AGENDA MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 26, 2026

TO: Forest Preserve District Planning & Utilization Committee

FROM: Patrick Chess, Director of Natural Resources
VIA: Benjamin Haberthur, Executive Director

SUBJECT: Presentation and Approval of Bids for Pond Management at Three Forest Preserves

PURPOSE:
The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the Committee with information to consider the approval of bids for three years of pond management at three Kane County Forest Preserves.

BACKGROUND:
The Bowes Creek Greenway Forest Preserve is approximately 32 acres situated south of Bowes Road in the Bowes Creek Country Club subdivision. The site contains three large artificial ponds (totaling approximately 8 acres). There are also three smaller degraded ponds at the site (approx. 0.6 acres). The 3 larger ponds experience periodic algal blooms and invasion by aquatic weeds. The residents of Bowes Creek find the algae and aquatic vegetation unsightly and have requested that the portion of their HOA dues that come to the District for the management of this site be used for pond management.

Similarly, Arlene Shoemaker Forest Preserve is approximately 118 acres located on the east side of Aurora. Within the preserve are two stormwater management ponds totaling 8.5 acres within a neighboring subdivision. Residents of that subdivision frequent express concerns about the health of the ponds including access to fishing amenities and the ability to maintain appropriate depths for adequate stormwater capacity. The Burnidge Forest Preserve encompasses 705 acres and is located along Big Timber and Coombs Roads, west of Elgin, IL. Along with the Paul Wolff Campground the most notable natural features of the preserve are the large tallgrass prairie recreations, wetland, and woodland restorations.

The site also contains two artificially created ponds north of the campground. The larger of the two ponds is a popular spot for campers to fish and recreate. Currently this pond is invaded by aquatic weeds such as elodea and Eurasian water milfoil. The pond also experiences annual algal blooms despite some limited attempts at mechanical aeration. The algae and aquatic vegetation can make recreational fishing at this site challenging to impractical and multiple preserve users have reported that the condition of the pond is aesthetically unsatisfactory.

Bids were sought from qualified firms for three years of consecutive growing season (Apr-Oct) ecological health monitoring and aquatic vegetation management at the ponds within these three preserves. The contract performance standard is to maintain 70% open water within the pond throughout the growing season. Additionally, the aquatic vegetation present within the pond must be comprised of 30% or less exotic species.

The lowest, qualified bids for the projects were as follows:

- Project 1: Burnidge Forest Preserve - $8,451.00 ($2,817.00/year) Tigris Aquatic Services
- Project 2: Bowes Creek Greenway Forest Preserve - $20,200.02 ($6,733.34/year) Jones Lake Management
- Project 3: Arlene Shoemaker Forest Preserve - $17,499.97 ($5,833.32/year) Jones Lake Management

FINANCIAL IMPACT:
Funds totaling $140,000 were budgeted in the Natural Resource Management Weed Management account (01-31-31-7064) in FY25/26. Sufficient funds of $26,433.02 are available to cover the first year of expenses for projects 1 and 3 at a total expense of $8,650.32.
Funds totaling $35,000 are budgeted in the 2025/26 fiscal year for donated lands management specific to the Bowes Creek Greenway Forest Preserve. Sufficient funds of $7,349.02 are available to cover the first year of expenses of project 2 at a cost of $6,733.34. Funds totaling $68,123.99 are available in the Bowes Creek escrow account 01-0224 to cover the second and third years of control.

RECOMMENDATION:
Staff recommends the Committee approve the bids from Tigris Aquatic Services for three years of pond monitoring and maintenance at Burnidge Forest Preserve (Project 1) for $8,451 ($2,817/year) as well as the bid from Jones Lake Management for three years of pond monitoring and maintenance at Bowes Creek Greenway (Project 2) for $20.200.02 ($6,733.34/year) and at Arlene Shoemaker (Project 3) for $17,499.97 ($5,833.32/year). Total contract costs are $46,150.99 ($15,383.66/year).

ATTACHMENTS:
Bid Abstract
Project Locator Map
Project Area Map – Burnidge
Project Area Map – Bowes Creek Greenway
Project Area Map – Arlene Shoemaker