



## Planning & Land Protection Department Memorandum

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TO: Benjamin Haberthur, Executive Director

FROM: Jennifer Rooks-Lopez, Director of Planning & Land Protection  
Zach Tegge, Landscape Architect

RE: February 2025 Department Monthly Report

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### LAND ACQUISITION & PLANNING

Staff continues to work with the Land Acquisition Committee on the evaluation and acquisition of properties.

#### MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH FOX VALLEY PARK DISTRICT

The Fox Valley Park District (FVPD) applied for and was recently awarded a federal grant to design and construct a pedestrian and bike bridge over the Fox River between Lippold Park and Les Arends Forest Preserve. After extensive site studies, it was determined the best western shore landing site is the northern edge of Les Arends and a future intergovernmental easement agreement ("IGA Easement") between the parties will be required. The specific details of the future easement agreement is



subject to finalization of engineering and planning of the exact landing placement locations. The Memorandum of Understanding is necessary to comply with preliminary documentation requirements.

- Full Commission approved the MOU.

#### INTERGOVERNMENTAL EASEMENT AGREEMENT WITH VILLAGE OF ALGONQUIN

The Village of Algonquin approached the District in 2024 with a request to acquire a 10' easement for the creation of a bike trail on Broadsmore Drive to connect to existing Village owned bike trails west of Randall Road. The proposed bike trail will be along the northern edge of Willoughby Forest Preserve. The Village of Algonquin will be responsible for the installation, maintenance and mowing of the new trail.

- The easement agreement was reviewed by the Land Acquisition Committee. Full commission approval is expected at the March Commission meeting.

## LICENSE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT OF KANE COUNTY AND THE VILLAGE OF PINGREE GROVE

In 2014, the Commission approved a License Agreement with the Village of Pingree Grove for the use of a portion of the Pingree Grove Forest Preserve to develop a community park. Since that time the Village has continued to make improvements to the property including a small gravel parking area and mowed trails. The Village submitted an updated site plan that they would like to use to pursue grant funding to assist with design and construction costs. This second amendment to the License Agreement, modifies the agreement to reflect the new site plan and extends the term of the agreement for an additional 25 years ending in March 2025.

- Full Commission approved the License Agreement

## GRANT PROJECTS

### MILL CREEK GREENWAY

The District was awarded an Open space Land Acquisition Grant (OSLAD) in 2023 for improvements to the Mill Creek Greenway Forest Preserve. This project will develop the 62.5 acres purchased in 2016 with Land Water Conservation Funding (LWCF) by introducing resource-based recreation elements that include an outdoor archery range (first of the District's kind), interpretive nature trails, 60+ acres of prairie restoration, parking, restrooms, and design for a future linkage to a regional bike trail.

- Contractor working to secure required bonds and insurance.

### BIG ROCK FOREST PRESERVE LIMESTONE TRAIL RESURFACING

In 2023, the District was awarded a Recreational Trail Program (RTP) grant to provide a trail connection between the Deer Valley property and Big Rock campground and to assist with the resurfacing of 1.57 miles of limestone trails at Big Rock Forest Preserve. Installed in 2014, sections of the limestone trails, especially in the woodland area are





experiencing erosion and are in need of significant resurfacing. The RTP grant, will fund 80% of the project costs up to \$200,000.00.

- Contractor working to secure required bonds and insurance.

### **FITCHIE CREEK FOREST PRESERVE LIMESTONE TRAIL RESURFACING**

On September 24, 2024 the District was awarded a Recreational Trail Program (RTP) grant to assist in the restoration of the existing limestone trail at Fitchie Creek Forest Preserve. Sections of the trail, especially that section within the wooded area, experience significant washout and flooding. The project will include addressing known drainage issues and resurfacing of the limestone trail. The RTP grant, will fund 80% of the project costs up to \$200,000.00.

- Staff are designing development plans. Project expected to release for bid in April.



## **CAPITAL PROJECTS**

### **MUIRHEAD SPRINGS WETLAND/STREAM MITIGATION BANK PROJECT**

In 2017, the District began planning to restore over 200 acres of wetland at Muirhead Springs Forest Preserve as part of a wetland mitigation bank. V3 Companies was chosen and approved to be the consultant for this project. Staff and V3 met on-site to review the site conditions.

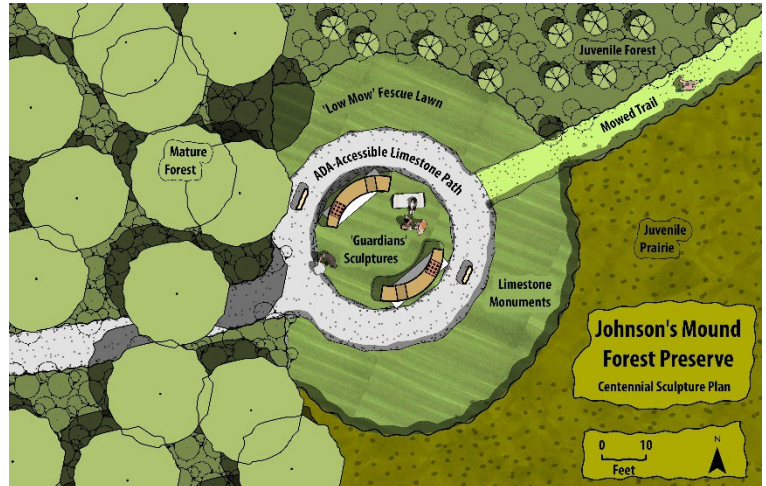
- Staff and V3 are working on the Adaptive Management plan to allow credits for shore bird habitat.



### **JOHNSONS MOUND CENTENNIAL IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT**

On June 8, 2025, the District will celebrate its' 100-year anniversary preserving and restoring Kane County's natural areas. The first preserve acquired by the District was Johnson's Mound Forest Preserve in Blackberry Township. To celebrate 100 years of conservation, the District plans to expand Johnson's

Mound Forest Preserve by restoring thirty-five (35) acres of agricultural land to forest and prairie. A key component to the centennial celebration will be the opportunity for the public to participate in the 12 acres woodland restoration and planting of 800 trees. Trees of various sizes will be offered for public donation that will include a commemorative plaque to recognize the generous donation. Revenue generated from the sale of trees is expected to be over \$170,000 and will be used to help offset the cost of the restoration and improvements at Johnson's Mound.



Additional improvements planned include the following: 23 acres of prairie restoration, Volunteer/donor memorial / Sculpture, Additional limestone trails, Ribbon cutting/ceremony on anniversary date.

- Bids for construction have been received and are expected to be awarded in March 2025.

## **MISCELLANEOUS UPDATES**

- February 11 – Bid opening for Johnson's Mound Improvements
- February 13 – Planning staff attended the Conservation Foundation awards luncheon
- February 21 – Planning started the interview process for our summer GIS intern.
- February 27 – Planning staff attended the pre-bid meeting for the replacement of the well at Settlers Hill Golf Course.