



Operations Department Memorandum

TO: Benjamin Haberthur, Executive Director
FROM: Jeremy Jensen, Director of Operations
RE: April 2026 Department Monthly Report

OPERATIONS

Fox River Flooding

With the Fox River rising to flood stage, multiple locations on Forest Preserve property had to be closed for the safety of visitors. Staff monitored conditions, waiting to see if it would be necessary, but eventually the Fox River was closed to recreational access, and the boat launches at Fox River Shores, Voyageur, Jon Duerr and Fabyan Forest Preserves had to be closed to boating access. The water levels continued to rise high enough to cover portions of bicycle trails mainly along the Fox River Trail, but several smaller spur trails along the watershed were impacted as well. Buffalo Park Forest Preserve was one of the few locations where water levels rose enough that roadways and portions of the preserve went underwater. Staff installed signage and barricades to warn visitors of the danger and anticipate cleanup efforts once the water recedes enough to allow access again.

Spring Wind & Storms

Last month, the wind from multiple storms toppled trees and saturated soils allowed roots to give way, leading to blocked trails at multiple locations along the trails and within multiple preserves throughout the county. At Schweitzer Forest Preserve experienced a temporary closure while crews cleared a large cherry tree off the fence of the off-leash area.

Campground Season Begins

May 1st marked opening day for the 2026 camping season at Paul Wolff and Big Rock Campgrounds. Staff worked to make sure camping sites were cleaned, picnic tables distributed, saturated lawns were mowed, electric and water service were turned on and tested, and attendant staff were trained.



Closures due to the Fox River flooding at Buffalo Park FP.



The 2026 campground crew is ready to welcome visitors to Paul Wolff.



Bison grazing on the prairie at Burlington FP.

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Emergency repairs to the Paul Wolff dump station were completed just in time for opening day.

Burlington Prairie Bison

Burlington Forest Preserve had its own set of preparations for opening day on May 1st. Cooperative team projects from multiple departments and contractors succeeded in completing split rail fence installation, establishing electrical service, expanding parking capacity and preparing the preserve to welcome visitors to view the bison herd that has made Burlington their new home.

Archery Range

The archery complex, at Mill Creek Greenway Forest Preserve, will host a grand opening on June 6, 2026. Contractors have completed construction and staff have been busy installing signage, transporting equipment and organizing workspaces. In addition, 17 staff successfully completed the required training to become USA Archery Level 1 Instructors. A special thank you to the DuPage County Forest Preserve archery staff for providing the instructors and hosting the field day for the requirement.

Horticulture

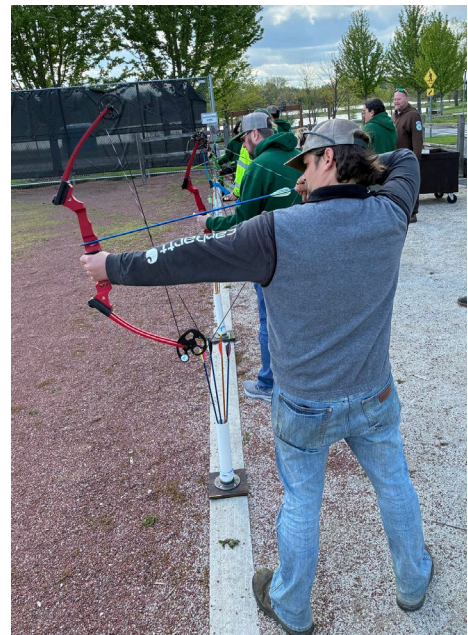
This month was a lot of cleanouts, from pruning shrubs and small trees at Creek Bend that had poor form or deadwood, to removing some large grasses that had become overgrown in their locations to clearing out beds that were overgrown and disorganized, to herbicide weeds on pathways and in beds. Mt Fuji in the Japanese Garden is a work in progress. Overgrown and invasive Lily of the Valley has been treated with herbicide and dug out from the roots, and some new juniper and spruce varieties will be added along w ornamental rocks. Vinca will be transplanted from the Centennial Garden to the side of Mt Fuji. The Rose Arbor is being restrung in weak spots, due to winter weather and the weight of the dormant clematis broke through in quite a few places. Perennial shrubs, grasses and plants have begun going in at the Villa, and a variety of perennials and annuals continue to be ordered for May. Lots of plant pickups and planting will happen soon! It's definitely the busiest time of the year for horticulture, but looking forward to the growing season ahead!

Fleet

Required District trucks and trailers passed Safety Test Lane inspections at KDOT. This is a state mandated inspection to



Staff across multiple departments completed training to become certified archery instructors.



Experienced archer Operations Crewleader Star takes his turn.

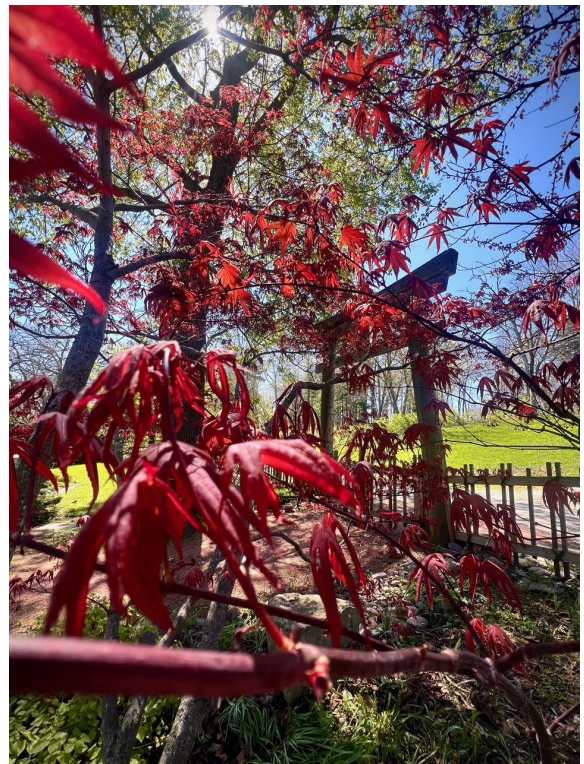


Young fern tendrils sprouting out at Fabyan FP.

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ensure commercial vehicles are safe to be on the roadways. A large portion of Operations and NRM's fleet need to be tested and certified every 6 months to maintain compliance. Annual services of tractors and utility carts continued within a brief window between burn season and mowing season and Fleet continues to stay proactive in preventative maintenance practices of all District equipment.



A beautiful and colorful spring is welcoming guests at the Fabyan Japanese Tea Garden.