Forest Preserve District of DuPage County Master Plan

2017 Community Input Summary
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Introduction

In 2017 the Forest Preserve District began work on a new master plan, which when completed in late 2018 will guide the development of the agency’s natural areas and its educational and recreational efforts over the next five years.

The first critical step in the process — and the one summarized in this report — was gathering input from the general public and internal and external stakeholders. For this step, the master plan committee, comprised of Forest Preserve District employees, worked with a consultant.

In August 2017 the Forest Preserve District went out to bid for a consultant to assist with surveys and group meetings. It awarded the contract to Public Research Group of Naperville, Illinois. The master plan committee formulated a strategy to work collaboratively with the consultant and performed much of the production work to reduce costs.

Between August and November 2017 the Forest Preserve District held public, volunteer, staff, commissioner and special-interest-group meetings. It offered a cumulative voting activity; collected email comments; and conducted community, volunteer and staff surveys. When its efforts were completed, it had received comments and opinions from over 6,500 individuals.

In general, there is strong support for the mission of the Forest Preserve District and the services it provides. The sentiment from across the community is that people value Forest Preserve District services and believe the agency should focus on restoring, improving and maintaining its current resources.
Public Input Meetings

Public meetings bring residents into the planning process, promote additional components (such as surveys) and provide a quick overview of community concerns.

Successful public meetings have focused agendas and consistent leadership and formats. Therefore, after deciding to hold one meeting in each of the county’s six voting districts, the master planning committee invited volunteers to help test the proposed format and agenda.

Eighteen people representing a range of Forest Preserve District volunteer programs attended the test meeting on Aug. 22 at Forest Preserve District headquarters. Consistent with the proposed agenda for public meetings, moderators asked the volunteers to participate in a cumulative voting activity (see Page 15) and then gave a short introduction to the master plan process. They encouraged volunteers to complete the forthcoming survey and after the meeting asked for detailed comments on the agenda, process and flow.

Because the volunteers represented departments actively engaged in master plan meetings and the comment-review process, the committee determined the meeting provided accurate guidance for slight revisions and reworked trigger questions to better focus discussions and improve the value of open-ended comments. After conversations with the consultant, a review of literature, and discussions with staff, the committee established the following agenda:

- Arrival greetings and refreshments
- Request to participate in cumulative voting activity before the group discussion
- Welcome and introduction by the Forest Preserve District president and the commissioner from the relevant district
- Staff explanation of the master plan process
- Staff-moderated discussion of four questions (“How do you use the forest preserves?” “What do you like about the forest preserves?” “What don’t you like about the forest preserves?” and “What would you like to see in the future at the forest preserves?”) with replies written and displayed on flip charts for participants’ review
- Opportunity for general comments (also displayed on flip charts)
- Reminder to call or email Forest Preserve District staff with comments and ideas not expressed at the meeting
Prior to scheduling each meeting the committee reviewed school, park district and library calendars to identify conflicting events that might affect attendance. It then selected dates and venues based on centralized locations, availability and accessibility.

District 1 Sept. 19 7 – 8:30 p.m.  
Itasca Community Library in Itasca

District 2 Sept. 26 7 – 8:30 p.m.  
Mayslake Peabody Estate in Oak Brook

District 3 Oct. 30 7 – 8:30 p.m.  
Indian Prairie Public Library in Darien

District 4 Oct. 25 7 – 8:30 p.m.  
College of DuPage in Glen Ellyn

District 5 Oct. 18 7 – 8:30 p.m.  
Naperville Municipal Center in Naperville

District 6 Oct. 3 7 – 8:30 p.m.  
West Chicago Park District ARC Center in West Chicago

Because successful public meetings also have advanced publicity, the Forest Preserve District used an ongoing multimedia strategy to promote attendance:

- Press release to all Forest Preserve District media contacts
- Content on Forest Preserve District website
- Facebook postings
- Flyers and postcards distributed via library and park district websites and bulletin boards
- Flyers posted in grade K – 12 virtual backpacks
- Flyers posted in information kiosks at DuPage forest preserves
- Postcard packets placed at volunteer log-in desks at education sites for distribution by volunteers
- Press release posted on environmental groups’ websites and bulletin boards
- Personal phone calls by staff and commissioners to community contacts
- Flyer emailed to township and municipal offices for posting and distribution
- Invitations to DuPage mayors and managers requesting to spread the word in their municipalities
- Informal word of mouth
- Signs posted at meeting locations and on the host agencies’ websites or calendars where possible

Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Attendees</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District 1</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 3</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 4</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 5</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 6</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>911</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At the end of each meeting, participants could share comments on any topic. The following is a recap from all six meetings. These comments do not provide statistically valid data (attendees may not have commented on a topic already addressed, may not have felt comfortable commenting, etc.) but do offer some anecdotal insight into community perspectives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent of All Comments Given</th>
<th>Better communication, outreach and transparency</th>
<th>Preserve improvements, programs and amenities</th>
<th>General, favorable comments about the Forest Preserve District</th>
<th>More collaboration, cooperation and coordination</th>
<th>More land acquisition and natural resource restoration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>29</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HELP US PLAN FOR THE FUTURE!

The Forest Preserve District invites DuPage County residents and Forest preserve fans to help it determine which projects to address over the next five years as part of a master plan. Join a tweet at convenient locations around the county, and help us to plan the future in your DuPage forest preserves! For more information, call 630-871-6404

Community Meetings

- Tues., Sept. 15 • 7 p.m.  
  Itasca Community Library • Itasca

- Tues., Sept. 22 • 7 p.m.  
  Maylake Peabody Estate • Oak Brook

- Tues., Oct. 3 • 7 p.m.  
  West Chicago Park District ARC Center • West Chicago

- Wed., Oct. 18 • 7 p.m.  
  Naperville Municipal Center • Naperville

- Wed., Oct. 25 • 7 p.m.  
  College of DuPage Health & Science Center Room 100 • Glen Ellyn

- Mon., Oct. 30 • 7 p.m.  
  Indian Prairie Public Library • Darien
Input Gathered

**Question 1**
How do you use the forest preserves?

62% To participate in an outdoor activity
25% To visit an education site, attend a program or event
7% To volunteer or spend time with family and friends
6% To spend time in nature or passively enjoy the benefits of open space
**Question 2**
What do you like about the forest preserves?

- 34% Good sites, amenities, programs, events and outdoor activities
- 34% Protection or restoration of open space or natural resources and broader community benefits
- 21% Ease of access, good distribution and equity, safe and well maintained
- 11% Aspects about the Forest Preserve District as an organization

**Question 3**
What don’t you like about the forest preserves?

- 31% Not enough or need improved recreation facilities, sites, amenities, access and programs
- 25% Aspects about the Forest Preserve District as an organization, its policies and restrictions
- 19% Insufficient or unclear communication, outreach and public information
- 12% Not enough maintenance or specific maintenance procedures
- 11% Too much development or not enough natural resource restoration
- 2% Conflicts between user groups
Question 4
What would you like to see in the future at the forest preserves?

56% Better access, preserve improvements, amenities, maintenance, programs and security
17% Better outreach, communication and promotion
17% More land acquisition, natural resource restoration and scientific research
10% Better transparency, collaboration, partnerships and policy changes
Because volunteers are highly engaged individuals with high levels of familiarity with the organization, the Forest Preserve District felt it was important to provide separate input meetings so volunteers could be more involved with planning for the future.

The meetings allowed volunteers to share their ideas and experiences, highlighted additional components of the master planning process (such as the survey), and gave the Forest Preserve District additional insight into community concerns.

The format was similar to the public meetings:

- Arrival greetings and refreshments
- Request to participate in cumulative voting activity before the discussion
- Welcome, introduction and explanation of the master plan process by staff
- Staff-moderated discussion of three questions (“What do you like about the forest preserves?” “What don’t you like about the forest preserves?” and “What would you like to see in the future at the forest preserves?”) with replies written and displayed on flip charts for participants’ review
- Opportunity for general comments (also displayed on flip charts)
- Reminder to call or email Forest Preserve District staff with comments and ideas not expressed at the meeting

The first meeting started with a fourth warm-up question (“What does volunteering mean to you?”) but because volunteers readily shared information without much prompting, to conserve time and better focus the discussion the committee did not use the question in subsequent meetings.

Prior to scheduling the meetings, the master plan committee consulted with the Forest Preserve District’s Volunteer Services department about dates, times and locations that would generally accommodate all groups. It then scheduled one daytime meeting on the east side of the county and one daytime and one evening meeting in the center. Volunteer Services distributed invitations and left promotional postcards at each volunteer site. Volunteers were encouraged to call or email if they planned on attending so staff could appropriately plan for the size of the group and determine if additional meetings would be necessary.
At the end of each meeting, participants could share comments on any topic. The following is a recap from all three meetings. These comments do not provide statistically valid data (attendees may not have commented on a topic already addressed, may not have felt comfortable commenting, etc.) but do provide some anecdotal insight into community perspectives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent of All Comments Given</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Better communication, policies and procedures, staff and volunteer concerns</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More land acquisition and natural resource restoration</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preserve improvements, programs and events</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General, favorable comments about the Forest Preserve District</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Results***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendees</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 13 at 1 p.m.</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 14 at 1:30 p.m.</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 14 at 6 p.m.</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The 18 volunteers at the Aug. 22 test meeting gave an additional 128 comments.
Input Gathered

Question 1
What do you like about the forest preserves?

- 45% Protecting open space and improving the environment
- 35% Facilities, amenities and activities
- 20% Aspects of the Forest Preserve District as an organization and particular individuals within and supporting it

Question 2
What don’t you like about the forest preserves?

- 50% Aspects of the Forest Preserve District as an organization and particular individuals within and supporting it
- 33% Lack of access, development, amenities, activities and maintenance
- 17% Too much development and not enough natural resource restoration
Question 3
What would you like to see in the future at the forest preserves?

- **48%** New or restoration of existing facilities, trails, programs and amenities
- **23%** More land acquisition, natural resource restoration and less development
- **22%** Improved forest preserve administrative practices, collaboration and clear direction
- **7%** Other uncategorized comments
Over a 10-week period, the Forest Preserve District held cumulative voting activities at several locations to engage the public and gauge community interest in five categories: trails; historic buildings and sites; prairies, woods and wetland restoration; educational facilities and programs; and recreation.

Participants were asked which categories the Forest Preserve District should focus on over the next five years. Each then received 10 tokens and “voted” by placing the tokens in ballot boxes representing each category. They could place all 10 chips in one box to show strong support for a single category or could divide the chips among the boxes in any way.

Similar to its test of the public meeting agenda, the master plan committee tested the cumulative voting activity at Medinah Park District’s summer festival on Aug. 19 and again at the Aug. 22 public input test meeting with Forest Preserve District volunteers (see Page 5). In addition to the two tests and the public and volunteer input meetings in September, October and November (see Page 5 and 11) the Forest Preserve District used the cumulative voting activity at the following events:

- **Kline Creek Farm Country Fair**  
  Sept. 2 and 3  
  10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

- **St. James Farm Dairy Day**  
  Sept. 9  
  10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

- **Graue Mill Corn Fest**  
  Sept. 10  
  10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

- **Mayslake Peabody Estate**  
  Sept. 23  
  9 a.m. – 2 p.m.

- **Danada Fall Festival**  
  Oct. 8  
  11 a.m. – 4 p.m.

- **Fullersburg Woods Halloween Night Walks**  
  Oct. 29  
  11 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Results

A total of 3,016 individuals participated in the cumulative voting exercise. Because the two test events were conducted with members of the public and the actual voting process did not change afterward, results from the two tests are included in the total.

While lacking the scientific rigor of more quantitative input methods, cumulative voting has several advantages. Among them is the ability to quickly receive feedback from people who actively use the areas assessed. The activity is inexpensive, fast and simple to execute and offers immediate results. Data produced by cumulative voting can be used to validate (or disclaim) other more scientifically rigorous data by comparing the results of both methods. There is also value in “taking the public’s temperature” by giving visitors an opportunity to quickly provide opinions on key issues. Cumulative voting further benefits the Forest Preserve District by creating awareness of both the agency and the planning process.

People who participate in cumulative voting genuinely enjoy the activity, and the Forest Preserve District’s activity was no exception. People routinely commented that they enjoyed the chance to “provide input quickly and simply,” that it was “a good way to get feedback,” and that it was nice to be able to “have an opinion without needing to stop and complete a paper survey.”
Input Gathered

Cumulative Voting Results

- 24% Trails
- 22% Prairies, Woods and Wetland Restoration
- 18% Nature Centers and Programs
- 18% Recreation
- 18% Preservation of Historic Buildings and Sites
Email Comments

To receive comments from people unable to participate in any other master plan outreach activities, the Forest Preserve District set up a special email address and posted it on the master plan page of its website. The following is a recap of messages received as of April 30, 2018:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Emails</th>
<th>Percent of All Emails Received</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous (spam, duplicates, test emails, questions or comments about meetings or surveys, etc.)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trail development or improvements</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-leash dog area improvements</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor recreation facility improvements</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More land acquisition or natural resource restoration</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The master plan committee worked with Forest Preserve District employees from several departments to craft questions for community, volunteer and staff surveys.

Community
The Forest Preserve District conducted two community surveys: a random sample and a general population. For both, it produced and promoted the survey materials and accepted responses. For the random sample survey, the Forest Preserve District obtained the addresses and recruited volunteers to collate and prepare the surveys for mailing. Public Research Group’s Community Survey and Assessment Report in appendix A summarizes the results of these surveys and lists responses for each question from the random sample.

Volunteers
The Forest Preserve District crafted another survey to gather input from its more than 900 volunteers. The format was similar to the community survey but contained more open-ended questions and one on volunteers’ perceptions of forest preserve visitor interests. The Forest Preserve District sent the survey to all volunteers on Nov. 17. It emailed most but sent paper copies to people who did not have email addresses on file. It received 172 completed surveys in return (163 online and nine mailed). Select questions are featured in the Community Survey and Assessment Report in appendix A; responses for all questions are in appendix B.

Staff
In recognition of the distinct perspective dedicated staff can bring to a master plan process, the Forest Preserve crafted a survey specifically for its 300 employees. The format was similar to the community survey but contained more open-ended questions and one on employees’ perceptions of forest preserve visitor interests. The Forest Preserve District sent the survey to all employees on Nov. 17. It emailed most but sent paper copies to employees who did not have email access. It received 178 completed surveys in return (171 online and seven printed). Select questions are featured in the Community Survey and Assessment Report in appendix A; responses for all questions are in appendix C.
Meetings for Staff, Commissioners and Special Interest Groups

Staff Workshop
On Aug. 24 Public Research Group facilitated a staff workshop at Mayslake Peabody Estate from 8 to 11:30 am. Fifty-one employees attended. They were divided into six groups and asked to provide their thoughts on four questions. The master plan committee documented the discussions and produced a summary of the replies, which is in appendix D.

Commissioner Visioning Sessions
Public Research Group held a series of sessions for Forest Preserve District commissioners to hear their individual opinions and gain an understanding of their short-term priorities. The Community Survey and Assessment Report in appendix A provides a brief summary of the sessions.

Special-Interest-Group Meetings
As a way to gather anecdotal information to complement the random sample community survey, the Forest Preserve District arranged for nine meetings with special-interest groups — people with interests in off-leash dog areas, historic and cultural resources, outdoor recreation, programs for visitors with special needs, etc. Public Research Group’s Community Survey and Assessment Report in appendix A provides a brief summary of the meetings.
Appendix A

Community Survey and Assessment Summary
Community Survey and Assessment

Forest Preserve District of DuPage County

PUBLIC RESEARCH GROUP
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DuPage County is the second largest county in Illinois with 932,126 residents. The County is comprised of 9 townships, portions of 39 municipalities, and 336 square miles. DuPage is a major employment center for north eastern Illinois, home to over half a million jobs, 19 colleges, 7 hospitals, 2 national laboratories (Argonne National Laboratory and Fermi National Accelerator), 300 miles of bikeways and nearly 26,000 acres of forest preserve property. Over 20% of the county is open space.

The Public Research Group assisted the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County in the fall of 2017 by preparing and administering a random survey that was sent to 5,000 DuPage County households via US Mail on October 27, 2017 and responses were received until December 20, 2017. In addition, a random email sample was send out to 5,000 DuPage County households on November 2, 2017 to supplement the outgoing mailing sample using a technology touch to offset the traditional US Mail delivery method. The survey was also translated into Spanish and was made available to those who requested it. There were no requests to distribute it to interested households.

The random survey solicited responses from households with no preconceived notice of forest preserve survey. From that random sample the District received and compiled 705 mail, and 77 email surveys. The sample of 782 households provides a margin of error of plus or minus 3.5% at a 95% confidence level. This exceeds the typical industry standard and ensures that findings are representative of the sentiments across the County.

In addition to the random survey, the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County and the Public Research Group conducted additional surveys to assist the District in securing follow up information in the development of a Master Plan. The general population survey was posted on the Forest Preserve District’s website as well as made available in hardcopy format from November 3, 2017 to December 13, 2017 and captured the opinions of 1,982 households that may or may not live within the District’s jurisdiction, but were interested enough in the priorities and operation of the Forest Preserve District to take the time to answer the questions posed in the survey. This sample was not combined with the primary random sample, but was compared to the statistically valid for additional insight into the survey findings. This data can be found in the Appendix.
**Major Survey Findings**

The survey contained a series of targeted questions that were crafted to measure attitudes and behaviors as well as perceptions by residents of DuPage County regarding the Forest Preserve. The survey allowed for opportunities for participants to provide specific comments from “open ended” comments. The survey contained 25 questions with approximately 215 variables, leading to over 170,000 possible survey data points for analysis from the 782 respondents.

**Administration**

- 90% of the respondents believe that the protection of natural areas is the most important value for the forest preserves to achieve.

**Visitation**

- Nearly one out of two respondents visit a preserve at least once a month. Only 11% have never visited a preserve.
- The top three preserves visited were Blackwell (43%), Herrick Lake (39%), and Danada (34%).

**Activities**

- The most common activities were trail use (76%), enjoying nature (63%), and sitting/relaxation (40%).
- Many respondents are happy with the way the preserves are now, and prefer to focus on maintaining what the Forest Preserve District has.

**Travel/Transportation**

- The vast majority of respondents of the random survey responded that they typically “drive” (83%) to a forest preserve.
- In terms of traveling to visit the preserves, 65% of those surveyed indicated they travel “3 – 10 miles”.

**Communication**

- The top response in terms of how households receive information was “I don’t” (32%). The second most selected option was “at a forest preserve” (27%).
- Nearly one out of four visitors (25%) use a smart phone in a forest preserve.

**Land Acquisition**

- The most important reason the Forest Preserve District should acquire land in the future is to “protect sensitive natural areas” (37%). Similarly, 33% of the respondents felt “preserve open space” was the most important reason.
Priorities

The respondents clearly ranked the choices related to existing resources at the top of their list. This includes choosing “restore existing prairies, woods, wetlands, lakes or streams” as the number one selection. The next two most selected options were “maintain or improve existing forest preserve buildings, parking lots or outdoor recreation areas” and “build new connections between existing trails”.

Demographics

The findings of the survey in this area reasonably reflect the County demographics and the most likely persons using and enjoying the preserves.

- 43.2 average age of individual in the household.
- 47% female/52% male gender breakdown.
- 72% married/11% single/5% widowed.
- 29.2 years living in DuPage County.
- The largest age group to respond to the survey was the 45-64 age range at 35.6%.
- The largest race to respond to the survey was White/Caucasian at 80.2%.
Conclusions

The survey findings suggest that the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County has a strong and satisfied user base that offers unique natural settings within a highly suburban and ever increasing urban environment. The statistical as well as anecdotal data collected would suggest that the public is generally supportive of the Forest Preserve and places value in its mission.

The following statements provide a summary of the survey conclusions:

- The protection of natural areas and experiencing nature is what the preserves do best.
- The Forest Preserve are good neighbours and looked favourably upon in terms of increasing home value.
- Strong visitation rates with Blackwell, Herrick Lake and Danada comprising the highest visits.
- The activities most enjoyed among visitors are walking, running or biking on a trail, enjoying nature and simply sitting and relaxing.
- Many are happy with the preserves just as they are.
- The majority of users of the preserves travel between 3 to 10 miles by car.
- There is a desire for an increase in both bike riding and walking in terms of transportation in the future.
- While many do not use a smart phone in a preserve, 25% do.
- Over two out of three respondents receive information about the Forest Preserve, but nearly one out of three don’t.
- Land acquisition should not be a major focus in the short term future, but the protection high quality natural areas are important.
- The protection and restoration of natural areas is a top priority followed by maintaining the valuable assets the Forest Preserve has and finally seeking out opportunities for trail connectivity.
Public Research Group of Naperville, IL assisted the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County in the fall of 2017 by preparing and administering a random survey that was sent to 5,000 DuPage County households via US Mail on October 27, 2017 and responses were received until December 20, 2017. In addition, a random email sample was sent out to 5,000 DuPage County households on November 2, 2017 to supplement the outgoing mailing sample using a technology touch to offset the traditional US Mail delivery method. The survey was also translated into Spanish and was made available to those who requested it. There were no requests to distribute it to interested households.

The random survey solicited responses from households with no preconceived notice of forest preserve survey. From that random sample the District received and compiled 705 mail, and 77 email surveys. The sample of 782 households provides a margin of error of plus or minus 3.5% at a 95% confidence level. This exceeds the typical industry standard and ensures that findings are representative of the sentiments across the County.

In addition to the random survey, the Forest Preserve District and the Public Research Group conducted supplementary surveys to assist in gathering additional information for use in a Master Plan.

The following were the additional surveys administered in the fall of 2017:
- General Population Survey
- Employee Survey
- Volunteer Survey

The general population survey was posted on the Forest Preserve District’s website as well as made available in hardcopy format from November 3, 2017 to December 13, 2017 and captured the opinions of 1,982 households that may or may not live within the District’s jurisdiction, but were interested enough in the priorities and operation of the Forest Preserve District to take the time to answer the questions posed in the survey. It is important to remember there is a distinction between the random survey and the general population survey. The complete data set can be found in the Appendix with highlight comparisons between the two separate surveys in the body of the report. While the random sample survey is completely a matter of chance being selected, participation in the general population survey was completely open. 15% of responses to the general population survey came from outside the boundaries of DuPage County.

A similar survey was made available to the employees of the Forest Preserve District during this same period of time. The employee survey received 178 responses. Finally, the District wanted to hear from their large group of dedicated volunteers. This survey received 172 responses.
The map that is shown below was generated using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software showing the locations and types of surveys responses within DuPage County with an overlay background of the six political districts of the Forest Preserve. The map illustrates that the sample return of the random survey is equally distributed among the six districts and the county as a whole.
The Forest Preserve District of DuPage County is interested in seeking resident opinions on the mission of the agency and their insight to future directives. These questions begin to provide valuable information to the District.

Question 12: Which of the following statements about DuPage forest preserves do you agree with?

More than 60% of the 782 respondents indicated they agreed with all of the statements, including 90% of respondents indicating they agree with the statement “they protect natural areas”. In comparison, the general population survey data also illustrates high scores for all of the statements, but placed a slightly higher value in the preserves with the statement “they give me places where I can do outdoor activities”.

![Survey Results Diagram]

12: Which of the following statements about DuPage forest preserves do you agree with?

- They protect natural areas. 90%
- They give me ways to experience nature. 85%
- They benefit the environment (clean air and water, etc.). 80%
- They give me places where I can do outdoor activities. 79%
- They provide outdoor learning experiences. 64%
- I don’t agree with any of them. 1%

2017 Random Survey (782 Responses)
Question 13: Please rank your choices from Question 12 based on their value to you.

Respondents were then asked to take Question 12 into a little further detail, by ranking the statements based on their value to their households. Respondents from the random sample again selected “they protect natural areas”, as their first choice. This selection was also the highest ranking choice for the general population survey.

![13: Please rank your choices (from Question 12) based on their value to you. Rankings (Weighted)](chart)

Question 14: DuPage forest preserves increase the value of my home?

Question 14 is rather straightforward in asking respondents if they feel the forest preserves increase the value of homes in DuPage County. The majority (79%) of respondents from the random sample felt the forest preserves increase their home values. The survey data is consistent with research that shows natural green spaces have a positive impact helping communities thrive which increases property values. Open space, trails and preserves help tourism spending and investment stay locally as well as aid in reducing health care costs by offering public outdoor fitness opportunities. The general population survey also agreed with these findings but showed a slightly stronger agreement at 87%.


**Visitation**

The questions that follow concentrated on determining the usage of the DuPage forest preserves and facilities. These questions were written to assist the agency in determining how and why the forest preserves are used by the public.

**Question 1: How often do you visit DuPage County forest preserves?**

Question 1 begins by asking those surveyed how often they visit the DuPage County forest preserves. The pie chart compares the percentages of the 774 responses of the random sample. The data in the graph below shows that visitation is relatively high with the majority of those surveyed visit the forest preserves “daily” (4%) “weekly” (18%) and “monthly” (26%). A visit would include a picnic in a preserve, a visit to a nature center, a walk along a trail, a round of golf or use of any other amenity within a preserve and/or facility during the past year. Only 11% of those surveyed said they never visit a DuPage County forest preserves. In comparison, the data collected from the general population shows a higher visitation rate, which was expected.
Question 2: Why haven’t you visited a DuPage forest preserve?

Question 2 follows up on the previous question. The bar chart below provides valuable information on the 138 survey respondents who do not use the DuPage forest preserves. Almost a quarter of the respondents (21%) indicated that they do not use a forest preserve because they “don’t know what there is to do there”, 15% of the respondents said they “don’t know where the forest preserves are”, 14% said they “didn’t have the time to visit,” and 12% of the surveyed respondents “weren’t interested in the activities or programs the DuPage forest preserve offer”. The general population survey findings are similar to those of the random sample.

[Bar chart showing reasons for not visiting a DuPage forest preserve]

Question 3: Why do you visit DuPage forest preserves?

Question 3 continues the exploration into the usage of the forest preserves. The bar chart below provides some insight into how the forest preserves are used by the 782 survey respondents. The top three responses were “to spend time in nature” (65%), “to exercise” (55%), and “to do an outdoor activity” (49%). The majority of “other” comments were dog related. The general population survey findings are similar to those of the random sample. A summary of the “other” responses can be found in the Appendix.

[Bar chart showing reasons for visiting a DuPage forest preserve]
Question 5: Which DuPage forest preserves have you visited?

Question 5 concludes the exploration of visitation with asking those surveyed which DuPage forest preserves they visit. The charts compares the percentages of the 782 responses from the random sample. The data shows that the three most visited forest preserves are Blackwell (42.8%), Herrick Lake (39.4%), and Danada (34%). The least visited forest preserves with under 1% of respondents visiting them are Dunham, Oak Grove, Goodrich Woods, York/High Ridge, Broadview Slough, and Hickory Grove. The general population survey findings are similar to those of the random sample with the top three being Blackwell, Danada and Herrick Lake. The top two DuPage forest preserves that were selected in the survey are consistent with the visitor data collected by the District.
5: Which DuPage forest preserves have you visited? 
(2 of 2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preserve Name</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Churchill Park</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cricket Creek</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring Creek Reservoir</td>
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<tr>
<td>Timber Ridge</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maple Meadows Golf Course</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Meadows Golf Course</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt Creek Marsh</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burlington Park</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glen Oak</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oldfield Oaks</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Des Plaines Riverway</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Preserve at Oak Meadows</td>
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<tr>
<td>Belleau Woods</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Branch Riverway</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medinah Wetlands</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egermann Woods</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne Grove</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wood Ridge</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>Country Lakes</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fischer Woods</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big Woods</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fox Hollow</td>
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<td>Fullerton Park</td>
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<td>Hitchcock Woods</td>
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<td>Swift Prairie</td>
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<td>Night Heron Marsh</td>
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<tr>
<td>Red Hawk Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black Willow Marsh</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunham</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oak Grove</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goodrich Woods</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>York/High Ridge</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadview Slough</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hickory Grove</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2017 Random Survey (782 Responses)
Activities

The next set of questions from the random survey focused on what type of activities patrons of the forest preserves like to do now and what they would like to do in the future. A diverse list of activities that are available to be enjoyed by the users of the preserves has a direct correlation to the rate of visitation of the preserves and adds value to the overall experience.

Question 4: Which of the following activities have you done at a DuPage forest preserve in the past 12 months?

Question 4 explores the types of activities at the forest preserves. The bar chart provides data on the following activities that the 782 survey respondents have done at a DuPage forest preserve in the past 12 months. The most common activities were “trail use” (76%), “enjoying nature” (63%), and “sitting/relaxation” (40%). The least used activities were “attending a history, culture, or art program” (2%), “volunteer work” (2%), and “horseback riding” (1%). The general population survey findings are similar to those of the random sample with both ranked “walked, ran or biked on a trail” as the highest rated activity.

![Bar chart showing the most common activities at DuPage forest preserves](chart.png)

Question 11: Which of the following would you like to do, see or see more of at DuPage forest preserves?

In Question 11, those surveyed were given a short list of items and asked to select all the items they would like to see, or see more of, at the DuPage forest preserves. Many of the options were selected by the 782 households in the random survey. However, the most frequent selection was “none” at 25%. This indicates that approximately 195 of the 782 respondents did not feel the District needs to add any amenities in the immediate future to the forest preserves. A summary of the “other” responses can be found in the Appendix.

The results tabulated from the general population survey yielded notable differences from the results of the random survey. In order to gather additional information, these survey respondents were given a larger list of options to select from which included 20 items versus a list of 11 items. In fact, in the general population survey, the first five most popular selections were not options in the random survey question. The top three general population survey findings include “trails” (52%), “restoration of natural areas” (31%) and “drinking water” (29%) at the DuPage forest preserves.
**Travel/Transportation**

These series of questions asked respondents how they get to and from the forest preserves in terms of modes of transportation and distances covered.

**Question 6: How do you usually get to a DuPage forest preserve?**

The survey respondents were given several options on how they travel to the forest preserves, including drive, bike, walk and public transportation. The vast majority of respondents of the random survey responded that they typically “drive” (83%) to a forest preserve. In fact, this percentage is nearly the same as the results of the general population survey, where the respondents said they usually “drive” 82% of the time. The second most selected response in both surveys was the use of a “bike” (11%).

![Pie chart showing the percentage of respondents who “drive,” “bike,” “walk,” or use other transportation to get to a DuPage forest preserve.](image)

**Question 7: How would you prefer to get to a DuPage forest preserve?**

After establishing how respondents currently travel to the forest preserves, the District is also interested in finding out how visitors would prefer to get to the forest preserves. The data collected seems to illustrate that in most cases, visitors are already utilizing their preferred mode of travel. 60% of the respondents indicated they would prefer to “drive”, rather than “bike” (26%) or “walk” (12%). However, alternate means of travel (Biking and/or walking) other than the automobile did have a strong increase with doubling in value as compared to the responses in Question 6. The general population survey results provided similar percentages to those found in the random survey.

![Pie chart showing the percentage of respondents who would prefer to “drive,” “bike,” “walk,” or use other transportation to get to a DuPage forest preserve.](image)
Question 8: How far do you typically travel to visit a DuPage forest preserve?

DuPage County covers nearly 336 square miles and is roughly 18 miles from one end of the county to the other. When asked how far households typically travel to visit the preserves, 65% of those surveyed indicated they travel “3 – 10 miles”. This seems to illustrate that preserves are diverse sites with a regional draw. This percentage, along with the percentages of the 2nd and 3rd selected choices, were comparable to the results received in the general population survey.
The next series of questions asked respondents how they receive information about the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County and the use of mobile technology such as a smart phone at a forest preserve.

Question 9: How often do you use your smart phone to access the internet or use apps when you’re at a DuPage forest preserve?

The Forest Preserve District was interested in learning how technology is being used in the forest preserves, specifically smart phones. Those surveyed indicated the majority are typically not using their smart phones when at a forest preserve, with 37% selecting “not often”, 32% selecting “never”, and 8% “don’t have a smart phone” at all. This was again fairly consistent with the results compiled from the general population survey.
Question 10: How do you currently receive information about DuPage forest preserves?

Multiple media outlets are used to ensure that the users are aware of the services, events and programs offered by the Forest Preserve District. Households were asked to select all the ways they receive information. While there were multiple options available to the respondents, the top response from those randomly surveyed selected “I don’t” (32%). The second most selected option was “at a forest preserve” (27%).

While technology-based marketing methods (e.g., Forest Preserve District website, email, social media) do not appear to be the primary source of information for respondents of the random survey, this is not the case for those submitting responses to the general population survey. There is a noticeable difference in the responses from the households that were randomly surveyed and the responses of those from the voluntary, general population survey. The biggest difference is the use of “Email” to receive information. Only 9% of those from the random survey indicated they receive information from “Email”. However 45% of those in the general population felt “Email” was their most relevant way to receive information.
**Land Acquisition**

The Forest Preserve District of DuPage County is a governmental unit that is a likely candidate to pursue land acquisition to preserve open space that is ever disappearing within the county. The questions that follow gather meaningful data in regards to the future direction of land acquisition.

Question 16: What is the most important reason the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County should acquire more land?

The results from Question 16 indicate that the 743 respondents from the random survey feel the most important reason the Forest Preserve District should acquire land is to “protect sensitive natural areas” (37%). Similarly, 33% of respondents felt to “preserve open space” was the most important reason. Conversely, there were only 11 of 743 (1%) households that felt to “preserve historic buildings” was the reason to acquire land. Finally, a sizeable group of respondents at 19% selected “it shouldn’t acquire more land”.

![Chart showing survey results for Question 16](chart.png)
Question 17: If the Forest Preserve of DuPage County were to acquire land, what type of land should it acquire?

As a follow-up to Question 16, respondents were then asked to tell the District what type of land should be acquired if the District were to acquire land. The answers to Question 17 were consistent with the sentiment in Question 16, in which a majority felt the District should target “high-quality natural areas” if it acquires land. This was consistent with the results compiled from the general population survey.

17: If the Forest Preserve of DuPage County were to acquire land, what type of land should it acquire?
Rankings (Weighted)

- High-quality natural areas: 3.52 (n=539)
- Flood-prone areas: 2.41 (n=524)
- Undeveloped areas (agricultural land, empty fields, etc.) that aren’t considered high-quality natural areas: 2.38 (n=525)
- Developed land (land with existing buildings, parking, etc.) that can be converted into natural areas: 1.90 (n=520)

2017 Random Survey
Priorities

This last question of this report focuses on the priorities for the future.

Question 15: Considering the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County does not have unlimited resources, what should it focus on over the next five years? Rank the following choices.

The Forest Preserve District is seeking an understanding on what areas it should focus on over the next several years. The findings from this question will aid in the development of priorities for the future. The question asked the respondents to rank a list of seven possible options to consider. The graph below shows the most important ranking of the seven possibilities. The respondents clearly ranked the choices related to existing “resources” at the top of their list. This includes selecting “restore existing prairies, woods, wetlands, lakes or streams” as the number one choice. The next two most selected options were “maintain or improve existing forest preserve buildings, parking lots or outdoor recreation areas” and “build new connections between existing trails”. The General Population Survey results are shown below. The top choices are identical between the two surveys.

![Graph showing rankings of choices for future focus areas.](image-url)
Demographics
The following page highlights the demographic findings of the survey reasonably reflect the County demographics.

43.2 years
Average age of survey household
(39.1 years average age of DuPage County household Data USA)

47% of respondents were female
(51% U.S. Census)

72% Married
11% Single
6% Separated/Divorced
5% Widowed
4% N/A

1/3 had a yearly household income less than $100k
($81,521 median household income U.S. Census)

29.2 years
Average length of residence in DuPage County

Survey Household Ages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-64</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-44</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 18 years old</td>
<td>24.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DuPage County Age Groups (2010)

Survey Household Race/Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>80.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I prefer not to answer</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic, Latino or Spanish</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian or Alaska Native</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Eastern or North African</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DuPage County Race/Ethnicity (2016)

White Alone (Persons only Reporting one Race) 80.6%
White (Not Hispanic or Latino) 67.4%
Hispanic 14.3%
Asian 11.4%
Black 4.8%
Other 0.2%
Summary of Qualitative Research

The Public Research Group assisted the Forest Preserve District on additional data gathering opportunities to supplement the quantitative survey research methods. The amount of information collected over the three month span was substantial with all of the raw data forwarded to the District for evaluation. The information is important in the role to both validate the survey findings as well as provide a slightly different viewpoint worthy of analysis of those differences.

Staff Input

Early into the research phase of the project, select staff assembled for a half day workshop to provide thoughts and opinions regarding the current culture of the District as well as direction for the future. The general consensus was that the District had many positives in terms of qualities of employment and values in the workplace as well as the ways that employees impact residents and users of the preserves. In terms of future priorities, the top three were restoring existing prairies, woods, wetlands, lakes or streams followed by maintain or improving existing forest preserve buildings, parking lots or outdoor recreation areas and finally acquiring more land. Building new trails ranked the lowest. In those conversations with the District staff regarding the culture of the agency, there is a noticeable shift in the way employees view their current workplace and outlook towards the future in comparison to the past. The following are the key findings from the Employee Survey.

Top 3 employee responses top Question 11: “What would you like to do, see or see more of at DuPage forest preserves?”
1. Restoration of natural areas (54%)
2. Flush restrooms (34%)
3. Drinking water (31%)

Top 3 employee responses to Question 12: “If you have regular interactions with visitors, what do they tell you they’d like to see more of at DuPage forest preserves?”
1. Flush restrooms (39%)
2. Restoration of natural areas (34%)
3. Drinking water (29%)

Employee rankings based on Question 13: “Considering the Forest Preserve District does not have unlimited resources, what should it focus on over the next five years?”
1. Restore existing prairies, woods, wetlands, lakes or streams
2. Maintain or improve existing forest preserve buildings, parking lots or outdoor recreation areas
3. Build new connections between existing trails
4. Acquire more land
5. Build new trails
6. Maintain or restore historic buildings and structures
7. Build new forest preserve buildings, parking lots or outdoor recreation areas

Employee rankings based on Question 15: “What is the most important reason the Forest Preserve District should acquire land?”
1. Preserve open space
2. Preserve historic buildings
3. Protect sensitive natural areas
4. It shouldn’t acquire more land
5. Expand outdoor recreational areas

Employee rankings based on Question 16: “If the Forest Preserve District were to acquire land, what type of land should it acquire?”
1. High-quality natural areas (73%)
2. Flood-prone areas (12%)
3. Developed land that can be converted into natural areas (9%)
4. Undeveloped areas that aren’t considered high-quality natural areas (6%)
**Commissioner Visioning Sessions**

The Board of Commissioners had an opportunity to share ideas and express opinions during this research project. The facilitators from Public Research Group held a series of visioning sessions with two Commissioners at a time to listen to individual opinions and gain an understanding of the short term future priorities of the Board. Each of the Commissioners has a keen awareness as to the success of the District as a whole as well as vested interest in the individual areas that they represent. A few of the important areas of discussion during the sessions were centralized on trail expansion, the desire to finish started projects before launching into new ones, and keeping the District on solid financial ground. Board members thought the focus should be on getting more people into the preserves, and further evaluating existing structures to improve utilisation and efficiency.

**Special Interest Group Meetings**

As another way to gather anecdotal, non-statistically valid information to complement the quantitative survey research, the Forest Preserve District arranged nine meetings with special interest groups. Meetings were held with individuals interested in off-leash dog areas, historic and cultural issues, natural resources, outdoor recreation, seniors and active adults, users with special needs, teachers and educators, active transportation and youth. A total of 51 people attended the meetings.

Almost all groups, regardless of specific purpose, stressed that the District should provide significant natural resources for the health, physical and psychological well-being of DuPage County residents and visitors in some form or fashion. Other suggestions included continuing and improving partnerships, increasing and improving programs, amenities and trail connectivity, and improving accessibility.
Volunteer Survey

The Forest Preserve District of DuPage County relies on the generosity of its volunteers to help accomplish its mission. District volunteers introduce school groups and families to nature, bring history to life, and care for animals. They restore habitats and help visitors explore forest preserve trails and discover interesting outdoor activities such as archery, kayaking and fishing. The data collected through the Volunteer Survey expressed a generally positive outlook on spending time assisting the District. The following are the key findings from the Volunteer Survey.

Top 3 volunteer responses to Question 10: “Which of the following would you like to do, see or see more of at DuPage forest preserves?”
1. Restoration of natural areas (54%)
2. Trails (38%)
3. Flush restrooms (27%)

Top 3 volunteer responses to Question 11: “If you have regular interactions with forest preserve visitors, which do they tell you they’d like to see more of at DuPage forest preserves?”
1. I don’t interact with visitors (29%)
2. Nothing (19%)
3. Flush restrooms (15%)

Volunteer rankings based on Question 12: “Considering the Forest Preserve District does not have unlimited resources, what should it focus on over the next five years?”
1. Restore existing prairies, woods, wetlands, lakes or streams
2. Maintain or improve existing forest preserve buildings, parking lots or outdoor recreation areas
3. Build new connections between existing trails
4. Acquire more land
5. Maintain or restore historic buildings and structures
6. Build new trails
7. Build new forest preserve buildings, parking lots or outdoor recreation areas

Volunteer rankings based on Question 16: “If the Forest Preserve District were acquire land, what type of land should it acquire?”
1. High-quality natural areas
2. Undeveloped areas that aren’t considered high-quality natural areas
3. Flood-prone areas
4. Developed land that can be converted into natural areas
Conclusions

The survey findings suggest that the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County has a strong and satisfied user base that offers unique natural settings within a highly suburban and ever increasing urban environment. The statistical, as well as anecdotal, data collected would suggest that the public is generally supportive of the Forest Preserve and places value in its mission.

The following statements provide a summary of the survey conclusions:

• The protection of natural areas and experiencing nature is what the preserves do best.
• The Forest Preserve are good neighbours and looked favourably upon in terms of increasing home value.
• Strong visitation rates with Blackwell, Herrick Lake and Danada comprising the highest visits.
• The activities most enjoyed among visitors are walking, running or biking on a trail, enjoying nature and simply sitting and relaxing.
• Many are happy with the preserves just as they are.
• The majority of users of the preserves travel between 3 to 10 miles by car.
• There is a desire for an increase in both bike riding and walking in terms of transportation in the future.
• While many do not use a smart phone in a preserve, 25% do.
• Over two out of three respondents receive information about the Forest Preserve, but nearly one out of three don’t.
• Land acquisition should not be a major focus in the short term future, but the protection high quality natural areas are important.
• The protection and restoration of natural areas is a top priority followed by maintaining the valuable assets the Forest Preserve has and finally seeking out opportunities for trail connectivity.
October 27, 2017

Dear Fellow DuPage Resident,

As president of the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County and a father of two young boys, I know that time can be scarce, so let me get straight to the point: The Forest Preserve District is developing a plan to guide its efforts over the next five years and we want to hear from you!

For over 100 years, the Forest Preserve District has been striving to protect and improve the county’s prairies, forests and wetlands while providing great ways for people to experience, enjoy and learn more about these incredible areas. To date, we manage nearly 26,000 acres across 60 different forest preserves. We may not offer ballfields or playgrounds, but we do offer some of the most beautiful open spaces in northern Illinois with some of the best ways to relax and soak up the scenery.

That’s why I hope you’ll take a few minutes to answer the enclosed survey and return it to us by Nov. 20 using the enclosed postage-paid envelope. These surveys are anonymous, so feel free to share your candid opinions. Your response will be a valuable part of our planning process and greatly appreciated.

If you’d like to learn more about our planning process, you can read the latest on our website at dupageforest.org/master-plan, where we’ll post findings from this survey and our other community outreach efforts. And if you have any questions, please contact Jessica Ortega at 630-871-6404 or jortega@dupageforest.org.

Thank you for taking the time to make your forest preserves even better places to visit, and have a fantastic fall!

Sincerely,

Joseph F. Cantore
President

Enclosures

Si desea recibir una copia de esta encuesta en español, envíe un correo electrónico con su dirección de correo a jortega@dupageforest.org
Appendix

Random Sample Survey Instrument

Forest Preserve District of DuPage County

Instructions
• This survey should take less than 10 minutes to complete.
• When answering questions 1 – 19, take into account all of the members of your household. When answering questions 20 – 25 think just about yourself.
• When you are finished, please place the survey in the enclosed postage-paid envelope and drop it in the mail by Nov. 20.
• All responses are anonymous and confidential. If you have any questions, please call us at 630-871-6404.
• Si desea recibir una copia de esta encuesta en español, envíe un correo electrónico con su dirección de correo a jortega@dupageforest.org.

Questions
1. How often do you visit DuPage County forest preserves? Choose only one.
   ○ Daily  ○ Weekly  ○ Monthly  ○ Less than once a month  ○ Never

If you answered “Never” to question 1, please answer question 2.
If you gave an answer other than “Never,” skip to question 3.

2. Why haven’t you visited a DuPage forest preserve? Choose all that apply and then skip to question 10.
   ○ I don’t know where they are.  ○ I don’t know what there is to do there.
   ○ I have no one to go with.  ○ There’s not one close to my home.
   ○ I don’t have enough time.  ○ I don’t have the right equipment to participate.
   ○ I don’t think they’re safe.  ○ I’m not interested in the activities or programs they offer.
   ○ I have mobility limitations.  ○ Other Please specify: __________________________

3. Why do you visit DuPage forest preserves? Choose all that apply.
   ○ To exercise  ○ To relax  ○ To attend a program I registered for
   ○ To do an outdoor activity  ○ To spend time in nature  ○ To spend time with family or friends
   ○ Other Please specify: __________________________

4. Which of the following activities have you done at a DuPage forest preserve in the past 12 months? Choose all that apply.
   ○ Walked, ran or biked on a trail  ○ Enjoyed nature  ○ Attended a program about plants, animals or nature
   ○ Took photographs  ○ Golfed  ○ Went boating (rented one or used my own)
   ○ Went horseback riding  ○ Camped  ○ Attended a Forest Preserve District event
   ○ Sat and relaxed  ○ Picnicked  ○ Attended a wedding, party or social event
   ○ Used an archery range  ○ Volunteered  ○ Went skiing or cross-country skiing
   ○ Used an off-leash dog area  ○ Fished  ○ Attended a program about history, culture or art
   ○ Went wildlife watching  ○ Went birding  ○ Other Please specify: __________________________
5. Which DuPage forest preserves have you visited? There’s a map on the back of the cover letter if you need one. **Choose all that apply.**

- Belleau Woods
- Big Woods
- Black Willow Marsh
- Blackwell
- Broadview Slough
- Brush Hill
- Burlington Park
- Churchill Park
- Churchill Woods
- Community Park
- Country Lakes
- Cricket Creek
- Danada
- Danada Equestrian Center
- Des Plaines Riverway
- Dunham
- East Branch
- East Branch Riverway
- Egermann Woods
- Fischer Woods
- Fox Hollow
- Fullerburg Woods
- Fullerburg Woods Nature Education Center
- Fullerton Park
- Glen Oak
- Goodrich Woods
- Green Meadows Golf Course
- Greene Valley
- Hawk Hollow
- Herrick Lake
- Hickory Grove
- Hidden Lake
- Hitchcock Woods
- James “Pate” Philip State Park
- Kline Creek Farm
- Lincoln Marsh
- Lyman Woods
- Mallard Lake
- Maple Grove
- Maple Meadows Golf Course
- Mayslake
- Mayslake Peabody Estate
- McDowell Grove
- Meacham Grove
- Medinah Wetlands
- Night Heron Marsh
- Oak Grove
- Oldfield Oaks
- Pioneer Park
- Pratt’s Wayne Woods
- The Preserve at Oak Meadows
- Red Hawk Park
- Salt Creek Greenway
- Salt Creek Marsh
- Salt Creek Park
- Songbird Slough
- Spring Creek Reservoir
- Springbrook Prairie
- St. James Farm
- Swift Prairie
- Timber Ridge
- Warrenville Grove
- Waterfall Glen
- Wayne Grove
- West Branch
- West Branch Riverway
- West Chicago Prairie
- West DuPage Woods
- Willowbrook
- Willowbrook Wildlife Center
- Winfield Mounds
- Wood Dale Grove
- Wood Ridge
- York Woods
- York/High Ridge

6. How do you usually get to a DuPage forest preserve? **Choose only one.**

- Drive
- Bike
- Walk
- Public transportation
- Other "Please specify._

7. How would you prefer to get to a DuPage forest preserve? (This answer may be different than your answer for question 6.) **Choose only one.**

- Drive
- Bike
- Walk
- Public transportation
- Other "Please specify._

8. How far do you typically travel to visit a DuPage forest preserve? **Choose only one.**

- Less than 3 miles
- 3 – 10 miles
- More than 10 miles

9. How often do you use your smart phone to access the internet or use apps when you’re at a DuPage forest preserve? **Choose only one.**

- Every time
- Most times but not all
- Not often
- Never
- I don’t have a smart phone.
10. How do you currently receive information about DuPage forest preserves? Choose all that apply.
   - Email
   - Banners or other street signs
   - Social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
   - The Conservationist
   - Family, friends or neighbors
   - Other Please specify, ________________
   - Newspaper
   - Forest Preserve District website
   - I don’t.
   - At a forest preserve
   - Non-Forest Preserve District website

11. Which of the following would you like to do or see more of at DuPage forest preserves? Choose all that apply.
   - Nature play spaces
   - Mountain biking
   - Archery
   - None
   - Equestrian camping
   - Bike rentals
   - Campsites
   - Other Please specify, ________________
   - Cross-country ski rentals
   - Paddle boarding
   - Cabin rentals

12. Which of the following statements about DuPage forest preserves do you agree with? Choose all that apply.
   - A They protect natural areas.
   - D They benefit the environment (clean air and water, etc.)
   - B They give me ways to experience nature.
   - E They give me places where I can do outdoor activities.
   - C They provide outdoor learning experiences.
   - F I don’t agree with any of them. (Skip to question 14.)

13. Rank your choices from question 12 based on their value to you. For the one you value most, write the letter corresponding to that statement next to the 1 below. For the one you value second-most, write that letter next to the 2, continuing until you’ve ranked all of your choices.

   1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____

14. DuPage forest preserves increase the value of my home. Choose only one.
   - I agree.
   - I disagree.

15. Considering the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County does not have unlimited resources, what should it focus on over the next five years? Rank from 1 to 7 with 1 being the first topic it should focus on, 2 the second topic, etc.

   _____ Acquire more land
   _____ Build new trails
   _____ Build new connections between existing trails
   _____ Restore existing prairies, woods, wetlands, lakes or streams
   _____ Maintain or improve existing forest preserve buildings, parking lots or outdoor recreation areas
   _____ Build new forest preserve buildings, parking lots or outdoor recreation areas
   _____ Maintain or restore historic buildings and structures

16. What is the most important reason the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County should acquire more land? Choose only one.
   - Preserve open space
   - Protect sensitive natural areas
   - Expand outdoor recreational areas
   - It shouldn’t acquire more land.
   - Preserve historic buildings
If you answered "It shouldn't acquire more land" to question 16, please skip to question 18.

17. If the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County were to acquire land, what type of land should it acquire? Rank from 1 to 4 with 1 being the most important type, 2 the second-most important type, etc.
   - High-quality natural areas
   - Developed land (land with existing buildings, parking, etc.) that can be converted into natural areas
   - Flood-prone areas
   - Undeveloped areas (agricultural land, empty fields, etc.) that aren't considered high-quality natural areas

18. Beginning with yourself, what are the ages of the people in your household?
   ______ ______ ______ ______ ______ ______

19. How much total combined income did the members of your household earn last year?
   - $0 – $24,999
   - $25,000 – $49,999
   - $50,000 – $99,999
   - $100,000 – $199,999
   - $200,000 or more
   - I prefer not to answer.

20. How many years have you lived in DuPage County? ___________


22. What is your gender? __________________________  I prefer not to answer.

23. What is your race or ethnicity? Choose all that apply.
   - White
   - Hispanic, Latino or Spanish
   - Black or African American
   - Asian
   - American Indian or Alaska Native
   - Middle Eastern or North African
   - Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
   - Other Please specify. __________________________
   - I prefer not to answer.

24. What is the highest level of school you completed?
   - None
   - Preschool – 12th grade
   - High school diploma or GED
   - Some college or professional training
   - College degree or professional certification
   - College degree beyond a bachelor’s degree
   - I prefer not to answer.

25. Is there something you’d like to tell us about DuPage forest preserves that we didn’t ask?________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________

<<1>>
October 27, 2017

Dear Fellow DuPage Resident,

As president of the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County and a father of two young boys, I know that time can be scarce, so let me get straight to the point: The Forest Preserve District is developing a plan to guide its efforts over the next five years and we want to hear from you!

For over 100 years, the Forest Preserve District has been striving to protect and improve the county’s prairies, forests and wetlands while providing great ways for people to experience, enjoy and learn more about these incredible areas. To date, we manage nearly 26,000 acres across 60 different forest preserves. We may not offer ballfields or playgrounds, but we do offer some of the most beautiful open spaces in northern Illinois with some of the best ways to relax and soak up the scenery.

That’s why I hope you’ll take a few minutes to answer the enclosed survey and return it to us by Nov. 20 using the enclosed postage-paid envelope. These surveys are anonymous, so feel free to share your candid opinions. Your response will be a valuable part of our planning process and greatly appreciated.

If you’d like to learn more about our planning process, you can read the latest on our website at dupageforest.org/master-plan, where we’ll post findings from this survey and our other community outreach efforts. And if you have any questions, please contact Jessica Ortega at 630-871-6404 or jortega@dupageforest.org.

Thank you for taking the time to make your forest preserves even better places to visit, and have a fantastic fall!

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Joseph F. Cantore
President

Enclosures

Si desea recibir una copia de esta encuesta en español, envíe un correo electrónico con su dirección de correo a jortega@dupageforest.org
General Population Sample Survey Instrument

Forest Preserve District of DuPage County

Instructions
If it's more convenient, you can complete this same survey online through Dec. 10 at dupageforest.org/master-plan-survey. If you wish to complete this paper survey:

• This survey should take less than 10 minutes to complete.
• When answering questions 1 – 16, take into account all of the members of your household. When answering questions 17 – 27 think just about yourself.
• When you are finished, please return this survey by Dec. 10 to Danada Equestrian Center, Fullersburg Woods Nature Education Center, Kline Creek Farm, Mayslake Peabody Estate, Willowbrook Wildlife Center or Forest Preserve District headquarters (hours vary by location) or via U.S. mail to Forest Preserve District of DuPage County, Master Plan Survey, 35580 Naperville Road, Wheaton IL 60189.
• All responses are anonymous and confidential. If you have any questions, please call us at 630-871-6404.

Questions
1. How often do you visit DuPage County forest preserves? Choose only one.
   - Daily
   - Weekly
   - Monthly
   - Less than once a month
   - Never

If you answered “Never” to question 1, answer question 2.
If you gave an answer other than “Never,” skip to question 3.

2. Why haven’t you visited a DuPage forest preserve? Choose all that apply and then skip to question 10.
   - I don’t know where they are.
   - I don’t know what there is to do there.
   - I have no one to go with.
   - There’s not one close to my home.
   - I don’t have enough time.
   - I don’t have the right equipment to participate.
   - I don’t think they’re safe.
   - I’m not interested in the activities or programs they offer.
   - I have mobility limitations.
   - Other Please specify.

3. Why do you visit DuPage forest preserves? Choose all that apply.
   - To exercise
   - To relax
   - To do an outdoor activity
   - To spend time in nature
   - To spend time with family or friends
   - Other Please specify.

4. Which of the following activities have you done at a DuPage forest preserve in the past 12 months?
   Choose all that apply.
   - Walked, ran or biked on a trail
   - Enjoyed nature
   - Attended a program about plants, animals or nature
   - Took photographs
   - Golfed
   - Went boating (rented one or used my own)
   - Went horseback riding
   - Camped
   - Attended a Forest Preserve District event
   - Sat and relaxed
   - Picnicked
   - Attended a wedding, party or social event
   - Used an archery range
   - Volunteered
   - Went sledding or cross-country skiing
   - Used an off-leash dog area
   - Fished
   - Attended a program about history, culture or art
   - Went wildlife watching
   - Went birding
   - Other Please specify.
5. Which DuPage forest preserves have you visited? Choose all that apply.

☐ Belleau Woods  ☐ Greenrich Woods  ☐ Red Hawk Park
☐ Big Woods  ☐ Green Meadows Golf Course  ☐ Salt Creek Greenway
☐ Black Willow Marsh  ☐ Greene Valley  ☐ Salt Creek Marsh
☐ Blackwell  ☐ Hawk Hollow  ☐ Salt Creek Park
☐ Broadview Slough  ☐ Herrick Lake  ☐ Songbird Slough
☐ Brush Hill  ☐ Hickory Grove  ☐ Spring Creek Reservoir
☐ Burlington Park  ☐ Hidden Lake  ☐ Springbrook Prairie
☐ Churchill Park  ☐ Hitchcock Woods  ☐ St. James Farm
☐ Churchill Woods  ☐ James “Pate” Philip State Park  ☐ Swift Prairie
☐ Community Park  ☐ Kline Creek Farm  ☐ Timber Ridge
☐ Country Lakes  ☐ Lincoln Marsh  ☐ Warrierville Grove
☐ Cricket Creek  ☐ Lyman Woods  ☐ Waterfall Glen
☐ Danada  ☐ Mallard Lake  ☐ Wayne Grove
☐ Danada Equestrian Center  ☐ Maple Grove  ☐ West Branch
☐ Des Plaines Riverway  ☐ Maple Meadows Golf Course  ☐ West Branch Riverway
☐ Dunham  ☐ Mayslake  ☐ West Chicago Prairie
☐ East Branch  ☐ Mayslake Peabody Estate  ☐ West DuPage Woods
☐ East Branch Riverway  ☐ McDowell Grove  ☐ Willowbrook
☐ Egemann Woods  ☐ Meacham Grove  ☐ Willowbrook Wildlife Center
☐ Fischer Woods  ☐ Medinah Wetlands  ☐ Winfield Mounds
☐ Fox Hollow  ☐ Night Heron Marsh  ☐ Wood Dale Grove
☐ Fulersburg Woods  ☐ Oak Grove  ☐ Wood Ridge
☐ Fulersburg Woods Nature Education Center  ☐ Oldfield Oaks  ☐ York Woods
☐ Fullerton Park  ☐ Pioneer Park  ☐ York/High Ridge
☐ Glen Oak  ☐ The Preserve at Oak Meadows

6. How do you usually get to a DuPage forest preserve? Choose only one.

☐ Drive  ☐ Bike  ☐ Walk  ☐ Public transportation  ☐ Other Please specify ____________________________

7. How would you prefer to get to a DuPage forest preserve? (This answer may be different than your answer for question 6.) Choose only one.

☐ Drive  ☐ Bike  ☐ Walk  ☐ Public transportation  ☐ Other Please specify ____________________________

8. How far do you typically travel to visit a DuPage forest preserve? Choose only one.

☐ Less than 3 miles  ☐ 3 – 10 miles  ☐ More than 10 miles

9. How often do you use your smart phone to access the internet or use apps when you’re at a DuPage forest preserve? Choose only one.

☐ Every time  ☐ Most times but not all  ☐ Not often  ☐ Never  ☐ I don’t have a smart phone.
10. How do you currently receive information about DuPage forest preserves? **Choose all that apply.**
   - Email
   - Banners or other street signs
   - Social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
   - The Conservationist
   - Family, friends or neighbors
   - Other: ____________________________
   - Newspaper
   - Forest Preserve District website
   - I don’t.
   - At a forest preserve
   - Non-Forest Preserve District website

11. Which of the following would you like to do, see or see more of at DuPage forest preserves? **Choose all that apply.**
   - Nature play spaces
   - Campsites
   - Drinking water
   - Equestrian camping
   - Cabin rentals
   - Flush restrooms
   - Cross-country ski rentals
   - Trails
   - Bike racks
   - Mountain biking
   - Parking lots
   - Restoration of natural areas
   - Bike rentals
   - Picnic shelters
   - Other: ____________________________
   - Paddle boarding
   - Trail wayfinding signs and trail maps
   - None
   - Archery
   - Canoe launches on waterways

12. Which of the following statements about DuPage forest preserves do you agree with? **Choose all that apply.**
   - A They protect natural areas.
   - D They benefit the environment (clean air and water, etc.)
   - B They give me ways to experience nature.
   - E They give me places where I can do outdoor activities.
   - C They provide outdoor learning experiences.
   - F I don’t agree with any of them. (Skip to question 14.)

13. Rank your choices from question 12 based on their value to you. **For the one you value most, write the letter corresponding to that statement next to the 1 below. For the one you value second-most, write that letter next to the 2, continuing until you’ve ranked all of your choices.**
   1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____

14. Considering the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County does not have unlimited resources, what should it focus on over the next five years?
   **Rank from 1 to 7 with 1 being the first topic it should focus on, 2 the second topic, etc.**
   - Acquire more land
   - Build new trails
   - Build new connections between existing trails
   - Restore existing prairies, woods, wetlands, lakes or streams
   - Maintain or improve existing forest preserve buildings, parking lots or outdoor recreation areas
   - Build new forest preserve buildings, parking lots or outdoor recreation areas
   - Maintain or restore historic buildings and structures

15. What is the most important reason the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County should acquire more land? **Choose only one.**
   - Preserve open space
   - Protect sensitive natural areas
   - Expand outdoor recreational areas
   - It shouldn’t acquire more land.
   - Preserve historic buildings
If you answered “It shouldn’t acquire more land” to question 15, skip to question 17.

16. If the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County were to acquire land, what type of land should it acquire? 
   Rank from 1 to 4 with 1 being the most important type, 2 the second-most important type, etc.
   _____ High-quality natural areas
   _____ Developed land (land with existing buildings, parking, etc.) that can be converted into natural areas
   _____ Flood-prone areas
   _____ Undeveloped areas (agricultural land, empty fields, etc.) that aren’t considered high-quality natural areas

17. Do you live in DuPage County?  ○ Yes  ○ No

If you answered “Yes” to question 17, answer questions 18 and 19. If you answered “No,” skip to 20.

18. How many years have you lived in DuPage County?  ______________

19. DuPage forest preserves increase the value of my home. Choose only one.  ○ I agree.  ○ I disagree.

20. What is your zip code?  ______________

21. Beginning with yourself, what are the ages of the people in your household?
   _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

22. How much total combined income did the members of your household earn last year?
   ○ $0 – $24,999  ○ $25,000 – $49,999  ○ $50,000 – $99,999  ○ $100,000 – $199,999  ○ $200,000 or more
   ○ I prefer not to answer.

23. What is your marital status?  ○ Single  ○ Married  ○ Separated/Divorced  ○ Widowed  ○ I prefer not to answer.

24. What is your gender?  ______________  ○ I prefer not to answer.

25. What is your race or ethnicity? Choose all that apply.
   ○ White  ○ Hispanic, Latino or Spanish  ○ Black or African American  ○ Asian  ○ American Indian or Alaska Native
   ○ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander  ○ Other  Please specify.  ______________  ○ I prefer not to answer.

26. What is the highest level of school you completed?
   ○ None  ○ Preschool – 12th grade  ○ High school diploma or GED  ○ Some college or professional training
   ○ College degree or professional certification  ○ College degree beyond a bachelor’s degree  ○ I prefer not to answer.

27. Is there something you’d like to tell us about DuPage forest preserves that we didn’t ask?
   ________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________
General Population Survey Data

The following consists of survey data for the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County General Population survey completed in the late fall of 2017. The survey was available online from November 3rd to December 13th and was also made available to individuals in a hardcopy format. Public Research Group has compiled 1956 online and 26 hardcopy surveys.

The first map that is shown below was generated using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software showing the locations of general population surveys responses within DuPage County with an overlay background of the six political districts of the Forest Preserve.
The second map shows the survey locations in relation to the zip codes found within DuPage County.
Appendix

1: How often do you visit DuPage County forest preserves?

- Never, 2%
- Daily, 10%
- Weekly, 37%
- Monthly, 28%
- Less than once a month, 23%

2017 General Survey (1980 Responses)
2: Why haven't you visited a DuPage forest preserve?

- I don't know what there is to do there: 26%
- I'm not interested in the activities or programs they offer: 22%
- I don't have enough time: 12%
- There's not one close to my home: 9%
- I don't know where they are: 9%
- I have no one to go with: 7%
- Other: 5%
- I have mobility limitations: 5%
- I don't think they're safe: 5%
- I don't have the right equipment to participate: 0%

2017 General Survey (58 Responses)

3: Why do you visit DuPage forest preserves?

- To spend time in nature: 59%
- To exercise: 56%
- To do an outdoor activity: 53%
- To relax: 41%
- To spend time with family or friends: 33%
- Other: 21%
- To attend a program I registered for: 13%

2017 General Survey (1982 Responses)
4: Which of the following activities have you done at a DuPage forest preserve in the past 12 months?

- Walked, ran or biked on a trail: 74%
- Enjoyed nature: 64%
- Took photographs: 41%
- Sat and relaxed: 37%
- Went wildlife watching: 22%
- Used an off-leash dog area: 19%
- Attended a Forest Preserve District event: 17%
- Picnicked: 16%
- Fished: 13%
- Went boating (Rented one or used my own): 12%
- Attended a program about plants, animals or nature: 11%
- Golfed: 11%
- Went birding: 10%
- Went sledding or cross-country skiing: 8%
- Attended a program about history, culture or art: 8%
- Other: 7%
- Volunteered: 5%
- Camped: 5%
- Used an archery range: 5%
- Attended a wedding, party or social event: 4%
- Went horseback riding: 3%

2017 General Survey (1982 Responses)
5: Which DuPage forest preserves have you visited?  
(2 of 3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preserve</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salt Creek Greenway</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warrenville Grove</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James 'Pate' Philip State Park</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>York Woods</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maple Grove</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawk Hollow</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Chicago Prairie</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winfield Mounds</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maple Meadows Golf Course</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt Creek Park</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meacham Grove</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pioneer Park</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Songbird Slough</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Preserve at Oak Meadows</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Branch Riverway</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt Creek Marsh</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
</tr>
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<td>Des Plaines Riverway</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
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<td>Churchill Park</td>
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</tr>
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</tr>
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<td>Green Meadows Golf Course</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2017 General Survey (1982 Responses)
### 5: Which DuPage forest preserves have you visited? (3 of 3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preserve</th>
<th>Visited (%)</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Spring Creek Reservoir</td>
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<tr>
<td>Glen Oak</td>
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<td>Burlington Park</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
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<td>Dunham</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
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<td>Big Woods</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
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<td>Wayne Grove</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egermann Woods</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Park</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swift Prairie</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
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<td>Goodrich Woods</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fischer Woods</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fullerton Park</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medinah Wetlands</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hitchcock Woods</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fox Hollow</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Hawk Park</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood Ridge</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country Lakes</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Night Heron Marsh</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brush Hill</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oak Grove</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Willow Marsh</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>York/High Ridge</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hickory Grove</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadview Slough</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2017 General Survey (1982 Responses)
6: How do you usually get to a DuPage forest preserve?

- Drive, 82%
- Bike, 12%
- Walk, 5%
- Other, 1%
- Public Transportation, 0%

2017 General Survey (1741 Responses)

7: How would you prefer to get to a DuPage forest preserve?

- Drive, 56%
- Bike, 31%
- Walk, 10%
- Other, 1%
- Public Transportation, 2%

2017 General Survey (1732 Responses)
8: How far do you typically travel to visit a DuPage forest preserve?

- 3-10 miles, 61%
- Less than 3 Miles, 24%
- More than 10 miles, 14%

2017 General Survey (1734 Responses)

9: How often do you use your smart phone to access the internet or use apps when you're at a DuPage forest preserve?

- Not often, 37%
- Never, 24%
- Most times but not all, 22%
- Don’t have a smart phone, 4%
- Every time, 12%

2017 General Survey (1736 Responses)
10: How do you currently receive information about DuPage forest preserves?

- Email: 45%
- Forest Preserve District website: 31%
- At a forest preserve: 29%
- The Conservationist: 21%
- Social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.): 18%
- Banners or other street signs: 15%
- Family, friends or neighbors: 15%
- I don’t: 10%
- Newspaper: 10%
- Other: 2%
- Non-Forest Preserve District website: 2%

2017 General Survey (1982 Responses)
11: Which of the following would you like to do, see or see more of at DuPage forest preserves?

- Trails: 52%
- Restoration of natural areas: 31%
- Drinking water: 29%
- Flush restrooms: 28%
- Trail wayfinding signs and trail maps: 28%
- Mountain biking: 18%
- Canoe launches on waterways: 18%
- Campsites: 11%
- Cross-country ski rentals: 10%
- Nature play spaces: 10%
- Bike racks: 10%
- Cabin rentals: 10%
- Picnic shelters: 9%
- Bike rentals: 9%
- Archery: 9%
- Paddle boarding: 8%
- Other: 7%
- Parking lots: 6%
- None: 5%
- Equestrian camping: 3%

2017 General (1982 Responses)
12: Which of the following statements about DuPage forest preserves do you agree with?

- They give me places where I can do outdoor activities. 80% (n=1617)
- They give me ways to experience nature. 79% (n=1587)
- They protect natural areas. 78% (n=1620)
- They benefit the environment. 72% (n=1574)
- They provide outdoor learning experiences. 62% (n=1540)
- I don’t agree with any of them. 1% (n=1540)

2017 General Survey (1982 Responses)

13: Please rank your choices (from Question 12) based on their value to you.

Rankings (Weighted)

- A - They protect natural areas. 3.78 (n=1617)
- B - They give me ways to experience nature. 3.55 (n=1587)
- E - They give me places where I can do outdoor activities. 3.35 (n=1620)
- D - They benefit the environment. 2.72 (n=1574)
- C - They provide outdoor learning experiences. 1.84 (n=1540)

2017 General Survey
14: Considering the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County does not have unlimited resources, what should it focus on over the next five years?

Rankings (Weighted)

- **Restore existing prairies, woods, wetlands, lakes or streams**: 5.30
- **Build new connections between existing trails**: 4.96
- **Maintain or improve existing forest preserve buildings, parking lots or outdoor recreation areas**: 4.57
- **Build new trails**: 4.26
- **Acquire more land**: 3.83
- **Maintain or restore historic buildings and structures**: 3.47
- **Build new forest preserve buildings, parking lots or outdoor recreation areas**: 2.33

n=1570

2017 General Survey

15: What is the most important reason the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County should acquire more land?

- **Preserve open space**: 40%
- **Protect sensitive natural areas**: 32%
- **Expand outdoor recreational areas**: 16%
- **It shouldn't acquire more land**: 10%
- **Preserve historic buildings**: 2%

2017 General Survey (1718 Responses)
16: If the Forest Preserve of DuPage County were to acquire land, what type of land should it acquire?

Rankings (Weighted)

- High-quality natural areas: 3.50 (n=1440)
- Undeveloped areas (agricultural land, empty fields, etc.) that aren’t considered high-quality natural areas: 2.49 (n=1401)
- Flood-prone areas: 2.21 (n=1387)
- Developed land (land with existing buildings, parking, etc.) that can be converted into natural areas: 1.95 (n=1363)

2017 General Survey

17: Do you live in DuPage County?

- Yes, 81%
- No, 19%

2017 General Survey (1697 Responses)
18: How many years have you lived in DuPage County?

- 81-90 years: 0%
- 71-80 years: 0.3%
- 61-70 years: 4%
- 51-60 years: 8%
- 41-50 years: 13%
- 31-40 years: 20%
- 21-30 years: 24%
- 11-20 years: 18%
- 1-10 years: 14%

2017 General Survey (1353 Responses)

19: DuPage forest preserves increase the value of my home.

- Agree, 87%
- Disagree, 13%

2017 General (1369 Responses)
Of the 1982 Households Surveyed, 38% have a child under the age of 18.

Of the 1982 Households Surveyed, 55% are active adult/senior citizen households with an adult 61 years or older.
22: How much total combined income did the members of your household earn last year?

- $100,000 - $199,999: 31%
- $50,000 - $99,999: 24%
- $200,000 or more: 12%
- $25,000 - $49,999: 6%
- $0 - $24,999: 1%

2017 General Survey (1652 Responses)

23: What is your marital status?

- Married: 71%
- Single: 13%
- I prefer not to answer: 7%
- Widowed: 3%
- Separated/Divorced: 6%

2017 General Survey (1663 Responses)
24: What is your gender?

- Male, 58%
- Female, 42%

2017 General Survey (1401 Responses)

25: What is your race or ethnicity?

- White: 70.1%
- I prefer not to answer: 9.2%
- Hispanic, Latino or Spanish: 2.3%
- Asian: 1.6%
- Other: 1.0%
- Black or African American: 0.6%
- American Indian or Alaska Native: 0.4%
- Middle Eastern or North African: 0.4%
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific...: 0.4%

2017 General Survey (1982 Responses)
26: What is the highest level of school you completed?

- College degree or professional certification: 41%
- College degree beyond a bachelor’s degree: 37%
- Some college or professional training: 15%
- I prefer not to answer: 4%
- High school diploma or GED: 3%
- Preschool - 12th Grade: 0.4%
- None: 0.2%

2017 General Survey (1666 Responses)
Survey Open-Ended Response Summary

Questions 3 and 11 on the random sample and general population surveys allowed respondents to select “other” and write in their answers, which fell into the general categories below. (Some respondents may have been able to answer the same way by selecting one of the other answer options but chose not to.)

Random Sample Survey

Question 3: Why do you visit DuPage forest preserves?

“Other” (11% of all responses to this question)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To do an outdoor activity (other than trail use)</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To do an outdoor activity (trail use)</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend a third-party program or event</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend a forest preserve program or event or visit an education center</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spend time in nature</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 11: Which of the following would you like to do, see or see more of at DuPage forest preserves?

“Other” (12% of all responses to this question)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recreation opportunities and preserve amenities (outdoor recreation activities, rentals, drinking water and restrooms)</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More trail development</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other outdoor recreation currently not offered (youth activities, metal detecting, hunting)</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase existing programs and events</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unrelated or other uncategorized comments</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

General Population Survey

Question 3: Why do you visit DuPage forest preserves?

“Other” (21% of all responses to this question)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To do an outdoor activity (other than trail use)</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To do an outdoor activity (trail use)</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spend time in nature</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend a forest preserve program/event or visit an education center</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend a third-party program or event</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 11: Which of the following would you like to do, see or see more of at DuPage forest preserves?

“Other” (7% of all responses to this question)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recreation opportunities</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preserve amenities (restrooms, drinking water, benches, garbage cans, etc.)</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other outdoor recreation currently not offered (mountain bike trails, hunting, recreational shooting)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responses</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase existing programs and events</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More natural resource restoration/wildlife</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rehabilitation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unrelated or other uncategorized comments</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Questions 25 on the random sample survey and 27 on the general population survey were optional and open-ended. Responses fell into the general categories below.

**Random Sample Survey**

Questions 25: Is there something you’d like to tell us about DuPage forest preserves that we didn’t ask?

271 responses (35% of all completed surveys)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General appreciation</th>
<th>38%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expand or improve outdoor recreation opportunities and</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>preserve amenities (outdoor recreation facilities, rentals,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>drinking water and restrooms)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More trail development</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget/fee/tax concerns</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication and signage concerns</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety, trail etiquette and enforcement concerns</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More natural resource restoration/less development</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unrelated or other uncategorized comments</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization, regulation and policy concerns</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase existing programs and events</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific maintenance concerns</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquire/preserve land</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**General Population Survey**

Questions 27: Is there something you’d like to tell us about DuPage forest preserves that we didn’t ask?

787 responses (40% of all completed surveys)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General appreciation</th>
<th>27%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expand or improve outdoor recreation opportunities and</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>preserve amenities (outdoor recreation activities, rentals,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>drinking water and restrooms)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain bike trail development</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase existing programs and events</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety, trail etiquette and enforcement concerns</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More natural resource restoration/less development</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization, regulation and policy concerns</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific maintenance concerns</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget/fee/tax concerns</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication and signage concerns</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquire/preserve land</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unrelated or other uncategorized comments</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Instructions
• This survey should take less than 10 minutes to complete.
• All responses are anonymous and confidential. If you have any questions, please call or email Jessica Ortega at 630-871-6404 or jortega@dupageforest.org.

Questions
1. How long have you volunteered for the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County? Choose only one.
   • Less than a year
   • 1 – 5 years
   • 6 – 10 years
   • 11 – 20 years
   • Over 20 years

2. In which program do you currently volunteer? Choose all that apply.
   • DanadaEquestrian Center
   • Fullersburg Woods NatureEducation Center
   • Golf
   • Kline Creek Farm
   • MayslakePeabody Estate
   • Natural Resources
   • Special Services
   • St. James Farm
   • TrailPatrol
   • Volunteer Ranger Program
   • Willowbrook Wildlife Center
   • Other Please specify ________________________________

3. What do you value about volunteering for the Forest Preserve District?
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

4. How likely would you be to recommend volunteering at the Forest Preserve District to a friend or family member? Choose 0 to 10 with 0 being not at all and 10 being very likely.
   0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5. How often do you visit DuPage County forest preserves outside of your volunteer hours? Choose only one.
   • Daily
   • Weekly
   • Monthly
   • Less than once a month
   • Never

If you answered “Never” to question 5, skip to question 10.

6. Why do you visit DuPage forest preserves outside of your volunteer hours? Choose all that apply.
   • To exercise
   • To relax
   • To attend a program I registered for
   • To do an outdoor activity
   • To spend time in nature
   • To spend time with family or friends
   • Other Please specify ________________________________

7. How far do you typically travel to visit a DuPage forest preserve outside of your volunteer hours? Choose only one.
   • Less than 3 miles
   • 3 – 10 miles
   • More than 10 miles
8. Which DuPage forest preserves or sites do you visit outside of your volunteer hours? Choose all that apply.

- Belleau Woods
- Big Woods
- Black Willow Marsh
- Blackwell
- Broadview Slough
- Brush Hill
- Burlington Park
- Churchill Park
- Churchill Woods
- Community Park
- Country Lakes
- Cricket Creek
- Danada
- Danada Equestrian Center
- Des Plaines Riverway
- Dunham
- East Branch
- East Branch Riverway
- Eggermann Woods
- Fischer Woods
- Fox Hollow
- Fullersburg Woods
- Fullersburg Woods Nature Education Center
- Fullerton Park
- Glen Oak
- Goodrich Woods
- Green Meadows Golf Course
- Greene Valley
- Hawk Hollow
- Herrick Lake
- Hickory Grove
- Hidden Lake
- Hitchcock Woods
- James “Pate” Philip State Park
- Kline Creek Farm
- Lincoln Marsh
- Lyman Woods
- Mallard Lake
- Maple Grove
- Maple Meadows Golf Course
- Mayslake
- Mayslake Peabody Estate
- McDowell Grove
- Meacham Grove
- Medina Wetlands
- Night Heron Marsh
- Oak Grove
- Oldfield Oaks
- Pioneer Park
- Pratt’s Wayne Woods
- The Preserve at Oak Meadows
- Red Hawk Park
- Salt Creek Greenway
- Salt Creek Marsh
- Salt Creek Park
- Songbird Slough
- Spring Creek Reservoir
- Springbrook Prairie
- St. James Farm
- Swift Prairie
- Timber Ridge
- Warrendale Grove
- Waterfall Glen
- Wayne Grove
- West Branch
- West Branch Riverway
- West Chicago Prairie
- West DuPage Woods
- Willowbrook
- Willowbrook Wildlife Center
- Winfield Mounds
- Wood Dale Grove
- Wood Ridge
- York Woods
- York/High Ridge

9. Which of the following activities have you done at a DuPage forest preserve in the past 12 months outside of your volunteer hours? Choose all that apply.

- Walked, ran or biked on a trail
- Took photographs
- Went horseback riding
- Sat and relaxed
- Used an archery range
- Used an off-leash dog area
- Went wildlife watching
- Enjoyed nature
- Golfed
- Camped
- Picnicked
- Volunteered
- Fished
- Attended a program about plants, animals or nature
- Attended a Forest Preserve District event
- Attended a wedding, party or social event
- Attended a program about history, culture or art
- Went boating (rented one or used my own)
- Went sledding or cross-country skiing
- Other Please specify. ____________________________
10. Which of the following would you like to do, see or see more of at DuPage forest preserves? **Choose all that apply.**

- Natureplay spaces
- Equestrian camping
- Cross-country ski rentals
- Mountain biking
- Bike rentals
- Paddle boarding
- Archery
- Campsites
- Cabin rentals
- Trails
- Parking lots
- Picnic shelters
- Trail wayfinding signs and trail maps
- Canoe launches on waterways
- Drinkingwater
- Flushrestrooms
- Bikeracks
- Restoration of natural areas
- Other **Please specify.**

11. If you have regular interactions with forest preserve visitors, what do they tell you they’d like to see more of at DuPage forest preserves? **Choose all that apply.**

- Natureplay spaces
- Equestrian camping
- Cross-country ski rentals
- Mountain biking
- Bike rentals
- Paddle boarding
- Archery
- Campsites
- Cabin rentals
- Trails
- Parking lots
- Picnic shelters
- Trail wayfinding signs and trail maps
- Canoe launches on waterways
- Drinkingwater
- Flushrestrooms
- Bikeracks
- Restoration of natural areas
- Other **Please specify.**

12. Considering the Forest Preserve District does not have unlimited resources, what should it focus on over the next five years? **Rank from 1 to 7 with 1 being the first topic it should focus on, 2 the second topic, etc.**

- Acquire more land
- Build new trails
- Build new connections between existing trails
- Restore existing prairies, woods, wetlands, lakes or streams
- Maintain or improve existing forest preserve buildings, parking lots or outdoor recreation areas
- Build new forest preserve buildings, parking lots or outdoor recreation areas
- Maintain or restore historic buildings and structures

13. What three programs or projects in particular should the Forest Preserve District focus on over the next five years?
14. What is a major challenge facing the Forest Preserve District?

15. What is the most important reason the Forest Preserve District should acquire more land? Choose only one.
   - Preserve open space
   - Preserve historic buildings
   - Expand outdoor recreational areas
   - Protect sensitive natural areas

If you answered “It shouldn’t acquire more land” to question 15, skip to question 17.

16. If the Forest Preserve District were to acquire land, what type of land should it acquire?
   Rank from 1 to 4 with 1 being the most important type, 2 the second-most important type, etc.
   - High-quality natural areas
   - Developed land (land with existing buildings, parking, etc.) that can be converted into natural areas
   - Flood-prone areas
   - Undeveloped areas (agricultural land, empty fields, etc.) that aren’t considered high-quality natural areas

17. What ideas do you have that would help the Forest Preserve District connect more people to nature?

18. What’s one thing about DuPage forest preserves that you think more people should know about?

19. What are three programs or projects that the Forest Preserve District should stop doing?

20. Is there something you’d like to tell us about DuPage forest preserves that we didn’t ask?
**Question 1**
How long have you volunteered for the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County?

**Question 2**
In which program do you currently volunteer?

- **Natural Resources** 28%
- **Willowbrook Wildlife Center** 16%
- **Danada Equestrian Center** 15%
- **Trail Patrol** 10%
- **Mayslake Peabody Estate** 9%
- **Kline Creek Farm** 8%
- **Other** 6%
- **Special Services** 6%
- **Fullersburg Woods Nature Education Center** 5%
- **St. James Farm** 5%
- **Volunteer Ranger Program** 4%
- **Golf** 0%
Question 3
What do you value about volunteering for the Forest Preserve District?

- 33% Giving back to the community and environment
- 19% Social interaction
- 17% Connecting people to nature
- 17% Learning and personal fulfillment
- 13% Being outside and enjoying nature

Question 4
How likely would you be to recommend volunteering at the Forest Preserve District to a friend or family member?

On a scale of 1-10 with 10 being very likely, 90% of volunteer respondents indicated a likelihood of six or greater to recommend volunteering at the Forest Preserve District.

Question 5
How often do you visit DuPage forest preserves outside of your volunteer hours?

- 34% Monthly
- 28% Weekly
- 27% Less than once a month
- 6% Daily
- 5% Never
**Question 6**
Why do you visit DuPage forest preserves outside of your volunteer hours?

- To spend time in nature: 78%
- To relax: 59%
- To exercise: 59%
- To do an outdoor activity: 47%
- To spend time with family or friends: 41%
- To attend a program I registered for: 23%
- Other: 9%

**Question 7**
How far do you typically travel to visit a DuPage forest preserve outside of your volunteer hours?

- 66% 3-10 miles
- 20% Less than 3 miles
- 14% More than 10 miles
Question 8
Which DuPage forest preserves or sites do you visit outside of your volunteer hours?

- Herrick Lake 51%
- Blackwell 48%
- Danada, St. James Farm 40%
- Fullersburg Woods 35%
- Waterfall Glen 33%
- Hidden Lake 32%
- Willowbrook Wildlife Center 30%
- Kline Creek Farm 28%
- Greene Valley 23%
- Danada Equestrian Center 22%
- Pratt’s Wayne Woods, McDowell Grove 20%
- Fullersburg Woods Nature Education Center 19%
- Mayslake Peabody Estate 17%
- Mayslake, Springbrook Prairie 17%
- Lyman Woods, Lincoln Marsh 15%
- Willowbrook 14%
- Maple Grove, West DuPage Woods 13%
- Churchill Woods, Oldfield Oaks 9%
- West Chicago Prairie, West Branch, Warrenville Grove 8%
- Mallard Lake 7%
- York Woods, East Branch, Meacham Grove, JPP State Park, Songbird Slough, Hawk Hollow 6%
- Winfield Mounds, Cricket Creek 5%

Note:

No visits were recorded at York/High Ridge, Wayne Grove, Hickory Grove, Broadview Slough and Black Willow Marsh.
Question 9
Which of the following activities have you done at a DuPage forest preserve in the past 12 months outside of your volunteer hours?

- Enjoyed nature 77%
- Walked, ran or biked on a trail 76%
- Took photographs 49%
- Went wildlife watching 43%
- Attended a Forest Preserve District event 33%
- Sat and relaxed 33%
- Went birding 32%
- Attended a program about plants, animals or nature 18%
- Picnicked 16%
- Went boating (rented one or used my own) 13%
- Attended a program about history, culture or art 11%
- Fished 11%
- Used an off-leash dog area 9%
- Attended a wedding, party or social event 7%
- Went sledding or cross-country skiing 6%
- Other 5%
- Went horseback riding 5%
- Used an archery range 3%
- Golfed 3%
- Camped 2%
Question 10
Which of the following would you like to do, see or see more of at DuPage forest preserves?

- Restoration of natural areas 54%
- Trails 38%
- Flush restrooms 27%
- Trail wayfinding signs and trail maps 22%
- Drinking water 22%
- Cross-country ski rentals 20%
- Campsites 17%
- Cabin rentals 17%
- Bike rentals 15%
- Canoe launches on waterways 14%
- Paddle boarding 11%
- Equestrian camping 11%
- Archery 11%
- Nature play spaces 9%
- Other 8%
- Mountain biking 8%
- Picnic shelters 7%
- None 6%
- Bike racks 6%
- Parking lots 3%
Question 11
If you have regular interactions with forest preserve visitors, what do they tell you they’d like to see more of at DuPage forest preserves?

- I don’t interact with visitors 29%
- Nothing 19%
- Flush restrooms 15%
- Restoration of natural areas 14%
- Trails 10%
- Drinking water 9%
- Trail wayfinding signs and trail maps 8%
- Picnic shelters 5%
- Other 4%
- Campsites 4%
- Equestrian camping 4%
- Canoe launches on waterways 3%
- Cross-country ski rentals 3%
- Mountain biking 3%
- Nature play spaces 3%
- Parking lots 3%
- Archery 3%
- Cabin rentals 2%
- Paddle boarding 2%
- Bike rentals 2%
- Bike racks 1%

Question 12
Considering the Forest Preserve District does not have unlimited resources, what should it focus on over the next five years?

#1 Restore existing prairies, woods, wetlands, lakes or streams
#2 Maintain or improve existing forest preserve buildings, parking lots or outdoor recreation areas
#3 Build new connections between existing trails
#4 Acquire more land
#5 Maintain or restore historic buildings and structures
#6 Build new trails
#7 Build new forest preserve buildings, parking lots or outdoor recreation areas
Question 13
What three programs or projects in particular should the Forest Preserve District focus on over the next five years?

- Natural resource restoration and wildlife conservation 27%
- Increase or improve existing programs 14%
- More community outreach and education, improve external communication and image 10%
- More recreation facilities and preserve amenities 9%
- New trails and trail connections 8%
- Better utilize, maintain and renovate existing facilities and preserves 8%
- *Other 8%
- Acquire land 7%
- Implement existing master plans at Willowbrook and St. James Farm 5%
- Historic restoration (including Mayslake) 3%

*Other includes internal organizational improvements, achieving a balance in mission-driven initiatives, security, and other unrelated comments.

Question 14
What is a major challenge facing the Forest Preserve District?

- Lack of sufficient funding or resources 44%
- The public’s lack of awareness of the District or lack of interest in nature or being outside 15%
- * Other 10%
- Encroachment by outside entities and protecting open space from development 9%
- Invasive species and loss of habitat 9%
- Achieving a balance in mission-related initiatives 8%
- Politics 5%

*Other includes comments about over use, organizational issues and other uncategorized comments
Question 15
What is the most important reason the Forest Preserve District should acquire more land?

#1 Preserve historic buildings
#2 Preserve open space
#3 Protect sensitive natural areas
#4 It shouldn’t acquire more land
#5 Expand outdoor recreational areas

Question 16
If the Forest Preserve District were to acquire land, what type of land should it acquire?

#1 High quality natural areas
#2 Undeveloped areas that aren’t considered high-quality natural areas
#3 Flood-prone areas
#4 Developed land that can be converted into natural areas

Question 17
What ideas do you have that would help the Forest Preserve District connect more people to nature?

Better advertising, website and social media presence 34%
Create innovative programs and events, eliminate oversaturated programming 34%
Outreach to the community, youth and schools 11%
New recreation activities, trail connections, preserve access and preserve amenities 10%
Collaborate with external organizations to build awareness and cross-promote 6%
*Other 5%

*Other includes better volunteer utilization, and other unrelated comments.
Question 18
What’s one thing about DuPage forest preserves that you think more people should know about?

Question 19
What are three programs or projects that the Forest Preserve District should stop doing?

*Other includes organizational issues and other uncategorized comments
**Question 20**
Is there something you’d like to tell us about DuPage forest preserves that we didn’t ask?

- General appreciation 32%
- Be innovative or less restrictive 13%
- Build awareness of the Forest Preserve District 12%
- *Other 12%
- Place more value on protecting open space and natural resource restoration 8%
- Volunteer program issues 8%
- More facility improvements or recreation activities 5%
- Charge for programs to reduce cancellations 5%
- Provide more resources to volunteers 5%

*Other includes removing horse droppings on trails, keeping the Forest Preserve District Board and County Board separate and other uncategorized comments.*
Appendix C

Staff Survey Summary
Instructions

- This survey should take less than 10 minutes to complete.
- All responses are anonymous and confidential. If you have any questions, please call or email Jessica Ortega at 630-871-6404 or jortega@dupageforest.org.

Questions

1. How long have you worked for the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County? **Choose only one.**
   - ☐ Less than a year
   - ☐ 1 – 5 years
   - ☐ 6 – 10 years
   - ☐ 11 – 20 years
   - ☐ Over 20 years

2. What is your primary work site? **Choose only one.**
   - ☐ Administrative headquarters
   - ☐ Blackwell (Facilities Management, Fleet Management, Grounds & Resources, Natural Resources or West Division)
   - ☐ Churchill (East Division or Fleet Management)
   - ☐ Danada Equestrian Center, Fullersburg Woods Nature Education Center, Kline Creek Farm, Mayslake Peabody Estate, St. James Farm or Willowbrook Wildlife Center
   - ☐ Green Meadows, Maple Meadows or The Preserve at Oak Meadows
   - ☐ Other **Please specify.**

3. What do you value about the Forest Preserve District?

4. How likely would you be to recommend employment at the Forest Preserve District to a friend or family member? **Choose 0 to 10 with 0 being not at all and 10 being very likely.**
   - 0
   - 1
   - 2
   - 3
   - 4
   - 5
   - 6
   - 7
   - 8
   - 9
   - 10

5. What is a major challenge facing the Forest Preserve District?

6. How often do you visit DuPage County forest preserves outside of work hours? **Choose only one.**
   - ☐ Daily
   - ☐ Weekly
   - ☐ Monthly
   - ☐ Less than once a month
   - ☐ Never

If you answered “Never” to question 6, skip to question 11.
7. Which DuPage forest preserves or sites do you visit outside of work hours? Choose all that apply.

- Belleau Woods
- Big Woods
- Black Willow Marsh
- Blackwell
- Broadview Slough
- Brush Hill
- Burlington Park
- Churchill Park
- Churchill Woods
- Community Park
- Country Lakes
- Cricket Creek
- Danada
- Danada Equestrian Center
- Des Plaines Riverway
- Dunham
- East Branch
- East Branch Riverway
- Eggermann Woods
- Fischer Woods
- Fox Hollow
- Fullersburg Woods
- Fullersburg Woods Nature Education Center
- Fullerton Park
- Glen Oak
- Goodrich Woods
- Green Meadows Golf Course
- Greene Valley
- Hawk Hollow
- Herrick Lake
- Hickory Grove
- Hidden Lake
- Hitchcock Woods
- James “Pate” Philip State Park
- Kline Creek Farm
- Lincoln Marsh
- Lyman Woods
- Mallard Lake
- Maple Grove
- Maple Meadows Golf Course
- Mayslake
- Mayslake Peabody Estate
- McDowell Grove
- Meacham Grove
- Medinah Wetlands
- Night Heron Marsh
- Oak Grove
- Oldfield Oaks
- Pioneer Park
- Pratt’s Wayne Woods
- The Preserve at Oak Meadows
- Red Hawk Park
- Salt Creek Greenway
- Salt Creek Marsh
- Salt Creek Park
- Songbird Slough
- Spring Creek Reservoir
- Springbrook Prairie
- St. James Farm
- Swift Prairie
- Timber Ridge
- War Eagle Grove
- Waterfall Glen
- Wayne Grove
- West Branch
- West Branch Riverway
- West Chicago Prairie
- West DuPage Woods
- Willowbrook
- Willowbrook Wildlife Center
- Winfield Mounds
- Wood Dale Grove
- Wood Ridge
- York Woods
- York/High Ridge

8. Why do you visit DuPage forest preserves outside of work hours? Choose all that apply.

- To exercise
- To relax
- To do an outdoor activity
- To spend time in nature
- To spend time with family or friends
- Other Please specify: _____________________________

9. Which of the following activities have you done at a DuPage forest preserve in the past 12 months outside of work hours? Choose all that apply.

- Walked, ran or biked on a trail
- Took photographs
- Went horseback riding
- Sat and relaxed
- Used an archery range
- Used an off-leash dog area
- Went wildlife watching
- Enjoyed nature
- Golfed
- Camped
- Picnicked
- Volunteered
- Fished
- Went birding
- Attended a program about plants, animals or nature
- Went boating (rented one or used my own)
- Attended a Forest Preserve District event
- Attended a wedding, party or social event
- Went sledding or cross-country skiing
- Attended a program about history, culture or art
- Other Please specify: _____________________________
10. How far do you typically travel to visit a DuPage forest preserve outside of work hours? Choose only one.

- Less than 3 miles
- 3 – 10 miles
- More than 10 miles

11. Which of the following would you like to do, see or see more of at DuPage forest preserves? Choose all that apply.

- Natureplay spaces
- Campsites
- Drinkingwater
- Equestrian camping
- Cabin rentals
- Flushrestrooms
- Cross-country ski rentals
- Trails
- Bikeracks
- Mountain biking
- Parking lots
- Restoration of natural areas
- Bike rentals
- Picnic shelters
- Other Please specify.
- Paddle boarding
- Trail wayfinding signs and trail maps
- None
- Archery
- Canoe launches on waterways

12. If you have regular interactions with forest preserve visitors, what do they tell you they’d like to see more of at DuPage forest preserves? Choose all that apply.

- Natureplay spaces
- Campsites
- Drinkingwater
- Equestrian camping
- Cabin rentals
- Flushrestrooms
- Cross-country ski rentals
- Trails
- Bikeracks
- Mountain biking
- Parking lots
- Restoration of natural areas
- Bike rentals
- Picnic shelters
- Other Please specify.
- Paddle boarding
- Trail wayfinding signs and trail maps
- Nothing
- Archery
- Canoe launches on waterways
- I don’t interact with visitors.

13. Considering the Forest Preserve District does not have unlimited resources, what should it focus on over the next five years? Rank from 1 to 7 with 1 being the first topic it should focus on, 2 the second topic, etc.

- Acquire more land
- Build new trails
- Build new connections between existing trails
- Restore existing prairies, woods, wetlands, lakes or streams
- Maintain or improve existing forest preserve buildings, parking lots or outdoor recreation areas
- Build new forest preserve buildings, parking lots or outdoor recreation areas
- Maintain or restore historic buildings and structures

14. What three programs or projects in particular should the Forest Preserve District focus on over the next five years?
15. What is the most important reason the Forest Preserve District should acquire more land? **Choose only one.**
   - Preserve open space
   - Preserve historic buildings
   - It shouldn’t acquire more land.
   - Expand outdoor recreational areas
   - Protect sensitive natural areas

If you answered “It shouldn’t acquire more land” to question 15, skip to question 17.

16. If the Forest Preserve District were to acquire land, what type of land should it acquire?
   **Rank from 1 to 4 with 1 being the most important type, 2 the second-most important type, etc.**
   - High-quality natural areas
   - Developed land (land with existing buildings, parking, etc.) that can be converted into natural areas
   - Flood-prone areas
   - Undeveloped areas (agricultural land, empty fields, etc.) that aren’t considered high-quality natural areas

17. What ideas do you have that would help the Forest Preserve District connect more people to nature?

18. In what ways could you as an employee help improve the Forest Preserve District?

19. What’s one thing about DuPage forest preserves that you think more people should know about?

20. What are three programs or projects that the Forest Preserve District should stop doing?

21. Is there something you’d like to tell us about DuPage forest preserves that we didn’t ask?
**Question 1**
How long have you worked for the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County?

- 30% 1-5 years
- 23% 1-20 years
- 22% 6-10 years
- 16% Over 20 years
- 8% Less than a year
- 1% No response

**Question 2**
What is your primary work site?

- 28% Administrative headquarters
  Danada Equestrian Center, Fullersburg Woods Nature
- 23% Education Center, Kline Creek Farm, Mayslake Peabody
  Estate, St. James Farm or Willowbrook Wildlife Center
- 22% Blackwell
- 15% Green Meadows, Maple Meadows or The Preserve at Oak Meadows
- 9% Churchill
- 2% Other
- 1% No response
Question 3
What do you value about the Forest Preserve District?

- 67% Mission statement and connecting people to nature
- 33% Working conditions and fellow employees

Question 4
How likely would you be to recommend employment at the Forest Preserve District to a friend or family member?

On a scale of 1-10 with 10 being very likely, 72% of staff respondents indicated a likelihood of six or greater to recommend employment at the Forest Preserve District.
Question 5
What is a major challenge facing the Forest Preserve District?

- Internal organization and human resources issues: 25%
- Lack of sufficient funding or resources: 24%
- Politics: 24%
- Achieving a balance in mission related initiatives: 14%
- Lack of awareness of the District by the public: 8%
- Lack of innovation: 4%
- Other: 1%

Question 6
How often do you visit DuPage forest preserves outside of work hours?

- 32% Monthly
- 31% Less than once a month
- 28% Weekly
- 6% Never
- 3% Daily
Question 7
Which DuPage forest preserves or sites do you visit outside of work hours?

Blackwell 56%
Herrick Lake 45%
St. James Farm 40%
Danada 39%
Fullersburg Woods 38%
Waterfall Glen 37%
Willowbrook Wildlife Center 35%
Hidden Lake, Pratt’s Wayne Woods 25%
Kline Creek Farm 24%
Fullersburg Woods Nature Education Center, Danada Equestrian Center, Greene Valley 21%
Willowbrook, McDowell Grove 20%
Warrenville Grove, Churchill Woods 19%
Mayslake, Springbrook Prairie 18%
Mayslake Peabody Estate, Mallard Lake 16%
West Branch 15%
West Chicago Prairie, Lyman Woods, Timber Ridge 12%
Wood Dale Grove 11%
Winfeld Mounds, The Preserve at Oak Meadows, Lincoln Marsh 10%
East Branch, Maple Grove, Songbird Slough 9%
Meacham Grove, Cricket Creek, James ‘Pate’ Philip State Park, Hawk Hollow 8%
Salt Creek Park 7%
York Woods, Oldfield Oaks, Pioneer Park, Spring Creek Reservoir 6%


No visits were recorded at Wood Ridge, Oak Grove, Fox Hollow, Hickory Grove and Broadview Slough.
Question 8
Why do you visit DuPage forest preserves outside of work hours?

- To spend time in nature 63%
- To do an outdoor activity 56%
- To spend time with family or friends 54%
- To exercise 54%
- To relax 48%
- To attend a program I registered for 20%
- Other 8%
Question 9
Which of the following have you done at a DuPage forest preserve in the past 12 months outside of work hours?

- Walked, ran or biked on a trail: 78%
- Enjoyed nature: 70%
- Took photographs: 40%
- Sat and relaxed: 36%
- Attended a Forest Preserve District event: 34%
- Went wildlife watching: 31%
- Fished: 22%
- Picnicked: 20%
- Went boating (rented or used my own): 20%
- Went birding: 19%
- Attended a program about plants, animals or nature: 17%
- Golfed: 15%
- Attended a program about history, culture or art: 13%
- Volunteered: 12%
- Used an archery range: 12%
- Attended a wedding, party or social event: 8%
- Camped: 6%
- Went sledding or cross-country skiing: 4%
- Went horseback riding: 4%
- Used an off-leash dog area: 3%
- Other: 3%
Question 10
How far do you typically travel to visit a DuPage forest preserve outside of work hours?

- 53% 3-10 miles
- 29% More than 10 miles
- 18% Less than 3 miles
**Question 11**
Which of the following would you like to do, see or see more of at DuPage forest preserves?

- Restoration of natural areas 54%
- Flush restrooms 34%
- Drinking water 31%
- Trails 29%
- Nature play spaces 24%
- Canoe launches on waterways 21%
- Trail wayfinding signs and trail maps 20%
- Campsites 17%
- Bike rentals 17%
- Cabin rentals 16%
- Mountain biking 15%
- Paddle boarding 15%
- Other 13%
- Archery 12%
- Cross-country ski rentals 10%
- Bike racks 9%
- Picnic shelters 8%
- Equestrian camping 6%
- Parking lots 4%
- None 3%
**Question 12**
If you have regular interactions with forest preserve visitors, what do they tell you they’d like to see more of at DuPage forest preserves?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service/Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flush restrooms</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restoration of natural areas</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drinking water</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trail wayfinding signs and trail maps</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trails</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t interact with visitors</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain biking</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picnic shelters</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature play spaces</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking lots</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canoe launches on waterways</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campsites</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bike racks</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paddle boarding</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabin rentals</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bike rentals</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-country ski rentals</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archery</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equestrian camping</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question 13**
Considering the Forest Preserve District does not have unlimited resources, what should it focus on over the next five years?

1. **Restore existing prairies, woods, wetlands, lakes or streams**
2. **Maintain or improve existing forest preserve buildings, parking lots or outdoor recreation areas**
3. **Build new connections between existing trails**
4. **Acquire more land**
5. **Build new trails**
6. **Maintain or restore historic buildings and structures**
7. **Build new forest preserve buildings, parking lots or outdoor recreation areas**
**Question 14**
What three programs or projects in particular should the Forest Preserve District focus on over the next five years?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Natural resource restoration projects</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better utilize maintain or renovate existing facilities and preserves</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More recreation facilities and preserve amenities</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trail connections</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More community outreach and education, improve external communication</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement existing master plans at Willowbrook, St. James Farm and The Preserve at Oak Meadows</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquire land</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase or improve existing programs</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Other</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add staff to fill gaps and increase employee appreciation</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic restoration (including Mayslake)</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long range planning</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technological improvements</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquire land</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase or improve existing programs</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Other</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Long range planning</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technological improvements</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Other includes internal organizational improvements, flooding improvements, achieving a balance in mission-driven initiatives, research and other unrelated comments.

**Question 15**
What is the most important reason the Forest Preserve District should acquire more land?

1. Preserve open space
2. Preserve historic buildings
3. Protect sensitive natural areas
4. It shouldn’t acquire more land
5. Expand outdoor recreational areas
**Question 16**
If the Forest Preserve District were to acquire land, what type of land should it acquire?

1. High quality natural areas
2. Flood-prone areas
3. Undeveloped areas that aren’t considered high-quality natural areas
4. Developed land that can be converted into natural areas

**Question 17**
What ideas do you have that would help the Forest Preserve District connect more people to nature?

- Better advertising, website, social media presence or create a DuPage forest preserve app: 35%
- Create innovative programs and events, eliminate oversaturated programming: 24%
- New recreation activities, trail connections, preserve access and preserve amenities: 18%
- Outreach to the community, youth and schools: 10%
- Collaborate with external organizations to cross-promote: 6%
- *Other*: 6%

*Other includes internal organization/policy improvements, maintaining good preserve upkeep and appearance, and other uncategorized comments.*
Question 18
In what ways could you as an employee help improve the Forest Preserve District?

- Be an ambassador for the District, be available to and advocate for the public (26%)
- Excel on the job, be innovative and keep improving services offered (21%)
- Promote the District via word of mouth and personal social media accounts (17%)
- Facilitate better internal communication and share skills across departments (10%)
- Training, professional development and research (8%)
- Be positive, improve employee morale (6%)
- Improve energy conservation, reduce costs and waste (4%)
- Volunteer (3%)
- *Other (3%)

*Other includes greater autonomy in decision making and leaving no trace in the preserves

Question 19
What’s one thing about DuPage forest preserves that you think more people should know about?

- 62% What DuPage forest preserves have to offer
- 18% The effort that goes into supporting the Forest Preserve District
- 16% The benefits DuPage forest preserves provide the community and environment
- 5% Politics
Question 20
What are three programs or projects that the Forest Preserve should stop doing?

- Programs or projects that are outdated, underutilized or use a disproportionate amount of resources: 14%
- Off-leash dog areas: 14%
- Preserving or restoring historic structures: 13%
- New development (buildings, parking lots or trails): 10%
- Existing recreation offerings (Danada equestrian center, golf, model airfields and motorized boats): 10%
- Non-mission related programs, projects and acquisitions: 9%
- Other: 9%
- Investment in programs or projects without a vision for long term costs and maintenance: 6%
- Reducing funding, staff and benefits but expecting more productivity: 4%
- Purchasing or condemning more land: 3%
- Providing services for other organizations or agencies that don’t directly benefit the District: 3%
- Mowing excess turf area: 2%
- Stop Deer Management program and allow hunting instead: 2%
- Free programs: 2%
Question 21
Is there something you’d like to tell us about DuPage forest preserves that we didn’t ask?

- Issues related to internal communications, morale and human resources: 31%
- General appreciation: 14%
- Politics: 13%
- Other: 12%
- Improve what the District has now rather than developing new: 10%
- Increase staff to better serve the public: 6%
- Be innovative or less restrictive: 4%
- Provide employee discounts for programs: 4%
- Provide more recreation activities: 3%
- Place more value on protecting open space: 3%
Appendix D

Staff Workshop Summary

Question 1
What do I really value about being a staff member at the District? How does that translate into overall District values?

a. The mission of the District
   • Protecting nature, stewards of the land
   • Educating
   • Unique recreation opportunities

b. Being a public servant
   • Take pride in work to provide places for people to enjoy outdoors
   • Share knowledge with the public
   • Improve the environment for public benefit
   • Provide high quality experiences and programs

c. Working conditions and fellow employees
   • Productive working environment with high quality co-workers who are professional, highly trained experts in their field
   • Diverse and interesting work
   • Stable hours, benefits and pension
   • Good work/life balance, family-oriented

d. Fulfillment of my professional goals
   • Learning new things from colleagues
   • Sustainable projects with involvement over the long-term, creates a sense of pride and personal investment
   • Enjoy outside work, working in natural areas

Question 2
What are the opportunities for staff to contribute to make the District stand out to county residents?

a. Customer service/daily interactions with the public
b. Improved marketing
   • Improve social media presence
   • Support content development for all types of media
   • Get our message out of what we offer – media, personal interactions, etc.
   • Promote our innovative projects

c. Community outreach
   • Attend events/meet and greet
   • Educate residents about the how and why of projects/initiatives

d. Collaboration between agencies
   • Reach new audiences
   • Regional partner to promote protection and restoration of natural resources
e. Good appearances/high level of maintenance/public perception
   • High level of upkeep for buildings and landscape
   • All buildings and amenities in good condition for users to enjoy
   • Projects completed on time and in budget
   • Awareness of surroundings when working – how is the work impacting the public and what do they see? Explain work being done to the public out in the field.
   • Proper balance between development and the amount of staff and funding needed to maintain high level of upkeep
f. Assess, improve and innovate
   • Solicit feedback from users, assess program/initiative relevancy, reduce programs/initiatives that don’t work, focus on the mission
   • Need freedom to take risks to improve and innovate
   • Tap into new markets
   • Be a conservation agency leader
   • Develop inspiring programs and experiences
   • Be proactive

g. Internal cooperation
   • Intradepartmental cooperation to support and promote our mission
   • Communication to make sure we are all working toward the same goals
   • Assist with events outside of the department to ensure adequate staffing and fresh perspectives
   • Utilize expertise across departments

Question 3
What are the upcoming challenges for the District and how can staff help?

a. How to maintain more with less
   • More to do with less staff and funding (infrastructure, buildings and growing/improving programs) – the District is growing, but staff is not
   • A plan to deal with all the accumulated deferred maintenance
   • Eliminate excess infrastructure and buildings to reduce maintenance needs
   • Collaborate with local agencies to reduce redundancies
   • Prioritize and focus on what is most important
b. Need better technology
c. Need better external communications
   • Need to reach millennials
   • Educate the public on the value of the Forest Preserve
   • Unified social media presence
d. Need better internal communications
   • Clear setting and communication of goals by leadership to all staff. Support to implement goals from leadership
   • Build trust of staff by leadership and Board - allow staff to implement policy
   • Closer working relationships at management level and communication between departments
e. Be cutting edge and proactive
   • Allow and support risk taking to improve the organization
   • Connect with new users, underserved populations, changing demographics
   • Assess public needs and trends
   • Develop creative and innovative programs to compete
   • Develop a niche and do it well
f. Low staff morale and changing leadership
   • Lack of staff recognition
   • Atmosphere of uncertainty/instability – layoffs, department restructuring, benefit changes
   • Micromanagement of staff
   • Loss of institutional knowledge due to retirements
   • Staff turnover and need to educate new staff
g. Better implementation of 90/10 policy
h. No “park district” type development
i. Potential consolidation with the county

Question 4
What priorities should we as staff hold in high importance moving into the future?

a. Conservation
b. Stay on mission
c. Educate the public
d. Staff development/improve morale
e. Internal communications
f. High level of facility and infrastructure maintenance
g. Customer service
h. Be innovative
i. Improve technology
j. Improve efficiency
k. Community outreach
l. Make the forest preserves more accessible