



Fullersburg Woods: 2026 Preserve Master Plan

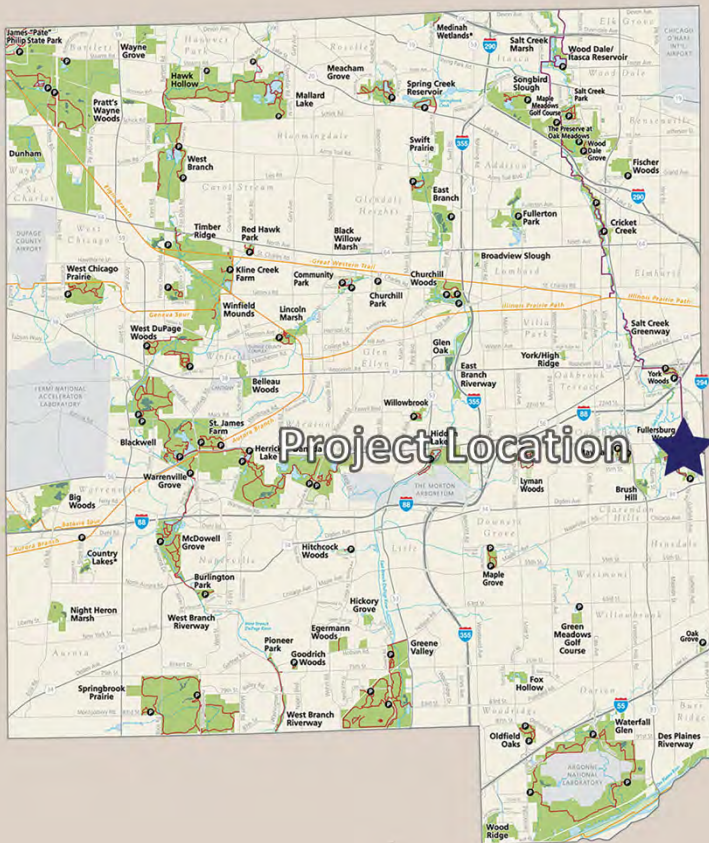
Public Input Meeting



Forest Preserve District of DuPage County

Location Map

Fullersburg Woods Forest Preserve, Oak Brook, IL



History

- Fullersburg opened to the public in 1920, and hosted a CCC camp in the 1930's. During that time the CCC constructed the visitor center and several shelters throughout the preserve.
- After heavy public use, in 1969 picnicking was restricted and boating prohibited to prevent degradation of Salt Creek. The District then pivoted to prioritize the ecology of the site, implementing plans to restore and preserve the natural areas of Fullersburg Woods.



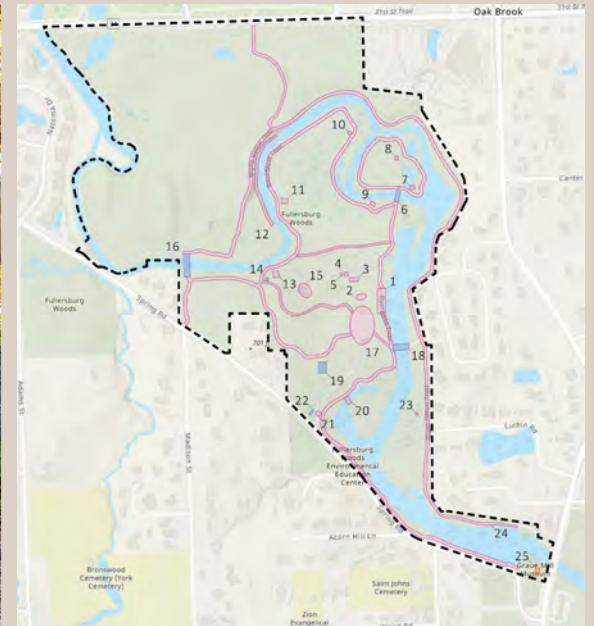
Background

- Fullersburg is a blend of high-quality natural areas, mixed with important recreation and historical elements. It is home to the Nature Education Center, Graue Mill & Museum, the Ben Fuller House, as well as trails, shelters, fishing access and boating on Salt Creek, all while hosting prime wildlife habitat in an urban setting.



Background- National Register

- 176.9 Acres of Fullersburg Woods was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2026. This listing includes the trail system, 5 buildings, 8 structures, 2 objects, and 1 parking lot. Requires additional permitting and review when using federal/ state funds and provides potential grant opportunities.



Background- Graue Historic District

- The Graue Mill has been on the National Register of Historic Places since 1975. The area includes the Graue Mill, which is an Illinois Historic Mechanical Engineering Landmark (ASME), Graue House, and the Ben Fuller House, which was relocated to its current location. The District operates and runs programs at the mill, and Graue House supports internal District usage.



Statistics

- 220 Acres
- Mid-range visitation at 9% (12th), 218k cars in 2025 (2nd)
- 4 miles of trail
- Nature Education Center
- Graue Mill & Museum
- Fishing & boating on Salt Creek
- Salt Creek dam removal & habitat restoration project



1993 Fullersburg Woods Master Plan



Master Planning Process

1. Information Gathering: March- June 2026
2. Analyze & Develop Goals: June - August 2026
3. Master Plan Development: August - November 2026
4. Draft Master Plan Review & Refinement: November - December 2026
5. Final Master Plan Delivery: January 2027



Master Planning Guardrails

- Downstate Forest Preserve Act
- Past Preserve Masterplans / History
- 2019 District Master Plan
- Land Use Classifications and Policies
- General Use Ordinance
- Intensive Recreation Use Ordinances



Downstate Forest Preserve Act

- Illinois law responsible for creating and managing Forest Preserve Districts state-wide
- Applies to all Forest Preserve Districts under 3,000,000 pop.
- “To acquire and hold lands containing natural forests... for the purpose of protecting and preserving the flora, fauna, and scenic beauties... in their natural state and condition, for the purpose of education, pleasure and recreation of the public”



General Use Ordinance

- District Approved Ordinance (Updated 2020)
- Dictates allowable recreation activities in Preserves
- Allows for application to Executive Director requesting activities not allowable within the ordinance
- Major Prohibited Activities:
 - Motorized vehicle use
 - Paintball guns, air rifles, fireworks
 - Hunting, trapping, collecting wildlife & plant material
- Special Use Permit Activities:
 - Fundraisers, races, training programs
 - Contests, shows, exhibitions
 - Public events, demonstrations, parades, speeches



District Ordinances/ Policies

- Intensive Recreation Ordinance
 - Limits “intense” recreation on District land
- Recreation Policy
 - Emphasizes passive, non-spectator recreation
 - District will not compete with other agencies or groups
- Land Management Policy
 - 10% development of preserves by land area
 - No development in Class 4 areas



Discussion Question

I. What are things that you like about Fullersburg Woods?



Discussion Question

2. What are things you least like about Fullersburg Woods?



Inventory Mapping - Aerials



Current Aerial

FBW Boundary



1939 Aerial

FBW Boundary

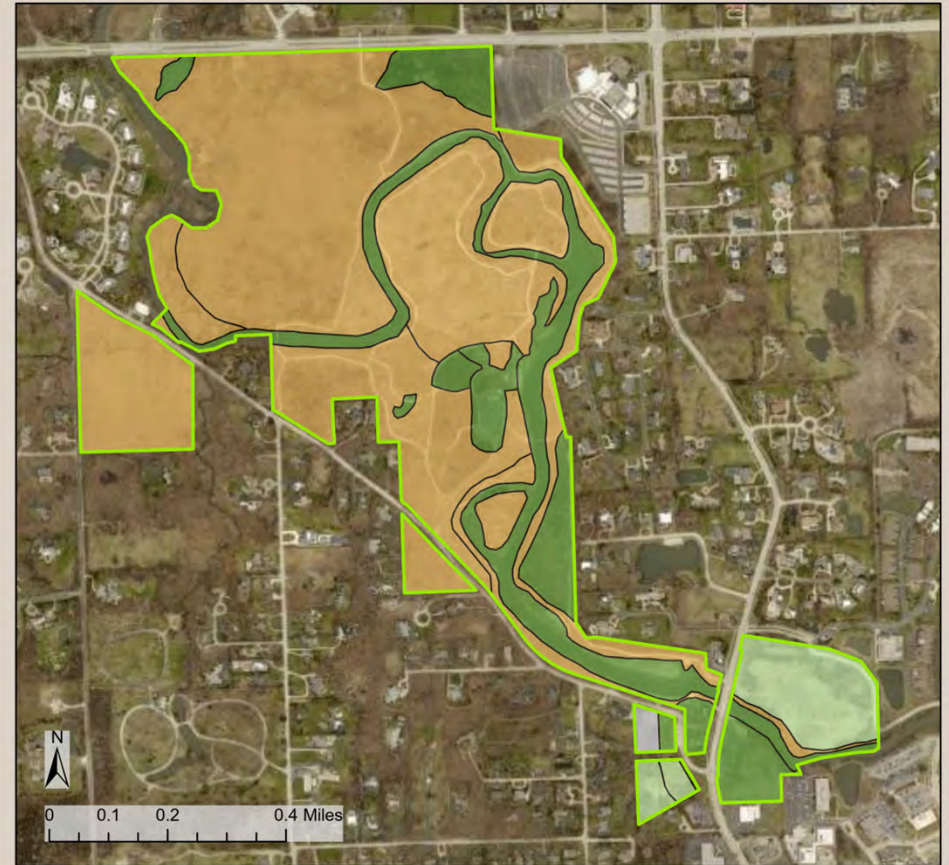
Land Use



FBW Boundary

FBW Boundary

Historical & Cultural



FBW Boundary

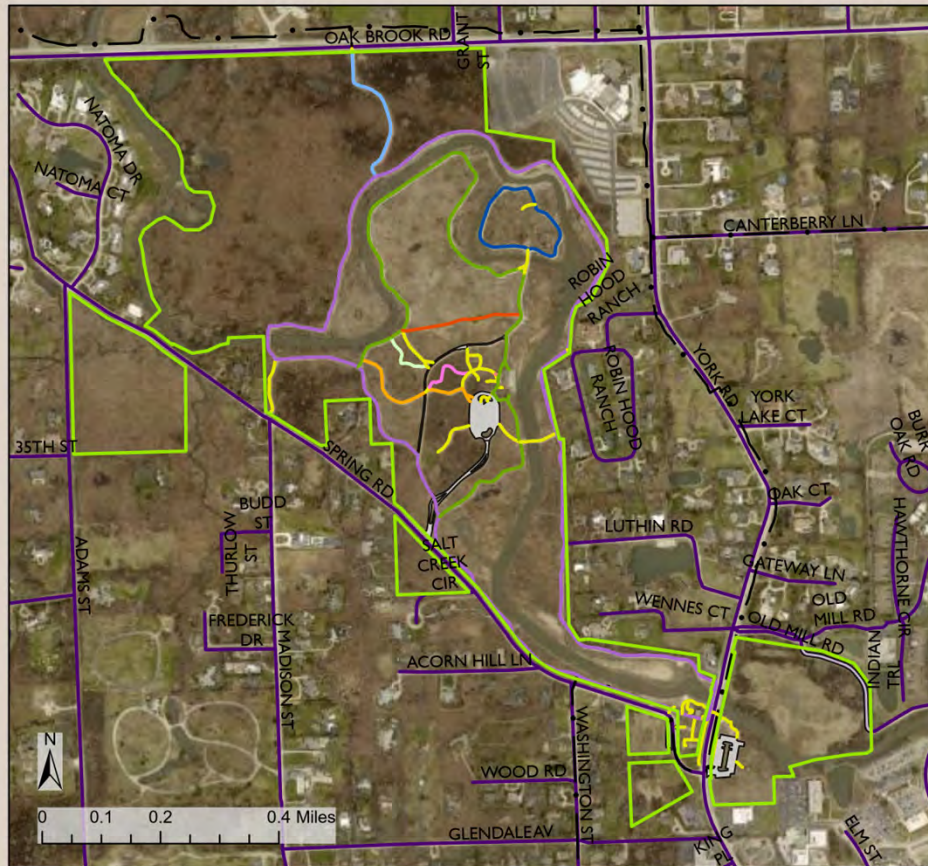
Classification

- I
- II
- III
- IV

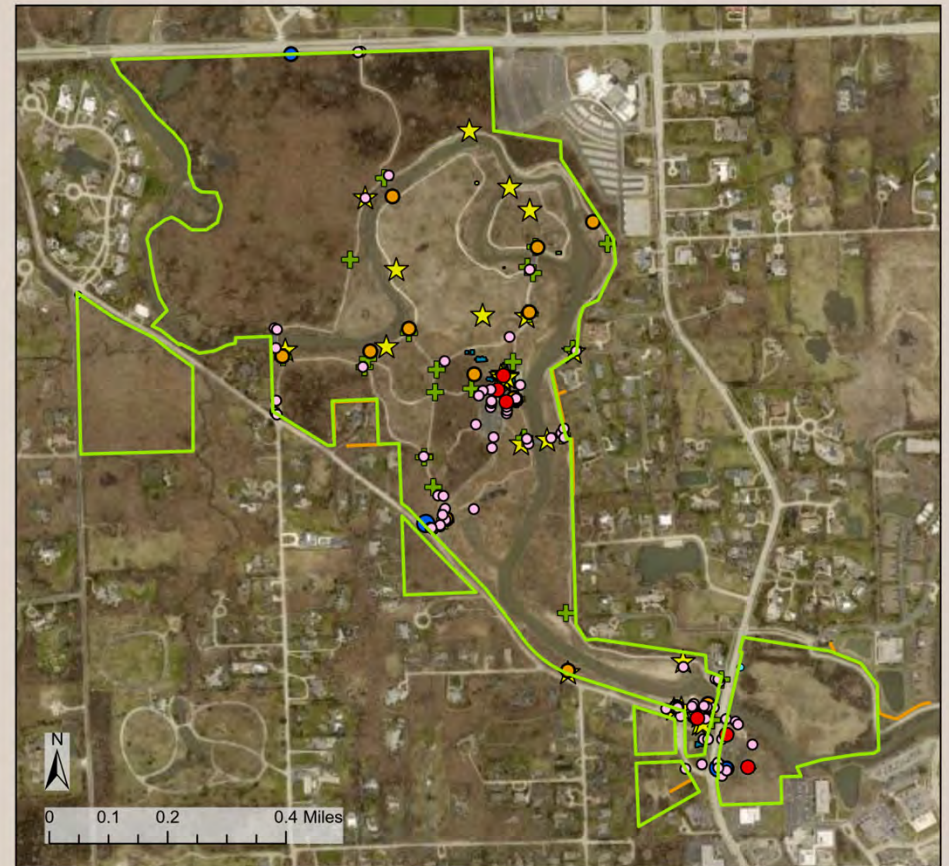
Ecosystems



Circulation & Structures



Circulation



Structures

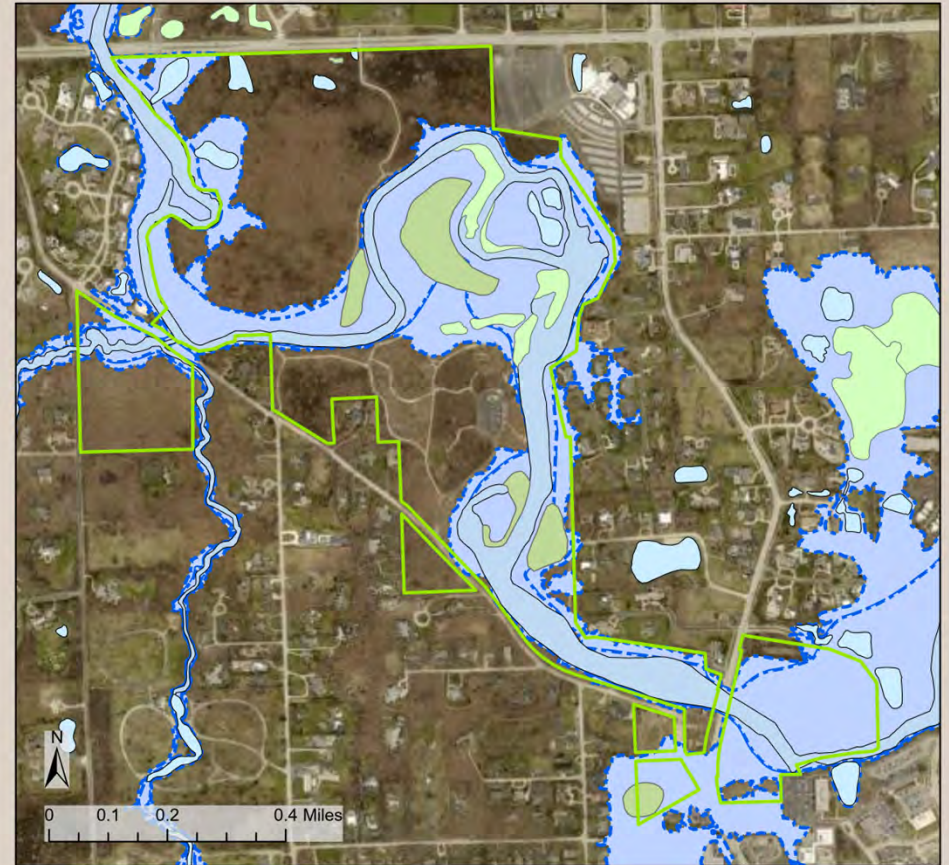


Topo & Hydrology



Topography

- FBW Boundary
- 10' Contours
- 2' Contours

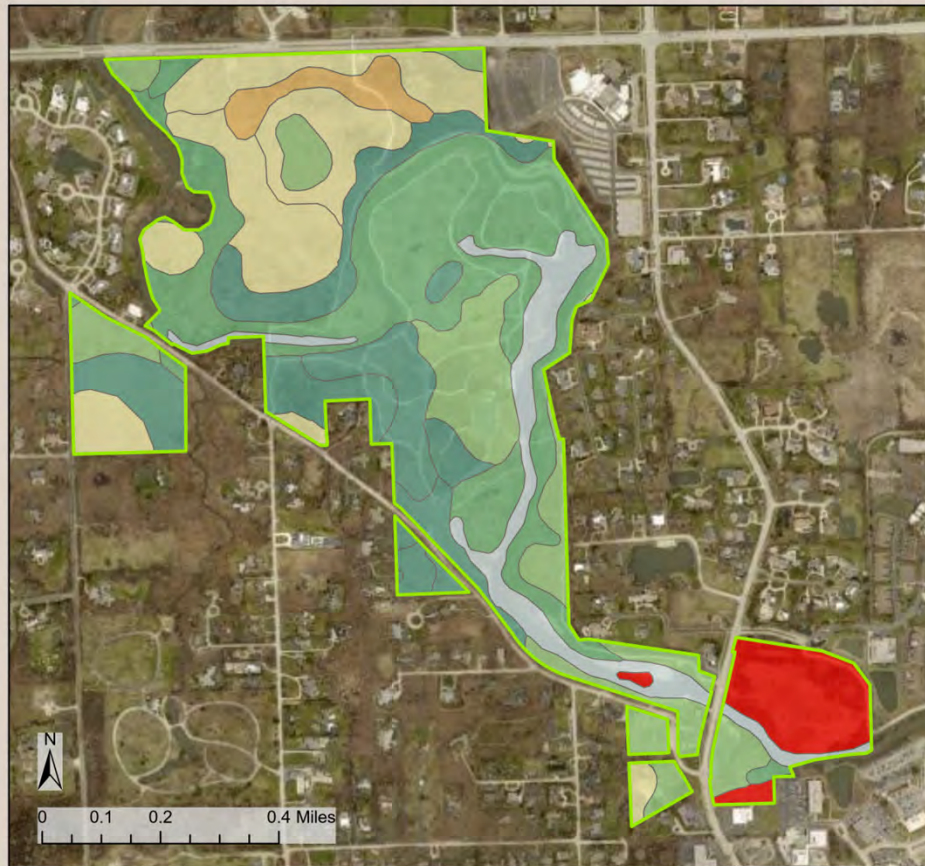


Hydrology

- FBW Boundary
- Wetland Type
 - Freshwater Emergent Wetland
 - Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland
 - Freshwater Pond
 - Lake
 - Riverine
- 100-year Floodplain

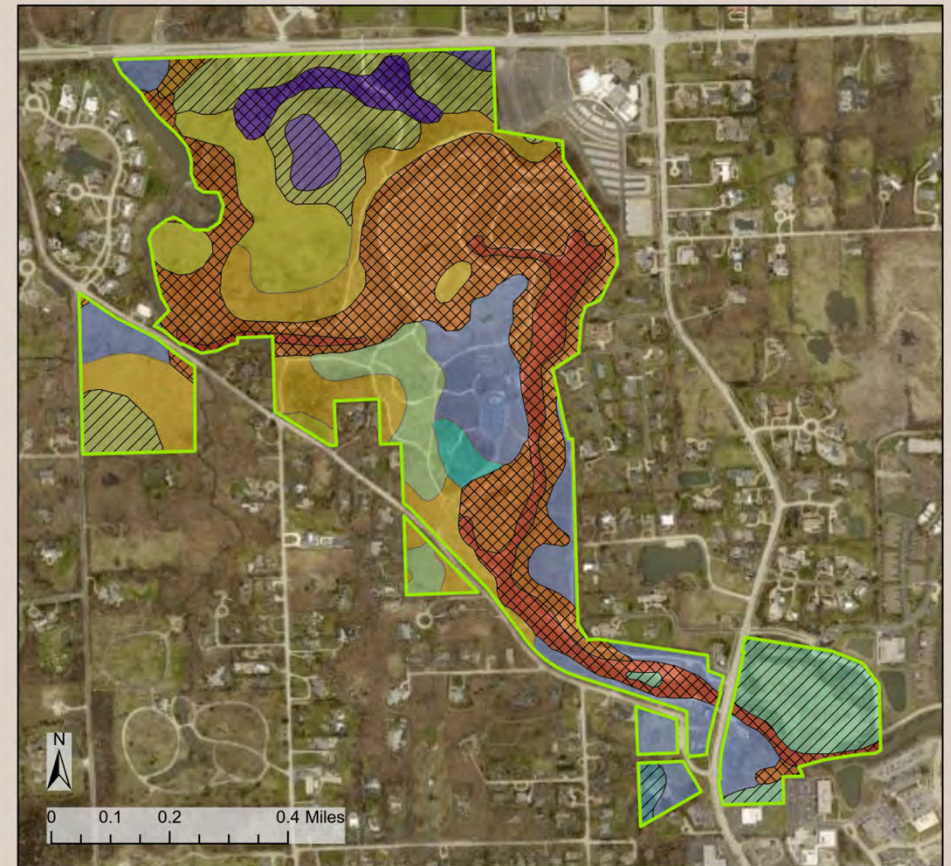


Restoration Potential & Soils



Pre-Settlement Soils

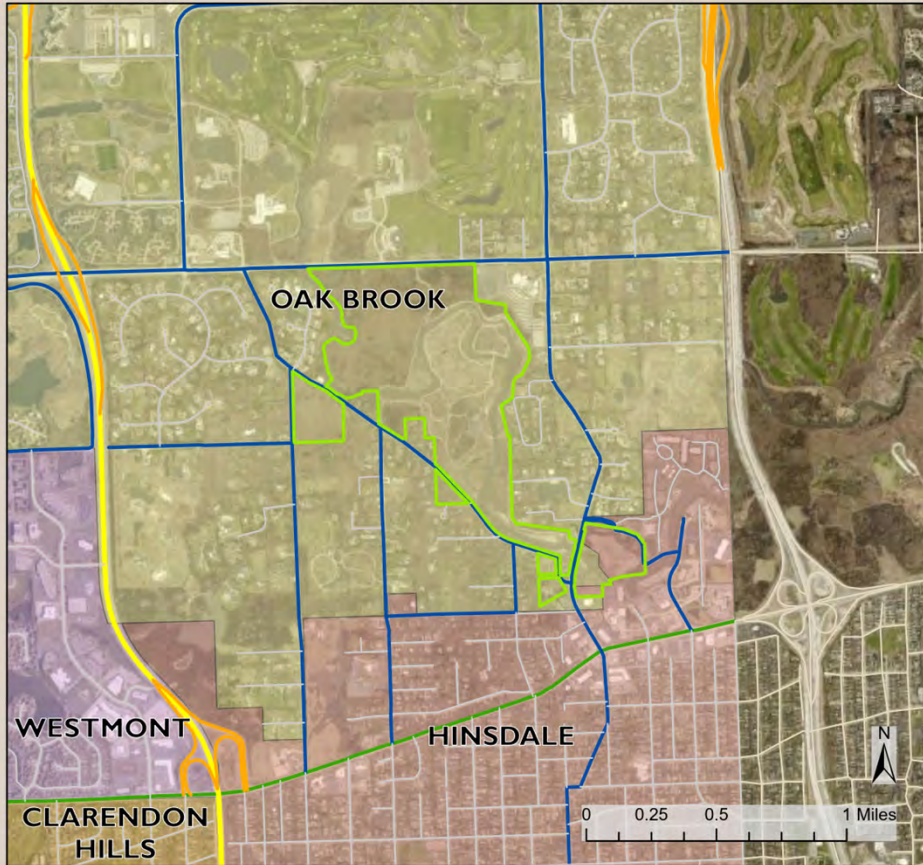
- FBV Boundary
- Upland Forest
- Urban
- Dry Mesic
- Mesic Prairie
- Water
- Savanna
- Savanna / Barren
- Sedge / Marsh
- Wet Prairie
- <all other values>



Soils

- FBV Boundary
- Fox silt loam, 2-4 percent slopes
- Grunleuin silt loam, 0-2 percent slopes
- Millstream silt loam, 0-2 percent slopes
- Orthents, loamy, undulating
- Ozaukee silt loam, 12-20 percent slopes
- Ozaukee silt loam, 2-4 percent slopes
- Ozaukee silt loam, 4-6 percent slopes, eroded
- Ozaukee silt loam, 6-12 percent slopes, eroded
- Peotone silty clay loam, 0-2 percent slopes
- Sawmill silty clay loam, 0-2 percent slopes, frequently flooded
- Water
- <all other values>
- Ashkum silty, clay loam, 0-2 percent slopes
- Beecher silt loam, 0-2 percent slopes
- hydric
- hydric inclusions
- <all other values>

Preserve Context



Roads & Municipalities

Road Type

- Interstates
- Major Roads
- Outside DuPage
- Ramps
- Residential Roads
- State Routes
- U.S. Routes



Regional Trails & Park Districts

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| — FBW Boundary | — Fermilab Bike Route | — Illinois Prairie Path - Connector | — O'Hare Connector |
| — Trail Name | — Ferry Road Bike Path | — Illinois Prairie Path - Elgin Branch | — Route 66 Trail |
| — 55th Street Bike Path | — Forest Preserve District Regional Trail | — Illinois Prairie Path - Geneva Spur | — Salt Creek Greenway Trail |
| — Aurora - Naperville Trail | — Gary Avenue Trail | — Illinois Prairie Path - Main Stem | — Southern DuPage County Regional Trail |
| — Bartlett Bike Path | — Great Western Trail | — Itasca - Addison Trail | — Stearns Road Bike Path |
| — Batavia Road Bike Path | — Hinsdale Bikeway | — Local Bike Trail | — Veterans Memorial Trail |
| — Carol Stream - Bloomingdale Trail | — I-88 Central DuPage Bikeway | — Mallard Lake Bike Trail | — Virgil Gilman Trail |
| — Centennial Trail | — ILLINOIS PRAIRIE PATH - GENEVA BRANCH | — North Aurora Road Bike Path | — West Branch DuPage River Trail |
| — DuPage Technology Corridor Trail | — Illinois Prairie Path - Aurora Branch | — North Central DuPage Regional Trail | — West Branch DuPage River Trail - Proposed |
| — East Branch DuPage River Greenway Trail | — Illinois Prairie Path - Batavia Spur | — Northlake Bike Path | — <all other values> |
| — East Branch DuPage River Trail | | | |



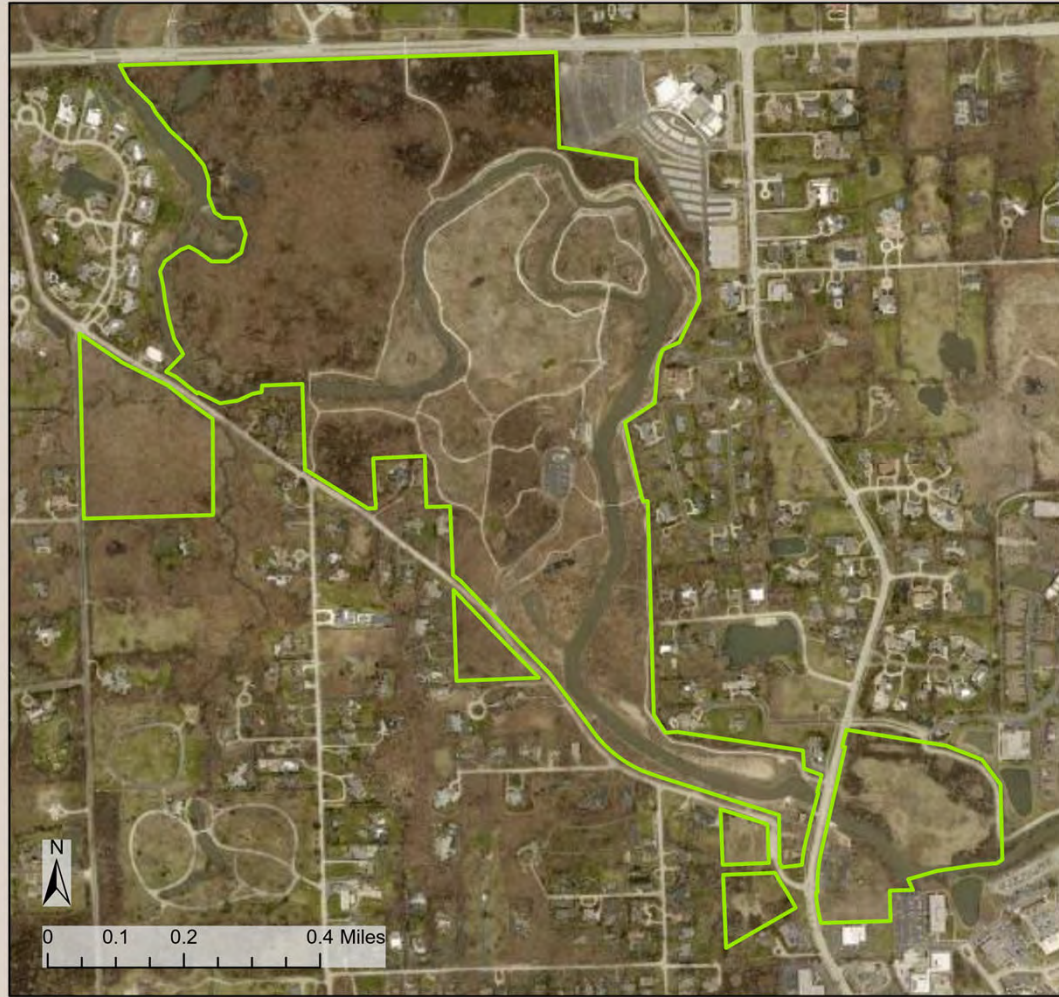
Discussion Question

3. What features would you like to see improved at Fullersburg Woods?

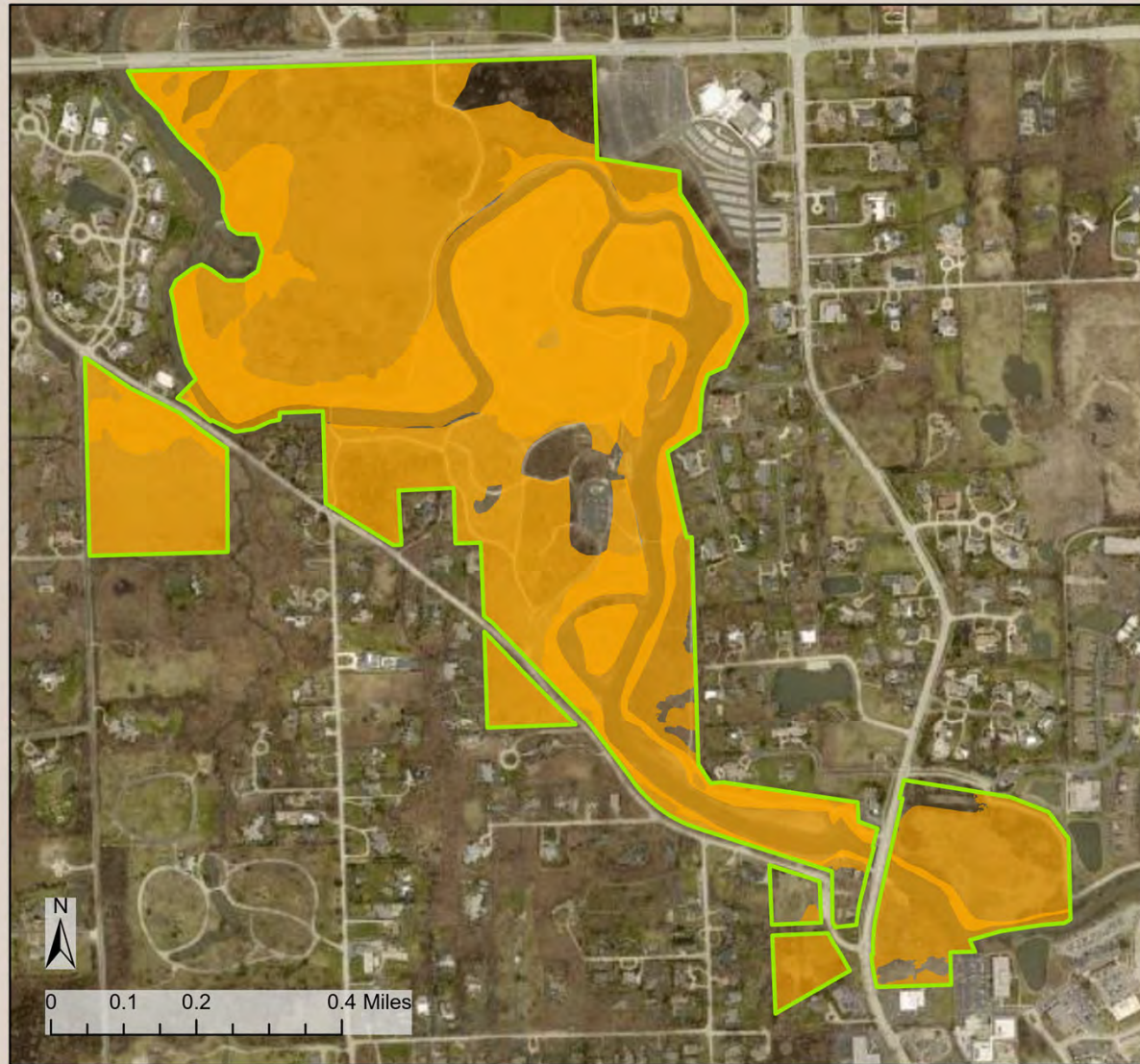


Discussion Question

4. What features, if any, would you like to see removed from Fullersburg Woods?



Construction Suitability



Classification

Construction Suitability



Forest Preserve District of DuPage County

Potential Amenities



Trails & Trail Connections



Seating Opportunities



Walking Paths



Flush Washrooms



Interpretive Signage



Wayfinding Signage

Potential Amenities



Historic Restoration



Accessible Fishing



Habitat Restoration



Winter Activities



Nature Play Space

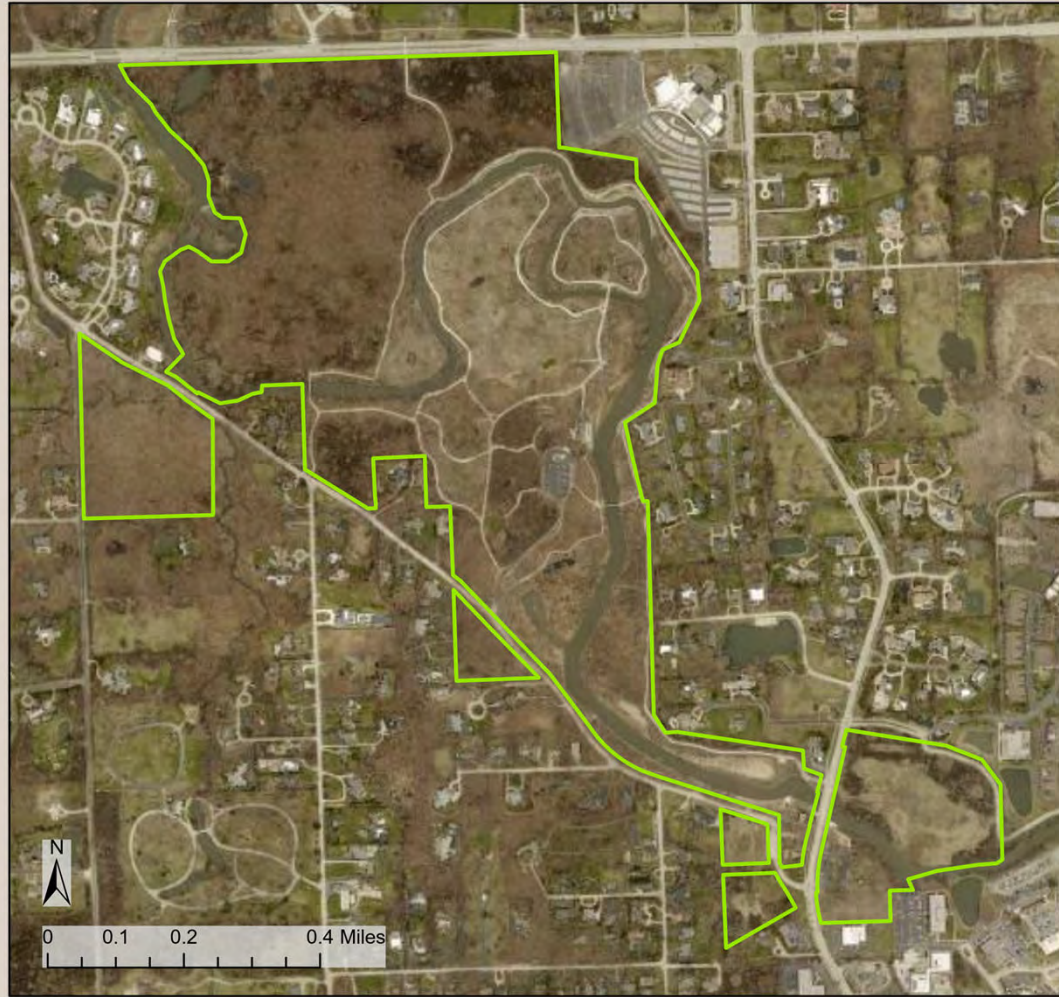


Parking Lot Improvements



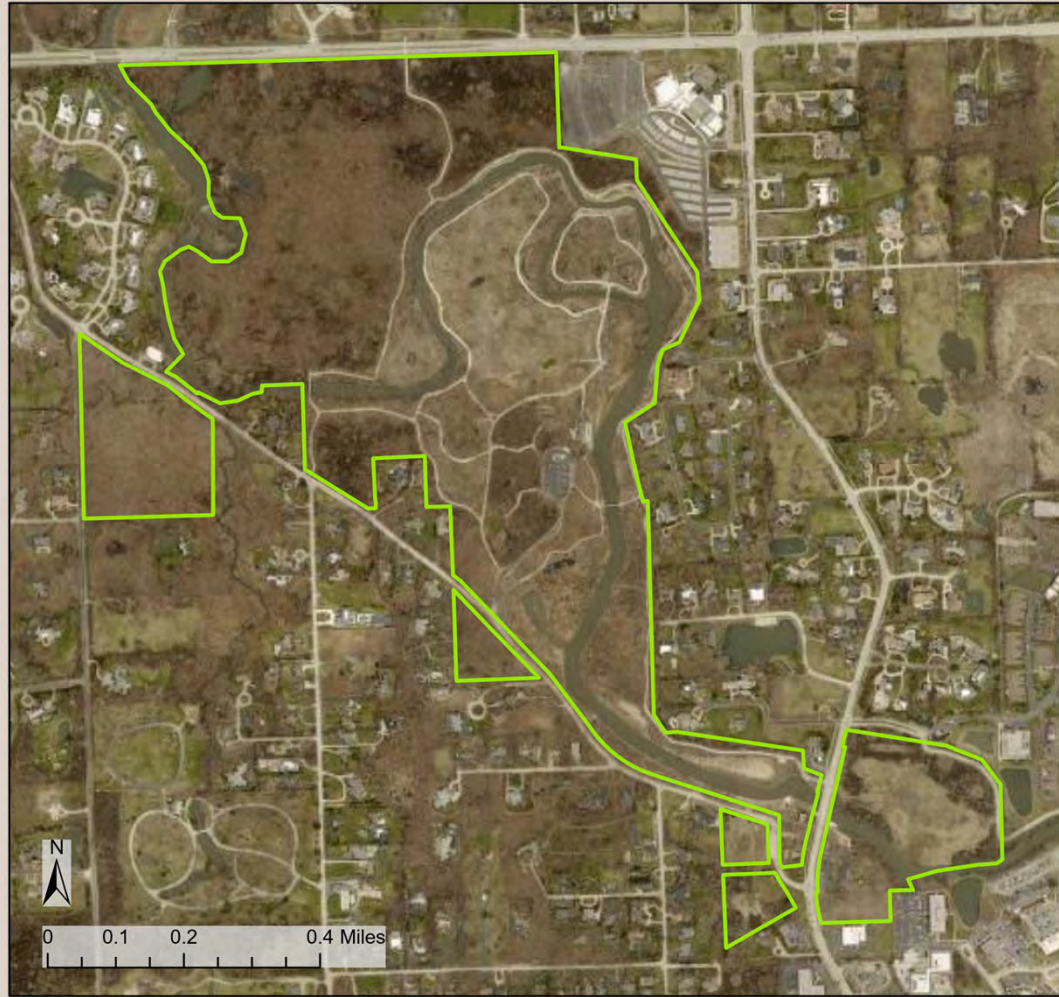
Discussion Question

5. What additional features, if any, within the District's policies would you like to see added to Fullersburg Woods?



Discussion Question

6. What in your opinion is the biggest concern or priority for Fullersburg Woods?



Identified Concerns

- Improve Graue House / Mill
 - Mill system upgrades and restoration
 - Mill structural stabilization phase II
 - Public washrooms and accessibility
 - Expanded exhibits and gift shop
 - New parking lot with bus drop off
 - Graue house building renewal efforts
- Improve Nature Education Center/Visitor Center
 - HVAC Upgrades
 - Update exhibits and public spaces upgrades (Continue animal displays yes/no)
 - Accessibility upgrades, indoor & outdoor
 - Site lighting and other exterior site improvements



Identified Concerns

- Preserve has multiple restrictions on construction and renovation projects - National Register, Ecosystem Class, Wetland/ Floodplain
- Continue restoration efforts - Butler Woods
- Focus improvements to existing features and infrastructure
- Improve overall parking - capacity, layout, entrance alignment
- Improve safety regarding Spring Road
- Maintain actively utilized trail system that is accessed year round
- Update trail wayfinding signs and maps where appropriate



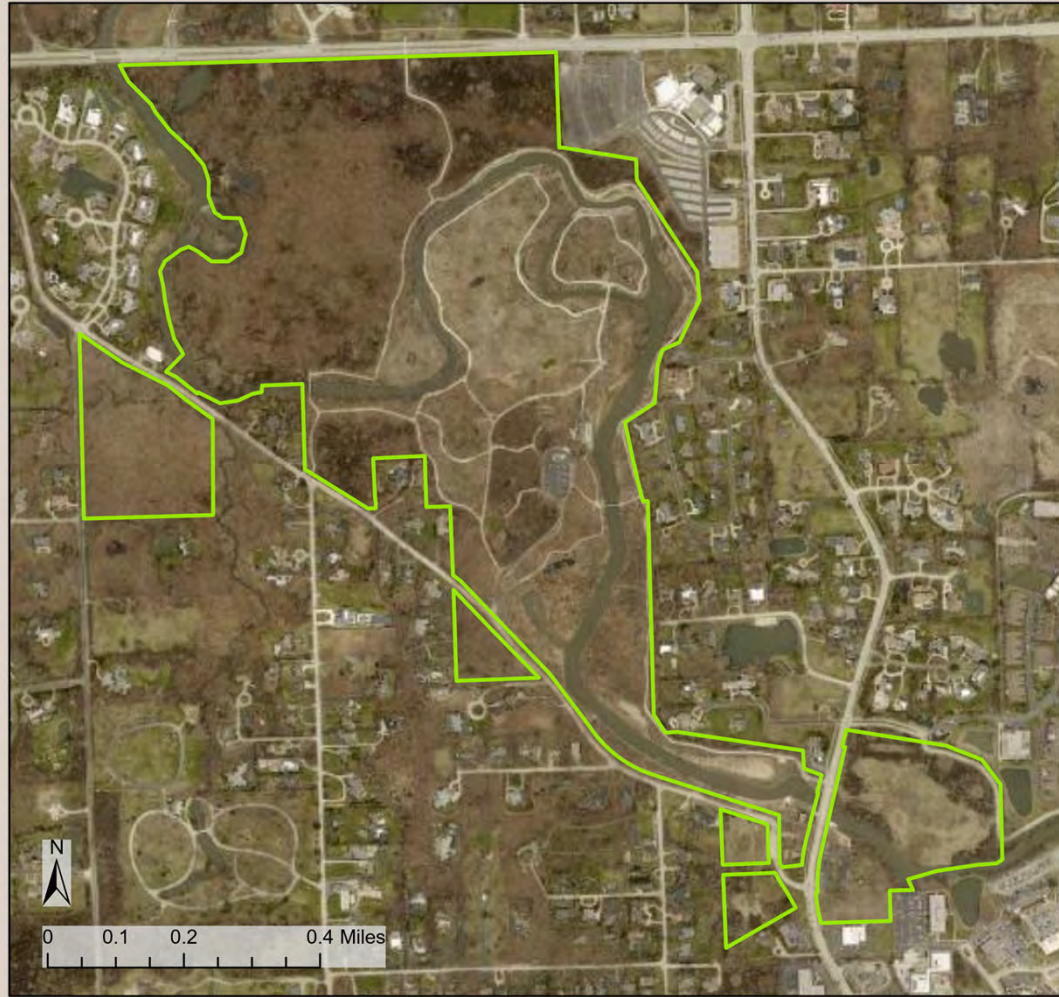
Master Plan Deliverable

- Final Preserve Master Plan
 - Document with a vision/goal, objectives, strategies and associated graphics, conceptual cost estimates, & appendices
 - Graphic plans conceptually showing all anticipated improvements
 - Preserve specific CIP recommendations
 - 0-5 Year Priorities
 - 5-10 Year Priorities
 - 10+ Year Priorities
 - “Current” for approximately 5 years for Grant requirements
 - Update required every 10-15 years (depending on Preserve)



Discussion Question

7. Other concerns or thoughts?



Questions?

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Forest Preserve District of DuPage County

Discussion Questions

1. What are things that you like about Fullersburg Woods?
2. What are things you least like about Fullersburg Woods?
3. What features would you like to see improved at Fullersburg Woods?
4. What features would you like to see removed from Fullersburg Woods?
5. What additional opportunities within the framework of the District's recreation and land use policies would you like to see added to Fullersburg Woods?
6. What in your opinion is the biggest concern or priority for Fullersburg Woods?
7. Other concerns or thoughts?

