KENDALL COUNTY FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT
PLANNING AD-HOC COMMITTEE

AGENDA

TUESDAY
FEBRUARY 25, 2014

3:30 P.M.
HISTORIC COURTHOUSE

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

III. PLANNING DISCUSSION

IV. OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS

V. ADJOURNMENT
Kendall County Forest Preserve District
Master Plan
Table of Contents – DRAFT

1. Introduction
   a. History
   b. Organization
   c. Mission Statement and Goals
   d. Master Plan Goals & Objectives
   e. Countywide Forest Preserve Map – update needed

2. Kendall County Natural Resources – brief description of the natural resources in KC.

3. Existing Preserves & Facilities
   a. Overview
   b. Preserve & Facility Chart
   c. Preserve ID – mostly complete
   d. Preserve Maps – mostly complete

4. Capital Projects
   a. Overview
   b. Preserve Maps – Show concept plan for each of the preserves.
   c. Preserve Capital Projects – List items shown on concept plan and estimated cost for each item. Include A&E costs. Try to tackle operation cost of new facilities in plan?
   d. Goals & Objectives – (some of these may be done as part of master plan process):
      i. Develop preserve facility standard details
      ii. ADA requirements
      iii. Apply for cap imp grants
      iv. Etc, etc
   e. Priority Plan – List capital projects from 1-x, or group capital projects into high/medium/low priorities so that there is some sort of hierarchy of projects moving forward.

5. Land Acquisition
   a. Overview
   b. Land Acquisition Evaluation Process
   c. Land Acquisition Chart
   d. Land Acquisition Maps – show land acq from 2003 and 2007 referendums - GIS
   e. Goals & Objectives

6. Management & Administration
   a. Organization
      i. Overview
ii. Commission Organizational Chart
iii. Staff Organization Chart
iv. District Guidelines – I like the idea of having something like Kane County’s Appendix C, but it seems it is more important than regulating to an Appendix. I think different sections of the Appendix C will fit better in other Chapters of our plan, but a good part of it might fit in well here.

b. Administration
i. Overview
ii. Activities
iii. Goals & Objectives

c. Community Affairs
i. Overview
ii. Activities
iii. Goals & Objective

7. Finances & Budget
i. Overview
ii. Activities
iii. Goals & Objectives

8. Operations and Programming
a. Grounds & Natural Resources
i. Overview
ii. Activities
iii. Goals & Objectives
b. Environmental Education
i. Overview
ii. Activities
iii. Goals & Objectives
c. Special Facilities/Ellis/Meadowhawk
i. Overview
ii. Activities
iii. Goals & Objectives
d. Volunteer Programs
i. Overview
ii. Activities
iii. Goals & Objectives
1. Introduction

A. History
The Kendall County Forest Preserve District was established when residents approved a referendum in April of 1964. By the early 1970s, four forest preserves with a combined 260 acres had been created in the county. Facilities consisted mainly of picnic shelters, footpaths, and the well-known Harris Forest Preserve sledding hill. For over two decades these preserves and facilities were sufficient to meet the low demands of the still largely rural and slow growing Kendall County.

As the population of Kendall County began to grow significantly in the 1990's, Kendall County citizens desired a more active Forest Preserve District. Long-time residents urged the District to preserve open space amid a wave of residential and commercial development. Newer residents, arriving mainly from counties with well established Forest Preserve Districts, desired the same in Kendall County. A group of residents formed the Kendall Natural Area Guardians (KNAGs) and urged the District to acquire high quality natural areas. The KNAGs created a list that identified many of these natural areas. This KNAG list, along with accompanying maps and plant species lists, were utilized by the District many years for land acquisition purposes.

The District also began to develop additional resources during the late 1990s and early 2000s. Increased staffing and funding allowed the District to initiate environmental education programming, public outreach, and natural resource management. These efforts led to increased awareness and use of the Forest Preserve District by residents.

In 2003, as Kendall County was one of the fastest growing counties in the United States, a $5 million open space bond referendum was approved by Kendall County residents for the District to acquire open space and to complete capital improvement projects.

In 2006 the District participated in Protect Kendall Now (PKN) initiated by The Conservation Foundation. PKN combined the earlier KNAG list with municipal, county, and other open space plans to create a comprehensive vision for the preservation of natural areas and open space throughout Kendall County. The PKN effort produced the Natural Treasures of Kendall County map.

As Kendall County continued its unprecedented population growth, in 2007 voters approved a $45 million open space bond referendum for additional open space preservation and capital improvement projects. These funds, combined with nearly $10 million in ensuing grant revenue, punctuated an amazing growth spurt where the District owns 5 times more acres in 2013 than it did just one decade earlier.

Many of these preserved acres contain some of the finest natural areas in Kendall County. Fox River frontage, property along streams, quality woodlands and wetlands, and expansion of current preserves have all been added to District holdings in the past decade. This additional acreage has permitted the District to expand its facilities and offer more recreational and environmental educational opportunities to residents than ever before.
B. Organization
The Forest Preserve District is governed by the Forest Preserve Commission, which is comprised of the ten Kendall County Board members. The Commission elects a President, Vice-President and Secretary, each of which serves a two year term. The District has its own property taxing authority, which largely funds the daily operating expenses of the District. These property tax funds are augmented by facility use fees, program fees, and farm license revenue. A yearly budgeting process determines the operating budget and tax levy to be issued by the District for each fiscal year. The District also has the ability to issue bonds for land acquisition, capital improvement projects, and capital equipment purchases.

As of 2013 the staff of the District is comprised of 10 full-time and 18 part-time employees. Several seasonal employees assist with summer camps each year. The staff is responsible for the grounds maintenance, natural areas management, environmental education programming, event coordination, volunteer coordination, and administration of the District.

C. Mission Statement and Goals
The mission of the Kendall County Forest Preserve District is to acquire, preserve and manage natural areas and open spaces, provide environmental education, and offer recreational opportunities for Kendall County residents.

More specifically, the goals of the Kendall County Forest Preserve District are to:

1. Acquire and hold lands containing forests, prairies, wetlands, streams and other natural areas in order to preserve the flora, fauna and scenic beauties of Kendall County for the enjoyment of county residents and future generations.

2. Acquire and hold properties containing lands capable of being restored to a natural condition and lands that will provide recreational opportunities and facilities.

3. Utilize the forest preserves to provide educational opportunities for county residents regarding the natural systems, natural processes and natural history of Kendall County.

4. Provide and maintain passive and active recreational opportunities and facilities for residents that are compatible with District natural areas and open spaces.

5. Implement management practices and policies that maintain and enhance the biodiversity of District natural areas.

6. Maintain and enhance practices and policies that promote fiscal
responsibility and organizational proficiency.

7. Maintain and enhance multiple media outlets to inform Kendall County residents of District programs, properties, facilities and policies.

8. Partner with other governmental agencies, conservation organizations and private landowners to preserve natural areas, create greenway corridors, and develop linear trails.

D. Master Plan Goals & Objectives
The intense growth in recent years presents the Kendall County Forest Preserve District with many challenges. Two of the main challenges are balancing the dramatic increase in the public’s use of the preserves, facilities, and programs with the realities of current operational resources; and to acquire additional open space in the future.

While the yearly budget process and day-to-day operations focus on the short-term needs of the Kendall County Forest Preserve District, the ability to plan over a longer time span is essential. The development of a long-range plan will allow the District to best use its resources to meet its mission and goals, and better enable the District to be proactive in a rapidly changing landscape.

The goal of this master plan is to strengthen and focus the resources of the Kendall County Forest Preserve District so that it is most able to fulfill its mission statement and goals.

Master Plan Objectives (with corresponding FP Goals):

Land Acquisition
- Plan for future acquisition of lands containing natural areas, lands suitable for restoration, and lands suitable for recreational facilities. (1,2,4,8)

Facilities
- Inventory existing facilities. (4)
- Create concept plans and/or identify improvements, estimate construction costs, and estimate maintenance costs for each of the preserves. (4,8)
- Prioritize capital improvement projects. (4,8)

Administration
- Continue to develop and implement appropriate policies, organizational structure, and processes. (6)
- Evaluate budget process to meet increased demands on preserves, facilities, and programming while practicing fiscal responsibility. (6)

Programming
- Continue to develop, promote, and evaluate educational opportunities to reach as
many Kendall County residents as feasible. (3)

Natural Areas Management
• Continue to actively manage and evaluate the natural areas of the District. (5)

Community Affairs
• Continue to inform and promote the public of the programs, properties, facilities and policies of the District. (7)
2. Kendall County Natural Resources

Natural Communities

1. Introduction

When the first white settlers arrived in what is today Kendall County, they found a land dominated by prairie. Woodlands clung alongside creeks and rivers, with an occasional grove of trees interspersed among the prairie. Various kinds of wetlands dotted the landscape, some held snowmelt and rainfall, while others released groundwater to the surface. Boundaries between prairie, wetland, and woodland were not always clearly defined, and these boundaries shifted as fire and weather altered the landscape. (Grand Prairie region & map of natural divisions)

Fire shaped all of the natural communities of the region. Intense prairie fires pushed trees and shrubs from the grasslands. Slower and more moderate fires meandered through woodlands, eliminating the unprotected thin barked trees. Wetlands, dried up at season’s end, also felt the singe of fire. During the spring and fall, fire left a mosaic of burned and unburned on the landscape.

The natural communities were rich in diversity of plant and animal life, creating intricate webs of relationships between predator and prey, pollinator and plant, soil and water. Many of these relationships we still strive to understand to this day.

As settlers quickly determined that the dark soils of the prairie were the best farmland in the world, prairies were quickly plowed under and wetlands were drained. The margins of woodlands were pushed back and straightened. Fires were suppressed. Remaining natural communities were fragmented, isolated, and forever altered.

In the early 1900’s a new conservation ethic began to take root. Preservation of natural areas, the study of ecology, and the process to learn how to restore our natural communities have all... Illinois, especially northeastern Illinois, has been a big player on this conservation stage. The Burnham Plan, the creation of Forest Preserve and Conservation Districts, and restoration initiatives at Fermi Lab, the Morton Arboretum, and many public lands across the region have collectively spearheaded one of conservations great success stories.
Definitions of terms? - ecosystem, natural community, remnant, biodiversity, herbaceous, forb, sedge, mesic, prescribed fire, etc.

2. Prairies
   a. Prior to European settlement, tallgrass prairies were the dominant natural community in Kendall County, covering approximately ___% of the land. Tallgrass prairies in Illinois are part of the ‘prairie peninsula’, an eastward extension of this natural community that was likely sustained by frequent fire. (insert map of prairie peninsula)

   Prairies are generally classified by soil moisture (wet, wet-mesic, mesic, dry-mesic, dry) and soil type (sand or gravel hill). Prior to settlement, most prairies in Kendall County would have been wet, wet-mesic, and mesic prairie.

   Prairies are fire dependent communities. Without regular fire, trees and shrubs invade these grasslands, producing shade that kills the prairie plants. Fires are also important to recycle nutrients, eliminate non-native herbaceous plants, allow soil warming earlier in the spring, and to create a mosaic of burned and unburned areas that many animal species depend on.

   Due to the loss of prairie habitat in Kendall County, many species of plants and animals have either been extirpated completed from the county, or have very small, and possible unsustainable, populations.

   b. Plants
      Over 300 plant species grew in tallgrass prairies, a diverse mix of grasses, sedges, and forbs. While grasses such as big bluestem (Andropogon gerardii), Indian grass (Sorghastrum nutans), and switch grass (Panicum virgatum) may have been the most numerous plants on the prairie, forbs would have contributed vast diversity. Most of the biomass of tallgrass prairie lies below the ground surface, where plant roots can reach over 15 feet in depth. These deep roots allowed the prairie plants to survive the harsh prairie environment that included drought, grazing, and fire. (pics of prairie plants)

   c. Animals
Tallgrass prairie is home to an array of birds, mammals, herps, and insects. Each animal species has its own set of requirements – other plants and animals it is dependent on, prairie structure, and size of a prairie to name but a few. If a habitat does not meet these requirements, the animal species simply cannot survive. To meet the requirements of the most number of species, large and varied grasslands are needed.

d. Restoration & Management

Unfortunately, no great expanses of intact prairie remain in Kendall County today. While a few tiny patches of prairie remnants cling to railroads or other out of the way locations, prairie restorations will make up the majority of future prairies in the county.

Prairie restoration on a landscape scale began in northeastern Illinois in the 1960s by Ray Schulenberg at the Morton Arboretum and at Fermi Lab in the 1970s by Dr. Robert Betz. These efforts led other land managers in the region to initiate prairie restorations of their own.

Prairie restorations include soil preparation, seeding, burning, mowing, herbiciding, and restoring hydrology. While in a few short years a newly seeded site may begin to look like a prairie, the complex prairie ecosystem will take decades to become established.

Established prairies typically require little management outside of a periodic prescribed burn. Mechanical removal of invasive brush and control of herbaceous weeds can be performed as required.

3. Wooded Communities

a. Kendall County has a number of wooded natural communities that are distinct in their species make-up, tree canopy coverage, typography, and hydrology. Most of our woodlands are dominated by oaks, maples, and hickories.

All of the wooded communities found in Kendall County are, to varying degrees, dependant on regular burning. In general, more open canopy wooded communities require more frequent and more intense burns, while more closed canopy wooded communities require less frequent and less intense burns.
Woodlands can be classified by soil moisture (wet, wet-mesic, mesic, dry-mesic, dry) or by the dominant trees (i.e. oak-hickory, oak-maple).

b. Savannas
Savannas form on the boundary where the prairie meets the woodland. As large, intense prairie fires swept into woodlands, only the most fire resistant tree could survive. In the Midwest, this hardy tree is the bur oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*).

Bur oak savannas have tree canopy coverage of 10-50%. The dappled sunlight that reaches the ground supports prairie and woodland plants, as well as certain plant species endemic to savannas. Shrubs typically found in savannas are the American hazelnut (*Corylus americana*) and the wild plum (*Prunus americana*).

Black oak savannas can form on poor, sandy soils. Dry conditions combined with more moderate fire combine to form black oak savannas. In Kendall County, very small patches of black oak savanna can be found on sites with sandy soil, mainly in the Big Rock Creek watershed and along the Fox River.

Intact oak savannas are quite rare today, as fire suppression, grazing, and invasive species have led to habitat degradation. However, many oak savannas persist today in Kendall County as more closed in woodlands, waiting for when sunlight might once again reach the ground.

c. Open Woodlands
In areas protected from intense fires by savannas, creeks or topography, open woodlands are to found. As the name suggests, open woodlands have fairly widely spaced trees resulting in a canopy cover of 50-80%. This allows sufficient sunlight to establish diverse shrub and herbaceous layers.

Moderate fires worked their way through the open woodlands, keeping the numbers of thin barked maple, ash, elm, and cherry to a minimum. As a result, most of our open woodlands are dominated by oak (*Quercus sp*) and hickory (*Carya sp*), although there can be quite a diversity of trees. Shrub species typical of open
woodlands include American hazelnut (*Corylus americana*), wild plum (*Prunus americana*), chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*), and black haw (*Viburnum prunifolium*).

Fire suppression, grazing, and invasive species have led to habitat degradation in our open woodlands. Specifically, garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*), common buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*), and honeysuckle (*Lonicera sp*), three invasive plants from Europe and Asia, have ruined many acres of open woodland habitat by pushing out native plants and preventing oak regeneration.

d. Northern Flatwoods
Northern flatwoods are a rare type of natural community that is formed where a unique set of topography, soils, and hydrology combine to form this wet woodland. Flatwoods are characterized by having water at, or near, the ground surface for the majority of the growing season. This is usually caused by a layer of clay a few feet below the surface that forces water to slowly move laterally rather than percolating downward. Topography prevents the water from quickly draining overland and off of the site.

The canopy trees of the flatwoods are spaced fairly far apart which allows adequate sunlight to reach the shrub and herbaceous layers. Tree canopy coverage is typically 20–80%. Trees indicative of flatwoods include swamp white oak (*Quercus bicolor*), linden (*Tilia americana*), black ash (*Fraxinus nigra*), and cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*). Commonly found shrubs include paw paw (*Asimina triloba*), blue beech (*Carpinus caroliniana*), and buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*). The herbaceous layer usually possesses a large number of sedge species, along with a substantial amount of forb and grass species. The herbaceous layer of flatwoods can be very diverse and include plants typical of open woodlands and sedge meadows, besides those associated specifically with flatwoods. Periodic fires through the flatwoods enhance the biodiversity by creating a balance between the various components of the community. In flatwoods, these fires are slow moving and control the number of woody plants, thereby allowing adequate sunlight to reach the herbaceous layer. Flatwoods support a variety of animal life that depends on the unique watery community for food, shelter and breeding habitat.
e. Forests
Forests thrive where fires are infrequent and of low intensity. Tree species that cannot tolerate the intense fires of the savanna or the moderate burns of the open woodlands find refuge in the forest. With more tree stems per acre, forests understandably have a more closed canopy, between 80-100%. Forests are typically dominated by maple, either black maple (*Acer nigrum*) or sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*), and by red oak (*Quercus rubra*).

Floodplain forests are a common variety in Kendall County, where silver maple (*Acer saccharinum*), ash (*Fraxinus* sp), and elm (*Ulmus* sp) dominate. High quality floodplain forests are uncommon as land use changes and drainage have increased flooding occurrences and altered the hydrology of these communities.

Shrubs typical of forests include bladdernut (*Staphylea trifolia*) and elderberry (*Sambucus canadensis*). Due to lower sunlight levels on the ground, the herbaceous layer of forest is generally sparser than that of other wooded communities.

f. Plants

g. Animals
Oaks/acorns. Various layers-shrub, herb, canopy

h. Restoration & Management
Many wooded communities in Kendall County have suffered from habitat fragmentation, fire suppression, invasive species, and changes in hydrology. As a result, our woodlands have lost some measure of plant and animal diversity, and long-term sustainability is uncertain. In many of our oak woodlands, new generations of oaks have not been able to grow due to habitat degradations. As the 'elder statesmen' oak trees begin to die, replacement oaks are not present to sustain this community.

To restore our woodland communities, a number of management techniques can be utilized. Fire, tree/brush removal, invasive plant control, hydrology, etc

4. Wetlands
a. Marshes
b. Fens and Seeps
c. Sedge Meadows
d. Plants
e. Animals
f. Restoration & Management
5. Lakes & Ponds
6. Rivers and Streams
3. Forest Preserves and Facilities

a. Overview

From its creation in 1964 to the mid-1990s, the Kendall County Forest Preserve District consisted of a few preserves with limited facilities. By far the most popular site was Harris Forest Preserve with its picnic shelters, horse arena, sled hill, ballfield, and trails. Trails at Lyon Forest Preserve, and a picnic shelter and trails at Baker Woods Forest Preserve completed the list of District facilities. By the 1990s, many of these existing facilities were aged and in disrepair.

The acquisition (1994) and development (1998) of the Richard Young Forest Preserve marked the beginning of a new era for the District. The facilities at Harris, Lyon, and Baker Woods Forest Preserves were significantly upgraded. Additional properties were acquired and construction projects at Subat Forest Preserve, Maramech Forest Preserve, and the Shuh Shuh Gah Canoe Launch added more sites for the public to use. These newer facilities largely mirrored existing facilities with their picnic shelters and trails.

As land was acquired from the 2003 and 2007 open space referendums, additional preserves were improved with public facilities. Hoover Forest Preserve and the Ellis House & Equestrian Center provided the District with opportunities to diversify its facilities with tent campsites, bunkhouses, environmental education buildings, equestrian facilities, and multi-purpose spaces. Jay Woods Forest Preserve, Millbrook South Forest Preserve, and Blackberry Trails Forest Preserve were all acquired and improved with public use facilities during this time period.

b. Preserve & Facility Chart

Complete

c. Preserve IDs

Partially complete - excel spreadsheets

d. Preserve Maps

 Mostly complete - create for preserves without GIS pdf maps.
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Note: z/663, z/664, and Total columns represent different data points or measurements for each feature or park.
BAKER WOODS FOREST PRESERVE

Address: 2939 Route 52, Minooka
13986 McKanna Road, Minooka (Ellis House & Equestrian Center)

Township: Seward

Total Acres: 252

Existing Facilities - 2939 Route 52:
- Parking: Yes
- Trails: Yes 3 miles
- Shelter: Yes 2
- Restroom: Yes (seasonal)
- V.I. Sign: Yes
- Water: No

Existing Facilities - 13986 McKanna Road, Minooka (Ellis House & Equestrian Center):
- Parking: Yes
- Trails: Yes 3 miles
- Shelter: No
- Restroom: Yes
- Water: Yes
- V.I. Sign: Yes
- Other: Equestrian facilities - stable, indoor arena, outdoor arena

Ellis House

Acquisition History:

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Baker Woods Forest Preserve consists of the Aux Sable Creek and its associated woodlands, and row crop fields. Pastures and hay fields associated with Ellis House & Equestrian Center occupy the northwest section of the preserve. A small gravel parking lot and associated amenities are located at the Route 52 entrance. Ellis House & Equestrian Center is located at the McKanna Road entrance. A multi-use trail was constructed in 2012.

The Aux Sable Creek is one of the highest-quality streams in Kendall County and northeastern Illinois. The corridor along the creek is predominately mesic maple-oak woodlands, although there are some floodplain forests along the Aux Sable. A small prairie restoration is located near the Route 52 entrance and a few ephemeral wetlands dot the woodlands each spring.
BLACKBERRY TRAIL FOREST PRESERVE

Address: Caliendo Circle, Montgomery
Township: Bristol
Total Acres: 154

Existing Facilities:

Parking: No  
Spaces: 
Trails: Yes  
Miles: 1.84  
Shelter: No  
Number: Tables:
Restroom: No  
V.I. Sign: No  
Water: No  
Other: 

Acquisition History:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acquired From</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Grants</th>
<th>Acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Montgomery Crossing LLC</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Donation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackberry Crossing LLC</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Donation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dickson</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Donation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackberry Pointe LLC</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Donation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>51.15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Blackberry Trail FP was created through a cooperative effort between the District, Village of Montgomery, and various development companies. All of the property was acquired through dedication agreements with the developers, who also paid for prairie seeding and trail construction. A partnership with the Fox Valley Park District allows access to this preserve through the adjacent Blackberry Trails Park.

This preserve creates a nearly contiguous greenway along the Blackberry Creek from the Kendall-Kane line to Galena Road. Although there are little remnant natural areas, this preserve and other adjacent open spaces shows the value of prairie restorations, naturalized stormwater detention, and greenway corridors in a highly developed landscape.
HARRIS FOREST PRESERVE

Address: 10460 Route 71, Yorkville

Township: Kendall

Total Acres: 94

Existing Facilities:
- Parking: Yes
- Spaces: ?
- Trails: Yes
- Miles: 2.67
- Shelter: Yes
- Number: 7
- Tables: ?
- Restroom: Yes
- V.I. Sign: Yes
- Water: Yes
- Other: Sled hill
- Horse arena
- Ballfield
- Maintenance buildings (2)

Acquisition History:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acquired From</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Grants</th>
<th>Acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Harris</td>
<td>1968</td>
<td>Fee Simple</td>
<td>80,900</td>
<td>40,450</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KC Recreation Assoc.</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Donation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Harris Forest Preserve is one of the most used of the Kendall County Forest Preserves. The facilities have been significantly upgraded since the late 1990s. The maintenance buildings are part of a farmstead that used to be on the site. Leifheit Lake is a man-made lake that was created in the early 1970s, with the spoils being used to form the sled hill.

The natural areas of Harris FP consist mainly of oak-maple woodlands. Recent restoration efforts have increased the herbaceous plant coverage of sizable sections of the woodlands. A number of unused former turf areas have been converted to meadows and prairies and add important habitat buffers to the woodlands. Small, intermittent streams flow through the woodlands and into Leifheit Lake.
HOOVER FOREST PRESERVE

Address: 11285 Fox Road, Yorkville
Township: Little Rock, Bristol, & Kendall
Total Acres: 393

Existing Facilities:
- Parking: Yes
- Spaces: ?
- Trails: Yes
- Miles: 6.64
- Shelter: Yes
- Number: 2
- Restroom: Yes
- V.I. Sign: No
- Water: Yes
- Other: Bunkhouses (3)
  - Meadowhawk Lodge
  - Staff residence
  - Maintenance building (2)
  - Education building (2)
  - Volunteer building
  - Group and family campsites
  - Neshnabe’k Village
  - Sled hill
  - Ballfield
  - Fox River decks (2)
  - Amphitheater

Acquisition History:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acquired From</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Grants</th>
<th>Acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chicago Area Council - Boy Scouts</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Fee Simple</td>
<td>6,394,275</td>
<td>6,119,391</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openlands</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Fee Simple</td>
<td>780,525</td>
<td>750,000</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openlands</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Fee Simple</td>
<td>7,020,524</td>
<td>5,930,538</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openlands</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Fee Simple</td>
<td>4,145,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This former Boy Scout camp is the largest and most used preserve in Kendall County. Since 2007, nearly all of the buildings and infrastructure at Hoover FP have been upgraded and renovated. Hoover FP is the central location for many of the District's environmental education programs. The preserve is also the home of the Kendall County Outdoor Education Center, which is an educational cooperative of the Regional Office of Education. These education facilities make Hoover FP the environmental education center of Kendall County.

Hoover FP possesses a deep water well, pump station, and water mains that service all of the facilities at the site. The preserve also has its own sewage treatment facility, an aerator lagoon system that is located on the west side of Hoover. A building that used to house an indoor pool currently stands vacant on the property. Five buildings formerly on the property were demolished by the District, as well as a number of non-functioning bathroom buildings.

Hoover FP has approximately 0.75 miles of Fox River frontage and the associated bluff and ravine system. Mixed mesic woodlands dominate the bluffs, while wet-mesic woodlands are found in the ravines. A number of seeps are located both on the Fox River bluffs and on the sides of the ravines. Hoover has a number of fields, mostly planted in cool season grass cover by the scouts years ago. Three areas of Hoover were planted with trees by the scouts. A former row crop field on the west side of Hoover is being restored to tallgrass prairie.
HENNEBERRY FOREST PRESERVE

Address: Cherry Road, Oswego

Township: Na-Au-Say

Total Acres: 217

Existing Facilities:

Parking: Spaces:
Trails: Miles:
Shelter: Number:
Restroom: Tables:
V.I. Sign:
Water:
Other:

 Acquisition History:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acquired From</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Grants</th>
<th>Acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Henneberry Woods LLC</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Fee Simple</td>
<td>5,312,189</td>
<td>780,000</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This site contains rolling grasslands, shrublands, and some forested areas. Approximately 100 acres are in row crop fields as of 2014. There is no direct access to Henneberry as of 2014. The grasslands and shrublands at Henneberry are uncommon in Kendall County and a number of increasingly rare bird species breed in these habitats. Future planning for Henneberry will balance public use with the breeding requirements of these species.
JAY WOODS FOREST PRESERVE

Address: 860 Creek Road, Plano

Township: Little Rock

Total Acres: 120

Existing Facilities:
- Parking: Yes
- Trails: Yes
- Shelter: Yes
- Restroom: Yes
- V.I. Sign: Yes
- Water: Yes
- Other: Overlook deck, Council ring, Corn crib

Tables: ?

Acquisition History:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acquired From</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Grants</th>
<th>Acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Conservation Foundation</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Donation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robb</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Fee Simple</td>
<td>750,000</td>
<td>750,000</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Jay Woods FP was acquired through a donation by Arlene and Dale Robb, as the property had been in Arlene's family since the 1850s. With the assistance of The Conservation Foundation and a grant, the District was able to acquire the 120 at no cost. The District repurposed the 1950s corn crib as the trail head complete with interpretive signage.

Jay Woods contains 45 acres of woodlands east of Creek Road. These woodlands contain a variety of habitat types including oak savannas, mesic woodlands, and wet-mesic woodlands. The Little Rock Creek bisects the woodlands. The 75 acres on the west side of the preserve are being restored to tallgrass prairie and also have naturalized stormwater detention areas.
LYON FOREST PRESERVE

Address: 8300 Van Emmon Road, Yorkville

Township: Bristol & Kendall

Total Acres: 44.5

Existing Facilities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility</th>
<th>Yes/No</th>
<th>Spaces/Miles/Number/Tables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parking</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trails</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restroom</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.I. Sign</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Acquisition History:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acquired From</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Grants</th>
<th>Acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lyon</td>
<td>1970</td>
<td>Donation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>44.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lyon FP contains a very diverse mixture of woodlands, seeps, fens, and tiny patches of remnant prairie. Lyon Creek bisects the preserve as it flows to meet the Fox River at the north edge of the site. Lyon FP was created when Frances Lyon donated property to the District in 1970. Mrs. Lyon also donated property to the Kendall County Historical Society that is today Lyon Farm.

Lyon FP contains narrow footpaths and links up to the Richard Young FP to the south. Although Lyon FP does not possess any public use facilities besides parking and trails, more facilities can be utilized by visitors at Young FP.
MARAMECH FOREST PRESERVE

Address: 14780 Griswold Springs Drive, Plano

Township: Little Rock

Total Acres: 92

Existing Facilities:

- Parking: Yes
- Spaces: ?
- Trails: Yes
- Miles: 0.4
- Shelter: Yes
- Number: 1
- Restroom: Yes
- V.I. Sign: Yes
- Water: Yes
- Other: Overlook deck

Acquisition History:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acquired From</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Grants</th>
<th>Acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First National Bank</td>
<td>1966</td>
<td>Fee Simple</td>
<td>56,800</td>
<td>28,400</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver</td>
<td>1968</td>
<td>Land Trade</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Maramech Forest Preserve was the first acquisition of the Kendall County Forest Preserve District, but did not have public access until the early 2000s. Much of the site is a designated Illinois Nature Preserve, identifying it as one of the highest quality sites of its type in all of Illinois. The Nature Preserve designation provides additional protections, and also restrict some uses of the site. Other sections of the site are designated as Nature Preserve buffer areas.

Maramech contains high quality northern flatwoods, an uncommon habitat that only occurs with the right combination of topography, hydrology, and soils. The flatwoods are located in a basin surrounded by wooded bluffs on three sides. The flatwoods contain a unique assemblage of wetland and mesic plant species. Management of the flatwoods is ongoing, with a major focus on keeping invasive plant species under control.
MILLBROOK SOUTH FOREST PRESERVE

Address: Fox River Drive, Millbrook

Township: Fox

Total Acres: 301

Existing Facilities:

Parking: Yes  Spaces: 15
Trails: Yes  Miles: 2.65
Shelter: No  Number: Tables: 1
Restroom: No  V.I. Sign: No
Water: No  Other:

Acquisition History:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acquired From</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Grants</th>
<th>Acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lee</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Fee Simple</td>
<td>21,000,000</td>
<td>6,176,400</td>
<td>301</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This preserve stretches for nearly one mile along the Fox River. The site contains high quality mesic woodlands, seeps, oak savanna, and a fen. Approximately 70 acres of tallgrass prairie are being restored. Millbrook South and Millbrook North were acquired from the same property owner, preserving over 600 acres and 1.75 miles of Fox River frontage in the largest acquisition by the District.
RICHARD YOUNG FOREST PRESERVE

Address: 8225 Route 71, Yorkville

Township: Bristol & Kendall

Total Acres: 130

Existing Facilities:

- Parking: Yes  Spaces: ?
- Trails: Yes  Miles: 1.55
- Shelter: Yes  Number: 2  Tables: ?
- Restroom: Yes
- V.I. Sign: Yes
- Water: Yes
- Other: Overlook deck  Council ring

Acquisition History:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acquired From</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Grants</th>
<th>Acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cole Taylor Bank</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Fee Simple</td>
<td>770,000</td>
<td>388,500</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Killian</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Fee Simple</td>
<td>804,250</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The core area of the Richard Young FP was the first major acquisition by the District in nearly 25 years and ushered in a new era of preserving open space. The preserve has surprising topography and a diverse assemblage of habitats, including mesic woodlands, wet-mesic woodlands, seeps, and restored prairies.

Young FP is bordered on the north by Lyon FP. Lyon Creek meanders through both preserves on its way to the Fox River. Young FP is named for lifelong Kendall County resident Richard Young, who was instrumental in preserving many natural areas in the Fox River valley and beyond.
SUBAT FOREST PRESERVE

Address: 4845 Eldamain Road, Plano

Township: Little Rock

Total Acres: 68

Existing Facilities:

- Parking: Yes
- Spacing: ?
- Trails: Yes
- Miles: 0.98
- Shelter: Yes
- Number: 1
- Restrooms: Yes
- Water: Yes
- V.I. Sign: Yes
- Other: Overlook deck
- Tables: ?

Acquisition History:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acquired From</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Grants</th>
<th>Acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subat</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Fee Simple</td>
<td>692,111</td>
<td>506,800</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County of Kendall</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Donation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Subat FP contains oak savanna, mesic woodlands, sedge meadow wetlands, restored tallgrass prairie, and the Rob Roy Creek. The preserve is named for John and Mary Subat, who sold the property at under fair market value and made several substantial financial donations to the District.
SHUH SHUH GAH CANOE LAUNCH

Address: 7488 Valley Lane, Millbrook

Township: Fox

Total Acres: 3.5

Existing Facilities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility</th>
<th>Available</th>
<th>Spaces</th>
<th>Miles</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Tables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parking</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trails</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restroom</td>
<td>Seasonal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.I. Sign</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Canoe launch</td>
<td>Steel truss Fox River bridge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Acquisition History:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acquired From</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Grants</th>
<th>Acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3rd Order of St. Francis</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Fee Simple</td>
<td>89,293</td>
<td>89,293</td>
<td>0.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Fee Simple</td>
<td>30,972</td>
<td>30,972</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soulsby</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Fee Simple</td>
<td>77,828</td>
<td>77,828</td>
<td>0.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fox Township</td>
<td></td>
<td>Donation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1.15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Shuh Shuh Gah is located on the Fox River and is composed primarily of parcels acquired through the FEMA buy-out program following the incredible flood of 1996. Although there is little in the way of natural areas at the site, it does provide public access to the Fox River, which is limited south of Silver Springs State Park.

Also on this site and owned by the District is the historic Millbrook Bridge. This steel truss bridge dates to 1897 and while in need of repairs, promises to be a vital recreational link in the future.
4. Capital Projects

a. Overview
Since 2007 the Kendall County Forest Preserve District has completed a significant capital project program. Using funds from the 2007 Open Space Referendum and numerous grants, these capital projects have opened many new acres of Forest Preserve lands to the public, significantly upgraded facilities at existing preserves, enhanced visitor experiences, and restored natural areas (see Appendix ?).

However, the Forest Preserve District continues to have undeveloped properties that have little to no public access. The District will also continue to pursue acquisition of land in the future. All of these properties will eventually require capital projects in order to provide public access and preserve natural resources.

As a conservation organization, the Forest Preserve District is committed to environmentally sensitive and sustainable projects. Several District projects have included environmentally sensitive components such as using recycled materials, protecting natural areas from construction, and utilizing solar and geothermal power.

b. Preserve Maps

c. Preserve Capital Projects

d. Goals & Objectives
i. Develop standardized construction details for use in the District’s capital projects.
ii. Solicit public input for capital projects.
iii. Develop concept plans, cost estimates, and construction documents for capital projects as needed.
iv. Apply for and utilize grants to maximize capital project funds.
v. Develop a land use classification system to guide the location of capital improvements and protection of natural resources on District lands.
vi. Partner with other government agencies, non-profit organizations, businesses, and the public on the acquisition of multipurpose trail corridors and the construction of such trails.
vii. Partner with the Illinois Department of Transportation and other agencies on the construction and maintenance of multipurpose trails along state routes in Kendall County. Formally accept maintenance of such trails as feasible.
viii. Abide by Kendall County Building and Zoning Department codes and regulations for applicable capital projects.

e. Priority Plan – Group capital projects into A/B/C priorities so that there is some sort of hierarchy of projects moving forward.
Keep it general, ‘vision’ instead of ‘plan’

Create list of what is typical in all preserves – parking, bathroom, signage, etc.

List of items that the District would like add in general (not necessarily specific to a site)

“These projects subject to capital funding availability and funding for operations and maintenance...”
5. Land Acquisition

a. Overview

Shortly after the Kendall County Forest Preserve District was created in 1964, it began to acquire property. A short flurry of purchases and donations ended in 1970 with the District owning just over 260 acres. Two of the early land purchases (Maramech Forest Preserve and Harris Forest Preserve) were partially funded by grants from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. A long land acquisition drought followed however, with the only property acquired between 1970 and 1992 being 8 donated acres.

In 1994 the District made its first significant purchase in nearly two and one-half decades with the acquisition of the Richard Young Forest Preserve, which was partially funded by a grant from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. Although it would be a few years before additional large tract acquisitions were made, the public discussions surrounding the purchase of Young FP showed that Kendall County residents were stirring to the idea of a much more active Forest Preserve District.

From the late 1990s into the early 2000s, the population of Kendall County was booming. With one of the fastest growing populations in the nation, many Kendall County residents were interested in seeing open space and natural areas preserved. In 2003, Kendall County voters approved a $5 million open space bond referendum providing the Forest Preserve District with, for the first time in its history, significant dollars to acquire open space. With the aid of grants and donations, the District acquired nearly 500 acres from 2003 to 2006. These acquisitions nearly doubled the size of the Forest Preserve District.

As the county population continued to grow at unprecedented levels, voters approved a $45 million open space bond referendum in 2007. Between 2007 and late 2013 the District acquired more than 1830 acres, nearly tripling its holdings. (Numerous capital improvement projects were also completed using bond funds from the 2007 referendum). The District also secured close to $8 million in land acquisition grant funding from 2007 to 2013.

As of late 2013, the District has limited land acquisition dollars available between remaining bond referendum and Land-Cash Ordinance funds.

b. Land Acquisition Evaluation Process
The District becomes aware of potential acquisitions in several ways:
1. The District contacts a landowner directly to determine if there is interest to sell property. If there is no interest, the District does not pursue any further.
2. Landowner or real estate agent contacts the District regarding an available property.
3. Resident informs the District of an available property.
4. District works with other government agencies, non-profits, and developers on preservation of open space.

Once a property is determined to be available, information regarding the property is gather by staff and presented to the Board of Commissioners. Included in this information will be the Land Acquisition Worksheet (Appendix ?) that will assist the commissioners in evaluating the property based on its physical characteristics. Other factors including, but not limited to price, threats to the property, and grant requirements will be considered by the commissioners when making land acquisition decisions.

(Land acq guidelines?)

Forest Preserve Commissioners, through staff, negotiate the purchase of property. When agreements are reached with a landowner, the Forest Preserve Commission approves an Acquisition Ordinance providing the officers and staff the authority to carry out necessary due diligence and to complete the acquisition.

The District utilizes fee simple purchases for the majority of its acquisitions. The District has acquired property via donations, dedication agreements with developers, partnerships with non-profits, and the Kendall County Land-Cash Ordinance.

Funding for land acquisition comes from a variety of sources including open space bond referendums, state and federal grants, and the Kendall County Land-Cash Ordinance.

c. History and Maps
   Chart – complete
   2003 & 2007 referendum maps - GIS
d. Land Acquisition Goals & Objectives
   • Apply for and utilize grants whenever possible to maximize land acquisition funds.
   • Create a list of high priority potential acquisition sites.
   • Consider a future open space acquisition bond referendum.
   • Utilize the Natural Treasures of Kendall County Plan as a guide for natural area and open space acquisitions.
   • Expand existing preserves, especially those with limited opportunities for expansion or those with limited access.
   • Create and implement land acquisition procedures to streamline acquisition process.
   • Increase public awareness regarding land preservation efforts.
   • Create greenway corridors along the Fox River and the significant creeks of Kendall County.
   • Work in partnership with other governmental agencies, non-profit organizations, and private citizens to maximize open space acquisition and preservation.
   • Educate landowners on the benefits of land donations.
   • Educate landowners and attorneys on the potential benefits and values of conservation easements.
   • Educate landowners and attorneys on the variety of financial and estate planning techniques that can result in open space preservation.
   • Work in partnership with the Kendall County Planning, Building and Zoning Department, municipalities, and developers on conservation design as a means for the preservation of open space.
### Table 3-1  
**Acquisition History - Kendall County Forest Preserve District**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>Type of Acquisition</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Funding</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>Maramech</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>Fee Simple</td>
<td>56,800</td>
<td>HUD&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<td>Maramech</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>1992</td>
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<td>1999</td>
<td>Shuh Shuh Gah</td>
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<td>OLT&lt;sup&gt;6&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>140</td>
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<td>ICECF&lt;sup&gt;8&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>Year</td>
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<td>Unit</td>
<td>Type</td>
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<td>Henneberry</td>
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<td>2010</td>
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<td>2010</td>
<td>Reservation Woods</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>Fee Simple</td>
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<td>2012</td>
<td>Tucker-Millington Fen</td>
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<td>Fee Simple</td>
<td>4,532,000</td>
<td>2007 Bonds</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Department of Housing and Urban Development  
2 Open Space Land Acquisition and Development; Illinois Department of Natural Resources  
3 Bike Path; Illinois Department of Transportation  
4 Hazard Mitigation Grant; Federal Emergency Management Agency  
5 C2000; Illinois Department of Natural Resources  
6 Open Land Trust; Illinois Department of Natural Resources  
7 Department of Commerce & Community Affairs  
8 National Park Service  
9 Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation  
10 Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity
Land Acquisition Worksheet

Decisions made regarding land acquisition are the responsibility of the Board of Commissioners of the Kendall County Forest Preserve District. This worksheet is meant to assist the board, along with staff recommendations and resident input, in the land acquisition process. Other factors including, but not limited to, price, threats to the property, needs of the District, and grant requirements will also be considered by the commissioners when making land acquisition decisions.

This worksheet is numerically based, with a high score indicating a property with high value as preserved open space. For each quality that a parcel possesses, it receives the corresponding score. The total score can then be compared with scores of other parcels in order to evaluate the properties as potential forest preserves.

Preserving Natural Features:
High Quality Natural Area (prairie, wetland, woodland, stream) 12
Fox Riverfront Property 12
Linkage Between Protected Open Spaces 8
Streams/Lakes/Ponds 8
Expansion of Current Forest Preserve 4
Presence of Endangered or Threatened Species 4
Significant Geologic Features 4
100 acres or larger 4

Subtotal 56

Recreation and Education Potential:
Multi-purpose Trails 12
Nature Trails 8
Water/Fishing/Canoe Access 4
Picnic Areas/High Use Areas 4
Preserve Access/Parking 4

Subtotal 32

Complement Existing Plans:
Protect Kendall Now 8
Kendall County Land Resource Management Plan or Watershed Plan or Municipal/Park District Plan or Trail Plan 4

Subtotal 12

Total 100
PROCEDURES FOR THE ACQUISITION OF INTERESTS IN REAL ESTATE

WHEREAS, the Statutes of the State of Illinois provide that forest preserve districts shall "have the power to acquire lands in fee simple within such districts for the purpose of protecting and preserving the flora and fauna and scenic beauties within such district, and to restore, restock, protect, and preserve the natural forests and such lands together with their flora and fauna, as nearly as may be, in their natural state and condition, for the purpose of the education, pleasure, and recreation of the public", and

WHEREAS, a goal of the Kendall County Forest Preserve District is to "acquire and hold lands containing forests, prairies, wetlands, streams and other natural areas in order to preserve the flora, fauna and scenic beauties of Kendall County for the enjoyment of county residents and future generations", and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners of the Kendall County Forest Preserve District desires to give clear direction for the acquisition of such land.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the President and the Board of Commissioners of the Kendall County Forest Preserve District, as follows:

I. INTRODUCTION

These Procedures provide a chronological guideline to be followed when acquiring interests in real estate. Acquisition of fee simple real estate is preferred, but less than fee simple may be considered to achieve the goals of and acquisition project. This may include long term leases, deferred payment programs, first options, life estate consideration, management agreements, and conservation easements. In addition, public and private grant programs and joint purchases with local, state, and federal governmental agencies will be pursued as other methods of accomplishing an acquisition project.

II. LAND ACQUISITION PROCEDURES

Listed chronologically with responsibility as indicated. Terms used to indicate responsibility shall be defined as follows:

“Staff” means the Forest Preserve Director;

“Attorney” means the State’s Attorney or other specific legal counsel as assigned by the Board of Commissioners;

“Agent” means an individual or organization utilized by the District specifically for land acquisition;
“Board” means the Board of Commissioners of the Forest Preserve District.

Legal work for the acquisition in interests of real estate will be handled by the Attorney. Legal work will include, but not be limited to, review and clearing of titles to property to be acquired, preparation of real estate purchase contracts, and all closing documents and proceedings. Additional legal counsel may be hired to expedite proceedings or to handle special circumstances. Selection of additional legal counsels will be made and approved by Board based on recommendations of Attorney and/or Staff.

A. LAND ACQUISITION PLANS

1. PARCEL LIST: Staff prepares a list of all parcels desired to be acquired within an approved acquisition project. Parcels are to be delineated by ownership and may include one or more Permanent Index Numbers (P.I.N.s) as assigned by the Kendall County Supervisor of Assessments. A record shall be developed and maintained by Staff of all pertinent information concerning a specific parcel. Any action taken concerning a parcel by Staff, Attorney, Agent, or Board is also recorded and kept by Staff.

2. RESOLUTION - AUTHORIZATION TO NEGOTIATE FOR PURCHASE OF PROPERTY: Staff will present a resolution authorizing Staff, Attorney, Agent, and Board to negotiate for the purchase of all parcels included in approved acquisition project(s). The resolution shall have an attachment with a list of independent contractors to include: (1) appraiser, (2) title commitment, (3) surveyor, and (4) attorney. The resolution is presented to the Board for approval and adoption. Adoption by the Board authorizes Staff, Attorney, Agent, and Board to gather all necessary information and to negotiate for purchase of indicated parcels.

3. INITIAL OWNER CONTACT: After approval of the Resolution to Negotiate, Staff will contact all of the suspected landowners of parcels included in an approved acquisition project. Initial contact will be in the form of a certified letter, sent “return receipt requested.” The letter will state that the Forest Preserve District is interested in acquiring specific parcels of land and that the District is interested in discussing the project with the landowner. The landowner will also be notified that:

   a. If parcel is held in a trust, all beneficiaries of the trust must be disclosed to the Forest Preserve District prior to purchase
of the parcel and must be reviewed by Board on an individual basis.

b. Parcels which have changed ownership since the Resolution to Negotiate date of approval must be reviewed by the Board on an individual basis.

4. MEETING WITH LANDOWNER: District Staff, Attorney, Agent, and/or Board shall meet with the landowner to discuss willingness of landowner to sell identified parcel(s) to the District. Landowner will be made aware of options including, but not limited to, fee simple purchase, bargain sale, first options, life estates, conservation easements, long term leases, deferred payment programs, and donations. Landowner will also be informed of commitments for title insurance and an appraisal of fair market value that the District will obtain for the identified parcel(s), as well as any grant considerations connected with the project. Landowner will be made aware that District will pay for commitments for title insurance, appraisal, and a final plat of survey, if necessary. Landowner will be made aware of responsibility to furnish the Environmental Disclosure Document required by the Responsible Property Transfer Act.

5. INFORMATION NECESSARY TO NEGOTIATE: Prior to negotiations, independent contractors shall be employed to provide commitments for title insurance and an appraisal for each parcel to be acquired. Selection of these contractors and specific work assignments are made through the Resolution to Negotiate authorizing negotiations for the purchase of property. Specific information shall include:

a. Commitments for title insurance are purchased for each parcel. The commitment indicates exact ownership, existing recorded easements, conveyances, or restrictions, and guarantees insurability of title once acquired. Copies of commitments for title insurance are forwarded to the Attorney upon receipt. Any unusual conditions on the title that are uncovered by the search are dealt with immediately by the Attorney before proceeding. Commitment for title insurance will be completed prior to authorizing an appraisal of the property.

c. An appraisal of fair market value is prepared for each parcel. Appraisals shall determine a fair market value of the property using the Market Data Approach. Appraisals
will indicate the value of the property in terms of per acre cost with a projected total cost based on estimated acreage. Completed appraisals are reviewed by the District and any inconsistencies or deficiencies are addressed immediately. This may require additional work by the appraiser, or in some cases, a second appraisal may be warranted.

6. **NEGOTIATIONS TO PURCHASE:** After receiving and reviewing all information necessary to negotiate, Staff and Attorney will begin actual negotiations to purchase. Staff makes an initial written offer to purchase for less than the appraisal value. The written offer is sent in the form of a certified letter, sent “return receipt requested.” The written offer is made on a per acre basis with a projected total price. Final cost is calculated on actual acreage acquired as determined by the final plat of survey. Landowner is given a minimum of ten (10) working days to respond to the offer. Actions taken by the District will be determined by the landowner’s response to the written offer.

   a. **Owner Response - Interested in Selling at Offered Price:** Attorney prepares a “Contract to Purchase Real Estate,” sends to landowner with instructions for landowner to sign and return; Attorney reviews and approves contract.

      i. Staff prepares and submits a resolution to acquire property to Board. Resolution includes per acre cost, projected total acreage, tentative legal description, and total cost.

      ii. Board reviews and considers resolution to acquire and authorizes Staff and Attorney to complete acquisition.

   b. **Owner Response - Interested in Selling, but not at Offered Price:** District negotiates with landowner in an attempt to determine a purchase price agreeable to both sides.

      i. If negotiations are successful, a land sales contract is prepared by Attorney, based on results of negotiations.

         (a). Staff prepares and submits a resolution to acquire property to Board. Resolution includes per acre cost, projected total
acreage, tentative legal description, and total cost.

(b). Board reviews and considers resolution to acquire and (1) authorizes Staff and Attorney to complete acquisition or (2) considers alteration of offer and instructs further negotiations.

ii. If negotiations are unsuccessful the Board reviews project.

(a). Board considers alteration of offer and instructs further negotiations; or

(b). Board considers eminent domain proceedings. Two-thirds affirmative vote of Board members present is necessary to adopt. If adopted, Board authorizes Attorney to proceed.

(c). Board terminates negotiations.

c. **Owner Response - Interested in Selling but has Special Request or Circumstances:** Special circumstances include, but are not limited to, partial take, additional take, life estate, lease request, and deferred payment programs.

i. District will negotiate with landowner in an effort to satisfy all parties and establish an acceptable contract. An amended “Contract for Purchase of Real Estate” shall be reviewed by Attorney. Staff prepares and submits a resolution to acquire property to Board. Resolution includes per acre cost, projected total acreage, tentative legal description, and total cost.

ii. If resolution is acceptable, Board authorizes Staff and Attorney to complete acquisition.

iii. If resolution is not acceptable, Board

(a). considers alteration of offer; or
(b). instructs Staff to restate original offer, allow a minimum of ten (10) additional working days for response; or

(c). Board considers eminent domain proceeding. Two-thirds affirmative vote of Board members present is necessary to adopt. If adopted, Board authorizes Attorney to proceed.

(d). Board terminates negotiations.

d. **Owner Response - Not Interested in Selling:** Board reviews project.

i. Instructs Staff to send second certified letter to landowner, sent “return receipt requested,” restating the original or amended offer, and allowing a minimum of ten (10) additional working days for response. Board may also instruct Staff to advise landowner of the District’s eminent domain power.

ii. If positive response is received from landowner, District negotiates as specified in previous steps. If a “Contract of Purchase of Real Estate” can be finalized, Staff presents a resolution to acquire the parcel to Board.

iii. If landowner continues to be not interested in selling, Board considers altering offer, terminating negotiations, or considers eminent domain procedures. Two-thirds affirmative vote of the Board members present is necessary to adopt. If adopted, Board authorizes Attorney to proceed.

e. **No response from Owner:** Staff sends second certified letter, sent “return receipt requested”, restating original offer, allowing a minimum of ten (10) additional working days for a response.

i. If response is received, District negotiates as indicated in previous steps.
ii. If no response is received, Attorney institutes court proceedings to identify landowner so that proper negotiations may take place.

Landowner may request that the District use power of eminent domain for a ‘friendly condemnation.’ Board will consider these requests on a case by case basis.

B. UNSOLICITED REQUESTS TO SELL OR DONATE PROPERTY OR EASEMENTS TO THE DISTRICT

There will be times when Staff is asked to review parcels which are not part of a District acquisition plan. These requests may come from landowners, other governmental agencies, Board members, etc., requesting that the District purchase, accept donation or easement, or otherwise assist in the preservation of the parcels.

Staff, Agent, and Attorney may gather whatever information is required to prepare a report and recommendation on the property. Staff, Agent, and Attorney may enter into discussions with landowner in order to assist them in presenting their request, and in preparing contracts, easements, etc. to submit to the Board. The Board will then decide whether or not to approve the proposal.

C. COMPLETION OF ACQUISITION

Once authorized by Board, Staff and Attorney will schedule, prepare, and secure all documents necessary to complete acquisition.

1. Prior to actual closing, Staff will be responsible for securing:
   
   (a). Final Plat of Survey indicating legal description, property measurements, and actual acreage to be acquired or placed in easement;
   
   (b). Phase I Environmental Assessment, if appropriate.

2. Prior to actual closing, Attorney will be responsible for securing:
   
   (a). All documents necessary to complete acquisition, schedule closing, and carry out actual closing transaction;
   
   (b). Title Insurance Policy purchased in the amount of the agreed upon purchase price. This policy is purchased prior
to purchase payment. This would not be required for easements.

3. Seller or grantor will provide:

   (a). Copies of all recorded or unrecorded leases, licenses, easements, options, or any other encumbrances;

   (b). Signed and recorded copies of the Responsible Property.

D. AFTER COMPLETION OF ACQUISITION

Staff will file application with the appropriate governmental agency to receive tax exempt status on all properties purchased.

Passed this _____ day of ______________, 20___

SIGNED:

____________________
____________________, President

ATTEST:

____________________
____________________, Secretary
6. Management & Administration

A. Organization

i. Overview
The Kendall County Forest Preserve District is governed by a 10-member Board of Commissioners. The Board of Commissioners elects a President, Vice-President, and Secretary, each of which serves a two year term. The Forest Preserve Director reports to the President and the Board of Commissioners.

The Board of Commissioners is responsible for understanding and meeting the open space needs of Kendall County residents as they pertain to the Forest Preserve District. Through its actions and policies, the Board of Commissioners preserves natural areas and open space, manages natural resources, offers environmental education programming, and provides recreational facilities to the public.

To conduct the business of the Forest Preserve District, the Board of Commissioners has several meetings and committees, each with certain functions.

- Forest Preserve District Board of Commissioners – These meetings are held twice monthly, consist of all ten commissioners, and are chaired by the President. Final approval for ordinances, claims, land acquisition, policies, budgets, levies, and contracts is granted at the Forest Preserve District Board of Commissioners meeting.
- Forest Preserve Committee – This committee meets once per month, consists of all ten commissioners, and is chaired by the President. Typically, most items of business are discussed and vetted at the Forest Preserve Committee meeting before being forwarded to the Board of Commissioners meeting.
- Forest Preserve Finance Committee – This committee meets twice monthly, consists of five commissioners appointed by the President, and is chaired by a commissioner selected by the President. All claims are vetted by this committee and forwarded to the Board of Commissioners for final payment approval. The Finance Committee also oversees preparation of the annual budget and tax levy ordinances.
- Special Facilities Committee – This committee meets once per month, consists of 5 commissioners appointed by the President, and is chaired by a commissioner selected by the President. The Special Facilities
Committee oversees items pertaining to Ellis House and to Meadowhawk Lodge.

- Planning Advisory Committee – This committee meets annually or as needed, consists of a combination of X commissioners appointed by the President, and X members of the public appointed by the President. The Planning Committee provides input on long-term projects, reviews the Forest Preserve District's Master Plan on an annual basis, and reviews the District’s annual report.

The Forest Preserve Director is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of the District, and to implement the actions and policies of the Board of Commissioners.

The main offices of the Kendall County Forest Preserve District are located in the Kendall County Historic Courthouse, 110 West Madison Street, Yorkville, Il 60560

ii. Commission Organizational Chart – complete

iii. Staff Organization Chart – complete

iv. District Guidelines – not complete

B. Administration

i. Overview
The District performs a wide variety of administrative duties typical of a governmental open space agency. Many of these tasks are internal including human resource duties, staff coordination, and project administration. Other administrative duties involve the public and the Board of Commissioners.

Many administrative duties are performed by the Forest Preserve Director, but many staff members also have significant administrative responsibilities.

ii. Activities
a. Collect all employee timesheets and process pay vouchers for part-time employees.

c. Schedule and track mandatory employee trainings.

d. Conduct employee evaluations.

e. Maintain employee files.

f. Provide information as needed to Kendall County Treasurer's Office and Kendall County Administrative Services regarding human resource issues.

g. Create and post meeting agendas, packets, and minutes.

h. Process accounts payable and accounts receivable.

i. Process facility rental permits and program registration forms.


k. Coordinate District staff, operations, and projects.

l. Coordinate with county departments, outside organizations, and the public as needed.

iii. Goals & Objectives

a. Update, create, and administer policies that promote efficient operations and adhere to legal requirements.

b. Develop, review, and update job descriptions as needed.


d. Provide training and equipment that promotes a safe working environment for District staff.

e. Encourage public input, participation, and feedback.

f. Create and distribute an annual report for the District.

g. Review the District's Master Plan on an annual basis.

C. Community Affairs

i. Overview

Communicating with the public is a critical component of the operations of the Kendall County Forest Preserve District. As the District is a public agency, it is paramount to produce and disseminate information about the District to residents.

The Kendall County Forest Preserve District utilizes a variety of print and electronic platforms to provide information about the facilities, programs, and accomplishments of the District. While there is more to be done, in recent years the District has greatly expanded its ability to communicate with the public. Traditional sources such as a newsletter, flyers, and press
releases have been combined with electronic communications to distribute information in ways that are relevant to the public.

ii. Activities
   a. Produce and distribute quarterly newsletter to approximately 5,000 households via mail and email.
   b. Produce and distribute X press releases annually promoting District programs and events.
   c. Produce and distribute maps, brochures, and flyers promoting District programs and facilities.
   d. Maintain two Facebook pages that promote District programs and facilities.
   e. Maintain three email lists to provide the public with information on specific programs of the District.
   f. Respond to resident inquiries via phone, email, and in person.

iii. Goals & Objectives
   a. Continuously promote District sites, programs, and accomplishments.
   b. Produce and update appropriate newsletters, brochures, flyers, maps, and electronic platforms.
   c. Encourage public input, participation, and feedback.
   d. Utilize media to promote District facilities, programs, and accomplishments.
   e. Provide public presentations and informational sessions as needed.
   f. Evaluate the potential of an online facility reservation system.
   g. Continue to evaluate and utilize new electronic platforms of communicating information.
   h. Partner with applicable groups and organizations to promote District sites, programs, and accomplishments.
7. Finances & Budget

a. Overview
The Kendall County Forest Preserve District seeks to maintain and enhance sound fiscal practices and policies regarding collection of revenues, purchasing, contracts, payroll, auditing, insurance, investments, and reporting.

The District currently utilizes the payroll, accounts receivable, accounts payable, and accounting systems of Kendall County. The Kendall County Treasurer is appointed every two years to serve as the Treasurer of the District.

The District maintains a general operating fund, capital funds, and special projects funds. The District’s Investment Policy guides how and where these funds are invested.

The Kendall County Forest Preserve District utilizes a variety of sources for funding operating expenses, land acquisition, capital projects, and programming. Many funding sources have restrictions on how they can be allocated or are sporadic in their availability.

Property Tax Levy
The yearly operating expenses of the District are funded predominately by a property tax levy. Expenses typically paid with property tax revenue include salaries, utilities, preserve maintenance, public programming, small equipment purchases, equipment maintenance, office supplies, and insurance. The Downstate Forest Preserve Act prohibits property tax revenue collected for operating expenses from being used for the outright purchase of property. Property taxes collected that are to be used for operating expenses are deposited in the general fund budget.

The Property Tax Extension Limitation Law (PTELL) determines the amount of revenue that can be generated by the property tax levy for operating expenses.

Land-Cash Ordinance
The Kendall County Land-Cash Ordinance requires that new residential developments provide for the open space needs of residents through either a dedication of property to the District or cash in lieu of land. Revenue generated through the Land-Cash Ordinance can be used for land acquisition and preserve development.

The Kendall County Land-Cash Ordinance applies only to those developments that occur in unincorporated Kendall County. Residential developments within
municipal boundaries are governed by the ordinances of that municipality and do not generate revenues for the District.

Revenues collected from the Land-Cash Ordinance are deposited by the Treasurer into a Land-Cash account.

**Bonding Authority**
The District possesses two types of bonding authority that can generate revenue for land acquisition, preserve improvements, and capital equipment purchases. Both types of bonds are repaid through property tax revenue. Non-referendum bonding authority allows the District to issue a limited number of bonds determined by outstanding bond debt and interest rates. The Forest Preserve District Commission controls non-referendum bonding authority.

Referendum bonding authority allows the District to issue bonds for an amount not to exceed the statutory debt limit of the District. County residents, who can approve or disapprove of a referendum placed on the ballot by the District Commission, control referendum bonding authority.

**Grants**
The District has been awarded a number of grants from a variety of state agencies, federal agencies, and private foundations in recent years. While the vast majority of grants have been secured for land acquisition and capital improvements, grants have been utilized for staffing, programming, and natural areas management. The District retains a grant administrator who assists with grant planning and writes grant proposals.

**Program and Facility Rental Fees**
The District charges fees for certain programming and rental facilities. These fees help to offset the operational costs to provide the programming and to maintain the facilities. Program and facility rental fees are deposited into the District's general fund budget.

**Farm License Revenue**
The District has farm licenses agreements for several properties that have been acquired in recent years. Farm license revenues are deposited in the District's general fund budget.

b. Activities
   1. Collect, track, and deposit program and facility rental fees.
   2. Collect, track, and deposit farm license revenue.
3. Collect, track, and deposit grant revenue.
4. Receive and process accounts payable.
5. Develop annual general fund budget, annual capital budget, and tax levy.
6. Obtain quotes for goods, services, and projects as needed.
7. Request proposals for professional services as needed.
8. Provide local, state, and federal agencies with necessary financial reports.

c. Goals & Objectives
1. Continue to review and improve the process and format of the annual general fund budget and capital budget.
2. Continue to review and improve multi-year budgeting for operations and capital expenditures.
3. Review and improve the District's investment policy as necessary.
4. Develop and institute new ways to gather and review pertinent financial information from District operations.
5. Maintain and improve standards for obtaining quotes and bids for goods, services, and projects.
6. Review District insurance purchased through Kendall County for value and cost. Determine the financial and operational effects of the District purchasing insurance coverage separate from Kendall County.
7. Review and implement recommendations of auditor as warranted.
8. Analyze need, cost and benefit to hire financial staff.
10. Investigate and evaluate alternate revenue streams.
11. Investigate potential for an open space bond referendum.
12. Investigate potential for creating tax levies specific to employee retirement, Medicare, and insurance.
13. Partner with applicable government agencies, non-profit organization, and businesses on cost saving and increased revenue initiatives.
8. Operations & Programming

a. Grounds & Natural Resources Department
   i. Overview
      The Grounds & Natural Resources Department is responsible for maintaining all of the facilities and natural areas of the District. This department is led by the Superintendent of Grounds and Natural Resources and is housed mainly at Harris Forest Preserve. Hoover Forest Preserve and Ellis House & Equestrian Center also have maintenance equipment and facilities specific to those sites.

      The Grounds & Natural Resources Department provides visitors with a quality experience through a high standard of maintenance, cleanliness, and service. The department is also charged with performing natural areas management projects in the District woodlands, prairies, and wetlands.

      Currently, the District has no staff specifically dedicated to natural resources work. While the Grounds & Natural Resources staff performs a variety of natural areas management projects each year, the District is limited in its ability to have a focused natural areas management program on a year round basis.

      The Grounds & Natural Resources staff also maintains the District’s vehicles and capital equipment. The department possesses several trucks, trailers, mowers, and tractors. In the future, the department will require additional equipment in order to perform its duties safely and more efficiently.

   ii. Activities
      a. Maintains x acres of turf grass.
      b. Maintains 22.5 miles of trails.
      c. Maintains 17 picnic shelters, 23 campsites, and two baseball fields.
      d. Maintains 7 wells, sewage treatment lagoon, 2 septic fields, and 8 restroom buildings.
      e. Maintains 3 bunkhouses, 2 multipurpose event buildings, an education building, horse stable, indoor riding arena, and two outdoor riding arenas.
      f. Maintains various maintenance, storage, and ancillary structures.
      g. Open and close preserves daily.
      h. Interacts with preserve visitors.
i. Prepares rental facilities for use by the public.

j. Performs natural areas management.

k. Maintains the District's equipment.

l. Assists other departments.

m. Coordinate sheriff's patrols.

iii. Goals & Objectives

a. Keep the grounds and facilities of the District to a high standard of maintenance and cleanliness.

b. Maintain District facilities for the use and safety of the public, and for protection of natural resources.

c. Provide positive interactions with the public.

d. Maintain District equipment and vehicles.

e. Coordinate with the District's volunteer programs to assist with achieving goals and objectives.

f. Partner with other agencies, community groups, and youth groups to assist with achieving goals and objectives.

g. Continue to develop and implement a preventative maintenance schedule for District facilities and equipment.

h. Maintain the natural resources of the District through management and restoration projects.

i. Create natural areas maps and natural areas management plans for the preserves.

j. Encourage public input, participation, and feedback.

k. Evaluate the need and opportunity to hire staff specific to natural resources.

l. Evaluate additional capital equipment purchases for efficiency and employee safety.

m. Evaluate sheriff's patrols, employee safety, and public safety.

n. Evaluate the ability of Harris Forest Preserve to be a viable Grounds & Natural Resources center of operations in the future.

b. Environmental Education Department

i. Overview

The Environmental Education Department is responsible for creating and implementing a wide variety of educational programs offered by the District. The department is led by the Supervisor of Environmental Education and is based out of the main District offices in the Kendall County Historic Courthouse. The Laws of Nature Center located in the Historic Courthouse, and The Rookery building and Neshnabe'k Native
American Village at Hoover Forest Preserve are administered by the Environmental Education Department.

Like other sections of the District, the Environmental Education Department has grown dramatically in recent years. The numbers of summer camps, school programs, recurring programs, and seasonal programs have expanded as public demand for these environmental education offerings has increased. The department also recently initiated an early childhood learning program that operates concurrently with the school year.

The Kendall County Outdoor Education Center (KCOEC) is located at Hoover Forest Preserve, but is not operated by the Forest Preserve District. Administered by the Regional Office of Education, the KCOEC is a cooperative of school districts that bus students to Hoover for outdoor education programming. The KCOEC also does various other programs throughout the year, includes several cooperative efforts with the District.

ii. Activities
   a. Conducts # summer camps.
   b. Conducts programming for # of school groups.
   c. Conducts # of recurring programs.
   d. Conducts # of seasonal/one time programs.
   e. Conducts Natural Beginnings Early Childhood program.
   f. Partners with other agencies to conduct large programs and events.
   g. Maintains exhibits in the Laws of Nature Center.
   h. Maintains accession records for the Laws of Nature Center.
   i. With the Grounds & Natural Resources Department, maintains the Neshnabe’k Native American Village and Rookery building.
   j. Coordinates Hoover Volunteer Program.
   k. Assists with production of the District’s quarterly newsletter.
   l. Promotes environmental education programming via Facebook, email, flyers, events, and print media.

iii. Goals & Objectives
   a. Continue to develop and offer a variety of quality environmental education programs and events to residents.
   b. Communicate environmental education programs and events to residents via print, electronic, and other appropriate formats.
   c. Operate environmental education facilities to a high standard of maintenance, cleanliness, and safety.
d. Encourage public input, participation, and feedback.
e. Update interpretive signage in the preserves as needed.
f. Continue to develop the Hoover Volunteer Program to assist with programming and facilities.
g. Continue to develop and strengthen partnerships with traditional and non-traditional educators.
h. Participate in applicable environmental education organizations.
i. Evaluate potential online registration capability.
j. Evaluate expenses and revenues of programs on a regular basis.
k. Evaluate the location of the Laws of Nature Center as a viable, long-term education site.

c. Ellis House & Equestrian Center

i. Overview

The Ellis House & Equestrian Center location was acquired in 2008 and consists of 45 acres. Ellis is part of the 240 acre Baker Woods Forest Preserve that is located south and west of the house and stable. Ellis was opened in the summer of 2009.

Ellis House & Equestrian Center has two main centers of operations, house rentals and equestrian activities, although there is significant overlap between the two. House rentals involve the house, event tent, and the grounds immediately surrounding the house. Operations related to rentals are administered by the Event Coordinator.

The equestrian activities involve the stable, indoor and outdoor riding arenas, pastures, and hayfields. Ellis offers a variety of equestrian programming including riding lessons, children’s parties, summer camps, and other special events. Ellis owns school horses that it utilizes for equestrian programming. The equestrian operations are administered by the Barn Manager.

The grounds and facilities of Ellis are maintained by the Grounds & Natural Resources Department.

ii. Activities

a. Conducts # of riding lessons.
b. Conducts # of children’s parties.
c. Conducts # summer camps.
d. Conducts Family Fun Night one time every month.
e. Conducts annual Reindeer Run 5K every December.
d. Conducts # of seasonal/one time programs.
e. Partners with other agencies to conduct large programs and events.
f. Conducts # of wedding and other house rentals.
g. Coordinates Ellis House & Equestrian Center Volunteer Program.
h. Coordinates community service workers.
i. Assists with production of the District’s quarterly newsletter.
j. Promotes Ellis House & Equestrian Center via Facebook, email, flyers, events, and print media.

i. Goals & Objectives
   a. Continue to develop and offer quality equestrian programs and events to residents.
   b. Continue to provide superior rental facilities and services.
   c. Communicate Ellis facilities, programs, and events to residents via print, electronic, and other appropriate formats.
   d. Operate Ellis to a high standard of maintenance, cleanliness, and safety.
   e. Encourage public input, participation, and feedback.
   f. Continue to develop the Ellis House & Equestrian Center Volunteer Program to assist with programming and facilities.
   g. Continue to develop and strengthen partnerships with other equestrian facilities and organizations.
   h. Participate in applicable equestrian organizations.
   i. Evaluate expenses and revenues of programs and facilities on a regular basis.

k. Special Facilities
   i. Overview
      The District operates two special facilities – Ellis House at Baker Woods Forest Preserve, and Meadowhawk Lodge at Hoover Forest Preserve.
   ii. Activities
   iii. Goals & Objectives

l. Volunteer Programs

   i. Volunteers are instrumental in assisting the District achieve its goals and objectives, and in fostering public involvement and appreciation in District efforts. Volunteers provide experience, knowledge, and time to improve
the facilities and programs of the District. The District has three distinct volunteer groups - the Natural Area Volunteer (NAV) Program, Ellis House & Equestrian Center Volunteer Program, and the Hoover Volunteer Program.

The Natural Area Volunteer Program was started in 20___. NAVs assist with natural areas management projects, monitor District trails, and participate in regional monitoring programs such as Plants of Concern and the Bird Conservation Network. The NAV Program is led by the Natural Area Volunteer Coordinator, who handles all of the administration, training, and scheduling for this group. The NAV Program utilizes an old scout staff home at Hoover Forest Preserve for storage and training space. The NAV Coordinator works with the Superintendent of the Grounds & Natural Resources Department to coordinate certain activities. The NAVs work District-wide in many of the preserves.

The Ellis House & Equestrian Center Volunteer Program began in 2009 and volunteers assist with maintenance, programming, events, and horse care. Staff members at Ellis are responsible for administering, training, and coordinating the Ellis volunteers. The vast majority of Ellis volunteer time is spent on-site, with occasional time spent at other preserves or promotional events.

The Hoover Volunteer Program was initiated in 2012. These volunteers assist with the care and use of the Neshnabe’k Native American Village, and in maintaining the planting beds and rain gardens at Hoover Forest Preserve. The Hoover Volunteer program is coordinated by one of the Naturalists in the Environmental Education Department. These volunteers work exclusively at Hoover Forest Preserve.

ii. Activities
   a. Collects and processes volunteer application forms, volunteer agreements, and background check forms.
   b. Conducts volunteer orientations and trainings.
   c. Supervises volunteer activities.
   d. Communicates with volunteers regarding scheduling, projects, and volunteer related issues.
   e. Tracks volunteer hours and projects.
   f. Maintains volunteer files.
   g. Maintains volunteer equipment and supplies.
   h. Schedules and supervises volunteer workdays and events.
i. Coordinates with other agencies on volunteer projects.

j. Hosts volunteer appreciation events.

iii. Goals and Objectives

a. Continue to improve volunteer related forms and documentation.

b. Develop and institute District-wide volunteer orientation.

c. Continue to improve and expand volunteer trainings.

d. Provide a safe working environment for all volunteers.

e. Provide positive interactions with the public.

f. Promote the volunteer opportunities of the District to attract additional volunteers.

g. Develop a consistent volunteer appreciation and acknowledgment program.

h. Encourage public input, participation, and feedback.