



Preservation Foundation
of the Lake County Forest Preserves

DATE: May 25, 2023

TO: Nels Leutwiler, Chair
Preservation Foundation Board

FROM: Dr. Pati Vitt
Director of Natural Resources

RECOMMENDATION: Recommend approval of a \$10,000 contingent grant to support floral resources for early spring pollinators at Greenbelt Forest Preserve.

FINANCIAL DATA: The requested funds will be paid over the next three years. As of March 31, 2023, the Foundation's total unrestricted funding was \$417,198.88. Grants paid and payable from the unrestricted fund after March 31, 2023, include:

Year	Amount
April 2023 Transfer	\$51,500
2023	\$73,150
2024	\$26,300
2025	\$11,000
Total Payable from Unrestricted Funds	\$188,315

BACKGROUND: The 595-acre Greenbelt Forest Preserve maintains high-quality remnant and restored habitats, including sedge meadows, shrubland, prairies, oak woodlands and savannas, vernal ponds, and other rare types, home to rare plants and animals. Unfortunately, the chronic effects of past agriculture, modern land use, climate change, and invasive species are threats to high-quality habitats and their inhabitants. Common buckthorn outcompetes native plants and is one of the region's main drivers of biodiversity loss. When removed, sunlight is allowed to reach the ground, encouraging the reproduction of oak species and promoting the growth of native grasses, sedges, and flowers. This project will install spring-blooming plants in areas where buckthorn has recently been removed.

The increased diversity of pollinator plants will attract a diversity of native insects, birds, and other animals to the site, including the federally endangered rusty patched bumble bee. One of ten bumble bee species in Illinois, it was the first pollinator protected under the federal Endangered Species Act. Increased sightings of the bee in several Lake County Forest Preserves, including Greenbelt, show that restoration efforts are succeeding in improving habitats and nurturing environmental health. And sightings of this bumble bee in restored areas speak to the value of long-term management and investment in restored landscapes.

This grant will provide matching funds to leverage a \$10,000 grant through the ComED Green Region Grant Program and is contingent upon the success of that pending application. If both grants are funded, the District will purchase and install 3,500 native spring-blooming plant plugs and 20 native spring-blooming shrubs, as well as fencing to protect against deer browse.

REVIEW BY OTHERS: Executive Director of the Preservation Foundation, Director of Community Engagement, Chief Operating Officer, Deputy Finance Director, Director of Operations and Infrastructure, Director of Administration

PRESERVATION FOUNDATION BOARD:

Date: _____ Roll Call Vote: Ayes: ____ Nays: _____

Voice Vote Majority Ayes; Nays: _____