

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Sept. 19, 2024
Forest Preserve District of Kane County

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FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT PLACES REFERENDUM ON THE NOV. 5 BALLOT

District hosts public info meeting, Sept. 24, in Aurora



GENEVA, IL — The public is invited to learn about upcoming preserve improvement plans by the Forest Preserve District of Kane County, at an information meeting, Tuesday, Sept. 24, from 6:30 - 8 p.m. in Aurora.

The Forest Preserve District is hosting the meeting to discuss the upcoming Land Acquisition & Preserve Improvement Referendum on the Nov. 5 ballot. Staff will share plans on how the District would utilize funds, if the referendum were successful. Highlights include improvements to Rutland Bog that would allow the public to better access and view the rare ecological communities present; a multi-level, accessible wildlife observatory at Muirhead Springs Forest Preserve, a birding hot spot recently visited by endangered Whooping Cranes; an expansion of the bison project, following the initial animals' arrival later this year; an urban ecology field station in Aurora, an outpost for our environmental education program and unique to the region. Additionally, the referendum would allow the District to create 250 acres of additional habitat per year, and add up to 125 acres of new forest preserve, each year.

The meeting is an open-house format. The public is welcome to attend any time between 6:30-8 p.m. to ask questions, see plans and/or leave comments. There will be a presentation at 7 p.m.

The meeting will take place at the Prisco Community Center, 150 W. Illinois Ave., Aurora.

In July, the Forest Preserve District Commission voted to put a referendum on the Nov. 5 ballot. Residents will be asked to vote on a referendum authorizing an increase to the limiting rate for the Forest Preserve District of Kane County. Funds would be used to:

- Preserve and maintain forests and natural lands
- Acquire additional lands from willing sellers
- Plant trees
- Protect rivers and watersheds
- Protect and improve wildlife habitat

- Enhance flood control and drainage
- Maintain and improve forest preserve woodlands, wetlands and prairies
- Provide nature education for all ages
- Increase forest preserve access and safety
- Improve recreational amenities such as hiking and biking trails, camping and fishing, and other forest preserve purposes

“Funds would be used to further the District’s mission of conservation, recreation and environmental education,” said Executive Director Benjamin Habberthur.

“Passage of this referendum would allow us to continue to protect open space, increase public access to nature through recreational amenities, preserve restore and enhance natural areas, expand nature programming for all ages, improve air and water quality, help reduce flooding, increase public safety patrols and more,” he said.

The cost of the referendum is roughly \$10 per \$100,000 of home market value. Most homeowners would pay \$2-\$3 per month. However, because taxes from the Forest Preserve District are set to decrease by varying amounts over the next few years, if the referendum were to pass, taxpayers would still see a reduction in overall taxes from the District in 2027.

For more information on the public information meeting or the District’s Land Acquisition & Preserve Improvement Referendum, visit <http://www.kaneforest.com/referendum>.

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