

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**Land investments add 1,465 acres to Forest Preserve District holdings**

GENEVA, IL — The Forest Preserve District of Kane County is 1,465 acres larger — and still growing — thanks to residents’ support of the 2017 land acquisition and preserve-improvement referendum.

Forest Preserve District staff reported new land totals at the Nov. 13 Forest Preserve Commission meeting. The new acreage brings total preserve holdings to 22,284 acres. Thirteen forest preserves have been expanded, and the District has invested in land to create three new preserves.

In total, more than \$19 million of the \$50 million referendum proceeds have been invested so far. Roughly 80 percent of referendum funds will go toward land acquisition, with the remaining 20 percent to go toward preserve capital improvements. With 1,465 new acres, the District is closing in on the goal of acquiring approximately 2,000 - 2,500 additional acres of open space.

“We’re following through on exactly what we said we would do, when we put the referendum before the voters last year in April,” said Forest Preserve Commission President Mike Kenyon. “We’ve added 1,465 acres and have other acquisitions in the works. We’ve also begun work on key capital improvements that will improve habitat for wildlife and recreational amenities for the public. It’s great to see. I’ve often said that the referendum was about legacy and leaving Kane County a better place for future generations. We’re working to do just that,” he said.

Maggie Auger chairs the District’s Land Acquisition Committee. She touched on some of the reasoning behind the acquisitions made thus far.

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“We’ve focused on enlarging the size of existing preserves to grow our woodlands, wetlands and prairies. We’ve made multiple investments to increase the size of Muirhead Springs Forest Preserve in Elgin. The addition of 325 acres creates a now 1,011-acre preserve. We’ve been able to protect land along creeks at Big Rock Forest Preserve in Big Rock, Ferson Creek Forest Preserve in Elgin and LeRoy Oakes Forest Preserve in St. Charles. These riparian areas are hot spots for biodiversity. We’ve also invested in a beautiful woodland in Big Rock township, that will create a new 85-acre preserve. It’s amazing to see what we’ve been able to accomplish with the support of our residents, and we’ve still got more in the works,” she said.

Land investments to date include:

- Sauer Family Prairie Kame Forest Preserve in Elburn: 71.48-acre addition
- Cardinal Creek Forest Preserve in Hampshire: combined 133.17-acre addition
- Yet-to-be-named forest preserve in Big Rock: combined 85.24 acres
- Binnie Forest Preserve in West Dundee: combined 84.01-acre addition
- Muirhead Springs Forest Preserve in Elgin: combined 325.06-acre addition
- Oakhurst Forest Preserve in Aurora: 4.68-acre addition
- Johnson’s Mound Forest Preserve in Elburn: combined 261.48-acre addition
- Yet-to-be-named forest preserve in St. Charles: 25.74-acre addition
- Bowes Creek Woods Forest Preserve in Elgin: 114-acre addition
- LeRoy Oakes Forest Preserve in St. Charles: combined 22.24-acre addition
- Chicago Premium Outlets Wetland Forest Preserve in Aurora: 75 acres
- Big Rock Forest Preserve in Big Rock: 86.27-acre addition
- Ferson Creek Forest Preserve in St. Charles: combined 77-acre addition
- Raceway Woods Forest Preserve in Carpentersville: 7-acre addition
- Fox River Shores Forest Preserve in Carpentersville: combined 86.5-acre addition
- Glenwood Park Forest Preserve in Batavia: 6-acre addition

For more information, see the Forest Preserve District of Kane County’s website at [www.kaneforest.com](http://www.kaneforest.com).