



The Forest Preserves of Cook County
Is seeking applicants for
**Deputy Director for the
Conservation & Experiential Programming Department**

The Forest Preserves of Cook County is seeking a Deputy Director to assist the Director of Conservation & Experiential Programming (CEP) Department with all aspects and operations of the department, its staff, and contract management. The Deputy Director will assist in implementing the Department's vision, mission, and strategies. The CEP Department advances the Forest Preserve's mission by connecting people to nature through interpretation, education, and outdoor recreation.

The CEP Department includes 121 staff members (52 full-time, 41 part-time year-round, and 21 seasonal staff) who are responsible for public engagement, including interpretative programs for the public, schools, and community groups; nature center management; ambassador animal care; campground and aquatic center management; and community engagement, partnerships, and outreach. CEP manages the contract and vendor management for Campground Management (five campgrounds) and Aquatic Center Management (three seasonal Aquatic Centers) for the Forest Preserves.

More information about CEP, including an organizational chart, can be found in the 2022 budget ordinance on our website. (<https://fpdcc.com/downloads/budget/2022/FPCC-2022-Budget-Appropriation-Ordinance-021422.pdf>)

The selected Deputy Director will have broad experience in programming, operations, animal care, partnerships, and staff management in areas related to outdoor recreation, environmental education, camping/campgrounds, nature centers, parks, or environmental justice.

About the Forest Preserves

Cook County is the second most populous county in the United States and includes the City of Chicago. And although it is one of the most densely populated areas in the country, it is also the most ecologically diverse county in Illinois. The Forest Preserves protects much of that ecological diversity including nearly 70,000 acres of forests, prairies, wetlands, woodlands, and other natural areas. Thanks to dedicated restoration and conservation efforts, native plants, and wildlife—including North American river otters, blue spotted salamanders, orchids, and birds such as bald eagles and bobolinks—continue to return to or flourish in the preserves. Each year, the Forest Preserves receives an estimated 62 million visits, as people use these lands and facilities to enjoy nature, bicycle, hike, fish, cross-country ski, picnic, canoe, or simply relax. Facilities located in the Forest Preserves include nature centers, boat rentals, equestrian stables, golf courses and driving ranges, and aquatic centers. Among the treasures of the Forest Preserves are the Brookfield Zoo and the Chicago Botanic Garden, two world-class institutions located on Forest Preserves land.

About the CEP Department

The CEP Department connects diverse audiences to nature through a wide range of educational and outdoor recreation experiences, focused at six nature centers, three aquatic centers, five campgrounds and other sites throughout the Forest Preserves. The CEP Department provides the Forest Preserves' public programming (www.fpdcc.com/events): education and outdoor recreation events and programs, outdoor adventures, camping, water fun and swim lessons, and cultural and seasonal special events. The department also invests in communities through engagement strategies that inform, consult, involve, collaborate, empower, and support community connections to nature. The CEP Department works with partner organizations at the local level on programming and building leaders to become long-term advocates, stewards, and ambassadors of the Forest Preserves. The CEP Department manages the Youth Outdoor Ambassador Program that places youth interns with various CEP teams and other Forest Preserves Departments.

The CEP Department public programming aligns with goals set forth the Forest Preserves' Next Century Conservation Plan (<http://nextcenturyconservationplan.org/>). These goals include:

- Provide programs that emphasize the benefits of nature to help create healthy people and healthy communities.
- Invite, excite, and engage diverse visitors to the Forest Preserves
- Make the Forest Preserves accessible and welcoming to all.
- Educate visitors and the community about the Forest Preserves' natural treasures.

The CEP Department's staff is comprised of six Nature Center Teams, three Programmatic Zone Teams that are focused on geographic areas of the county (North, Central and South), a Campground/Aquatic Center Team, and an Outreach Team. These teams are managed by the Public Engagement and Program Manager and the CEP Operations Manager.

In 2021, the CEP Department connected almost half a million people to the Forest Preserves through its programs and activities. Additionally, 102,456 of those people participated in one of over 5,000 public programs or special events hosted by CEP Teams.

Through the CEP Department, the Forest Preserves actively seeks new partnership opportunities and continues to expand its outreach efforts to connect more people to nature. In 2021 --even with COVID-19 restrictions--teams introduced 202 new community groups to the Forest Preserves and offered nature and outdoor recreation programs to 178 returning community groups.

The successful candidate will share the Forest Preserves' and CEP's vision for providing high quality, best practice based outdoor recreation, environmental education, and nature-based interpretation for all visitors to the Forest Preserves; will share the Forest Preserves' commitment to racial equity, diversity, and inclusion, and will ensure the Forest Preserves are welcoming to all and strive to engage all communities and connect their constituents to nature and the Forest Preserves' incredible natural resources. Additionally, they will support and assist in the leadership of developing a cohesive CEP team that works collaboratively and professionally.

Compensation and Benefits

Salary: \$90,889 - \$109,557 annually depending on experience, qualifications, and time in service. The Forest Preserves of Cook County offers a competitive benefit program.

Application Process and Recruitment Schedule

A full job description is available starting on page 3, below. To be considered, please submit your cover letter, resume, and a list of three professional references (who will not be contacted in the early stages of the recruitment) **by 5 pm on Friday, June 17, 2022** to Jacqui.ulrich@cookcountyil.gov. Resumes should reflect years each position was held, as well as the size of the previous program or department managed or administered.

Resumes will be screened based on the criteria outlined in this brochure and the job description. Candidates with the most relevant qualifications will be invited to interview.

The Forest Preserves of Cook County is an Equal Opportunity Employer. We value our employees and the different talents, expertise, and viewpoints that each brings to the table. We believe a robust exchange of ideas results in better decision-making and we commit to providing a constructive, safe, and positive work atmosphere that promotes mutual respect and empowers individuals to thrive in their jobs.

FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT OF COUNTY OF COOK



Forest Preserve District
Office of Personnel
536 N. Harlem
River Forest, Illinois 60305

Job Code:
Salary Grade: 22
Department:
Conservation & Experiential
Programming

STANDARD JOB DESCRIPTION **DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF CONSERVATION & EXPERIENTIAL PROGRAMMING**

Job Summary

Under the direction of the Director of Conservation and Experiential Programming, assists with supervising and coordinating all aspects and operations of the Department. Assists with planning, developing and overseeing the delivery of recreational and educational programs, facilities and services for the District; assists with oversight of and actively supports Department's seven day a week operations which include 6 nature centers, 3 aquatic centers, 5 campgrounds, various recreational activities, special events, educational programming, in schools and at community based organizations located throughout Cook County. Assists in the formation, enforcement, and recommendation of policies within all aspects of operations involving the Department. Represents the District in civic and community affairs. Develops and establishes good working relationships with other District departments, as well as with external recreation and education organizations, and local municipalities and institutions. In the absence of the Director, has the authority to authorize expenditures and make final decisions as they relate to the daily activities and operations of the Department. Assists with the development and monitoring of the Department operational budget. Works a flexible schedule and can support weekend, holiday and evening operations, events, and activities.

Typical Duties

Manages and coordinates staff, facilitates and operations to ensure the efficient and effective use of resources.

Participates in senior staff meetings, as well as regular staff meetings to provide the information and guidance needed to ensure the effective operation of the Department.

Serves as advisor to the Director in the formulation of policy, procedures and budgets as it relates to the Department.

Assists in the coordination of the Department with other District departments and partners.

Assists the Director with planning, conducting and evaluating programs and events.

Keeps abreast of relative trends and current events and/or projected usages and other aspects of outdoor recreation and environmental education, camping, animal care, aquatic centers, and other related areas

Assumes responsibility for the Department in the absence of the Director.

Assists in handling of all personnel matters as it relates to the Department.

Assists in developing grants to acquire additional funds for educational and recreational programs and projects.

Supports Department events and programs which includes availability holidays, evenings and weekends.

Assists in managing the Department's Performance Management Metric goals and performance measures.

Minimum Qualifications

Bachelor's Degree or higher in education, natural science, public administration, or related area.

Eight (8) years or more full-time work experience in areas related to the above, or any equivalent combination of education, training, or experience.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

Knowledge of administrative practices and procedures to include budgetary, personnel, reporting techniques.

Ability to coordinate and supervise the activities of others and provide guidance and direction to management and other personnel.

Skill and ability to communicate verbally and in writing with professionalism to diverse groups.

Ability to keep abreast of community trends and developments through personal observations and community engagement.

Ability to interact with other department staff and a variety of community groups on subject related programs.

Ability to develop organized plans, implement plan and evaluate plans to provide continuous quality program improvement.

Ability to supervise, plan, assign, coordinate and direct the work assignments of support staff.

Ability to follow oral and written instructions.

Ability to effectively interpret District policy and procedures to staff and public as it relates to Department programming, special events, recreation, and environmental education.

Excellent communication and presentation skills.

Ability to create project plans and manage multiple projects simultaneously.

Analytical and problem-solving skills.

Excellent organization, decision making, and time management skills.

Critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Ability to adapt to changing goals and initiatives.

Ability to support CEP's Animal Care processes and procedures and the Animal Care Committee

Ability to oversee and manage the contractual work of Campground and Aquatic Center management companies.

The duties listed are not set forth for purposes of limiting the assignment of work. They are not to be construed as a complete list of the many duties normally to be performed under a job title or those to be performed temporarily outside an employee's normal line of work.