



**September 12, 2024**

**Letter to the Editor**

Kane County is blessed with a rich tapestry of forest preserves that encompass more than 23,000 acres. These public lands enrich our quality of life and provide outdoor recreation areas for citizens to relax, unplug, and enjoy the mental and physical health benefits of nature. These lands need to be protected for present and future generations. We must continue to expand and maintain these natural lands, and protect the investment we've already made in our forest preserves.

This General Election on November 5, voters will be asked to support forest preserves in Kane County. The forest preserve district is asking for a small levy increase to preserve more land, maintain and restore existing forest preserves, and add recreational amenities such as trails and improved public access. Since the pandemic, many forest preserves have nearly doubled their attendance as people continue to discover the many benefits forest preserves provide to our lives and our communities.

If approved by the voters, the funding will enable the forest preserves to improve air and water quality, purchase land, restore and create more wildlife habitat, improve flood control, expand public safety, and create more places where children can experience and enjoy the wonders of nature. With land prices skyrocketing and the amount of natural lands dwindling, we must act now to preserve our last remaining open spaces for our children and our grandchildren before they are lost to development.

The cost for the average homeowner in Kane County will be approximately \$3 per month to keep our forest preserves green and healthy, and our air and water clean. The good news is that starting in 2026, the forest preserve taxes will go down \$47 annually due to the forest preserve district paying off previous voter-approved bonds.

The Fox River Ecosystem Partnership is a non-profit watershed-based group founded in 1996. We fully endorse this referendum, and we ask that you support our forest preserves on November 5 with a **YES** vote, and encourage your friends, neighbors, family members, and your network to support it, as well.

Jeffrey Mengler  
President