

**DATE:** February 12, 2026

**MEMO TO:** Elizabeth Hough, Chair  
Preservation Foundation Board

**FROM:** Pati Vitt  
Director of Natural Resources

**RECOMMENDATION:** Recommend approval of a \$1,078 grant from unrestricted funds to pilot a nocturnal plant-pollinator monitoring program.

**FINANCIAL DATA:** As of December 31, 2025, the Foundation's unrestricted funding total was \$488,961.

The Preservation Foundation Board of Directors has awarded \$202,518 in grants that have not yet been disbursed.

Future Disbursements	Amount
2026	\$121,518
2027	\$25,500
<b>2028 or TBD</b>	\$55,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$202,518</b>

If awarded, \$1,078 will be disbursed the second quarter of 2026.

**BACKGROUND:** As the 501(c)3 charitable partner of the Lake County Forest Preserves, the Preservation Foundation's mission is to extend and accelerate the Lake County Forest Preserves' goals through private philanthropy to restore and preserve Lake County's natural and cultural resources in perpetuity.

In 2013, the Preservation Foundation Board of Directors adopted a policy regarding the use of unrestricted charitable gifts, which created a process for staff to submit an Annual Fund Grant request to support the priorities of the Forest Preserves, such as piloting a new initiative, extending or accelerating existing work, or securing matching funds. To date, the Preservation Foundation has awarded nearly \$1.5 million in grants from unrestricted funds.

In accordance with this policy, a request for a one-year grant in the amount of \$1,078 has been submitted for review and approval at the Preservation Foundation's February 12, 2026 Board of Directors Meeting.

**REVIEW BY OTHERS:** Director of Community Engagement & Partnerships, Chief Operations Officer, Director of Administration, Director of Finance, and Forest Preserves Executive Director

**GRANT REQUEST:**

<b>Department</b>	Natural Resources
<b>Project Name</b>	Nocturnal Plant-Pollinator Monitoring
<b>Project Lead (if not Director)</b>	Dan Sandacz
<b>Total Amount Requested</b>	\$ 1,078
<b>Amount needed per year</b>	
<b>Grant Period</b>	One Year
<b>Grant Purpose</b>	Pilot a new initiative
<b>Project Description</b>	<p>The Plant-Pollinator Monitoring Program was launched in 2023 as a new ecological monitoring effort to document pollinator diversity and monitor relationships between plants and pollinators. These insights richly inform our habitat management strategies. One area that we have not yet assessed is nocturnal plant-pollinator relationships. Understanding those relationships is important to ensure restoration and management strategies are enhancing floral resources for this largely unexplored group of pollinators.</p> <p>Funding from this grant will support the purchase of nocturnal monitoring equipment and curation supplies to document nocturnal plant-pollinator relationships that are occurring in our preserves.</p>
<b>Project Impact</b>	<p>The project will provide the tools and equipment Natural Resources staff need to observe nocturnal pollinators and document their interactions with available floral resources. This is critical to assessing how our preserves currently support nocturnal pollinators and improve management efforts.</p> <p>This area of research is relatively novel and will enhance the regional understanding of these dynamics.</p>
<b>Additional Funding</b>	District staff time will be dedicated to conducting the monitoring, along with time dedicated by two Preservation Foundation-funded monitoring technicians.
<b>Impact if not funded</b>	The lack of understanding of nocturnal plant-pollinator relationships is a knowledge gap that limits the District's ability to fully manage natural resources in Lake County and beyond.

**PRESERVATION FOUNDATION BOARD:**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  Roll Call Vote: Ayes: \_\_\_\_\_ Nays: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Voice Vote; Majority Ayes: \_\_\_\_\_ Nays: \_\_\_\_\_