# FOREST PRESERVES of Cook County

## Partner Agency Group Leader

**Position Description** 

**Purpose**: Partner Agency Group Leaders are Partner Agency staff members authorized to lead groups at Closed/Non-Public workdays of their own agency staff or agency volunteers in restoration activities. They are not authorized to lead Open, Public workdays for FPCC volunteers.

Because there is a time constraint on getting these Group Leaders on board and because they are paid staff members representing their agencies, insured by them and only leading agency workdays, there is a different process of certification than with Stewardship Workday Leaders.

All work requires approval in advance and at least indirect supervision by a Site Steward, Nature Center Manager or Ecologist. Partner Agency Group Leaders are responsible for decisions at workdays in the absence of a Site Steward or other Land Manager.

### **Qualifications/Skills:**

- Understand FPCC policy and regulations regarding the Land Management Guidelines, chainsaw safety, herbicide application, brush pile burning, workday reporting
- Understand their own agency's policies and requirements
- Able to identify common invasive species
- Demonstrate ability to lead and organize safe and effective workdays

#### **Expectations & Responsibilities:**

- Partner Agency Group Leaders must work through the land manager of the Site Site Steward for volunteer managed sites, Nature Center Managers for Nature Center grounds and Regional Ecologist for District managed sites
- Communicate with Site Steward or Land Manager to plan workdays that operate within the approved Management Schedule
- Plan workday logistics, get signed waivers, following their own agency's guidelines and policy
- Obtain appropriate tools and signage when needed following FPCC guidelines and policy
- If BPB certified, assure brush pile calls are made
- Oversees all aspects of the workday meeting ecological goals
- Works with Site Steward or Land Manager to assure that any necessary future steps (chipping, burning, herbiciding, etc.) are scheduled to be completed
- Lead introduction and site orientation, communicate workday safety rules, demonstrate proper techniques for basic workday activities (for example, brush cutting, brush pile burning, collecting and sowing seed), identify target species
- Assign roles/positions to agency staff or volunteers in accordance to their experience
- Act as an ambassador for the site, their agency and for FPCC by actively engaging & recruiting volunteers

**Training**: Overall training on Restoration Ecology is the responsibility of the Partner agency who is also responsible for hiring, firing and evaluating the Group Leader.



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**Certification:** Because the Partner Agency Group Leader is conducting workdays as a representative of their own agency and only leading non-public workdays, the full Stewardship Workday Leader training program is not required. However, one field walk with an Ecologist to verify plant and ecosystem knowledge and priorities of the site and one field observation leading a workday by District staff (Grade School age participants – by Education Section and High School age and older – by Volunteer Resources) and is required to work on FPCC property. Additionally, a meeting with the Site Steward or Land Manager is required to assure understanding of the management schedule, goals and priorities of the site is also required. If this leader intends to work at multiple sites, meetings with each Site Steward or Land Manager is needed.

**Additional Training**: These individuals are invited to take any of the 3 courses that are part of the Stewardship Workday Leader series. Brush Pile Building and Burning is required if they intend to burn brush piles but not if they are just participating in a BPB workday with a certified Brush Pile Burn Boss present. Herbicide licensing is required if they plan to herbicide and they should be obtaining herbicide from the Land Manager of the site.

If the Agency Staff member wants to get certified as a Stewardship Workday Leader so that they can lead public workdays as well, they must complete all the requirements for Stewardship Workday Leader. This includes the three classes, the exams and observations associated with them as well as the 6 shadow/lead workdays and recommendations from two Site Stewards that are part of the Workday Leader certification process. As a certified Stewardship Workday Leader they then can work at any site but still only with permission of the Land Manager of the site.