



McHENRY COUNTY CONSERVATION
FOUNDATION

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McHenry County Conservation Foundation Awarded \$25,000 Enbridge Fueling Futures Grant

McHenry County Conservation Foundation was awarded a \$25,000 Enbridge Fueling Futures grant to purchase a new 200 gallon portable firefighting unit for the McHenry County Conservation District, which will enhance the prescribed fire program.

In Illinois, our oak woodlands and prairies adapted to tolerate fire and benefit from it, but in many cases human activities profoundly altered these ecosystems. Today, it is essential for the health of our natural spaces that natural resource professionals use fire in a controlled way to enhance these lands so they can continue to provide us with the ecosystem services we all depend on for survival. Slow-growing oak trees need lots of sunlight to establish and live hundreds of years. Regular implementation of fire keeps other native and invasive trees from growing around oaks and competing for their sunlight. In our prairies, many plant species flower more vigorously the year following a prescribed burn. Invasive species like honeysuckle and buckthorn are killed off, at least for a year or two, allowing native species to establish.

The portable firefighting unit is a self-contained firefighting system. They are an essential tool for land managers who use prescribed fire, allowing them to quickly and effectively suppress fires, which helps to protect property and resources. The District's burn season typically runs from mid-February until early May. During that time, an average of 29 burns are conducted with more than 1,770 acres of land stewarded with this management tool. In the next few years, the District plans to increase the average acreage they burn to 3,000 acres, which is nearly double what is currently being implemented. The District's previous portable firefighting unit was nearly 20 years old and reaching the end of its useful life. The replacement unit is necessary to sustain the prescribe burn schedule

The McHenry County Conservation Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that works to obtain grants and gifts in support of the work of the McHenry County Conservation District. To learn more about the McHenry County Conservation Foundation or the projects it supports, visit <http://www.mchenryconservation.org> or call (815) 338-6223.

Enbridge is a multinational pipeline company headquartered in Calgary, Alberta Canada. Through its Fueling Futures program, Enbridge helps fuel quality of life within communities where it works and operates in North America. To learn more about Enbridge's Fueling Futures program, visit <https://www.enbridge.com/about-us/our-values/corporate-citizenship>

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