ILLINOIS NATURE PRESERVES COMMISSION AGENDA TWO HUNDRED FOURTEENTH MEETING

Greenbelt Cultural Center Hawthorn Room 1215 Green Belt Street North Chicago, IL

May 7, 2013 9:00 a.m.

*Documentary Material Enclosed

Item 1: Call to Order, Roll Call, and Introduction of Attendees

Item 2:* Adoption of Agenda

Item 3:* Approval of the Special Meeting Minutes, January 28, 2013, and the 213th Meeting Minutes, January 29, 2013

Item 4: 2013 Meeting Schedule

September 10, 2013 Giant City State Park Lodge, Makanda

Item 5: INPC Staff Report

REPORT

Randy Heidorn

Nature Preserves Commission

Item 6: <u>IDNR Staff Report</u>

REPORT

Don McFall

Department of Natural Resources

Item 7: Endangered Species Protection Board Staff Report

REPORT

Anne Mankowski

Endangered Species Protection Board Manager

Item 8:* Kankakee Co. – Hopkins Park Savanna Nature Preserve, Dedication

The Illinois Chapter of The Nature Conservancy (TNC) seeks preliminary approval for dedication of the 77-acre Hopkins Park Savanna Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI) site (#1835) in perpetuity as Hopkins Park Savanna Nature Preserve. Hopkins Park Savanna is located in the Kankakee Sand Area Section of the Grand Prairie Natural Division of Illinois, and is recognized on the INAI for its high-quality dry and dry-mesic sand savanna, and for the presence of the state-threatened regal fritillary butterfly (*Speyeria regalia*) and bristly

blackberry (*Rubus schneideri*), and the state-endangered crowded oval sedge (*Carex cumulata*), Carey's heartsease (*Polygonum careyi*), and primrose violet (*Viola primulifolia*). Dedication of this natural area promotes the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan (IWAP) by providing habitat for at least seven wildlife species in greatest need of conservation, including northern bobwhite (*Colinus virginianus*), red-headed woodpecker (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*), and slender glass lizard (*Ophisaurus attenuatus*). The site is also located in the Kankakee Sands Conservation Opportunity Area, and lies in close proximity to many other high-quality natural areas. Hopkins Park Savanna INAI site is one of the best quality natural areas in the State of Illinois and is a key conservation holding in the Kankakee Sands. Dedication of this site as a nature preserve will help ensure its natural character is protected and managed for future generations.

REPORT Kim Roman Nature Preserves Commission ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED Preliminary Approval for Dedication

Item 9:* Tazewell Co. - Fon du Lac Seep Nature Preserve, Dedication

The Fon du Lac Park District seeks preliminary approval for dedication of 10.616 acres as the Fon du Lac Seep Nature Preserve. Fon du Lac Seep (INAI #0851) is located within the Illinois River Section of the Upper Mississippi River and Illinois River Bottomlands Natural Division and the Grand Prairie Section of the Grand Prairie Natural Division. The significant feature of this site is a 4-acre grade B seep with species such as bottlebrush sedge (Carex hystricina), swamp thistle (Cirsium muticum), spotted joe-pye-weed (Eupatorium maculatum), swamp goldenrod (Solidago patula), skunk cabbage (Symplocarpus foetidus), and marsh marigold (Caltha palustris). The 2.3 acres of grade C bottomland forest at this site supports silver maple (Acer saccharinum), American elm (Ulmus americana), and eastern cottonwood (Populus deltoides). Black ash (Fraxinus nigra) can be found in the bottomlands near the seeps. The 4.3 acres of grade C dry-mesic upland forest at this site is characterized by white oak (Quercus alba), black oak (Q. velutina), and sugar maple (Acer saccharum); butternut (Juglans cinerea) is a notable, minor component of this forest. Invasion by non-native species is the greatest threat to this site and the most immediate management concern. The IWAP would be supported by this dedication through the Forest, Land and Water Stewardship, Wetlands, and Invasive Species campaigns.

REPORT
Thomas Lerczak
Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED Preliminary Approval for Dedication

Item 10:* Washington Co. – Bohbrink Woods Nature Preserve, Dedication

The IDNR seeks preliminary approval for dedication of 10 acres near Nashville in southwestern Illinois as Bohbrink Woods Nature Preserve. The site is comprised entirely of grade B southern flatwoods natural community and is located in the Mount Vernon Hill Country Section of the Southern Till Plain Natural Division. The site is one-half of the Bohbrink Woods INAI site (#0868). Approximately 657 acres of grade A or B southern flatwoods remain in Illinois with only portions of 8 of the 18 remaining sites having protection status. In addition to protecting the rare southern flatwoods natural community, dedication of Bohbrink Woods supports several campaigns identified in the IWAP, including the Forests campaign, the Invasive Species campaign, and the Land and Water Stewardship campaign.

REPORT
Debbie Newman
Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED Preliminary Approval for Dedication

Item 11:* Kankakee Co. - Callie Mae Spraggins Savanna Nature Preserve, Dedication

Mr. Willie Spraggins seeks final approval for dedication of five acres of the Leesville Savanna INAI site (#1006) as Callie Mae Spraggins Savanna Nature Preserve, in honor of his late mother. Leesville Savanna is recognized on the INAI for its high-quality dry and dry-mesic sand savanna, sand flatwoods, and the presence of 13 state-listed species. The proposed Callie Mae Spraggins Savanna Nature Preserve is known to provide habitat for at least two stateendangered species: yellow wild indigo (Baptisia tinctoria) and primrose violet (Viola primulifolia). This sites lies within the Kankakee Sand Area Section of the Grand Prairie Natural Division and within the Kankakee Sands, a Conservation Opportunity Area, identified by the IWAP. The proposed five-acre nature preserve provides habitat for at least two wildlife species in greatest need of conservation, including northern bobwhite (Colinus virginianus) and red-headed woodpecker (Melanerpes erythrocephalus). Its location, immediately adjacent to Carl N. Becker Savanna Nature Preserve, makes this five-acre nature preserve a critical tract in the Illinois Nature Preserves system. The proposed Callie Mae Spraggins Savanna Nature Preserve shares many of the same natural features of the surrounding Leesville Savanna INAI site and is a key conservation holding which provides contiguity of protected habitat on the landscape. The site received preliminary approval for dedication at the Commission's 213th Meeting in January, 2013 (Resolution 2220).

REPORT Kim Roman Nature Preserves Commission ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED Final Approval for Dedication

Item 12:* Lake Co. – Openlands Lakeshore, Bluff and Ravine Nature Preserve, Dedication

Openlands seeks final approval for dedication of 74.795 acres (41.175 acres as nature preserve and 33.62 acres as buffer) of the Openlands Lakeshore Preserve as the Openlands Lakeshore, Bluff and Ravine Nature Preserve. The site is located in the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division in southeastern Lake County. The proposed nature preserve was first granted preliminary approval for dedication as part of Fort Sheridan Bluff and Ravine Nature Preserve at the Commission's 130th Meeting in February, 1991 (Resolution 1071) and encompasses the Fort Sheridan Bluff INAI site (#1078). This site, now owned by Openlands was previously owned by U.S. Army, then conveyed to the U.S. Navy and represents less than a half of the acreage of the site first approved by the Commission. The property is now subject to the terms of two Quit Claim Deeds conveying the property from the U.S. Navy to Openlands. The proposed Openlands Lakeshore, Bluff and Ravine Nature Preserve includes grade C beach and eroding bluff communities and ravines consisting of grade C mesic and drymesic upland forest and supports populations of the state-endangered shadbush (Amelanchier sanguinea), marram grass (Ammophila breviligulata), seaside spurge (Chamaesyce polygonifolia), buffalo berry (Sheperdia canadensis), and state-threatened sea rocket (Cakile edentula), golden sedge (Carex aurea), ground juniper (Juniperus communis), and dog violet (Viola conspersa). This proposal identifies reserved rights as stipulated in the conveyance of the property to Openlands: "...for the purpose of restoring and preserve (the Lakefront Preserve) as

a public open space conservation area and nature preserve for passive, low impact to the public, available to the public in perpetuity..." This includes access to, and the right to maintain, existing infrastructure. Openlands retains the right to use the site for educational venues and construct and maintain trails as necessary in order to comply with the terms of the conveyance of the property. Dedication of this site as an Illinois nature preserve is consistent with an earlier determination of the Commission and will protect beach and eroding bluff communities, the Fort Sheridan Bluff INAI site, portions of three ravine systems, habitat that supports eight statelisted plant species, and supports elements of the Chicago Wilderness Biodiversity Recovery Plan and IWAP. The site received preliminary approval for dedication at the Commission's 210th Meeting in January, 2012 (Resolution 2170).

REPORT Steven Byers Nature Preserves Commission ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED Final Approval for Dedication

Item 13:* <u>Lake Co. – Rollins Savanna Nature Preserve, Dedication</u>

The Lake County Forest Preserve District (LCFPD) seeks final approval for dedication of 1,063.9 acres of the 1,238.7-acre Rollins Savanna Forest Preserve as Rollins Savanna Nature Preserve. The proposed nature preserve is a mosaic of natural communities (grade C/D freshwater marsh, grade C/D dry-mesic upland forest, grade C/D dry-mesic savanna, and a medium-gradient stream) interspersed with formerly agricultural lands undergoing habitat restoration. The proposed nature preserve is located in the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division in north-central Lake County. The proposed nature preserve supports populations of seven state-endangered bird species, including the American bittern (Botaurus lentiginosus), black tern (Chlidonias niger), northern harrier (Circus cyaneus), common moorhen (Gallinula chloropus), black-crowned night heron (Nycticorax nycticorax), king rail (Rallus elegans), yellow-headed black bird (Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus); and three statethreatened species including the peregrine falcon (Falco peregrinus), least bittern (Ixobrychus exilis), and Iowa darter (Etheostoma exile). The proposed nature preserve also supports one state-endangered plant, the small yellow sedge (Carex cryptolepis). The site has undergone habitat restoration by the LCFPD since 1995, with an emphasis on restoring the surface hydrology, reintroduction of appropriate seed, controlled burning, and control of invasive species. Protection and stewardship of Rollins Savanna supports several action steps identified in the Farmland and Prairie, Wetlands, and Forest campaign sections of the IWAP and provides habitat for 30 birds, two mammals, one amphibian, and four fish described in the IWAP as species in greatest need of conservation. The site also lies within the Lake-McHenry Wetland Complex Conservation Opportunity Area identified in the IWAP. At least seven sites of archeological interest occur within the proposed Rollins Savanna Nature Preserve. The LCFPD retains the right for approval of the use of motorized vehicles (snowmobiles and regional snowmobile trail) in a portion of the proposed Rollins Savanna Nature Preserve which was outlined in the dedication proposal. The site received preliminary approval for dedication at the Commission's 213th Meeting in January, 2013 (Resolution 2221).

REPORT Steven Byers Nature Preserves Commission ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED Final Approval for Dedication

Item 14:* Lake Co. – Buffer Addition to Skokie River Nature Preserve, Dedication

Carol Fraser seeks final approval for dedication of a portion of one lot totaling 1.033 acres as a buffer addition to Skokie River Nature Preserve. The proposed buffer addition serves as a necessary adjunct to the Nature Preserve by maintaining the open space character of the site and by protecting surface hydrology. Skokie River Nature Preserve is located in the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division in Lake County and encompasses McLaughlin Prairie and Shaw Prairie (two high-quality mesic prairies). The INAI now recognizes both prairies and eight separate additions to Skokie River Nature Preserve as the Skokie River INAI site (#0658). The proposed buffer addition consists primarily of cultural oldfield communities and small managed grassland. The initial proposal for dedication of Skokie River Nature Preserve recognized the nature preserve's patchwork design and recommended "...dedication of adjacent lands as buffer...(and) natural community restoration." The proposed buffer addition is consistent with that recommendation, the precedent established for dedication of buffer additions to this site, and the Illinois Natural Areas Preservation Act as it pertains to buffers. Protection of the buffer addition will also maintain the current open space character of bordering lands and further protect the Nature Preserve from alterations in surface hydrology. The proposed buffer addition would increase the size of Skokie River Nature Preserve from 135.14 to 136.173 acres. The site received preliminary approval for dedication at the Commission's 213th Meeting in January, 2013 (Resolution 2222).

REPORT Steven Byers Nature Preserves Commission ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED Final Approval for Dedication

Item 15:* Lake Co. - Sun Lake Nature Preserve, Dedication

The LCFPD seeks final approval for final dedication of 512.9 acres of Sun Lake Forest Preserve as Sun Lake Nature Preserve. This site includes the entire Sun Lake INAI site (#1248) and includes grade C/D freshwater marsh, grade C/D calcareous floating mat, grade C/D dry-mesic upland forest, open water associated with Sun Lake, and extensive habitat restoration of agricultural lands. The proposed nature preserve is located in the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division in north-central Lake County. Fifteen state-listed species have been recorded from the proposed Sun Lake Nature Preserve and include ten species of wildlife and five species of plants. Of these, five species have been reported in the IDNR (2012) Natural Heritage Database and ten species have been reported by staff of the LCFPD. The state-endangered wildlife species include the king rail (Rallus elegans), osprey (Pandion haliaetus), black-crowned night-heron (Nycticorax nycticorax), common tern (Sterna hirundo), black tern (Chlidonias niger), Forster's tern (Sterna forsteri), a reptile, fern pondweed (Potamogeton robbinssii), spotted pondweed (Potamogeton pulcher), bog-panicled sedge (Carex diandra), and northern gooseberry (Ribes hirtellum). The state-threatened species include the least bittern (Ixobrychus exilis), black-billed cuckoo (Coccyzus erhthropthalmus), starhead topminnow (Fundulus dispar), and grass-leaved pondweed (Potamogeton gramineus). For five of these species, the element occurrences or observations date back over ten years and additional surveys are warranted to determine their current status. It is not likely that the Forster's tern currently nests at the site. The site has undergone habitat restoration by the LCFPD since 2004, with an emphasis on restoring the surface hydrology, reintroduction of appropriate seed, controlled burning, and control of invasive species. Protection and stewardship of Sun Lake supports several action steps identified in the Farmland and Prairie, Wetlands, and

Forest campaign sections of the IWAP and provides habitat for 14 birds, one mammal, one amphibian, and one reptile described in the IWAP as species in greatest need of conservation. The site also lies within the Lake-McHenry Wetland Complex Conservation Opportunity Area identified in the IWAP. There are also three archeological sites eligible for the National Register of Historic Places within the proposed Sun Lake Nature Preserve. The site received preliminary approval for dedication at the Commission's 213th Meeting in January, 2013 (Resolution 2224).

REPORT
Jim Anderson
Lake County Forest Preserve District

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED Final Approval for Dedication

Item 16:* <u>Champaign and Vermilion Co. – Translocation of the Federally and State Endangered Clubshell</u> and Riffleshell Mussels to Edgewood Farm Land and Water Reserve

Illinois Natural History Survey (INHS) staff members Jeremy Tiemann and Kevin Cummings have been involved over several years in an effort to relocate two species of federally and state endangered mussels, Northern Riffleshell (Epioblasma rangiana) and Clubshell (Pleurobema clava), that are threatened by a bridge replacement in Pennsylvania. Thousands of mussels are being relocated from a section of Pennsylvania's Allegheny River beneath a bridge that is scheduled for replacement in 2018. Pennsylvania state agencies and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) are relocating as many mussels as possible to suitable habitat in Illinois, Ohio, and West Virginia in a cooperative effort that these state and federal agencies view as an opportunity to assist in implementing part of the Northern Riffleshell and Clubshell recovery plan. Illinois was specifically contacted by the states of Pennsylvania and Ohio and the USFWS to be one of the recipients of these salvaged animals during USFWS sanctioned relocations. As part of this relocation project, INHS staff introduced northern riffleshell and clubshell mussels into the Salt Fork of the Vermilion River at Edgewood Farm Land and Water Reserve in Vermilion County in 2012. INHS staff had permission from the landowner, Jim Smith, but did not obtain INPC approval prior to the mussel introduction. Introducing animals into an Illinois land and water reserve requires aproval from the INPC. INHS staff are seeking a retroactive approval from the INPC since they did not have approval due to an oversight on their part. The 2012 portion of the mussel translocation project happened very quickly with very little lead time. INHS staff learned of the multi-state collecting event at the Alleghany River only a few days before they were required to be at the Allegheny River to collect the mussels. INHS staff attempted to meet the deadlines and find suitable locations to place the mussels. In 2012, east-central Illinois suffered a historic drought and many streams had very low water flows which rendered otherwise suitable habitat unfit as a translocation site. However, the Salt Fork of the Vermilion River receives continued water input from Champaign-Urbana's sanitary system and this provided stable base water flow despite the prolonged drought. As a result, the Salt Fork was the only known stream in east-central Illinois that had suitable mussel habitat, the host fish for the two mussel species, and sufficient water to support translocated mussels in 2012. INHS staff are also requesting approval to monitor the translocated mussel populations and to allow for future translocations of these two species at this site should more mussels become available.

REPORT Jeremy Tiemann Illinois Natural History Survey Kelly Neal

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED Retroactive Approval for Translocation and Ongoing Monitoring of Mussel Populations

Nature Preserves Commission

Item 17:* <u>Cook Co. – Request to Construct an Educational Shelter and Shed Within Chicago</u> <u>Ridge Prairie Nature Preserve</u>

The Oak Lawn Park District applied for and received an Open Space Land Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) grant from the IDNR in 2011. The focus of the project is removal of five acres of overburden from fly dumping from nearby development. The dumping occurred prior to dedication of the 11.7-acre site. The OSLAD funding would also be used for restoration of this area. When the INPC was provided the project information for review for the IDNR's Comprehensive Environmental Review Process (CERP), there was no reference to a shelter or shed in the document text. The key on the second page map did indicate a "Raised Overlook/Interpretive Center/Group Shelter." That item was missed by INPC staff during review process. The project was approved by the INPC, and the grant was awarded. The Park District has now finalized its planning and is ready to proceed with the project. The finalized plans were recently provided to INPC staff showing that a shelter to be used for educational programming and a shed to store educational materials will be constructed within the boundaries of the Nature Preserve. The OSLAD grant requires that the shelter be constructed; however, the Park District has indicated that the shed was not critical but would greatly facilitate its educational programming.

REPORT ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED
Steven Byers/Kelly Neal Approval to Construct the
Nature Preserves Commission Educational Shelter and Shed

Item 18*: <u>Lake Co. - Correction of Legal Description for Farm Trails North Nature Preserve</u>

The Citizens for Conservation of Barrington, Inc. received final approval for dedication of 20 acres as Farm Trails North Nature Preserve at the Commission's 141st Meeting in November, 1993 (Resolution 1204), and the dedication was recorded in Lake County on December 7, 1993. An error in the legal description has been found, and the landowner has requested that the Commission record the corrected legal description.

REPORT ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Jenny Skufca Approval of Corrected Legal

Nature Preserves Commission Description

Item 19*: Macoupin Co. - Correction of Legal Description for Denby Prairie Nature Preserve

The IDNR received final approval for dedication of 2.5 acres as Denby Prairie Nature Preserve at the Commission's 113th Meeting in May, 1987 (Resolution 931), and the dedication was recorded in Macoupin County on June 4, 1987. An error in the legal description has been discovered, and the landowner has requested that the Commission record the corrected legal description.

REPORT ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Jenny Skufca Approval of Corrected Legal

Nature Preserves Commission Description

Item 20*: Peoria Co. - Correction of Legal Description for Singing Woods Nature Preserve

The Peoria Park District received final approval for dedication of 695.85 acres as Singing Woods Nature Preserve at the Commission's 171st Meeting in May, 2001 (Resolution 1592), and the dedication was recorded in Peoria County on June 13, 2001. An error in the legal description has been found, and the landowner has requested that the Commission record the corrected legal description.

REPORT Jenny Skufca Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED Approval of Corrected Legal Description

Item 21:* Concern Regarding Use of Herbicides by Contractors at Nature Preserves

Dr. Dennis Nyberg, a former volunteer with Forest Preserve District of Cook County (FPDCC), submitted a written request to address the Commission regarding his concern that contractors for the FPDCC are inappropriately applying herbicide at nature preserve sites owned by the FPDCC. INPC management guidelines and administrative rules authorize the use of herbicides as a part of an approved management plan for a site.

REPORT

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Dr. Dennis Nyberg

None at this Time

Item 22: Natural Areas Acquisition Fund Fiscal Year 2014 Defense Proposals

Natural Areas Acquisition Fund (NAAF) capital appropriation in FY2012 and FY2013 included \$225,000 each to fund contractual natural area defense activities needed on properties included in one of the INPC's protection programs. NAAF defense projects that were begun in years prior to FY2013 and continued or completed during FY2013 include: funding the Illinois State Geological Survey (ISGS) to collect and review groundwater data needed to assess impacts of proposed off-site development, threats or damages, prepare Class III Special Resource Groundwater petitions to the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency for INPC program sites and provide groundwater consulting services for the INPC staff. In FY 2013, there was a new contract for the continuation of the aforementioned groundwater consulting services and Class III delineations from the ISGS. Approximately \$190,000 of the two years of appropriation authority remains unassigned to specific projects. This appropriation authority remains available to address threats that may arise provided dollars are available within NAAF. Based on the Governor's FY2014 budget proposal, \$225,000 may be available for allocation to defense from this year's appropriation. Specific projects will be selected as needed but will likely include a continuation of the aforementioned groundwater data and consultation services at some level. In addition, we are investigating using up to \$100,000 for beach sand nourishment at North Dunes Nature Preserve, Illinois Beach State Park. Specific projects funded during FY2014 will be reported in May, 2014.

REPORT Randy Heidorn/Jenny Skufca Nature Preserves Commission ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED Approval of FY2014 Defense Project Plan

Item 23: <u>Natural Areas Acquisition Fund Fiscal Year 2013 Land Acquisition Proposals – Additions to the Project List</u>

The NAAF is administered by the IDNR with review and recommendation of land acquisition projects by the INPC. In FY2010, the IDNR identified, and the INPC approved, acquisition of 20 high priority tracts of land within 16 natural areas. Since very little NAAF money was available for land acquisition in FY2010, FY2011 and FY2012, the IDNR worked off the INPC approved project list when NAAF funds were available for land acquisition. The FY2013 NAAF budget allocates \$1,500,000 for natural area land acquisition so additional projects can be considered. Six additional high priority natural area tracts of land have become available and are recommended for acquisition. All the proposed acquisition parcels are included on the INAI and/or provide habitat for endangered or threatened species of animals or plants. The proposed acquisitions total 368 acres and will cost approximately \$1,500,000 to acquire. INPC approval of the six newly identified opportunity areas is requested. In FY2014, \$1,500,000 of NAAF is proposed for land acquisition projects. INPC review and approval of the FY2014 land acquisition program will be sought at the INPC's 215th meeting on September 10, 2013.

REPORT Don McFall Department of Natural Resources ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED Approval of Additions to the FY2013 NAAF Land Acquisition List

Item 24: Review of Closed Meeting Minutes

There are four sets of minutes regarding land acquisition from closed meetings of the Commission. The meeting dates were August 2, 2005, May 2, 2006, May 6, 2008, and May 5, 2009. These meetings were closed in accordance with the Open Meetings Act to discuss the purchase of real property. Section 2.06 of the Open Meetings Act provides that public bodies, "shall periodically, but no less than semi-annually, meet to review minutes of all closed sessions. At such meetings, a determination shall be made and reported in an open session that:

1. the need for confidentiality still exists as to all or part of those minutes, or 2. that the minutes or portions thereof no longer require confidential treatment and are available for public inspection."

REPORT
Randy Heidorn
Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED
Disposition of Closed Meeting
Minutes

Item 25: Public Comment Period (3 minutes per person)

Item 26: Other Business

Items may be discussed, but no final action may occur for items not previously included on the agenda.

Item 27: Adjournment