

ILLINOIS NATURE PRESERVES COMMISSION
Minutes of the 214th Meeting
May 7, 2013

INDEX

<u>AREAS</u>	<u>ITEM</u>
Kankakee Co. – Hopkins Park Savanna, Nature Preserve, Dedication	8
Tazewell Co. – Fon du Lac Seep Nature Preserve, Dedication.....	9
Washington Co. – Bohbrink Woods, Nature Preserve, Dedication.....	10
Kankakee Co. – Callie Mae Spraggins Savanna Nature Preserve, Dedication	11
Lake Co. – Openlands Lakeshore, Bluff and Ravine Nature Preserve, Dedication	12
Lake Co. – Rollins Savanna Nature Preserve, Dedication.....	13
Lake Co. – Buffer Addition to Skokie River Nature Preserve, Dedication	14
Lake Co. – Sun Lake Nature Preserve, Dedication	15
Champaign and Vermilion Co. – Translocation of the Federally and State Endangered Clubshell and Riffleshell Mussels to Edgewood Farm Land and Water Reserve	16
Cook Co. – Request to Construct and Educational Shelter and Shed Within Chicago Ridge Prairie Nature Preserve.....	17
Lake Co. – Correction of Legal Description for Farm Trails North Nature Preserve	18
Macoupin Co. – Correction of Legal Description for Denby Prairie Nature Preserve.....	19
Peoria Co. – Correction of Legal Description for Singing Woods Nature Preserve	20

COMMISSION AFFAIRS

Adoption of Agenda.....	2
Approval of the Special Meeting Minutes, January 28, 2013, and the 213 th Meeting Minutes, January 29, 2013.....	3
2013 Meeting Schedule.....	4
INPC Staff Report.....	5
IDNR Staff Report	6
Endangered Species Protection Board Staff Report	7
Concern Regarding Use of Herbicides by Contractors at Nature Preserves	21
Natural Areas Acquisition Fund Fiscal Year 2014 Defense Proposals	22
Natural Areas Acquisition Fund Fiscal Year 2013 Land Acquisitions Proposals – Additions to the Project List.....	23
Review of Closed Meeting Minutes.....	24
Public Comment Period.....	25
Other Business	26
Adjournment	27

Illinois Nature Preserves Commission
Minutes of the 214th Meeting
(Subject to approval at the 215th Meeting)

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

Tuesday, May 7, 2013

214-1) Call to Order, Roll Call, and Introduction of Attendees

At 9:15 a.m., pursuant to the Call to Order of Chair Thomas, the meeting began.

Randy Heidorn read the roll call.

Members present: Dennis Clark, George Covington, Donnie Dann, William McClain, Jill Riddell, Lauren Rosenthal, and David Thomas.

Members absent: Pen DauBach and Mare Payne.

Others present: Steven Byers, Bob Edgin, Tom Lerczak, Angella Moorehouse, Kelly Neal, John Nelson, Debbie Reider, Kim Roman, and Jenny Skufca, Illinois Nature Preserves Commission (INPC); Marc Miller, Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR); Jim Herkert, Don McFall, and Penny Snyder, Office of Resource Conservation (ORC), IDNR; Anne Mankowski, Endangered Species Protection Board (ESPB), IDNR; Brian Anderson, Illinois Natural History Survey (INHS) and INPC Advisor; Fran Harty, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and INPC Consultant; Joe Roth, Openlands and INPC Consultant; Aimee Collins, Openlands; Jeremy Tiemann, INHS; Jolie Krasinski and Ashley Vizek, Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation; Jim Anderson, Andrew Kimmel; Ken Klick, and Ann Maine, Lake County Forest Preserve District (LCFPD) representing the proposed Rollins Savanna Nature Preserve, and the proposed Sun Lake Nature Preserve; David Holman, Dennis Nyberg, and Joyce Webber.

214-2) Adoption of Agenda

Items 10 and 14 have been deferred at the landowners' request.

It was moved by Covington, seconded by Rosenthal, and carried that the Agenda be adopted as modified.

Chair Thomas thanked the staff of the LCFPD for the tour on May 6, 2013. He also thanked Jerry Adelmann, Jill Allread and others at Openlands for hosting the joint celebration gathering.

Chair Thomas introduced Marc Miller, Director of the IDNR.

Director Miller stated that it was his pleasure to be here and the work that is done by the Commission is very important and fulfilling.

214-3) Approval the Special Meeting Minutes, January 28, 2013, and the 213th Meeting Minutes, January 29, 2013

It was moved by Clark, seconded by Dann, and carried that the Special Meeting Minutes, January 28, 2013, and the 213th Meeting Minutes, January 29, 2013 be approved.

Chair Thomas reported that at the 213th Meeting of the INPC, held on January 29, 2013, at the Rochester Public Library in Rochester, Illinois, legal protection was completed by the Commission for nine tracts of land totaling 3,069.1 acres. Five of these areas are owned by a not-for-profit corporation or private individuals who donated the value of the protection agreement to the public. This private land was permanently preserved without further acquisition of the land by the state. The dollar value of the tracts of private land is \$3,295,000 based on conservative estimates of the fair market value of the land. Private lands protected include Loy Prairie Land and Water Reserve, Marion County; the Sarah and Robert Allgyer Prairie Buffer Addition to Skokie River Nature Preserve, Lake County; William D. Wells Buffer Addition to Dokum Mskoda Sedge Meadow Nature Preserve; Nachusa Grasslands Nature Preserve, Lee and Ogle County; and Pruett Woods Nature Preserve, Saline County. Protection of this land came about because the Commission has eight staff in the field working with private and public landowners. There are now 367 dedicated nature preserves in 84 counties totaling 54,974.545 acres and 170 land and water reserves in 66 counties totaling 48,173.948 acres.

Chair Thomas stated that the Commission would like to present the following resolutions to recognize four individuals:

It was moved by Covington, seconded by Riddell, and carried that the following resolution be approved:

The Illinois Nature Preserves Commission recognizes Thomas Hahn, who served with distinction at the Lake County Forest Preserve District for over thirteen years, the last eight years of which he served in the capacity of Executive Director. During his tenure, Mr. Hahn's leadership guided public investment of \$345.5 million in the purchase of 9,433 acres and 22 new forest preserves. His passionate understanding of the need to permanently protect natural areas helped motivate the District to preserve 14 new parcels in the Illinois Nature Preserves System totaling 3,446 acres and including five new nature preserves, two new land and water reserves and seven additions to existing preserves or reserves. His support for natural resource management and natural community restoration has made the Lake County Forest Preserve District a model of how agencies, given adequate financial support, can restore and maintain high quality natural areas. Mr. Hahn's career leaves a long lasting legacy of natural lands to the people of the Lake County and the State of Illinois.

(Resolution 2234)

Commissioner Riddell stated that Mr. Hahn also served as the Executive Director of CorLands for many years, and he was also the Assistant Director at Openlands for many years. The total amount of land that he has helped to protect in his overall career is double the amount that is acknowledged for the time he was with the LCFPD. He has been a great friend to conservation.

It was moved by Rosenthal, seconded by Riddell, and carried that the following resolution be approved:

The Illinois Nature Preserves Commission (INPC) wishes to recognize Gerald A. Paulson on the occasion of his retirement from the Natural Land Institute (NLI) after a 42-year career in conservation. Mr. Paulson has served the INPC in many capacities during his long and successful career. In the early 1970s, he began his association with the INPC as its Northern Illinois Field Representative. He then transitioned to a contractor serving as staff for the INPC. Under George Fell's leadership, Mr. Paulson became the INPC's Coordinator of Preservation Activities, serving as such until the INPC moved its office to Springfield. After ten years with the NLI, Mr. Paulson left to work for the Lake Michigan Federation, McHenry County Defenders, American Farmland Trust, and The Wetlands Initiative before returning to the NLI. Mr. Paulson served with distinction as Executive Director of the NLI and Consultant to the INPC. Mr. Paulson leaves a legacy of protected land of more than 5,000 acres and numerous wise conservation policies and strategies. His active partnership and support have helped the INPC and the State of Illinois accomplish its natural areas conservation mission and will be long remembered.

(Resolution 2235)

It was moved by Dann, seconded by Rosenthal, and carried that the following resolution be approved:

The Illinois Nature Preserves Commission wishes to recognize the leadership and contributions made by John Rogner as Assistant Director of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. John will be remembered for his advocacy, dedication, and support of science-driven natural areas conservation as he served as the liaison between the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission from April 2011 through February 2013. His support within the Illinois Department of Natural Resources for long term protection of natural areas was exemplary, and his skill in partnership building led to important accomplishments including the establishment of the Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge. John's continuing commitment to and advocacy for the Commission's programs will always be greatly appreciated, and his legacy of land protection will continue for generations of Illinoisans.

(Resolution 2236)

Commissioner Thomas stated that he has had the pleasure of working with John over the years, and he felt this was a fitting tribute to someone that continues to play an important role in conservation in Illinois.

Commissioner Dann stated that John is the kind of public servant that he is so pleased, as a citizen, to support. He is always accessible, reasonable, incredibly knowledgeable, and effective. He stated that he would like to thank him for all the help that he has given over the years.

It was moved by Riddell, seconded by Clark, and carried that the following resolution be approved:

The Illinois Nature Preserves Commission (INPC) wishes to recognize Karen Witter on the occasion of her retirement from State service. Ms. Witter served as the first Director of the INPC from 1982 to 1985

following INPC's founder, Executive Secretary George B. Fell. Ms. Witter came well prepared to the protection of natural areas in Illinois, having been instrumental in drafting the Natural Areas Plan that followed the original Illinois Natural Areas Inventory. As INPC Director, she was charged with relocating the INPC headquarters to the state capital and hiring its first staff. Ms. Witter left the INPC in 1985 to take a position in Governor James R. Thompson's office where she helped secure Build Illinois Funding for acquisition of natural areas and open space. Ms. Witter became Director of the Department of Energy and Natural Resources. Once the Illinois Department of Natural Resources was formed, she became its Assistant Director with responsibilities for the scientific surveys and the Illinois State Museum. Ultimately, she served as the Assistant Director of the Illinois State Museum. Throughout her career, her passion for working to highlight and protect natural areas has left a legacy of leadership and guidance that will long influence how and what natural areas are protected in Illinois.

(Resolution 2237)

214-4) 2013 Meeting Schedule

September 10, 2013 – Giant City State Park Lodge, Makanda

214-5) INPC Staff Report

The INPC staff report is attached as Exhibit A. Randy Heidorn stated that this year is the Commission's 50th Anniversary, and the actual approval of the Act occurred in September, 1963. The Commission met for the first time in January, 1964, and dedicated the first nature preserve at Illinois Beach on September 3, 1969. It has been 50 years of saving Illinois' treasures. One of the keystone events of this will be the Natural Areas Conference the first week of October, 2013. He stated that he wanted to thank Chicago Wilderness, Chicago Botanic Gardens, and Morton Arboretum, key players for the conference, along with the Natural Areas Association. He stated that he looks forward to having everyone participate who can.

Kelly Neal highlighted a few of the stewardship and monitoring efforts contained in the staff report. Ms. Neal introduced the new logo that was designed by Central Management Services (CMS) to highlight the Commission's 50th Anniversary. CMS is producing three banners that will be used at events throughout the State. Information will be posted on the INPC Facebook page as soon as an event is scheduled. Ms. Neal stated that Debbie Newman worked with the Illinois Audubon Society to devote its entire fall magazine issue to the INPC's 50th Anniversary.

Randy Heidorn stated that Kim Roman has been doing an incredible job keeping up the INPC Facebook page. Another project, 50 sites for 50 years, was recommended by the Commissioners and will be initiated fairly soon.

Jenny Skufca highlighted a few defense items contained in the staff report. She stated that there are four cases that remain with the Illinois Attorney General's Office. Three of those are in the active phase of settlement negotiation: Short Fork Seep Nature Preserve – herbicide encroachment that occurred in 2010; Middlefork Savanna Nature Preserve – sediment encroachment in 2010; and Tallmadge Sand Forest Land and Water Reserve – timber theft in 2009. The 2010 crude oil release at Romeoville Prairie

Nature Preserve incident is still with the Illinois Attorney General's Office, but this case has not yet reached the settlement negotiation phase.

Ms. Skufca stated that a management action was approved for Volo Bog Nature Preserve for the Chipmunk Woods Outdoor Education Area. Stipulations approved by the Commission at its 213th Meeting in January, 2013 (Resolution 2232) were provided to the IDNR's Comprehensive Environmental Review Program (CERP). Due to the level of conversation that occurred about this project at the 213th Meeting, it was decided to add an additional recommendation. In consultation with other staff members, the stipulation to have the Volo Bog site staff provide baseline photographic documentation in late June, 2013 was added. Six photo station locations were identified throughout the project area. Photographs will be done in four cardinal directions at each of the six locations. The photographic documentation at each station will occur each June for the next four years.

Ms. Skufca gave a presentation showing the location of the Chipmunk Woods Outdoor Education Area in relation to the boundaries of Volo Bog Nature Preserve, along with the designated photo station locations. The administrative rules for nature preserves give the Commission the right to withdraw this management approval if adverse impact is shown to the Nature Preserve.

John Nelson gave a presentation on the Bluff Spring Fen Protection Plan. Mr. Nelson stated that this project has been in the works for the last ten years.

Steven Byers stated that \$76,000 has been earmarked for restoration at this site. The funds are being held by the Conservation Foundation. The funds will be used to purchase seed and follow-up herbicide application of weedy invasive species.

Mr. Nelson stated that there are many groundwater monitoring stations outside of the Nature Preserve, as well as inside of the Nature Preserve. There is a long-standing data set that will be used to determine if the protection plan is working.

Ms. Skufca stated that the Commission is getting daily progress updates from the contractor.

Randy Heidorn stated that the Reclamation District transferred the project to the Forest Preserve District of Cook County (FPDCC). The FPDCC has become a partner in this, and it is an excellent example how partners are key to the success of these complex conservation issues.

Dr. Brian Anderson stated that he was also involved in this project early on, and seeing this project come to a culmination was a testament to the important role of the Commission. The Commission's ability to stick with something for thirty years and get it done right was a real testament to the strength of the relationships in the conservation community. He stated that he wanted to applaud the staff and the Commission and remind them of the work that is done to maintain the vigilance and long-term commitment to these issues.

Chair Thomas stated that he has also been involved in this project on and off for approximately ten years with the blending of the land management and public policy and working with other groups, including scientists, that are constantly providing input for this very complex project. There has been a lot of discussion on the groundwater flow. He stated that it was rewarding to see how this blending of talent,

time, and energy made a difference. He thanked all the staff for the long journey. It is not over, but we have made tremendous progress.

Commissioner Clark asked if there was any need for a phase two environmental study.

Mr. Nelson stated that the only thing that they found during this project were some old railroad metal bars. The bars were taken across the street and recycled. There was nothing on the surface that indicated that a phase two environmental study was necessary. There were no underground storage tanks.

214-6) IDNR Staff Report

Don McFall presented the IDNR staff report which is attached as Exhibit B.

214-7) Endangered Species Protection Board Report

Anne Mankowski updated the Commission on the five-year review of the Illinois endangered and threatened species list. The process is ongoing, and the lists for birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fish and mussels have been reviewed. The next ESPB meeting is May 17, 2013. At that time the Board will be reviewing the remaining invertebrates and part of the plant list. Once the Board has gone through all the taxonomic groups, it will confirm preliminary decisions by the Board, hold a public hearing, and gain public comment. At a subsequent meeting, the Board will make its final listing decisions. At that point, it will move to the Administrative Rule process. The entire process is estimated to take two to three years. She stated that she would provide another update at the Commission's meeting in September, 2013.

Chair Thomas stated that Commissioner Covington would moderate the portion of the meeting concerning Item 8 because he and Commissioner Dann would be recusing themselves from the discussion because of their association with TNC.

214-8) Kankakee Co. – Hopkins Park Savanna Nature Preserve, Dedication

Kim Roman presented a proposal on behalf of the Illinois Chapter of TNC for preliminary approval for dedication of the 77-acre Hopkins Park Savanna Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI) site (#1835) as Hopkins Park Savanna Nature Preserve. Hopkins Park Savanna is located in the Kankakee Sand Area Section of the Grand Prairie Natural Division, 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.

It was moved by Rosenthal, seconded by Clark, and carried, with Dann and Thomas abstaining, that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission grants preliminary approval for dedication of Hopkins Park Savanna in Kankakee County as an Illinois nature preserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 8 of the Agenda for the 214th Meeting.

(Resolution 2238)

Chair Thomas stated that TNC has made a major effort in the Kankakee Sand Area, both with private donations as well as foundation funding. TNC has an approval in a block to look at various properties. When properties come up in that area, it is able to acquire the property. There is a great long-term plan to acquire land in this area as it becomes available. He felt it was an exciting prospect.

Commissioner Dann stated that from his observation, there were not many sites in the entire TNC preserve design that would not qualify as an Illinois nature preserve.

214-9) Tazewell Co. – Fon du Lac Seep Nature Preserve, Dedication

Thomas Lerczak presented a proposal on behalf of the Fon du Lac Park District for 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.

Mr. Lerczak stated that there is a power line that runs along the right-of-way. From that power line there is one utility line that goes to an old house referred to as the Cooper Mansion. The vegetation in that area will be maintained in order not to interfere with the power line.

Commissioner McClain stated that he was glad to see the proposed management plan provided for conducting plant and animal inventories. The seeps have not been explored in depth, and he felt that there were new discoveries to be found in those seeps, especially those along the Illinois River. He stated that he was happy to see that a lot of these were being protected.

Commissioner Covington asked about the status of the Cooper Mansion and if it posed any threat to the proposed nature preserve.

Mr. Lerczak stated the Cooper Mansion was owned by the Fon du Lac Park District. The entire parcel was purchased by the Fon du Lac Park District because it was recognized as an important natural area, and the Park District wanted to see the seep protected. At the time of the purchase, the Park District thought it could use the building as a meeting place or find some other type of use for it. At the present time the building is being leased out to private individuals, and the Park District may or may not keep it in ownership. Once the boundary signs are in place for the nature preserve, the building will have no effect on the nature preserve because it has been excluded from the nature preserve dedication.

It was moved by McClain, seconded by Riddell, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission grants preliminary approval for dedication of Fon du Lac Seep in Tazewell County as an Illinois nature preserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 9 of the Agenda for the 214th Meeting.

(Resolution 2239)

214-10) Washington Co. – Bohbrink Woods Nature Preserve, Dedication

This item was deferred at the request of the landowner.

214-11) Kankakee Co. – Callie Mae Spraggins Savanna Nature Preserve, Dedication

Kim Roman presented a proposal on behalf of Mr. Willie Spraggins for 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 state-endangered species: yellow wild indigo (*Baptisia tinctoria*) and primrose violet (*Viola primulifolia*). This site 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).

Commissioner Covington stated that was recusing himself from the discussion and vote on this site because he has consulted with Mr. Spraggins on this site.

Randy Heidorn stated that this was a privately-owned site, and a title commitment was in place.

Ms. Roman stated that a survey was also done by a licensed surveyor, and the legal description for the site was prepared at that time.

Commissioner McClain stated that after seeing Mr. Spraggins and his family, one can tell that they are very delighted and proud to do this. He stated that it was a wonderful story.

Ms. Roman stated that it has been a pleasure to work with the Spraggins family.

It was moved by McClain, seconded by Clark, and carried, with Covington abstaining, that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission grants final approval for dedication of Callie Mae Spraggins Savanna in Kankakee County as an Illinois nature preserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 11 of the Agenda for the 214th Meeting.

(Resolution 2240)

214-12) Lake Co. – Openlands Lakeshore, Bluff and Ravine Nature Preserve, Dedication

Steven Byers presented a proposal on behalf of Openlands for 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 dry-mesic upland forest and supports populations of the state-endangered shadbush (*Amelanchier sanguinea*), marram grass (*Ammophila breviligulata*), seaside spurge (*Chamaesyce polygonifolia*), buffalo berry (*Shepherdia 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 state-listed 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).

Chair Thomas stated that this site provides for more intense human visitation and use and represents the range of things that the Commission has to consider. He stated that this was a wonderful example. The

artwork at the site is somewhat different than what is found in most of the INPC sites. He felt it was a nice blending of human use and maintaining a natural use, and he appreciated seeing the site firsthand.

Aimee Collins stated that it was Openlands intension to balance the use with the natural resources of the site. She stated that Openlands was honored to bring this site before the Commission, and she thanked Mr. Byers for his assistance through this process. She knows that this will bring permanent protection to a site that is near and dear to their hearts, and she thanked the Commission for its consideration of this site.

It was moved by Dann, seconded by Riddell, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission grants final approval for dedication of Openlands Lakeshore, Bluff and Ravine in Lake County as an Illinois nature preserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 12 of the Agenda for the 214th Meeting.

(Resolution 2241)

Randy Heidorn stated that this site proves that conservation is a marathon. In 1982, about a month into his career and during a weekly call with his boss, Fran Harty, he was asked to meet with the base facility staff at Fort Sheridan because there were a couple of INAI sites there. He stated that it was really great to see a site from so early in his career being preserved. He thanked Openlands and the Forest Preserve District for the hard work.

214-13) Lake Co. – Rollins Savanna Nature Preserve, Dedication

Jim Anderson presented a proposal on behalf of the LCFPD for 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 former 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 state-threatened 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).

Mr. Anderson presented the allowable uses, including the right to remove any drainage tile that was missed; re-route a trail with the approval of the Commission; maintain the trail; accommodate trail users by providing additional parking, benches, fencing, and signs; allowing dogs on leashes within the proposed nature preserve; and the provision to allow a snowmobile trail on the eastern boundary within a portion of the proposed nature preserve. The allowable uses and reserved rights for the site were explained in detail in the dedication proposal which was presented at the Commission's 213th Meeting in January, 2013.

Chair Thomas asked if the water level could be controlled in the wetland areas.

Mr. Anderson stated that water control structures were incorporated into the wetland restoration.

Steven Byers stated that at the when Rollins Savanna was given preliminary approval in January, 2013, the Commission expressed that the approval of the snowmobile use at this site should not be construed as a precedent for other sites currently in or being considered for inclusion the Illinois Nature Preserve System.

Commissioner Covington stated that it was important to remember that the snowmobile use at this site was a preexisting use, and it was part of a regional trail. The only alternative for the LCFPD would be to exclude the trail; however, he did not feel that was in anyone's interest. It was his opinion that it should not be considered a precedent for allowing snowmobiling; but in this instance, he felt that it was worth allowing this continued use.

It was moved by Riddell, seconded by Covington, and carried that the following resolution be approved:

The Commission grants final approval for dedication of Rollins Savanna in Lake County as an Illinois nature preserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 13 of the Agenda for the 214th Meeting; however this would not be seen as setting a precedent for allowing snowmobile trails in current or future nature preserves.

(Resolution 2242)

214-14) Lake Co. – Buffer Addition to Skokie River Nature Preserve, Dedication

This item was deferred at the request of the landowner.

214-15) Lake Co. – Sun Lake Nature Preserve, Dedication

Jim Anderson presented a proposal on behalf of the LCFPD for final approval 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 erythrophthalmus*), 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).

Anne Maine, president of the LCFPD, thanked the Commission for holding its meeting in Lake County. She stated that the dedication of this site allows the LCFPD to protect the natural features in perpetuity, and the LCFPD treasures the working relationship with the INPC.

It was moved by Dann, seconded by Riddell, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission grants final approval for dedication of Sun Lake in McHenry County as an Illinois nature preserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 15 of the Agenda for the 214th Meeting.

(Resolution 2243)

214-16) Champaign and Vermilion Co. – Translocation of the Federally and State Endangered Clubshell and Riffleshell Mussels to Edgewood Farm Land and Water Reserve

Jeremy Tiemann gave a comprehensive presentation explaining the Illinois Natural History Survey's (INHS) request for translocation of two species of mussels. 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 approval 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 Allegheny 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.

Chair Thomas stated that he was recusing himself from any discussion on this issue due to his long association with the INHS. He stated that Commission Dann would be facilitating the questions and action related to this agenda item.

Commissioner Riddell asked what the merits were of distributing the mussels from this bridge so widely as opposed to putting them in more densely in fewer locations.

Mr. Tiemann stated that the USFWS and the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, in addition to state agencies, were enacting the federal recovery plan which was to establish populations throughout its range. Translocation is a tool that may be worthwhile in trying to establish viable populations in separate river drainages. These mussels are the two most common species in the Allegheny River. It has been determined that it would be futile to move the mussels downstream or upstream from the bridge because populations are well established in this area. This would be an opportunity to learn if a translocation could become a viable opportunity for other species in the future.

Commissioner Riddell asked about the genetic diversity.

Mr. Tiemann stated that this topic has been debated. He stated that it was his opinion that we would never see these populations touching again because of sedimentation problems and habitat. Mussel glochidia use darter species as hosts. Darter home ranges are feet, not miles. Unless the locks and dams disappear, or if farmers decrease the sedimentation, he does not see the habitat in certain stretches of river changing. He stated that these would be fragmented populations. Because of that, most researchers are not concerned about the genetics. If extant populations did occur, the genetics would be a concern.

Commissioner Dann asked if the Vermilion River was the only possible river in Illinois.

Mr. Tiemann stated, "Yes." He stated that there was a population in the head waters of the Tippecanoe River in northern Indiana, but in between the Vermilion River and the Tippecanoe River are two impoundments which are not coming out any time soon. Data has shown that darters do not navigate past dams, especially dams like this because there is no fish passage. These are basically isolated, land-locked populations.

Commissioner McClain asked if there was any thought given towards trying to encourage landowners within the relocation watershed to try to somehow reduce siltation.

Mr. Tiemann stated that he does not work for the IDNR, so he does not know what sort of incentive programs are there. He stated that he lives in the Salt Fork Basin, and he is a member of Friends of the Salt Fork. He knows that there are concerned landowners that own riverfront property that do take measures to control sedimentation, but their neighbors do not. That is a big problem, but he was not aware of what steps could be done to resolve those issues.

Commissioner Riddell asked that someone speak to the INPC's role in needing to approve this request.

Kelly Neal presented the INPC staff recommendation, and it is attached as Exhibit C. She stated that because of the items presented by Mr. Tiemann – the drought, the nature of having to go get the mussels quickly, have them in quarantine, and Hurricane Isaac, they were under a crunch and really wanted to get the mussels into the habitat so that they could start acclimating. There were very few appropriate sites; and as he had indicated, the Smiths were very enthusiastic about offering their section of the river. All that happened very quickly, and the Commission was not involved in that process. At this time, staff is bringing this request before the Commission for a retroactive approval of this action. Because the site has been determined to be suitable if there are more mussels available in the future, the INHS is interested in further translocations.

Ms. Neal stated that the Commissioners were provided the staff recommendation which contains the recommendation that the Commission give the retroactive approval for the previous translocation and if future translocations were to take place, there is a list of stipulations that would be required of the INHS to fulfill in order to do future translocations.

Commissioner Riddell asked if staff was asking the Commission to pass two resolutions; one for the retroactive approval of the translocation and one for approval of future translocations that follow these criteria.

Ms. Neal stated that it would be up to the Commission as to the number of resolutions it felt would be appropriate in this instance. In this case, there were two separate issues. The first issue was the request for the retroactive approval for the past translocation, and the second issue was the request for approval of the possibility of future translocations.

Commissioner Riddell asked if the Commission has ever been asked to give a general approval for a concept of translocation without a specific proposal. She asked if it was possible to give a blanket approval for future translocations.

Ms. Neal stated that she thought that the information that was provided by Mr. Tiemann, as well as some of the information that has been produced by the USFWS and the joint document by the IDNR and the ESPB provided some guiding information for future translocations.

Commissioner Riddell stated that if this was the sort of thing that did sometime emerge rather quickly and needed to be acted upon quickly, she may feel more comfortable giving a future approval in that instance now rather than this retroactive approval because that felt a little funny.

Ms. Neal stated that was why staff was asking the Commission for approval of staff level review and approval for future translocations for this specific site. The stipulations contained in the staff recommendation include that the ESPB be involved and would do its own separate review.

Commissioner Dann asked if the Commission had the capability, in an emergency situation, to have an electronic meeting to contact a quorum of Commissioners.

Randy Heidorn stated that the Open Meetings Act limited the ability to do that. The Commission would have to publish the meeting information and list specific locations where Commissioners would meet.

Commissioner Dann stated that it was all the more reason that Commissioner Riddell's suggestion had validity to it.

Commissioner Riddell stated that page four of the staff recommendation had the recommendations nicely written out. There were three parts to the recommendation which she felt were fine.

Commissioner Clark asked if the ESPB weighed in on this since its recent letter in January.

Ms. Neal stated that unfortunately staff did not involve the ESPB in the process as much as we should have. We were kind of catching up.

Mr. Heidorn stated that there was an initial letter which was verbally discussed back in January, 2013. We did get a response at that point. Albeit that at the time we did not have a written proposal because we were still in the process of getting one from the applicant who had a realization that an error had happened in terms of placing these animals without authorization.

Commissioner McClain stated that he agreed that this same sort of scenario will repeat itself in the future, not just for mussels, but perhaps for plants as well as with other animals. He felt the Commission was going to be faced with the question, not just of saving diversity. Plant and animal diversity was something that we really need to think about and to do.

Ms. Neal stated that because the plant translocations seem to occur more often, we do typically approve those on a staff level. We use the Illinois plant translocation policy which is a joint policy between the IDNR, the ESPB, and the INPC as a guiding document, along with referring to any specialist that is needed. Due to the differences between animals, their genetics, and other such considerations, staff feel more comfortable at this time working with the Commission.

Commissioner Riddell stated that she felt there was a greater consciousness of the INPC's role in terrestrial environments. She wondered if perhaps part of the problem was due to this translocation being an aquatic species. The Commission needs to ensure that the INHS's consciousness is raised regarding the need to seek INPC approval for future translocations at INPC sites.

Commissioner Dann stated that Commissioner McClain's point was a very valid one, especially looking at the broader picture in this area of climate change and how our habitats are going to be changing and the need to build some flexibility into allowing INPC staff to function effectively. He stated that he was not sure how to do that institutionally, but it was something that we should be giving some consideration to.

Ms. Neal stated that what has been done in the past was to follow a three time approval process by the Commission, meaning once the Commission has reviewed and approved the translocation of a species or cohort (such as butterflies) three separate times, staff are then more comfortable approving such a request at the staff level. There is such diversity in species and their life cycles that staff have not yet developed a policy.

Commissioner Rosenthal stated that there is an Illinois plant translocation policy, and she asked if anyone had tried to write an Illinois animal translocation policy and work with the ESPB in doing that.

Ms. Neal stated that the ESPB has a translocation policy for animals.

Commissioner Rosenthal asked if the ESPB animal translocation policy was followed in this case.

Ms. Neal stated that the biological criteria were considered by the INPC, but the procedures followed were different. The ESPB and the IDNR provided the 2010 document for the 2010 translocation and listed criteria and factors that needed to be fulfilled in order for that 2010 translocation to occur. Review of that document and comparing to what occurred this time, there was a comfort level that those biological factors were generally followed.

Commissioner Rosenthal stated that this was not okay. The applicants made a mistake. In 2010 the IDNR and the INPC said something could be done. Staff from the INPC talked with Anne Mankowski and received an email that did not support the action, but the applicant had already done it. Now the applicant is coming afterwards and saying that we should ask the Commission to approve what they did. In this case maybe there was no harm done. It was the right choice to make at the time because it was good to capture these species and get them in the river when the weather allowed it to happen before the hurricane hit, but the process was not okay. Asking for after the fact approval should not set a precedent. There should be a policy in place that gives the staff the proper leeway to do the right thing at the time. To come to the Commissioners after something was done by mistake was an insult to the integrity of the entire process for the INPC and the ESPB. She stated that she did not know how the Commission is supposed to do its job if you come to them and say this is okay, but they say no, then you go "too bad, we are doing it anyway."

Ms. Neal stated that she did want to note that both the Commission and the ESPB found out after the translocation occurred. Neither entity had an ability to comment or to provide input prior to the translocation.

Mr. Heidorn stated that one of the things this really points out was that we need to be addressing the animals in a similar way that has been done with plants. Maybe this really points towards moving forward and trying to develop a policy that would be similar to the plant translocation. Specific criteria is needed so staff can then evaluate these requests in advance and not have to bring every one of these to the Commission for approval. He stated that he felt this was the way to get this process fixed.

Chair Thomas stated that he felt it would be good if the staff develop a policy, in consultation with the ESPB, regarding animal translocation. He stated that he agreed wholeheartedly that these things were going to come up in the future. Staff may not have time to come back to the Commission if there is an opportunity that presents itself. A Commission approved policy should be in place which would allow staff to make those kinds of decisions.

Commissioner Dann asked Mr. Heidorn if the request for INPC staff to develop an animal translocation policy was reasonable.

Mr. Heidorn stated, "Yes."

It was moved by Riddell, seconded by Covington, and carried, with Thomas abstaining, that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission gives retroactive approval of the 2012 translocation of clubshell and riffleshell mussels to Edgewood Farm Land and Water Reserve in Champaign and Vermilion counties and approves the monitoring of the translocated mussel populations as described in the proposal presented under Item 16 of the Agenda for the 214th Meeting.

(Resolution 2244)

It was moved by Riddell, seconded by Covington:

The Commission approves the future translocations of the clubshell and rifflesell mussels at Edgewood Farm Land and Water Reserve in Champaign and Vermilion counties should more mussels become available.

Commissioner Rosenthal wanted to be certain that the resolution was only for the approval for future translocations of the clubshell and riffelshell mussels at the Edgewood Farm Land and Water Reserve. She also wanted it known that approval was given with the information contained in the proposal presented under Item 16 of the Agenda for the 214th Meeting, subject to the stipulations outlined on page four of the staff recommendation.

Commissioner Riddell stated that she accepted that amendment. The resolution now before the Commission:

The Commission approves the future translocations of the clubshell and rifflesell mussels at Edgewood Farm Land and Water Reserve in Champaign and Vermilion counties should more mussels become

available as presented in the proposal presented under Item 16 of the Agenda for the 214th Meeting, subject to the stipulations outlined on page four of the staff recommendation.

The amended motion carried, with Thomas abstaining, that the amended resolution be adopted.

(Resolution 2245)

Commissioner Rosenthal asked if a motion was needed to direct staff to work on an animal translocation policy to be presented in September, 2013.

Mr. Heidorn stated that it was up to the Commissioners, but he put the directive on his list.

Chair Thomas asked the Commissioners if they wanted to put forth a motion to have it in the record that they recommended it.

Commissioner Rosenthal stated that she could understand how this circumstance happens. Because the Commission does not have the flexibility to set up meetings on short term or to do electronic meetings under the Open Meetings Act, she did not want to have this happen again. She did not like that there was no criteria out there for this.

Chair Thomas stated that he agreed, but he was just asking if the Commissioners wanted to have it as an actual motion that would be voted on as opposed to saying Mr. Heidorn is just going to do it because he has written it down.

Mr. Heidorn stated that the request would be part of the meeting minutes.

It was decided that no motion was needed.

A lunch break was taken from 12:25 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.

214-17) Cook Co. – Request to Construct an Educational Shelter and Shed Within Chicago Ridge Prairie Nature Preserve

Steven Byers gave a presentation regarding the request from the Oak Lawn Park District to construct an educational shelter and shed within Chicago Ridge Prairie Nature Preserve. He stated that 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 was 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 would 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.

Commissioner Dann asked why the Village would not remove all of the overburden.

Mr. Byers stated that all of the overburden, less the location of the overlook, would be removed. The trail would be at the surface of the original soil profile. The only area of overburden that would remain would be at that particular location; an area that already had two-three feet of overburden. It was the wish and the intent of the Oak Lawn Park District, consistent with its OSLAD grant application, to provide a raised overlook of approximately two feet.

Commissioner McClain asked what the fill consisted of.

Mr. Byers stated that the fill was landscape debris and dirt. The original INAI extended to the east, but this portion of Chicago Ridge Prairie INAI was developed. As part of that development process, there was illegal dumping that occurred at this location. The Commission has been working with the Oak Lawn Park District to try and secure funding, initially with the US Army Corps of Engineers, but more recently there was an opportunity with the OSLAD grant to actually remove all of the overburden except for the location of the proposed overlook.

Commissioner McClain asked if the limestone screenings will affect the pH and therefore have an effect on the plant communities.

Mr. Byers stated that he did not believe so. One of the distinctive features of this particular prairie was that it lies over gravel and limestone. It was one of only two surviving prairies of this type in the entire State of Illinois.

Commissioner McClain stated that one of the things that was lacking in many, many places was access to nature. He felt that this shelter would be a step in the right direction to provide access to engage people into nature.

Mr. Byers stated that the Oak Lawn Park District is hoping to partner with the nearby school to provide those types of educational opportunities and venues. He stated that education was a common theme throughout the proposal for dedication, as well as the management goals and schedules, for this particular site.

Commissioner Riddell asked if the overburden contained junky vegetation or if it contained patches of good stuff.

Mr. Byers stated that there were few patches where the overburden was not as thick. In other locations, the overburden was two or three feet deep. It was variable throughout the site.

Commissioner Riddell stated that her initial concern was why put the overlook in the middle of the prairie, but as she understands it now, that area was not really prairie. The overlook was being put in an area that was almost thought of as a buffer where it could see out into the high-quality prairie.

Mr. Byers stated that he thought that was the intent of the location of the overlook – to provide that sense of what the real prairie looked like, yet still minimize the impact to the prairie. One of the staff recommendations was that the overlook would be placed on existing overburden, not on the high-quality prairie.

Kelly Neal presented the INPC staff recommendation, and it is attached as Exhibit D. Ms. Neal stated that the overlook would be placed in a highly degraded area, but it does provide a view of the high-quality prairie. Looking at the surrounding communities, it would be well placed in terms providing educational opportunities to a large number of people. Staff does recommend approval of the shelter. The Oak Lawn Park District was also requesting the construction of the shed within the shelter to store educational materials which was not included in the original CERP review. She stated that staff does not feel that the shed was necessarily required and are not recommending the approval of the shed. The stipulations for approval of the shelter construction were listed in the staff recommendation.

Chair Thomas asked if the Commission was also being asked to approve the trail.

Ms. Neal stated that the INPC administrative rules allow for staff level approval of trails.

Chair Thomas asked what was planned for the rest of the site after the overburden is removed.

Mr. Byers stated that he was working with the volunteer steward and the Oak Lawn Park District, and appropriate seed mixes will be used on the site to reintroduce the local genotypes.

Commissioner Dann asked if the Park District could be convinced to remove the overburden and not build the shelter.

Mr. Byers stated that the Park District had a vision for this site that included introducing the school children and the public to this site. The Park District feels strongly that these amenities would help in that mission.

Commissioner Clark asked if there was a parking lot nearby.

Mr. Byers stated that there was a street that was platted and primarily used for vehicles gaining access to the school. Part of the street extends, so there would be on-street parking outside of the boundary of the Nature Preserve.

Commissioner Riddell asked how having this shelter would affect prescribed burning.

Mr. Byers stated that, like with any structure, one would have to do a little planning and do some black lines. Knowing the volunteer steward and the fact that prescribed burns are done routinely at this site, he did not feel that this would represent a challenge.

Commissioner Riddell asked about the lighting for the shelter. She asked if it was possible to have some type of restrictions on lighting so that it would only be used when there was some type of night-time

program. The impact of light on insect populations and the creation of more urban glare was probably not a great contribution to the natural area.

Mr. Byers stated that he felt this was a reasonable request, one that the Park District would be prepared to acknowledge and honor. He stated that there were already extreme levels of light pollution, so no additional stress on the insects was needed.

Mr. Byers stated that early on in the protection of this site the Commission had the opportunity to work with Openlands. He asked that Joe Roth be given an opportunity to address the Commission on the role of Openlands, the significance of this site, and its vision for the site.

Mr. Roth stated that Openlands did pre-purchase this property around 1992 for the Oak Lawn Park District. It was a part of a violation settlement. He stated that he would like to commend Mr. Byers and the Commission. Since 1994, Openlands has been looking for options to get the overburden off of that site because of the rare nature of the habitat. He stated that Openlands felt confident that this was a good resolution to the situation. He stated that Mr. Byers and Ms. Neal have done a good job of analyzing the request for the construction of the shelter and would support the proposal and Ms. Neal's recommendations. It was a chance to get that 4.7 acres of overburden removed, give the seed bank a chance to come back, and introduce a public use. The elevated platform would allow individuals to see into the prairie. He stated that he would ask for the Commission's approval of the construction of the shelter pursuant to the INPC staff recommendations.

It was moved by Rosenthal, seconded by Clark, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission grants approval of the construction of an educational shelter within Chicago Ridge Prairie Nature Preserve in Cook County as described in the proposal presented under Item 17 of the Agenda for the 214th Meeting, subject to the stipulations outlined in the staff recommendation; however the Commission does not grant approval of the construction of the shed.

(Resolution 2246)

Chair Thomas stated that he wanted to thank the LCFPD for hosting the INPC meeting and providing lunch.

214-18) Lake Co. – Correction of Legal Description for Farm Trails North Nature Preserve

Jenny Skufca gave a presentation describing the legal description discrepancy for Farm Trails North Nature Preserve. 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.

It was moved by Covington, seconded by Dann, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission approved the correction to the legal description for Farm Trails North Nature Preserve in Lake County as described in the proposal presented under Item 18 of the Agenda for the 214th Meeting. The corrected legal description will be attached to the dedication document and re-recorded in Lake County.

(Resolution 2247)

214-19) Macoupin Co. – Correction of Legal Description for Denby Prairie Nature Preserve

Jenny Skufca gave a presentation describing the legal description discrepancy 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.

It was moved by Clark, seconded by Rosenthal, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission approved the correction to the legal description for Denby Prairie Nature Preserve in Macoupin County as described in the proposal presented under Item 19 of the Agenda for the 214th Meeting. The corrected legal description will be attached to the dedication document and re-recorded in Macoupin County.

(Resolution 2248)

214-20) Peoria Co. – Correction of Legal Description for Singing Woods Nature Preserve

Jenny Skufca gave a presentation describing the legal description discrepancy 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.

It was moved by Clark, seconded by Rosenthal, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission approved the correction to the legal description for Singing Woods Nature Preserve in Peoria County as described in the proposal presented under Item 20 of the Agenda for the 214th Meeting. The corrected legal description will be attached to the dedication document and re-recorded in Peoria County.

(Resolution 2249)

214-21) Concern Regarding Use of Herbicides by Contractors at Nature Preserves

Kelly Neal, on behalf of Dr. Dennis Nyberg, addressed the Commission regarding his concern regarding the use of herbicides by contractors in nature preserves. Ms. Neal stated that Dr. Nyberg was unable to

stay because of a personal emergency, and he asked her to provide the Commission with the information he wanted to present.

Ms. Neal stated that it was her understanding that in January or early February, 2013, Dr. Nyberg sent a Freedom of Information Act request to the IDNR and the FPDCC for information regarding herbicide application at the FPDCC sites. At that time he also made a request to address the Commission at its next meeting. Dr. Nyberg wanted to speak on the information that was provided to him by the FPDCC. Since he was not able to address the Commission in person, he provided a written statement that Ms. Neal read into the record:

OBSERVATIONS and INFERENCES

I have observed considerable damage to native vegetation associated with contractor spraying of herbicides in the Forest Preserve District of Cook County. While I support the presumed intent of this effort - to kill invasive vegetation to promote native vegetation, I have observed large kill zones far beyond the borders of the shrubs I infer were the spraying target. I have rarely or never observed such extensive 'collateral damage' when volunteers or staff have done herbiciding in the preserves. From these observations I infer that either or both 1) the contracts are written in a manner that encourages excessive killing because the requirements specify killing invasive species rather than protecting native vegetation, or 2) the individuals that actually do the spraying are not well trained or supervised in plant identification.

RECOMMENDATION

The INPC should not approve further spraying by contractors in Illinois Nature Preserves until it has created and promulgated contract language that rewards the contractor for minimizing the damage to native vegetation. The INPC should also figure out some way to assure that the individuals actually doing the spraying have a good knowledge of the species of the community they are working in.

Dr. Nyberg's statement is attached as Exhibit E.

Commissioner Riddell asked if INPC staff have observed the same things on the INPC sites referred to in Dr. Nyberg's statement.

Ms. Neal stated that she did not have any information on that.

Joe Roth stated that there were several major projects going on in Cook County right now. He stated that it was his experience that the District has been very diligent about looking at follow-up and collateral damage. When he saw this agenda item, he contacted the District to see if this involved the sites that Openlands was working on. Without a specific site and circumstance to react to, it was hard to react to a generalization that was not collaborated.

Ms. Neal stated that historically, when contractors apply for a non-point discharge elimination system (NPDES) permit, the Commission has reviewed those requests. For the Cook County NPDES permits, the Commission did require fairly stringent language for the contractors.

Steven Byers stated that his experience echoes Mr. Roth's comments. This was the first time that he has been made aware of an allegation of misuse or abuse of herbicides. The perception with the volunteer stewards across Cook County was that the use of contractors by the FPDCC had leveraged and enhanced

the ability of the volunteer stewards to do more work than would be possible with just the staff of the FPDCC or the volunteers themselves. He stated that the volunteer stewards at Bluff Spring Fen could not speak more highly of the role of contractors in supporting the work that was going on at that particular site.

Chair Thomas asked if staff felt there was any need to change any of the language in what they provide to contractors at this point.

Ms. Neal stated that the Commission does not directly provide anything to contractors, but the Commission does require that all owners of nature preserves follow the vegetation management guidelines. Now that the NPDES permits were being reviewed by INPC staff, stipulations were being provided for the contractors who apply for those permits.

Mr. Roth suggested that a request be sent to Dr. Nyberg for specific site and circumstance information so factual follow-up could be done to determine what happened. This would allow the Commission to respond responsibly because it could have specific circumstances and site information to investigate.

Commissioner Clark stated that was a good point. Like many things in life, you could have a great contractor; but the people who work for him might cause the problem. This might be just an isolated incident. It would be nice to figure out where it was and who it was and remind the organization that hired the contractor to police them once in a while.

214-22) Natural Areas Acquisition Fund Fiscal Year 2014 Defense Proposals

Randy Heidorn gave an overview of the funding levels in the Natural Areas Acquisition Fund (NAAF). The NAAF capital appropriation in FY 2012 and FY 2013 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 FY 2013 and continued or completed during FY 2013 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 FY 2014 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 FY 2014 will be reported in May, 2014.

Commissioner Covington asked what the parameters were for the use of NAAF defense dollars.

Mr. Heidorn stated that it was usually for technical assistance or, as in the case with Illinois Beach, when we are trying to address an immediate threat that is occurring. It is usually beyond the realm of

normal stewardship activities when we need a chunk of money to take care of an immediate problem. This is very reactive to threats that occur with the exception of the groundwater.

Commissioner Covington asked if these were really physical things, structures and sand replenishment.

Mr. Heidorn stated, “Yes.” Theoretically they could be gathering the data for doing a lawsuit. It can dovetail into those kinds of enforcement actions where we need to collect some sort of groundwater, current conditions, work on models, and so forth to see what may happen in the future if a certain type of development takes place.

It was moved by Clark, seconded by Covington, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission approves the Natural Areas Acquisition Fund Fiscal Year 2014 defense project plan, as presented under Item 22 of the Agenda for the 214th Meeting.

(Resolution 2250)

214-23) Natural Areas Acquisition Fund Fiscal Year 2013 Land Acquisition Proposals – Additions to the Project List

Don McFall stated that the NAAF is administered by the IDNR with review and recommendation of land acquisition projects by the INPC. In FY 2010, 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 FY 2010, FY 2011 and FY 2012, the IDNR worked off the INPC approved project list when NAAF funds were available for land acquisition. The FY 2013 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 FY 2014, \$1,500,000 of NAAF is proposed for land acquisition projects. INPC review and approval of the FY 2014 land acquisition program will be sought at the INPC’s 215th meeting on September 10, 2013.

The additions to the FY 2013 land acquisition list are as follows: (The areas are listed in general priority order.)

Stemler Cave Woods State Natural Area, St. Clair County
Two sites in the Franklin Creek State Natural Area, Lee County
Housen Hill Prairie, Pike County
Burnside Forest, Fayette County
Hartman Spring Nature Preserve, Pulaski County
Sandy Ford State Natural Area, LaSalle County
Cache River State Natural Area, Johnson County
Chestnut Hills State Natural Area, Pulaski County

Commissioner Rosenthal stated that it was so exciting to be back in a place where you could talk about acquiring land with the NAAF. She stated that most of the Commissioners were not even on the Commission the last time we were able to talk about that. She also wanted to commend Mr. McFall and the staff in general in prioritizing those parcels so the management would be more cost effective within the program, thereby not adding additional stewardship burden.

Mr. McFall stated that there was a possibility of having matching dollars to acquire three of the proposed sites.

It was moved by Rosenthal, seconded by Covington, and that the Illinois Nature Preserve go into closed session, pursuant to Section 2(c)(5) of the Illinois Open Meetings Act [5ILCS 120/2(c)(5)] for purposes of discussing the purchase or lease of real property for the use of the public body, including meetings held for the purpose of discussing whether a particular parcel should be acquired.” A unanimous roll-call vote was taken. Closed session started at 2:15 p.m.

The meeting was called back to order at 2:25 p.m. by Chair Thomas.

It was moved by Dann, seconded by Rosenthal, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission approves the Fiscal Year 2013 Natural Areas Acquisition Fund additions to the project list as presented under Item 23 of the Agenda for the 214th Meeting, and the Director of the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission be given authority to acquire additional INAI listed sites as they become available within the confines of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Natural Areas Acquisition Fund budget.

(Resolution 2251)

Commissioner Dann asked if there would be any administrative help for the Commission such as an Area 9 person and help for the Director – was that in the cards.

Randy Heidorn stated that at this point the Commission would probably not get the headcount to add an additional person in FY 2014. The need was still there. The big thing was that we were definitely hoping that the NAAF reserves continued to grow. The balance of NAAF has had a bump right now due to repayment of the \$3.5 million that was borrowed from the fund. Normal revenues have been growing but are not great enough to sustain restoration of lost staff. As long as the trends continue, we should be in much better shape.

Commissioner Rosenthal stated that when you hire staff you would like to be able to keep them for the second year.

Commissioner Clark asked if there was a way to reach out to our partners and give them a list of the former interns and list their qualifications to see if there was any opportunity for employment. Some of these organizations were adding staff. It would be nice to get these people employed so they could eventually replace all of us as we move on later.

214-24) Review of Closed Meeting Minutes

Chair Thomas stated that 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.”

Randy Heidorn stated that all four sets of minutes contain information that was still of a sensitive nature, and it was the Department’s recommendation that they remain closed.

It was moved by Rosenthal, seconded by Covington, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

In accordance with the Open Meetings Act, the closed session minutes from the August 2, 2005, May 2, 2006, May 6, 2008, and May 5, 2009 meetings will remain confidential but will be reviewed semi-annually to ascertain the need to be kept confidential.

(Resolution 2252)

214-25) Public Comment Period

Kim Roman invited everyone to participate in a Kankakee Sands field trip on May 18, 2013.

214-26) Other Business

There was no other business.

214-27) Adjournment

It was moved by Dann, seconded by Clark, and carried that the meeting be adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Illinois Nature Preserves Commission
One Natural Resources Way
Springfield, IL 62702
217/785-8686



Illinois Nature Preserves Commission

memorandum

Exhibit A

To: Commissioners

From: Kelly Neal, Jenny Skufca, and Randy Heidorn

Date: April 26, 2013

Subject: Compiled Staff Report for the 214th Meeting of the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission
Reporting Period: December 22, 2012 – April 9, 2013

KEY

NP = Nature Preserve
SP = State Park
LWR = Land and Water Reserve
COA = Conservation Opportunity Area
NHL = Natural Heritage Landmark
FPD = Forest Preserve District
INAI = Illinois Natural Areas Inventory
IDOT = Illinois Department of Transportation
INPC = Illinois Nature Preserves Commission
IDNR = Illinois Department of Natural Resources

AREAS

Area 1 - John Nelson
Area 2 - Steven Byers
Area 3 - Kim Roman
Area 4 - Angella Moorehouse
Area 5 - Thomas Lerczak
Area 6 - Mary Kay Solecki
Area 7 - Debbie Newman
Area 8 - Bob Edgin

INPC OPERATIONS

- After some minor revisions, a request was sent to the IDNR Office of Legal Council to seek IDNR written approval of the proposed administrative rule: 17 IL Admin Code 4020: Inventories, Registers and Records. The proposed rule sets out procedures and rates of fees for use of the Natural Heritage database and was approved by the INPC at the 213th meeting (Resolution 2233). The IDNR internal review of the proposed fees ended with no comments. The rule will be sent to the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules and Secretary of State for First Notice on May 2, 2013.
- Randy Heidorn, Jenny Skufca and Kelly Neal continued to coordinate with the Office of Realty and Environmental Planning on review of changes to the Illinois Natural Areas Preservation Act (as it relates to consultation) and the Administrative Rule for Consultation.
- Mary Kay Solecki continued to review protection proposals for inclusion on the INPC agenda.
- Mary Kay Solecki has been coordinating with Hal Hassen, IDNR archeologist, and INPC staff on preparation of procedures for the inclusion of historic properties in the INPC system which will be presented to the Commission for approval at a later date.
- Randy Heidorn, Debbie Newman, Kim Roman and Kelly Neal worked on planning and promoting the INPC's 50th Anniversary in coordination with current and former INPC Commissioners. Logos for the INPC's 50th Anniversary have been designed.
- Randy Heidorn continues to represent the INPC on the planning committee of the 40th Natural Areas Conference scheduled for October 1-4, 2012. Mr. Heidorn will be helping convene this conference with former INPC Commissioner, John Schwegman, who was also the first president of Natural Areas Association (NAA). The conference theme lends itself to the celebration of the INPC's 50th Anniversary.

OUTREACH/PARTNERSHIP/TRAINING/VOLUNTEER COORDINATION/MEETINGS ATTENDED

INPC staff prepared for and participated in:

- Randy Heidorn attended the Board of Director's Meeting of the NAA in Washington, D.C. He is currently President of the NAA. While there, he participated in the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' Teaming with Wildlife Coalition fly-in. He participated in meetings with staff members of the Illinois Congressional delegation advocating for continued funding of the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants. Illinois has received over \$12 million over the last decade to fund primarily restoration work on state-owned natural areas and hill prairies. As a part of the event, Mr. Heidorn assisted IDNR Director Miller in giving Senator Dick Durbin an award recognizing his ongoing support for this grant program.
- Randy Heidorn and Steven Byers participated in the quarterly meeting of Chicago Wilderness Executive Council. Mr. Byers serves as a voting member of this Council representing the INPC.

- Randy Heidorn represented the INPC at the Association of Forest Preserve and Conservation District quarterly meeting, the Illinois Wildlife Action Team meeting, and the Prairie State Conservation Coalition annual meeting.
- Randy Heidorn participated in a coordination meeting between the IDNR and The Nature Conservancy.
- Jenny Skufca and Kelly Neal reviewed and ranked IDNR Wildlife Preservation Fund proposals.
- Jenny Skufca and Kelly Neal continue to coordinate with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on Habitat Conservation Plans for the Hine's Emerald Dragonfly and Wind Energy.
- Jenny Skufca, Kim Roman, Angela Moorehouse, Thomas Lerczak, Debbie Newman and Bob Edgin attended the Illinois Rights of Way Association training on legal descriptions and title work.
- Jenny Skufca organized and facilitated three downstate IDNR Conservation Congress meetings, and Steven Byers and Kim Roman facilitated a Conservation Congress meeting in Chicago.
- Randy Heidorn and Debbie Reider participated in a training exercise with the National Incident Management Organization. Type 3 Incident Management Teams from Illinois participated in a simulation involving massive damage after a large hurricane. Debbie Reider serves as a Logistics Section Chief on the IDNR team. Randy Heidorn serves as a Situation Unit Leader on the State of Illinois Southern Team.
- INPC staff completed mandatory ethics training.

Area 1

- Participated with other agency representatives in a Project Quercus meeting. The objective was to encourage the preservation and restoration of oak woodlands in McHenry County.

Area 2

- Gave a presentation regarding Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge to two groups.
- Gave a PowerPoint presentation to the Citizens For Conservation regarding the importance of protecting natural areas and open space, and the role of the INPC.
- Participated in the Kane County Green Infrastructure Planning effort with natural resource management staff of the FPD of Kane County, Kane County Planning, and local natural resource experts.
- Represented the INPC at Chicago Wilderness events; served as co-chair of a Natural Resource Management Team.
- Represented the INPC at a Natural Land Institute Annual Meeting.
- Participated in a Southeastern Wisconsin - Northeastern Illinois Fox River Summit.
- Represented the INPC at an Openlands venue to plan for the FPD of Cook County vision for its next 100 years.
- Sent correspondence to Cook County regarding feral cat colonies and made suggestions for improvements in the program.

Area 3

- Participated in planning meetings with Friends Of The Kankakee.
- Gave a presentation on Long Run Seep NP and its proposed Class III designation to the Long Run Watershed Planning Group.
- Participated in a Millenium Reserve meeting with the IDNR, FPD of Cook County, and Chicago Park District.

Area 4

- Co-authored a presentation given at the Tallgrass Prairie and Oak Savanna Regional Fire Conference in Dubuque, Iowa.
- Represented the INPC at meetings held by the Leopold Heritage Group in Burlington, Iowa to discuss land protection and natural area management in western Illinois and southeastern Iowa.
- Attended meetings with partners within the Upper Mississippi River COA.
- Assisted with the transformation of Interstate Resource Conservation and Development to River Bend Wildland Trust.
- Assisting in the planning of a Bio Blitz to be held at the Mississippi River – Andalusia Slough INAI site.

Area 6

- Participated in pesticide training and testing to renew pesticide applicator license.
- Participated in the annual meeting and steward's luncheon for the east-central Illinois Volunteer Stewards hosted by Grand Prairie Friends.
- Provided photos for the INPC Facebook page.
- Participated in a meeting on the future of the Vermilion River.
- Coordinated stewardship needs with Embarrass Volunteer Stewards and provided herbicide.

Area 7

- Participated in pesticide training and testing to renew pesticide applicator license.
- Drafted the Exotics chapter for the IDNR Policy and Procedure Manual.
- Attended the Heartlands Conservancy Annual Meeting.
- Provided stewardship information to the St. Clair County Greenspace Foundation.
- Attended Riverwatch Training.
- Attended an Illinois Invasive Plant Species Council Meeting.
- Worked with three apprentice Certified Prescribed Burn Managers.

PROTECTION

Discussion of protection options with landowners or potential funders

Area 1

- Met with private landowners near White Pines Forest NP to discuss registration requirements.
- Discussed potential INPC protection options for the Spears property with an Illinois Clean Energy foundation representative.
- Sent land protection letters to two landowners of wetlands within the Boone Creek Fen and Seep INAI site.

Area 2

- Attended a meeting with the Village of Oakwood Hills regarding a buffer addition to Oakwood Hills Fen NP.
- Attended a meeting at Cary Junior High regarding protection and stewardship of the prairie.

Area 3

- Had discussions with the FPD of Cook County regarding dedicating additional acreage near Sand Ridge Savanna NP.
- Met with the landowner of a 40-acre site adjacent to Carl N. Becker Savanna NP.
- Met with The Conservation Foundation and an agent regarding a 300-acre farm adjacent to Fox River INAI site.

Area 4

- Discussed protection options with the owner of a natural area.
- Met with the new owner of property adjacent to Stony Hills NP to discuss protection status.
- Notified the IDNR Office of Realty and Planning of a potential acquisition opportunity at Housen Hill Prairie INAI site.

Area 6

- Coordinated with the Champaign County FPD regarding a possible addition to Tomlinson Pioneer Cemetery Prairie NP.
- Discussed protection of portions of the Sangamon River INAI site with the Land Conservation Foundation and staff of a private owner with significant acreage along the stream.
- Discussed protection of stream segments of the Salt Fork Vermilion River INAI site with two private owners.
- Evaluated a possible land acquisition at Willow Creek State Habitat Area.
- Discussed protection options with the new landowners of a NHL, formally known as Noel’s Woods NHL, who agreed to re-enroll the INAI site as Wolf Ridge NHL.

Area 7

- Williams Creek Woods INAI site.
- Potato Hill Natural Area INAI site.
- Renault Herp Area INAI site.
- Prairie Du Rocher South INAI site.

OTHER LANDOWNER CONTACTS (includes acquisition)

Area 1

Freeport Prairie NP	Flora Prairie NP
Boone Creek Fen NP	Nachusa Grasslands NP
Boloria Fen and Sedge Meadow NP	Pine Rock NP
Gladstone Fen NP	Foley Sand Prairie NP
Harlem Hills NP	Casper Bluff LWR
Volo Bog NP	Eagles Nest LWR
Hanover Bluff NP	Yonder Prairie NP

Area 2

Oakwood Hills Fen NP	Liberty Prairie NP
Wolf Road Prairie NP	Hybernia NP
Bluff Spring Fen NP	MacArthur Woods NP
Busse Forest NP	Ferson’s Creek NP
Red Wing Slough/Deer Lake LWR	Trout Park NP
Middlefork Savanna NP	Thatcher Gar Forest
Barber Fen NP	Fort Sheridan
Powderhorn Prairie and Marsh NP	Alden Sedge Meadow
Skokie River NP	

Area 3

Sweet Fern Savanna LWR	Stateline Savanna INAI site
Leesville Savanna INAI site	

Area 4

Black Hawk Forest NP	Cedar Glen LWR
Josua Lindahl Hill Prairies NP	Short Fork Seep NP
Stony Hills NP	Thistle Hills LWR
Jamar Haven LWR	Nenawakwa LWR
Cedar Glen NP	Forest Park South NP

Detweiller Woods NP	Samuel Barnum Mead Savanna NP
Robinson Park Hill Prairies NP	Geissler Savanna LWR
Singing Woods NP	McFarland Hill LWR
Spring Grove Cemetery Prairie NP	New Crystal Lake Club NHL
Brimfield Railroad Restoration Prairie NP	Mississippi River – Andalusia Slough INAI
Rock Island Trail Prairie NP	Wokonda Camp INAI
Cecil White Prairie LWR	

Area 5

Gillespie Prairie LWR	Hopewell Hill Prairies NP
Anderson Prairie LWR	North Elkhart Hill Grove LWR
Fon du Lac Seep LWR	Bois du Sangamon NP
Bennett's Terraqueous Gardens NP	Thomas W. and Elizabeth Moews Dore Seep NP
Carpenter Park NP	Sandy Creek Bluffs LWR
McCune Sand Prairie LWR	Mackinaw River LWR
Oak Bluff Savanna NP	Chinquapin Bluffs LWR
Thaddeus Stubblefield Grove NP	Funks Grove LWR
Elkhart Hill Grove NP	Quiver Prairie Natural Area
Dirksen-McNaughton Woods LWR	Fon du Lac Seep LWR
Independence Park Woods LWR	Matanzas Sand Prairie NHL
Black Partridge Park Woods LWR	Fern Ridge
Crevecoeur NP	River Hill Seep
Walden West LWR	

Area 6

Barnhart Prairie Restoration NP	Loda Cemetery Prairie NP
Doris Westfall Prairie Restoration NP	Middle Fork Woods NP
Edgewood Farm LWR	Riedle's Bluffs NHL
Embarras Bluffs NHL	Riverbend LWR
Jasmine Hollow LWR	Sibley Grove NP
Kinney's Ford Seep LWR	Upper Sangamon River LWR
Larimore's Salt Fork of the Vermilion River LWR	

Area 7

DesPain Wetlands LWR	Salt Lick Point LWR
Prairie of the Rock NP	Martha and Michelle Prairie LWR
Prairie of the Rock Overlook LWR	William A. DeMint Memorial Hill Prairie NP
Brickey-Gonterman Memorial Hill Prairie NP	An INAI site in Monroe County (acquisition)
Brickey-Gonterman at Renault Bluffs LWR	An INAI site in St. Clair County (acquisition)
Angela's Prairie LWR	

EASEMENT/DEDICATION MONITORING/BOUNDARY SURVEYS

Area 1

Boone Creek Fen NP (x 3 landowners)	Wilson Prairie NP
Gladstone Fen NP	Boger Bog NP
Boloria Fen and Sedge Meadow NP	Black-Crown Marsh LWR
Freeport Prairie NP	

Area 2

Dixie Fromm Briggs Prairie NP	Skokie River NP
Bluff Spring Fen NP	Glacial Park NP
Trout Park NP	Sterne's Fen NP
Trout Park Rivers Edge	Oakwood Hills Fen NP
Sleepy Hollow Ravine NP	

Area 3

Superior Street Prairie LWR	Camp River Trails LWR
Starved Rock NP	

Area 4

Stony Hills NP	Nenawakwa LWR
Jamar Haven LWR	Cedar Glen LWR
Robert A. Evers LWR	Cedar Glen NP

Mississippi River Sand Hills NP
Spring Grove Cemetery Prairie NP

Black Hawk Forest NP
Cecil White Prairie LWR

Area 5

Carpenter Park NP
Fon du Lac Seep LWR
Bennett's Terraqueous Gardens NP
Cooper Park Wetlands LWR
Independence Park Woods LWR
Bill and Mike's Hill Prairie NHL
Chandlerville Cemetery Hill Prairie LWR
Speckman-Stelter Woods LWR
Speckman-Stelter Woods NHL
Funks Grove LWR
Curtis Woods NHL

Roberts Cemetery Savanna NP
McMaster Woods NP
Black Partridge Park Woods LWR
Crevecoeur NP
Bois du Sangamon NP
Witter's Bobtown Hill Prairie NP
Orlandini's South Fork of the Sangamon River NHL
Kevin and Linda Cox's Cory Woods NHL
Ridgetop Hill Prairie NP
Wiegand Prairie NHL

Area 6

Completed annual INAI site surveillance forms

BIOLOGICAL INVENTORIES

Area 3

Pecumsaugen Creek/Blackball Mines NP

Area 4

Cedar Glen NP
Cedar Glen LWR
Mississippi River –Nauvoo INAI site

Area 5

Walden West LWR
Sand Prairie-Scrub Oak NP

INAI UPDATE

Area 1

Met with Chris Benda to discuss nominated sites/natural communities

Area 4

Schuyler County
Mercer County
Rock Island County

STEWARDSHIP – Planning

Kelly Neal attended the Eastern Prairie Fringed Orchid Researcher's meeting to coordinate permitting and activities at other INPC sites.

Area 1

Boone Creek Fen NP
Boloria Fen and Sedge Meadow NP

Freeport Prairie NP
George B. Fell NP

Area 2

Met with Conserve Lake County staff regarding an update of the protection and management plans for Liberty Prairie NP.

Area 3

Discussed updating management plans with the FPD of Kendall County and FPD of Cook County, The Nature Conservancy, and Chicago Council Girl Scouts.

Area 4

Black Hawk Forest NP
Josua Lindahl Hill Prairies NP
Stony Hills NP
Jamar Haven LWR
Thistle Hills LWR
Short Fork Seep NP
Nenawakwa LWR
Haw Creek Sedge Meadow LWR

Kedzior Woodlands LWR
Harry N. Patterson Savanna LWR
Cecil White Prairie LWR
Cedar Glen NP
Cedar Glen LWR
Mississippi River Sand Hills NP
Robert A. Evers LWR
Grubb Hollow Prairie NP

Area 5

Tomlin Timber NP
 Anderson Prairie LWR
 North Elkhart Hill Grove LWR
 Black Partidge Park Woods LWR
 Dirksen-McNaughton Woods LWR
 Crevecoeur NP
 Mettler Woods NP
 Baugher Hill Prairie NHL
 Mt. Palatine Cemetery Prairie NP
 North Elkhart Hill Grove LWR
 Hopewell Hill Prairies NP

Carpenter Park NP
 Funks Grove LWR
 Fon du Lac Seep LWR
 Bennett's Terraqueous Gardens NP
 Illinois River Sand Areas LWR
 McCune Sand Prairie LWR
 Sandy Creek Bluffs LWR
 Walden West LWR
 Stubblefield Woodlots NP
 Independence Park Woods LWR
 Anderson Prairie LWR

Area 6

Horseshoe Bottom NP
 Upper Sangamon River LWR

Kinney's Ford Seep LWR
 Doris Westfall Prairie Restoration NP

Area 7

Salt Lick Point LWR
 DesPain Wetlands LWR

Stemler Cave Woods NP
 Blufftop Acres LWR

STEWARDSHIP - Consulting, contract work conducted, administered or completed

Area 1

Harlem Hills NP

George B. Fell NP

Area 3

Hildy Prairie NP
 Old Plank Road Prairie NP

Long Run Seep
 Proposed Callie Mae Spraggins Savanna NP

Area 5

Crevecoeur NP

Area 6

Riverbend LWR
 Sibley Grove NP
 Submitted NAAF proposal to conduct prescribed burns at 1 NP, 2 LWRs, and an INAI site.

Area 7

Salt Lick Point LWR
 DesPain Wetlands LWR
 Blufftop Acres LWR

Horse Creek Glade NHL
 Armin Krueger Speleological NP
 Various sites in Monroe and Randolph counties.

STEWARDSHIP – Land management conducted by staff

Area 1

Piscasaw Creek INAI site
 Boone Creek Fen NP
 Harlem Hills NP
 Boloria Fen and Sedge Meadow NP

Proposed Johns Mound LWR
 Sleepy Hollow Ravine NP
 Yonder Prairie NP
 Bluff Spring Fen NP

Area 2

Trout Park NP
 Hybernia NP
 Bluff Spring Fen NP

Sleepy Hollow Ravine NP
 Wingate Prairie NP
 Boone Creek Fen

Area 3

Sweet Fern Savanna LWR
 Goose Lake Prairie NP
 Hitts Siding Prairie NP

Sleepy Hollow Ravine NP
 Boone Creek Fen NP

Area 4

Black Hawk Forest NP
 Josua Lindahl Hill Prairies NP
 Stony Hills NP
 Jamar Haven LWR
 Nenawakwa LWR

Robert A. Evers LWR
 Harry N. Patterson Savanna LWR
 Root Cemetery Savanna NP

Area 5

Dirksen-McNaughton Woods LWR

Black Partridge Park Woods LWR

Sparks Pond LWR

Walden West LWR

Area 6

Little Vermilion River LWR

Upper Sangamon River LWR

Tomlinson Pioneer Cemetery Prairie NP

Area 7

DesPain Wetlands LWR

Angela's Prairie LWR

Salt Lick Point LWR

STEWARDSHIP - Prescribed Burning

Area 1

Freeport Prairie NP

Hanover Bluff NP

Boloria Fen and Sedge Meadow NP

Chain of Lakes SP

Area 3

Des Plaines Dolomite Prairies LWR

Wilmington Shrub Prairie NP

Grant Creek Prairie NP

Old Plank Road Prairie NP

Hanover Bluff NP

Area 4

Robert A. Evers LWR

Area 5

Revis Spring Hill Prairie NP

Witter's Bobtown Hill Prairie NP

Sand Prairie-Scrub Oak NP

Area 6

Prospect Cemetery Prairie NP

Sibley Grove NP

Barnhart Prairie Restoration NP

Area 7

DesPain Wetlands LWR

Brickey-Gonterman Memorial Hill Prairie NP

Stemler Cave Woods NP

Brickey-Gonterman at Renault Bluffs LWR

Angela's Prairie LWR

Angela's Prairie NHL

Martha and Michelle Prairie LWR

Blufftop Acres LWR

**Threats to Sites Report for the 214th Meeting of the
Illinois Nature Preserves Commission
(Reporting period: December 22, 2012 – April 9, 2013)**

Bluff Spring Fen NP, Cook County – Steven Byers, John Nelson, Jenny Skufca

Issue: The Bluff Spring Fen Protection Plan (approved June 30, 2003) between the INPC and Bluff City Materials, Inc. calls for conveyance of surface water from Gifford Lake to Poplar Creek through proposed stormwater piping.

Threat: Surface water represents a threat to this groundwater-dependent wetland.

Status: Ongoing. The stormwater piping project began in March 2013, and is expected to take six months to complete. The landowner of the NP, Forest Preserve District of Cook County, and INPC staff are in close contact with the contractor and Bluff City Materials. Daily activity reports with photo-documentation are provided to all parties.

Middlefork Savanna NP, Lake County – Steven Byers, Jenny Skufca

Issue #1: An adjacent landowner, Knollwood Golf Club, dredged a golf course pond and piped sediment into the NP owned by the Lake County Forest Preserve District (LCFPD).

Threat #1: Direct and indirect impact to aquatic resources/ephemeral ponds in the NP and at the Knollwood Golf Club.

Status #1: Ongoing. The Office of the Attorney General is engaged in settlement negotiation with the alleged responsible party based on the Complaint for Injunction and Civil Penalties filed on October 31, 2012, and citing six counts based on violations to the Illinois Natural Areas Preservation Act (INAPA) and one count based on a violation of the Illinois Environmental Protection Act. The INPC continues to coordinate with the LCFPD.

Issue #2: Private landowner located adjacent to NP has requested a conditional use permit and zoning change in order to construct and maintain a private helicopter landing facility approximately 150 feet from the NP boundary.

Threat #2: Potential impacts (noise, lighting, loose debris) to public and wildlife associated with the landings and takeoffs in close proximity to and over the NP. Concern related to nesting and migration of avian species, as well as pollutants entering sensitive aquatic systems.

Status #2: New. The NP landowner, LCFPD, provided an opposition letter to the Lake County Planning, Building, and Development Department on March 26, 2013, on this proposed use and has notified the petitioner of the impact this project would have on a dedicated NP

Trout Park Nature Preserve, Kane County – Steven Byers, Jenny Skufca

Issue #1: The Tollway Authority will be widening I-90 (one additional lane each direction) and will be constructing a new bridge over the Fox River.

Threat #1: Direct impacts to woody cover adjacent to the NP. The right-of-way will be much wider than suggested by current boundary fences and will be impacted during bridge construction. Indirect impacts from additional salt and contaminants from widened road.

Status #1: Ongoing. The INPC staff has met with the Tollway Authority regarding the bridge design features and the need to monitor groundwater. Groundwater monitoring wells have been installed by the Illinois State Geological Survey. At the INPC staff's recommendation and as mitigation for wetland

impacts outside of the NP, the Tollway Authority has accepted the protection of the Fox River Country Day School site (INAI #0968, Chicago Junior School Area) that includes the balance of the unprotected high-quality forested fen wetlands in Illinois.

Issue #2: Proposed construction of an auto auction facility within the Class III groundwater area for Trout Park NP.

Threat #2: Potential for pollutants from facility to adversely impact groundwater quality.

Status #2: Ongoing. The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) provided recommendations to the consultant by email on December 7, 2012, and a follow-up letter to the attorney on January 8, 2013, regarding design features (fill, secondary drainage, liners, quality control, etc.) and a groundwater monitoring program to eliminate or reduce the threat to groundwater.

Bliss Woods NP, Kane County – Steven Byers, Jenny Skufca

Issue: An unknown amount of lead shot has been deposited in the NP by years of trap/skeet shooting at adjacent former Aurora Sportsman's Club.

Threat: Lead shot poses a threat to humans and the environment.

Status: Ongoing. The IEPA submitted Violation Notices to the alleged responsible parties on January 10, 2013, citing a threat to groundwater and open dumping. One of the alleged responsible parties is working with IEPA to propose remediation opportunities to the NP landowner, Forest Preserve District of Kane County (FPDKC). The INPC staff with FPDKC staff intend to map management areas in the NP to identify highest sensitivity and match potential lead remediation options with conditions on the ground. A FOIA Request was submitted on February 27, 2013, and has been complied with by the INPC.

Red Wing Slough/Deer Lake LWR, Lake County – Steven Byers

Issue: The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) plans to widen Illinois Route 173 adjacent to the southern boundary of the LWR.

Threat: Potential direct impact to wetland resources in existing right-of-way and indirect impacts to the LWR that include alterations to surface hydrology, increased pollutants, and salt spray.

Status: New. The INPC staff has met with representatives of IDOT and is currently involved in the evaluation of alignment alternatives.

Oakwood Hills NP, Bates Fen NP, and multiple INAI sites, McHenry County – Steven Byers

Issue: Maintenance of an existing pipeline.

Threat: Potential direct and indirect impact to multiple sites of statewide ecological significance. The maintenance project calls for construction of pits to install equipment and excavation, as necessary, to repair pipelines.

Status: New. The INPC staff is coordinating with pipeline officials, McHenry County Conservation District, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and IDNR Consultation to ensure project will not impact high-quality natural areas.

MacArthur Woods NO, Lloyd's Woods NP, Grainger Woods NP, and Elm Road Woods NP, Lake County – Steven Byers

Issue: Nicor proposes to install pipelines within the St. Mary's Road right-of-way located adjacent to the aforementioned NPs.

Threat: Potential direct and indirect impacts to the NPs. Maintenance project calls for construction of pits to install equipment and excavation.

Status: New. The INPC staff is coordinating with the landowner of the NPs (LCFPD) and participating in field surveys with the adjacent landowner and consultants to eliminate or minimize impact to NPs.

Illinois Beach NP, Lake County – Steven Byers, Jenny Skufca

Issue: The landowner, IDNR, is storing and applying road salt in close proximity and potentially within the NP.

Threat: Salt used for deicing roads is a primary source of chlorides, which have been documented to be a major cause of groundwater and surface water degradation resulting in direct impact to freshwater aquatic plants and animals. Studies show that non-native, invasive plant species favor higher chloride levels and will out-compete the native plants found in our relict high-quality wetlands. As a result of excessive chloride loadings, wetlands change from their natural high diversity condition to that of a monoculture that offers little habitat opportunity for native flora and fauna.

Status: New. The INPC submitted a memo to the IDNR on April 24, 2013, requesting removal of the road salt pile and no further use of salt within Illinois Beach State Park. The INPC received a response that the salt was being removed. The INPC staff will confirm its removal. Long term, IDNR staff are working on a salt guidance document for Illinois state parks.

Tallmadge Sand Forest LWR, Kankakee County – Kim Roman, Jenny Skufca

Issue: Eighty-eight white oak trees were removed from within the LWR.

Threat: Direct impact to the LWR. Unauthorized removal of trees, over 4,000 feet of up to 18-inch ruts were created throughout the interior of the LWR; unauthorized removal of signs.

Status: Ongoing. The Office of the Attorney General is representing the INPC as a plaintiff and intervenor (with the LWR landowner, The Nature Conservancy) in a Complaint for Injunction and Civil Penalties filed October 29, 2012, citing four counts based on violations to the INAPA. The case is scheduled for trial in October 2013.

Des Plaines Dolomite Prairies LWR, Will County – Kim Roman

Issue: A private contractor hired by a power company to maintain lines running through the LWR was responsible for creating ruts on the site.

Threat: Direct impact to the LWR.

Status: New. The INPC staff facilitated discussion with the power company, private contractor, and IDNR site staff to repair ruts and perform weed control this growing season.

Short Fork Seep NP, McDonough County – Angella Moorehouse, Jenny Skufca

Issue: The private landowner discovered that herbicide associated with power line vegetative maintenance had been used within the NP.

Threat: Direct impact to flora in the NP causing damage to the vegetation and soils within the high quality portion of seep/sedge meadow of the NP.

Status: Ongoing. The Office of the Attorney General continues to conduct settlement negotiations with the alleged responsible party based on a Complaint for Injunctive and Other Relief filed December 7, 2011. A FOIA Request was submitted on March 20, 2013, and has been complied with by the INPC.

Black Hawk Forest NP, Rock Island County – Angella Moorehouse

Issue: A large gully has formed just west of the southwest corner of the NP.

Threat: Potential indirect sedimentation impact to the NP.

Status: New. The IDOT will install a new pipe. All work will occur outside of the NP boundary.

Crevecoeur NP, Tazewell County – Thomas Lerczak

Issue: At least three adjacent landowners are potentially encroaching on the NP boundary.

Threat: Unauthorized use of the NP.

Status: Ongoing. A formal boundary survey has revealed multiple encroachments along the NP's southern boundary. Survey flags have been placed. Encroaching landowners will be contacted. The INPC staff is working with the landowner (Village of Creve Coeur) to establish protocol.

Gillespie Prairie LWR, Macoupin and Montgomery counties – Thomas Lerczak, Jenny Skufca

Issue: Ditch clearing has occurred on 0.9 acres of the IDNR-owned LWR, a portion of which lies on property leased to Aladdin Steel.

Threat: Unauthorized vegetation removal within the LWR.

Status: Ongoing. The INPC submitted correspondence to Aladdin Steel on March 4, 2013, requesting mitigation for damages. The INPC staff will continue to work with the IDNR District Heritage Biologist, Site Superintendent, and Leases and Concessions staff until a resolution is reached. On April 29, 2013, Aladdin Steel verbally agreed to conduct all mitigation requested.

Edgewood Farm LWR and Larimore's Salt Fork of the Vermilion River LWR, Vermilion County – Mary Kay Solecki

Issue: Sunrise Coal is planning a new coal mine upstream of the LWRs.

Threat: Potential water withdrawal from Salt Fork of the Vermilion River for coal washing and processing estimated at ~325,000 gallons/day initially then increasing to 540,000 gallons/day; discharge of wastewater into Salt Fork. The Salt Fork of the Vermilion River is recognized as a high-quality stream in Vermilion County and the eastern part of Champaign County by the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory. The Salt Fork in Vermilion County is also home to several state-threatened or endangered mussels and fish. Potential water withdrawal and wastewater discharge may impact state-listed species and the two LWRs on the Salt Fork.

Status: New. The INPC staff researched mine plans, identified progress of the permit and approval process, and coordinated with the LWR and INAI site landowners. The INPC staff presented concerns to Homer Village Board at their meeting. The Village Board was considering selling non-potable water to Sunrise Coal Company. The Village Board voted unanimously to deny request for up to 540,000 gallons/day of non-potable water. Sunrise Coal will likely seek alternate means of obtaining non-potable water for the mine. The INPC intends to submit correspondence to the Village of Homer and Sunrise Coal making them aware of its concerns.

Middle Fork Woods NP, Vermilion County – Mary Kay Solecki

Issue: Serious issues with ash ponds located in the floodplain of the Middle Fork of the Vermilion River and the potential need for long-term riverbank stabilization in the vicinity of the ash ponds. Samples from monitoring wells show two unlined, impounded ash ponds are leaking contaminants into the groundwater. A sheen was observed in two erosion channels on the River bank located near failed gabions at one ash pond. Red staining of the bank also existed in this same area. In the fall of 2012, a Violation Notice was issued by IEPA to Dynegy for exceedances of groundwater standards for boron, manganese, sulfate, total dissolved solids, and pH. Notice of Intent to Pursue Legal Action (NIPLA) was sent by the IEPA to Dynegy on December 13, 2012.

Threat: Potential for significant adverse effects to the Middle Fork of the Vermilion River, surrounding floodplain and other natural resources in the area if concerns are not addressed. The NP is located on the River, downstream of the ash ponds.

Status: New. The INPC staff reviewed potential impacts and the site visit report provided by the IDNR staff. Ongoing coordination with the IDNR will occur regarding solutions.

John M. Olin NP, Madison County – Debbie Newman, Jenny Skufca

Issue: Neighboring landowner has cleared approximately three acres of timber along Hop Hollow Creek, which forms a portion of the NP boundary.

Threat: Changes to the surface hydrology of the NP may occur when precipitation returns due to large piles of timber placed along the Creek and across the Creek. Within a short distance of the clearing, the Creek outfalls to the Mississippi River.

Status: Ongoing. The NP neighbor's attorney has provided their property survey, which they claim contradicts the formal survey completed for the NP. An IDNR surveyor will assist the INPC in confirmation of surveys. Boundaries will be marked accordingly and the encroachment reassessed based on boundary findings. The IDNR's Office of Legal Council is remaining abreast of the issue.

Marjorie J. Brines White Oak Woods LWR, Wabash County – Bob Edgin

Issue: Illegal dumping of tires, metal, and small appliances.

Threat: Unauthorized use of the LWR; direct and indirect impacts to natural community.

Status: New. Trash was removed by the private landowner and the INPC staff.

Culley Barrens LWR, Pope County – Bob Edgin

Issue: Unauthorized camping, trash and tent left by campers; removal of boundary signs.

Threat: Unauthorized use of the LWR.

Status: New. The private landowner was notified and had no knowledge of the camping activities. The landowner requested the tent and trash be removed and have the boundary signs replaced. The tent and trash were removed by the INPC staff. Boundary signs will be replaced as time allows.

Flag Pond LWR, Clay County – Bob Edgin

Issue: Discovery of four deer stands within the LWR boundary.

Threat: Unauthorized use of the IDNR-owned LWR.

Status: New. The site manager was notified. Investigation is ongoing.

**Illinois Department of Natural Resources
report to the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission
at the 214th meeting, May 7, 2013**

Illinois Invasive Species Awareness Month

May is Invasive Species Awareness Month (ISAM) in Illinois and groups across the state are holding invasive species events. So far 73 events are listed on the ISAM Calendar, which can be viewed online on the Awareness Month website at: <http://www.invasive.org/illinois/Calendar.html>. There's still time to submit events. Chris Evans, Invasive Species Campaign Coordinator with the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan, coordinates ISAM and maintains the calendar of events.

Natural Heritage Resident Interns

The DNR and Division of Natural Heritage are anticipating the opening of 8 Natural Heritage Resident positions. We are hoping to formally announce these openings in May with selection to occur in June. Positions will start sometime after July 1, 2013.

The Residency Program provides 12-month, full-time employment with benefits under the mentoring of Natural Heritage or Nature Preserves Commission staff in field or central office locations. Candidates must be graduate students currently enrolled in a full-time graduate program in plant biology, forestry, zoology or related biological science field and have the approval of their academic advisor.

The proposed locations for these positions are Cook County, McDonough County and Jasper County to work with Nature Preserves Commission field staff; McHenry County, Peoria County, Ford County and Madison County to work with Natural Heritage biologists, and Sangamon County to work with DNRs Endangered Species program and Database program. Bob Szafoni is DNRs Natural Heritage Resident Coordinator. He can provide details on the program to interested students.

Land Acquisition

DNR acquired a 263 acre addition to Cretaceous Hills State Natural Area in Pope County in April. Cretaceous Hills is an endangered species site and a good example of the original barrens natural community of southern Illinois. The addition expands Cretaceous Hills to 500 acres, including a 236 acre nature preserve. Open Land Trust funds were used to acquire the tract.

Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI)

The 65th Natural Areas Evaluation Committee (NAEC) meeting was held March 19th. At that meeting, 1 existing Category I site was deleted from the INAI due to long term adverse conditions resulting in overall degradation of the site. Also, 1 new site was added as a Cat I and Cat II site. These actions resulted in a net gain of 32 acres being added to the INAI.

Other actions at the meeting revolved around a discussion of Category II, specific suitable habitat designation. A draft Cat II feature deletion form was circulated. Based upon the comments on the form and other comments, the Natural Areas Program has undertaken a significant re-evaluation of the Cat II criteria within the Standards and Guidelines. These revisions will be distributed for comment at the next NAEC meeting.

INAI Update

The Illinois Natural History Survey provided DNR the final copy of the Cat I re-check update to the INAI. This significant recheck of existing Cat I terrestrial natural communities was primarily funded by the Grand Victoria Foundation, Illinois Clean Energy Foundation and other private foundations. Changes to the INAI resulting from the re-check will be handled similarly as the INAI Update and will involve a DNR review of recommendations prior to any action by the NAEC. NAPS will be given the opportunity to review the information as well.



Illinois Nature Preserves Commission

memorandum

Exhibit C

To: Commissioners

From: Kelly Neal, Jenny Skufca, and Randy Heidorn

Date: April 30, 2013

Subject: Staff Recommendation Regarding Item 16 – Champaign and Vermilion Co. – Translocation of the Federally and State Endangered Clubshell and Riffleshell Mussels to Edgewood Farm Land and Water Reserve (LWR)

Background

Edgewood Farm LWR, owned by James and Eleanor Smith, is 156.7-acre site located in the Vermilion River Section of the Wabash Border Natural Division. A 1.2 mile meandering stretch of the Salt Fork River lies within the LWR. The Salt Fork River is considered a biologically significant stream (Illinois Natural Areas Inventory #1427), having healthy fish, mussel and macroinvertebrate populations. At the time of the LWR registration in 2000 (Resolution 1555) the site supported two state-endangered mussels, the round hickory nut (*Obovaria subrotunda*), which is now believed to be extirpated from the state and is no longer listed, and the wavy-rayed lamp mussel (*Lampsilis fasciola*), as well as the state-endangered fish, the bluebreast darter (*Etheostoma camurum*). A survey conducted by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) in the summer of 2012, documented the presence of both the wavy-rayed lamp mussel and the state-threatened purple wartyback mussel (*Cyclonaias tuberculata*). The River in the vicinity of the LWR also provides habitat for the state-threatened little spectaclecase (*Villosa lianosa*) and the state-endangered rainbow mussel (*Villosa iris*). The LWR provides a riparian buffer along the Salt Fork River and benefits water quality in the River by limiting water runoff and soil erosion. The LWR was established to protect and preserve a high quality segment of the Salt Fork River.

Proposal/Request

The IDNR and the Illinois Natural History Survey (INHS) partnered with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and state agencies in Ohio and Pennsylvania on a plan to reintroduce the federally and state-endangered clubshell (*Pleurobema clava*) mussel and the federally endangered northern riffleshell (*Epioblasma rangiana*) mussel into Illinois. Both species were historically present in streams throughout the Ohio River drainage, including the Vermilion River of the Wabash basin. Both species have experienced significant declines range-wide. The northern riffleshell was considered extirpated within Illinois. This range-wide decline is not attributed to one problem, but rather a combination of issues that reduced habitat and water quality, including impoundments, siltation, pollution, stream dredging, and exotic species.

The joint recovery plan for the clubshell and northern riffleshell listed translocation as a viable option during species recovery (USFWS 1994). A bridge replacement project on the Alleghany River in Pennsylvania provided an opportunity for the translocation of both species to Illinois. The Hunter Station Bridge in Forrest County will be dropped into the River on top of the largest populations of clubshell and northern riffleshell mussels in the world (estimated 50,000 animals within the footprint of the bridge). State and federal agencies viewed a salvage operation as an opportunity to assist in implementing part of the clubshell and northern riffleshell recovery plan. Illinois was specifically contacted by the states of Pennsylvania and Ohio and the USFWS to be one of the recipients of salvaged animals during the USFWS sanctioned relocations. Beginning in 2006, biologists from the IDNR and the INHS began preparing for this move, and in part, used the federal recovery plan as a guidance tool.

In order to reproduce, freshwater mussels need an appropriate fish host to complete its life cycle. Northern riffleshell larvae (glochidia) need to attach to the fins and gills of various darter species, whereas clubshell glochidia utilize various minnows or darters. To locate sites suitable for translocation, biologists sampled more than 40 sites in the Vermilion River basin that historically had either the mussels or the fish hosts. Data from these surveys suggested most areas in the basin contained high densities of the needed minnows and darters.

It was also necessary to identify areas with diverse and abundant freshwater mussel assemblages. Data from the INHS Survey Mollusk Collection were used to identify areas that met these criteria, and from 2008-2010 biologists “ground truthed” these sites to determine if mollusk assemblages were still intact. Sites enrolled in conservation programs with willing landowners (such as the IDNR and forest preserve district properties) were also a factor in determining suitable translocation sites.

Having identified suitable sites, a translocation of both species occurred in 2010 at two sites in Illinois (Middle Fork and Richter). These sites were not in the INPC system. The sites were monitored for two years, and it was determined that survival rates were satisfactory.

In August 2012, INHS staff learned of another multi-state, multi-agency collecting event a few days before the meeting was scheduled for mussel collection at the Allegheny River in Pennsylvania. Staff from the INHS, IDNR, USFWS and agencies from Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia collected 4,500 northern riffleshell and 1,200 clubshell from the Hunter Station Bridge site for reintroductions in Illinois, Ohio, and West Virginia (Illinois’ allocation was 1,000 northern riffleshell and 200 clubshell). The animals were quarantined for two weeks at the INHS Research Pond site in Champaign. After the quarantine, the animals were fixed with passive integrated transponder (PIT) tags for future location of the animals for monitoring.

The project happened quickly, and staff had to scramble to make things happen to meet the deadlines that they were given. Due to drought conditions, the Middle Fork site that was used in 2010 was determined to be unsuitable for a 2012 translocation. There was also concern that placing all of the mussels at only one site (Richter) would make them too vulnerable. A third site, the North Fork, also turned out to be unsuitable after a site visit determined that the previously diverse mussel area no longer contained a healthy assemblage of species, and likely would not contain suitable habitat to support translocated mussels.

During the quarantine period, INHS staff attended a Prairie River's Network member event and talked with the Smiths, owners of Edgewood Farm LWR. The Smiths expressed an interest in having the mussels placed in the Salt Fork River on their family farm. Because there were limited suitable locations due to 2012 drought conditions and the remnants of Hurricane Isaac threatened to drastically increase river levels, INHS staff had to make an educated, impromptu decision about a release site. INHS staff had visited the Smith property in 2002 and knew that this section of the Salt Fork contained good mussel habitat, diverse and sensitive mussel species, and that the host fishes were present in the area. On September 6, 2012, (after the quarantine period expired) staff went to the site with mussels and found conditions to still be suitable. Approximately 500 northern riffleshell and 100 clubshell were placed at the site.

The Salt Fork at the Edgewood Farm LWR has the required suitable mussel habitat - bottom of sand, gravel, and boulders with relatively little silt, lined by an intact riparian corridor with a functional floodplain. Additionally, channelization or dredging of the Salt Fork within the LWR is not permitted by the present or future owners. This stretch of the Salt Fork has a continuous flow of water, even during drought. These conditions are *the* optimal conditions for clubshell and northern riffleshell mussels.

Monitoring in October, 2012, detected approximately 64% of the animals (undetected animals were likely buried just beyond the detectability range of the PIT tag). Future plans include regular, continued monitoring of sites several times over the next 5+ years (until the tags are no longer transmitting). Because of the suitability of the site, INHS staff hope to be able to translocate more of both species in the future, and request the INPC’s retroactive approval for the 2012 translocation, as well as approval for future releases.

Anne Mankowski, Executive Director of the Endangered Species Protection Board (ESPB), was verbally made aware of the translocation request. Ms. Mankowski submitted a written comment on January 21, 2013, not approving the 2012

translocation without it being a part of “a Board-approved, species-specific, state-level recovery plan or outline or project-level translocation proposal (and as per agreed upon ESPB/ORC coordination process), or 2) recognize as part “recovery”, “conservation”, or research/scientific purpose” translocations that take place absent of respective planning documents.”

Legal Authorities and Responsibilities

The Administrative Rules for the Register of Land and Water Reserves (17 Ill. Admin. Code, Part 4010) states:

Section 4010.220 The Management Program

g) Requests for approval of specific management activities pursuant to Section 4010.270 will be considered in the context of the management program.

Section 4010.230 Allowable Management

a) Management activities allowed on Illinois Nature Preserves under the Rules for Management of Illinois Nature Preserves, 17 Ill. Adm. Code 4000.415 through 4000.475, are allowed on registered land and water reserves.

d) Management may be undertaken on a registered natural area only by or under direction of, or with the permission of, the landowner.

Section 4010.270 Approval of Specific Management and Uses

Management and uses not otherwise allowed by this Part may be specifically approved by the Department and the Commission where the management or use is consistent with the management program or for the purposes of restoring a high quality natural community (a plant and animal assemblage that existed in Illinois at the time of settlement by immigrants from Europe), enhancing populations of threatened or endangered species, or enhancing the opportunity for scientific research.

The Rules for Management of Nature Preserves (17 Ill. Adm. Codes, Part 4000) states:

4000.425 Management of Vegetation and Wildlife

[f] Introduction of plants and animals: no plants or animals or their reproductive bodies shall be brought into a nature preserve or moved from one place to another within a nature preserve except for the purpose of restoring degraded communities to the extent they are historically known or protecting or enhancing populations of endangered or threatened species. Such introductions shall be carried out as provided in the master plan, management schedule or pursuant to Section 4000.160 (Approval of Specific Management Activities).

Analysis

Because the INHS, IDNR and USFWS organized the Illinois translocation effort, it was deemed unnecessary to require the landowner to submit the written request which was prepared by INHS staff.

In its recovery objectives, the 1994 USFWS Recovery Plan indicates that viable populations must be established in ten separate drainages for both the riffleshell and clubshell mussels. The Plan does not include the Vermilion River drainage among the eight specific drainages listed for each species, but it does state “plus two additional drainages” for each species. The 2008 USFWS “Environmental Assessment Augmentation and Reintroduction Plan for the Clubshell (*Pleurobema clava*) and Northern Riffleshell (*Epioblasma torulosa rangiana*) in Illinois” states, “In order to establish these species in at least ten drainages and maintain population viability, it is necessary to augment existing populations and reintroduce these species within their historic range.” The document recognizes the Vermilion River watershed (of which the Salt Fork is a tributary in this system) as historic habitat for both mussel species.

In 2010, Anne Mankowski, Don McFall and Bob Szafoni, IDNR Division of Natural Heritage, submitted the document “Proposal for translocation of specimens of Northern Riffleshell (*Epioblasma torulosa rangiana*) from the Alleghany River, Pennsylvania, to three locations in the Vermilion River drainage in Illinois: Jordan Creek of the North Fork Nature Preserve in Vermilion County; Middle Fork River County Forest Preserve in Champaign County; and, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Richter site on the Salt Fork of the Vermilion River in Champaign County” to the ESPB. The ESPB Director endorsed the project on September 7, 2010, with a recommendation to the IDNR to issue a permit for such work. As previously mentioned, the Middle Fork and Richter sites were used in 2010. The Jordan Creek site was not.

For the 2012 translocation, the IDNR based its permitting on the 2010 approval (personal communication, Joe Kath, IDNR Endangered Species Manager). The IDNR Office of Resource Conservation Director, Jim Herkert, expressed IDNR

support of the relocation of the mussels into the LWR in a memo dated April 26, 2013, stating that the “reintroduction is consistent with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Clubshell and Northern Riffleshell Recovery Plan, approved 1994.” He further indicated the suitability of Edgewood Farm LWR as it met biological criteria for mussel reintroduction, as well as being assured long-term protection as a LWR.

The USFWS, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, and the LWR landowner have all provided documentation of approval of the translocation of clubshell and northern riffleshell mussels.

Through conversation in a social setting, the Smiths expressed their interest and offered their property to the INHS as a location for the mussel placement. It seemed not to have occurred to those involved that the special designation as a LWR comes with statutory obligations that require the site to be treated differently than other privately owned properties. In consideration of the 2012 drought conditions, time-line constraints, and the need to place the mussels prior to potentially dangerous conditions forecast as a result of Hurricane Isaac, INHS staff chose what they thought was the safest location with the best probability of survival and acted to release the mussels after the quarantine period had lapsed.

INPC staff was not made aware of the translocation until after the submission deadlines for the January, 2012 INPC meeting had passed. Since the mussels were already in place and winter conditions precluded any field action, it was determined that this retroactive proposal could be presented for Commission review at the May, 2012 INPC meeting. It is unfortunate that an after-the-fact review is required, but from all of the information that INPC staff have reviewed, Edgewood Farm LWR meets the biological requirements and those laid out by the USFWS for both species involved. Placement of the mussels at the site also enhances the biological diversity of the LWR.

Approximately 500 northern riffleshell and 100 clubshell have been placed at the site. Eight months have passed, and it is reasonable to assume that surviving individuals have established themselves in the Salt Fork River within Edgewood Farms LWR. Removal and relocation of the mussels would likely cause stress to the animals and would be disruptive to the LWR habitat.

Recommendation

With the stipulations noted below, INPC staff recommends:

- Retro-active approval of the 2012 translocation of clubshell and riffleshell mussels to Edgewood Farms LWR.
- Approval to monitor the translocated mussel populations.
- Allow for future translocations of both species at this site, should more mussels become available.

Stipulations:

- All six ESPB translocation “criteria” outlined in the document “ Proposal for translocation of specimens of Northern Riffleshell (*Epioblasma torulosa rangiana*) from the Alleghany River, Pennsylvania, to three locations in the Vermilion River drainage in Illinois: Jordan Creek of the North Fork Nature Preserve in Vermilion County; Middle Fork River County Forest Preserve in Champaign County; and, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Richter site on the Salt Fork of the Vermilion River in Champaign County” must be confirmed to be valid if future translocations take place at this site.
- Additionally the five “factors” provided in the detailed review of the above document must be considered for future translocations, and appropriate documentation regarding continued suitability of the site in regards to these factors must be provided to INPC staff for review prior to INPC staff level approval.
- Future translocation may be done only with appropriate consultation with the IDNR and ESPB.
- All required landowner approvals will be obtained for each new translocation event.
- The site will be monitored several times for individuals released in 2012 over the 2013 field season.
- All individuals in any future mussel releases must be PIT tagged and monitored in the same way during the first year after release.
- After the first field season, all translocated populations will be monitored approximately twice a year for an additional five years with a subset of relocated individuals being dug-up to determine and quantify survivorship and assess success of the effort.
- An annual report will be submitted to the INPC at the end of the calendar year for every year that monitoring takes place.

Literature Cited

- Mankowski, A., B. Szafoni and D. McFall. 2010. Proposal for translocation of specimens of Northern Riffleshell (*Epioblasma torulosa rangiana*) from the Alleghany River, Pennsylvania, to three locations in the Vermilion River drainage in Illinois: Jordan Creek of the North Fork Nature Preserve in Vermilion County; Middle Fork River County Forest Preserve in Champaign County; and, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Richter site on the Salt Fork of the Vermilion River in Champaign County. ESPB and IDNR internal document. 7 pp.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). 1994. Clubshell (*Pleurobema clava*) and Northern Riffleshell (*Epioblasma torulosa rangiana*) recovery plan. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Hadley, MA. 68 pp.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). 2008. Environmental Assessment Augmentation and Reintroduction Plan for the Clubshell (*Pleurobema clava*) and Northern Riffleshell (*Epioblasma torulosa rangiana*) in Illinois. U.S. Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 3.



Illinois Nature Preserves Commission

memorandum

Exhibit D

To: Commissioners

From: Kelly Neal, Jenny Skufca, and Randy Heidorn

Date: April 30, 2013

Subject: Staff Recommendation Regarding Item 17 – Cook Co. – Request to Construct an Educational Shelter and Shed within Chicago Ridge Prairie Nature Preserve

Background

Chicago Ridge Prairie Nature Preserve (NP), owned by the Oak Lawn Park District, is an 11.74-acre site located in the Chicago Lake Plain Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division. The site contains 7.1 acres of grade A and B mesic gravel prairie and grade B wet prairie (Illinois Natural Areas Inventory #0398) and an additional 4.7 acres of partially filled, degraded wetland. The site was dedicated in October, 1994 (Resolution 1253).

Request

The Oak Lawn Park District applied for and received an Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Open Space Land Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) grant from the IDNR in 2011. The focus of the project is the removal of five acres of overburden from fly dumping from nearby development which occurred prior to dedication of the site. A portion of the OSLAD grant would also be used for restoration of this area. When the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission (INPC) was provided with the project information for review for the IDNR's Comprehensive Environmental Review Process (CERP) on August 5, 2011, there was no reference to a shelter or shed in the document text. A key on the second page map did indicate a "Raised overlook/Interpretive Center/Group Shelter." This item was missed by staff during review. The project was approved by the INPC, and the grant was awarded. The Park District has now finalized their planning and is ready to proceed with the project. The finalized plans were recently provided to the INPC; at which time staff was made aware that a shelter to be used for educational programming and a shed to store educational materials was to be constructed within the boundaries of the NP. The OSLAD grant included construction of the shelter and shed. The Park District has indicated that the shed was not critical, but it would greatly facilitate its educational programming. The Oak Lawn Park District requests approval to construct the educational shelter and shed.

Legal Authorities and Responsibilities

The Rules for Management of Nature Preserves (17 Ill. Adm. Codes, Part 4000) states:

4000.120 Applicability of Rules c) Management, development, or uses of a specific preserve, not otherwise allowed under the rules, may be allowed as a provision of the master plan for the site, or may be approved by the Commission under Section 4000.160 of this Part.

Section 4000.160 Approval of Specific Management Activities

Management activities otherwise prohibited under the rules or an approved master plan may be approved by the Commission upon written request of the owner. The request must outline the objective of the management activity, and identify the natural communities and any threatened or endangered species, or significant or notable natural features, that may be affected by the proposed activity. If the Commission determines that the proposed activity will enhance the natural features of the preserve, consistent with the proposal for dedication, the Commission shall approve the request. The

Commission may, with reasonable notice to the custodian, withdraw approval for management activities previously granted if it is subsequently determined that the activity may have an adverse impact on the nature preserve.

4000.170 Intrusions

There shall be no intrusions of structures, easements, rights of way, or land uses which do not conform with this Part, except for preexisting rights which are not inconsistent with the Act, those specifically allowed as part of an approved master plan or management schedule, or those approved as a deviation from the rules under Section 4000.160.

4000.270 Other Structures and Improvements a) Within a dedicated nature preserve, necessary signs, trash receptacles and minor structures to house research instruments or hand tools are permitted if provided for in the master plan, management schedule, or in a Special Use Permit. Signs and structures shall be approved by the Commission and the owner.

b) Within buffer areas, service areas may be established which provide access and parking, management facilities, and/or visitor facilities. Service areas must not impair the natural features of the nature preserve. Such necessary service areas should be included in the instrument of dedication, master plan or management schedule. All other structures and facilities not included in Section 4000.270(a) shall be located in buffer areas or on property outside the dedicated nature preserve.

Analysis

Typically restoration of degraded areas, such as removal of fill, can be reviewed and approved at the staff level. Also, the dedication proposal for the site stated, “The fill removal project, which should expose the original soil contour, should be monitored by Park District staff or their representative, or staff of the Nature Preserves Commission. Approval for the removal of this overburden by the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission is considered an important and integral aspect of this dedication proposal.” Preliminary approval for dedication of this site by the Commission in May, 1994 (Resolution 1229) also indicated approval of the fill removal.

The management schedule prepared in 1995 by Steven Byers indicated in the “Objectives for Establishing Preserve...3) provide unique educational opportunities through the Public and Private Schools and the Oak Lawn Park District” and lists in the “Overall Management Goals – Ranked in Priority Order” that the fourth goal was to “Provide for education/research programs at Chicago Ridge Prairie.”

This NP, located in an urban setting, has the potential to reach a large and diverse audience and provide education on topics of significant importance to the INPC. Topics could include the natural heritage of the area, such as the unique high quality prairie habitats; rare, threatened, and endangered plant and animal species; exotic/invasives species issues, and the need for control of these species; and other management practices such as prescribed fire.

It should be noted that since preparation of the information in the agenda paragraph for this item, INPC staff have confirmed with the IDNR Grants staff that if the INPC decides not to approve the shelter and shed construction request, OSLAD funds could still be awarded for the site restoration aspects of the project. The total grant reimbursement would only be reduced by the amount projected for the shelter and shed. Because OSLAD is a 50% reimbursement grant program, the applicant will not be out any amount of money, as they would have had to spend it initially for construction of the shelter and shed to qualify for reimbursement.

Recommendation

With the stipulations noted below, INPC staff recommend approval of construction of a shelter to be used for educational purposes in the fill area of Chicago Ridge Prairie Nature Preserve. Staff do not recommend construction of a storage shed within the boundaries of the NP.

Stipulations:

- The educational shelter footprint dimensions adhere to the plans provided by the Oak Lawn Park District.
- The shelter must be constructed either on the existing fill material or in an area where the overburden has been removed.
- Shelter construction should not adversely impact restoration and stewardship activities within the NP.
- Heavy Equipment access to the shelter construction site must be through degraded areas.

- All heavy equipment must be power washed to remove exotic/invasive weed seed or propagules before entering the sites.
- There shall be no negative impacts to high quality plant communities or threatened or endangered species.
- Best management practices should be utilized to prevent erosion and sedimentation.
- If light fixtures are installed at the shelter, they should be targeted within the structure and should not be directed into the prairie habitat. Lights should only be turned on in the evening when used for evening educational programming.
- Portions of the concrete pad should be replaced with a limestone screening surface.
- The amenities will be designed to be accessible for all.

To: Illinois Nature Preserves Commission

From: Dennis Nyberg, Prof. Emeritus Biological Sciences, Univ of Illinois at Chicago

Date: 12 April 2013

Re: Contractor Herbiciding within Illinois Nature Preserves

OBSERVATIONS and INFERENCES

I have observed considerable damage to native vegetation associated with contractor spraying of herbicides in the Forest Preserve District of Cook County. While I support the presumed intent of this effort- to kill invasive vegetation to promote native vegetation, I have observed large kill zones far beyond the borders of the shrubs I infer were the spraying target. I have rarely or never observed such extensive 'collateral damage' when volunteers or staff have done herbiciding in the preserves. From these observations I infer that either or both 1) the contracts are written in a manner that encourages excessive killing because the requirements specify killing invasive species rather than protecting native vegetation, or 2) the individuals that actually do the spraying are not well trained or supervised in plant identification.

RECOMMENDATION

The INPC should not approve further spraying by contractors in Illinois Nature Preserves until it has created and promulgated contract language that rewards the contractor for minimizing the damage to native vegetation. The INPC should also figure out some way to assure that the individuals actually doing the spraying have a good knowledge of the species of the community they are working in.