

ILLINOIS NATURE PRESERVES COMMISSION AGENDA
TWO HUNDRED TWENTY-SIXTH MEETING

Jarrett Prairie Center
7993 N. River Road
Byron, IL 61010

May 9, 2017, 10:00 a.m.

*Documentary Material Enclosed

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

Item 2:* Adoption of Agenda

Item 3:* A. Approval of Minutes for the 224th Meeting, September 13, 2016

B. Approval of Minutes for the 225th Meeting, January 24, 2017

Item 4: Next meeting dates and locations

September 12, 2017 Noble Center, Peoria Park District, Peoria, IL

Item 5:* INPC Staff Report

REPORT
Tom Lerczak
Nature Preserves Commission

Item 6: IDNR Staff Report

REPORT
Ann Holtrop
Department of Natural Resources

Item 7*:* Endangered Species Protection Board Report

REPORT
Joyce Hofmann
Endangered Species Protection Board

Item 8:* Cook Co. – Bobolink Meadow Land and Water Reserve, Registration

Bobolink Meadow, the proposed Land and Water Reserve, is a 918-acre site owned by the Forest Preserves of Cook County. It is located in the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division of Illinois. It lies mostly in a former glacial lakebed that was in agricultural production before the 1960's, and has undergone a major hydrological and plant community restoration facilitated by the 2008 O'Hare Modernization and Mitigation Account. More than 300 acres of the site's wetlands were created or enhanced as a result of the mitigation funding, and approximately 500 acres total have been restored to a mosaic of mesic to wet prairie with interspersed patches of sedge meadow and

shallow emergent communities. The open, graminoid communities at this site, combined with similar habitats within the Bartel Grassland Land and Water Reserve, which lies immediately adjacent to Bobolink Meadow, provide approximately 900 acres of contiguous grassland habitat. These two sites combined are one of the most important protected grassland complexes in the Chicago region for breeding grassland birds. It supports the second largest population of bobolinks (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*) in Illinois. The state-endangered king rail (*Rallus elegans*) also nests at Bobolink Meadow, as do many other species considered in Greatest Need of Conservation by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR). Additionally, the site is well-known to provide winter habitat for the state-endangered short-eared owl (*Asio flammeus*) and northern harrier (*Circus cyaneus*), and also attracts an impressive variety of shorebirds and waterfowl species during spring and fall migration. The site's qualifying features for registration as a Land and Water Reserve are its 1) grassland habitat of more than 80 acres that support breeding populations of area-sensitive grassland wildlife species, 2) habitat for endangered or threatened species, 3) wetlands at least 50 acres in size, 4) unusual concentrations of wildlife such as migration stop-over, feeding, and rest sites, and 5) buffer/expansion of Bartel Grassland Land and Water Reserve.

REPORT

Kim Roman

Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Registration Approval

Item 9:* Lee Co. – Addition to Ryan Wetland and Sand Prairie Land and Water Reserve, Registration

The Lee County Soil & Water Conservation District proposes to register 6.75 acres as an addition to their Ryan Wetland and Sand Prairie Land and Water Reserve. The proposed addition is located in the Grand Prairie Section of the Grand Prairie Natural Division and is eligible for registration by the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission (INPC) due to its designation as part of a Category II INAI site documented to provide habitat for two state-listed species: one reptile and the regal fritillary butterfly (*Speyeria idalia*). The proposed addition (6.75 acres) and the existing reserve (41.5 acres) are part of the 202.3-acre Ryan Wetland and Sand Prairie Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI) site (#1681). The INAI site consists of low to moderate quality ephemeral sand ponds, sand prairies, and wetlands that provide habitat for a wide variety of wildlife, including several animal species identified in the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan as Species in Greatest Need of Conservation: regal fritillary (*Speyeria idalia*), two reptile species, American badger (*Taxidea taxus*), northern bobwhite (*Colinus virginianus*), American woodcock (*Scolopax minor*), great egret (*Ardea alba*), and slender glass lizard (*Ophisaurus attenuates*). The proposed addition has natural areas of similar quality to those found within the original reserve. If approved, this addition to the Ryan Wetland and Sand Prairie Land and Water Reserve will bring the total acreage of protected land at this site to 48.25 acres. It is recommended by the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission field staff that this 6.75-acre parcel be registered in perpetuity as an addition to the Ryan Wetland and Sand Prairie Land and Water Reserve.

REPORT

John Nelson

Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Registration Approval

Item 10:* Cook Co. – Addition and Buffer Addition to Kennicott's Grove Nature Preserve, Dedication

The Glenview Park District seeks preliminary approval for dedication of a 44.19-acre addition to the 50-acre Kennicott's Grove Nature Preserve. The proposed addition includes 24.19 acres as nature preserve and 20.0 acres as nature preserve buffer. Both Kennicott's Grove Nature Preserve and the proposed addition are located within the 144.7-acre property owned by the Glenview Park District that

is referred to as “The Grove.” Kennicott’s Grove Nature Preserve received final approval for dedication at the Commission’s 155th Meeting in May 1997 (Resolution # 1359). “The Grove” also includes the Kennicott House, Redfield House, and Interpretive Center and was recognized by the National Register of Historic Places in 1973 and was granted National Historic Landmark status in 1976. The proposed 44.19-acre addition lies adjacent to the Kennicott’s Grove INAI site (INAI # 1469) and includes Grade C mesic upland forest and ponds located within the nature preserve addition and a prairie restoration within the nature preserve buffer addition. The existing nature preserve and proposed nature preserve addition provide suitable habitat for two State-listed species; the swollen sedge (*Carex intumescens*) and one snake species. Kennicott’s Grove Nature Preserve and the proposed addition are located in the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division in the northern part of Cook County, Illinois. In 1973, when it appeared that much of “The Grove” would be converted to other uses, the Save the Grove Committee was formed and petitioned the Glenview Park District to acquire part of “The Grove”. In 1974, citizens voted affirmatively by a large margin (88% in support) to begin land acquisition at “The Grove.” Protection of Kennicott’s Grove Nature Preserve and the proposed addition supports several elements of the Illinois Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan (the Plan). Additionally, the site provides suitable nesting habitat for 10 bird species, 2 amphibian species, and 2 reptile species identified in the Plan as Species in Greatest Need of Conservation. Formal protection of the two parcels totaling 44.19 acres will protect Grade C mesic upland forest and pond communities that support a number of plant and animal species, protect a portion of the original prairie grove first described by Dr. John Kennicott in 1850, further protect Kennicott’s Grove Nature Preserve from incompatible land uses, and is consistent with the first proposal that recommended dedication of all surviving portions of the original prairie grove. Finally, Kennicott’s Grove Nature Preserve and the proposed addition are a fitting companion to the designation of “The Grove” as a National Historic Landmark.

REPORT

Steven Byers
Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Preliminary Approval for Dedication

Item 11:* Cook Co. – Glenview Naval Air Station Prairie Nature Preserve, Dedication

The Glenview Park District seeks preliminary approval for dedication of the 30.0-acre Glenview Naval Air Station Prairie as an Illinois Nature Preserve. The proposed nature preserve is located within the 32.0-acre Kent Fuller Air Station Prairie/Evelyn Pease Tyner Center. Glenview Naval Air Station Prairie was included on the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI # 1495) as a Category II site in recognition of the presence of one State-listed animal and three State-listed plant species. The proposed Glenview Naval Air Station Prairie Nature Preserve supports Grade C mesic and wet-mesic prairie, Grade C wet prairie, and Grade C freshwater marsh. The proposed Glenview Naval Air Station Prairie Nature Preserve is located in the Chicago Lake Plain Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division in the northeastern part of Cook County, Illinois. The namesake for the proposed nature preserve is the Glenview Naval Air Station that remained in operation from 1942 until 1995. For the period from 1923, when the airfield was first built until the closure of the Glenview Naval Air Station in 1995, it is very likely repeated mowing maintained the prairie. Upon closure of the base, the entire base was conveyed to the Village of Glenview. Community interest in reuse of the base grew and in 1999, the Village of Glenview formally recognized the prairie and increased the designated size of the prairie from 14 to 31 acres. In 2007, the Village of Glenview conveyed the prairie to the Glenview Park District. Protection of the Glenview Naval Air Station Prairie supports several elements of the Illinois Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan (the Plan). Additionally, the site provides suitable nesting habitat for 8 bird species and one reptile species identified in the Plan

as Species in Greatest Need of Conservation. The proposed Glenview Naval Air Station Prairie Nature Preserve encompasses the entire Glenview Naval Air Station Prairie INAI site. Most notably, the mesic and wet-mesic prairies at this site (totaling 23.22 acres) are considered G-2 or “imperiled globally.” Their protection as part of the Illinois Nature Preserves System is consistent with the recommendations of the Chicago Wilderness Biodiversity Recovery Plan. The Commission acknowledges the long-term interest and support of the Village of Glenview, the Glenview Park District, and volunteer steward Kent Fuller for long-standing efforts to protect and steward the Glenview Naval Air Station Prairie.

REPORT
Steven Byers
Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED
Preliminary Approval for Dedication

Item 12:* Lake Co. – Donnelley Nature Preserve Buffer Addition to Almond Marsh Nature Preserve, Dedication

Libertyville Township seeks preliminary approval for dedication of the 53-acre Donnelley Nature Preserve Buffer Addition to Almond Marsh Nature Preserve. Almond Marsh (a 110-acre parcel) received final approval for dedication as Almond Marsh Nature Preserve at the Commission’s 129th Meeting in November 1990 (Resolution # 1048). Since then there have been four additions to Almond Marsh Nature Preserve totaling 47.5 acres. Additional lands located in the vicinity of Almond Marsh Nature Preserve have been protected; Oak Openings Nature Preserve (73.29 acres) and Ryhan Tract Land and Water Reserve (13.72 acres). Almond Marsh is included in the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI # 1253) and features Grade B freshwater marsh and Grade B sedge meadow wetlands. The proposed Donnelley Nature Preserve Buffer Addition includes Grade C freshwater marsh (20 acres), Grade C savanna (9 acres), and cropland (24 acres) that is being restored to prairie and savanna. Conversion of the cropland began in 2016. Almond Marsh Nature Preserve and the proposed addition are centrally located within the 5,770-acre Liberty Prairie Reserve located in south-central Lake County, Illinois in the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division. Protection of the proposed addition supports elements of the Illinois Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan. The proposed Donnelley Nature Preserve Buffer Addition will provide water quality benefits to Almond Marsh and provide a large block of restored grasslands for birds, and further buffer Almond Marsh Nature Preserve from incompatible land uses. The proposed Donnelley Nature Preserve Buffer Addition (53 acres) will increase the size of Almond Marsh Nature Preserve from 157.5 acres to 210.5 acres. The Commission acknowledges the long-term interest and support of Libertyville Township in the protection and stewardship of lands located in the Liberty Prairie Reserve.

REPORT
Steven Byers
Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED
Preliminary Approval for Dedication

Item 13:* McLean Co. – Addition to Stubblefield Woodlots Nature Preserve, Dedication

A 5.56-acre tract of land is being proposed as the James Stubblefield Nature Preserve Addition to the 11.7-acre Stubblefield Woodlots Nature Preserve, which consists of two tracts (5.22 acres and 6.49 acres) that are not adjacent, but separated from each other by about 90 feet. The James Stubblefield Nature Preserve Addition is adjacent to both of these tracts, and would connect the two initial tracts, establishing the Stubblefield Woodlots Nature Preserve as one contiguous preserve. The preserve and the proposed addition are owned by the Sugar Grove Foundation in McLean County. All of the current

preserve and the proposed addition are Grade B mesic upland forest, part of the Funks Grove Natural Area (INAI #721). The 1,005-acre Funks Grove Natural Area is a remnant of a prairie grove (i.e., a wooded area surrounded by prairie) that once encompassed about 3,000 acres, and is located within the Grand Prairie Section of the Grand Prairie Natural Division. The most obvious and impressive trees are the large sugar maples (*Acer saccharum*), bur oaks (*Quercus macrocarpa*), and black walnuts (*Juglans nigra*). A notable component of this forest is blue ash (*Fraxinus quadrangulata*). Stubblefield Woodlots Nature Preserve is open to the public, although there are no established trails, and none are planned. Management of the site will focus on controlling non-native and invasive species. The Illinois Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan and Strategy would be supported by this dedication through the Forest, Land and Water Stewardship, and Invasive Species campaigns.

REPORT

Justin Dillard

Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Preliminary Approval for Dedication

Item 14:* Kane Co. – Buffer Addition to Dixie Briggs Fromm Prairie Nature Preserve, Dedication

Dundee Township seeks final approval for dedication of a 94.4-acre nature preserve buffer addition to Dixie Briggs Fromm Prairie Nature Preserve. The 56.5-acre Dixie Briggs Fromm Prairie Nature Preserve received final approval for dedication at the Commission’s 179th Meeting in May 2003 (Resolution # 1722). The proposed nature preserve buffer addition received preliminary approval for dedication at the Commission’s 225th Meeting in January 2017 (Resolution # 2374). The proposed nature preserve buffer addition includes 18 acres of Grade C mesic upland forest and a 71.4-acre cultural community (formerly cropland) that is being restored to either prairie (66.4 acres) or forest (5 acres). Restoration began in 2004. Dixie Briggs Fromm Prairie Nature Preserve and the proposed addition are located in the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division in the northeast corner of Kane County, Illinois. Protection of the proposed addition supports several elements of the Illinois Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan. Six species of birds identified in that plan as Species in Greatest Need of Conservation have been recorded from the proposed addition. Dedication of the proposed nature preserve buffer addition will increase the size of Dixie Briggs Fromm Prairie Nature Preserve from 56.5 to 150.9 acres and honors a recommendation from the original proposal that stated: “...the balance of the land (owned by Dundee Township) should be included as nature preserve buffer once the crop production is replaced with an active prairie restoration effort.” The proposed nature preserve buffer addition will provide water quality benefits, will provide a large block of grasslands for birds, and further protect Dixie Briggs Fromm Prairie Nature Preserve from incompatible land uses. The Commission acknowledges the long-term interest and support of Dundee Township in the protection and stewardship of Dixie Briggs Fromm Prairie Nature Preserve.

REPORT

Steven Byers

Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Final Approval for Dedication

Item 15:* Lake Co. – Donnelley Nature Preserve Buffer Addition to Liberty Prairie Nature Preserve, Dedication

Libertyville Township seeks final approval for dedication of the 109-acre Donnelley Nature Preserve Buffer Addition to Liberty Prairie Nature Preserve. The 47-acre Liberty Prairie received final approval for dedication at the Commission's 129th Meeting in November 1990 (Resolution # 1062). Since that time Libertyville Township has formally protected two nature preserve buffer additions to Liberty Prairie; the first addition receiving final approval for dedication at the Commission's 180th Meeting in October 2003 (Resolution # 1743) and the second addition receiving final approval for dedication at the Commission's 212th Meeting in October 2012 (Resolution # 2206). The proposed Donnelley Nature Preserve Buffer Addition to Liberty Prairie Nature Preserve received preliminary approval for dedication at the Commission's 225th Meeting in January 2017 (Resolution # 2375). Liberty Prairie Nature Preserve and the proposed addition are centrally located within the 5,770-acre Liberty Prairie Reserve located in south-central Lake County, Illinois. Liberty Prairie Nature Preserve and the proposed Donnelley Nature Preserve Buffer Addition are located in the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division. The proposed Donnelley Nature Preserve Buffer Addition consists of a cultural community (cropland) that is being restored to dry-mesic, mesic, and wet prairie. Efforts to begin conversion of the cropland to prairie began in 2014. Protection of the proposed addition supports elements of the Illinois Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan. The proposed Donnelley Nature Preserve Buffer Addition will provide water quality benefits, will provide a large block of grasslands for grassland birds, and further buffer Liberty Prairie Nature Preserve from incompatible land uses. The proposed Donnelley Nature Preserve Buffer Addition will increase the size of Liberty Prairie Nature Preserve from 75 to 184 acres. The Commission acknowledges the long-term interest and support of Libertyville Township in the protection and stewardship of Liberty Prairie Nature Preserve.

REPORT

Steven Byers

Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Final Approval for Dedication

Item 16:* Logan Co. – Addition to Elkhart Hill Grove Nature Preserve, Dedication

Elizabeth Pasquesi and Catherine Carolin seek final approval for their 65.2-acre proposed nature preserve addition to Elkhart Hill Grove Nature Preserve (65.2 acres). This 65.2-acre proposed nature preserve addition was registered as Elkhart Hill Grove Land and Water Reserve in 2002. Preliminary approval of this nature preserve addition was conferred at the 225th meeting of the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission (Resolution # 2376) on January 24, 2017. The existing dedicated nature preserve is owned by William McClellan Drake Jr, Victoria Evan-Cook, Valentine Snell, Mason Hammond Drake, and Ascha Kells Drake. All of the proposed preserve addition is Grade A mesic upland forest that is included within the 210.2-acre Elkhart Hill Natural Area (INAI #0178). Elkhart Hill Natural Area is located in the Springfield Section of the Grand Prairie Natural Division; it is the only prairie grove in Illinois located on a glacial kame (from the Illinoisan glacial period). Sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*), blue ash (*Fraxinus quadrangulata*), and bur oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*) are important canopy species. Other common species in smaller diameter classes include slippery elm (*Ulmus rubra*), American elm (*Ulmus americana*) and hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*). Wood nettle (*Laportea canadensis*) is a dominant herbaceous species. Pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*) is a common understory tree that typically occurs in large patches. The forest supports a rich wildflower display which includes species such as dutchman's-breeches (*Dicentra cucullaria*), Virginia bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*), blue-eyed Mary (*Collinsia verna*), false rue anemone (*Isopyrum biternatum*), bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*), broad-leaf waterleaf (*Hydrophyllum canadense*), white trillium

(*Trillium flexipes*), toothwort (*Dentaria laciniata*), and spring beauty (*Claytonia virginica*). Hiking and limited horseback riding, a reserved right with provisions to be outlined in the site's master plan for management, will be allowed with permission from the landowners and restricted to established trails. White-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) hunting will be allowed with permission from the landowners as a population control method following INPC management guidelines (Volume 5, Number 1). The landowners are seeking final approval of their 65.2-acre registered reserve as a nature preserve addition to Elkhart Hill Grove Nature Preserve for the higher level of protection. Upon dedication, Elkhart Hill Grove Nature Preserve will consist of 130.4 acres.

REPORT

Tom Lerczak

Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Final Approval for Dedication

Item 17: JoDaviess Co. – Approval to construct picnic shelter with observation deck at Wapello Land and Water Reserve

The JoDaviess Conservation Foundation (JDCF) requests approval for the construction of a picnic shelter with an observation deck at its Wapello Land and Water Reserve. The site was approved by the INPC in 2006 as the first LWR afforded legal protection due to the presence of significant archeological features. As part of the registration proposal, the landowner retained the right to construct and use a small parking area in the northeast corner of the reserve. An archeological survey of the parking area was conducted in 2006 and a gravel parking lot constructed soon after. The following text from the Allowable Uses section of the original proposal pertains to the current request:

“Recreational and educational activities will be promoted within the reserve. Future plans include the development of a small parking lot (adjacent to Rt. 84) with an informational kiosk and hiking trail system with interpretive signage extending from the parking area through the various community types. Bank fishing and a canoe launch site may also be developed along the Apple River. Other possible recreational development could include restrooms beside the parking lot. With the exception of sign posting and activities involving the uppermost surface soils at plow line depth within the agricultural field, any ground-disturbing activities on the site, including the above mentioned recreational development, will require written permission from INPC and IDNR and may necessitate an archaeological investigation of the area.”

While the Allowable Uses section references a parking area, restrooms, kiosk, etc., no mention is made for a picnic shelter. However, the designation of the “parking area” for visitor uses is explicitly implied as part of the “recreational and educational activities” to be promoted at the site. Figure 1 and 2 illustrate the location of the proposed pavilion within the “parking area” reserved for visitor use facilities. This location is within the area previously surveyed for archeological resources used for approval of the existing parking area. Based on the extensive archeological surveys done on this site there is no known feature(s) near the proposed shelter site/parking lot (Milhouse, 2007: UIUC-ITARP CONTROLLED SURFACE COLLECTIONS AT THE WAPELLO LAND AND WATER RESERVE, May 11, 2006, April 23-26 and 1 May 2007 ITARP Research Report Series Number 117, *Philip G. Millhouse* University of Illinois-ITARP November 2007).

The proposed picnic shelter will have a maximum footprint of 20 ft. x 40 ft (Figure 3) with concrete floor, and post and metal roof construction. If funds allow, the pavilion will have a second-story

observation deck overlooking the re-created prairie landscape and former Native-American village. Total height approximately 22 ft.

If approved, the picnic shelter will provide a nice dry and shaded gathering place out of the sun for JDCF staff, volunteer stewards, and the public who frequent the site. It will also be used as a gathering and launching area for school field trips.

REPORT

John Nelson
Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Approval to construct a picnic shelter with observation deck

Item 18:* Update to Vegetation Management Guidelines Revision Process

The Illinois Nature Preserves Commission currently has Vegetation Management Guidelines for 40 species. In the past, revisions to these guidelines were written by Nature Preserves Commission or Division of Natural Heritage staff and the revised documents sent to all Commission consultants for comments. Any comments received were incorporated into the revision and the Guideline was brought before the Commission for approval. As a result, it often took several months for revisions to receive final approval. The Vegetation Management Guidelines are species specific and currently there is no central database listing the herbicides that have been approved for use in high quality, buffer or disturbed areas within the Nature Preserve system. As a result, there are inconsistencies in the guidelines regarding approved herbicide uses, and questions regarding the use of herbicides with trade names other than those mentioned in the guidelines can be difficult to answer. Staff is requesting permission to make minor changes to existing Vegetation Management Guidelines, maintain a database of previously approved herbicides, and to make future revisions to existing Vegetation Management Guidelines at the staff level.

REPORT

Bob Edgin
Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Approval of revisions to selected Vegetation Management Guidelines and authorization for staff to make future changes and maintain a database of approved herbicides

Item 19: Public Comment Period (3 minutes per person)

Item 20: Other Business

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

Item 21: Adjournment