

**ILLINOIS NATURE PRESERVES COMMISSION AGENDA
TWO HUNDRED THIRTY-NINTH MEETING**

Illinois Department of Natural Resources
One Natural Resources Way
Springfield, IL 62702

September 14, 2021, 10:00 a.m.
WebEx meeting due to Covid-19 pandemic

*Documentary Material Enclosed

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

Item 2:* Adoption of Agenda

Item 3:* Approval of Minutes for the 237th Meeting January 26, 2021
Approval of Special Minutes for the 238th Meeting May 10, 2021
Approval of Minutes for the 238th Meeting May 11, 2021

Item 4: Next meeting dates and locations

240	January 25, 2022	Illinois Department of Natural Resources
241	May 10, 2022	Starved Rock Lodge & Conference Center
242	September 13, 2022	Olney Central College

Item 5:* INPC Staff Report

REPORT
Dr. Leon Hinz
Nature Preserves Commission

Amy Doll, Director
Friends of Illinois Nature Preserves

Item 6:* IDNR Staff Report

REPORT
Ann Marie Holtrop
Division of Natural Heritage

Item 7:* Endangered Species Protection Board Report

REPORT
Dr. Joyce Hofmann
Endangered Species Protection Board

Item 8: Committee of the Whole Meeting to propose nominations for Illinois Nature Preserves Commission Advisors, Consultants and Officers (Committee Chair: Dr. Dave Thomas)

A. Nomination of Advisors

Current Advisors:

Colleen Callahan IL Dept. of Natural Resources <i>(Statutory Advisor)</i>	Dr. Eric M. Schauber IL Natural History Survey <i>(Statutory Advisor)</i>	Cinnamon Catlin-Legutko IL State Museum <i>(Statutory Advisor)</i>
Dr. Joyce Hofmann IL Endangered Species Protection Board	Dr. Richard C. Berg IL State Geological Survey	Mike Norris IL Dept. of Natural Resources Office of Historic Preservation
Dr. Timothy Pauketat IL State Archaeological Survey	Dr. Kevin O'Brien IL Sustainable Technology Center	Dr. Jeff Stein Prairie Research Institute

B. Nomination of Consultants

Current Consultants:

Gerald Adelman	Jill Allread	Randy Heidorn
Harry Drucker	Fran Harty	Jill Riddell
Dr. Jim Herkert	Kerry Leigh	Joseph Roth
Lauren Rosenthal	Bruce Ross-Shannon	John White
John Schwegman	Michelle Carr	

C. Nomination of Officers

Current Officers:

Chair: George Covington
 Vice Chair: Dr. Abigail Derby Lewis
 Secretary: Dr. Pen DauBach

Item 9:* Johnson and Pulaski Cos. – 11-Parcel Addition to Cache River Land and Water Reserve, Registration

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources seeks to register an 11-parcel, 1023.1-acre addition to the Cache River Land and Water Reserve located in the Bottomlands Section of the Coastal Plain Natural Division in southern Johnson and northern Pulaski counties. The Cache River Land and Water Reserve contains expansive cypress-tupelo swamps supporting rare and State-listed plants and animals, many of which are at the northern extent of their range, and an abundance of other high-quality natural communities. Registration will protect additional parcels within the Lower Cache River Swamp INAI site (#0610; Categories I, II, III). Other known qualifying features within the proposed addition parcels include: >120

acres of restored and remnant wetlands and >250 acres of forest, including Grade C dry-mesic upland forest, mesic floodplain forest, and wet-mesic floodplain forest. The proposed addition parcels harbor current occurrence records for five State-listed threatened and endangered species. Protection of this 11-parcel addition will contribute to the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan by supporting the focal species of the Farmland and Prairie, Forest and Woodland, and Wetlands Campaigns and contributing to the goals and efforts to control the focal species of the Invasives Campaign. This protection will also fulfill the objectives for broad, watershed-level stewardship as practiced by the interagency Cache River Joint Venture Partnership. If approved, this addition will bring the total acreage of the Cache River Land and Water Reserve to 11,692.7 acres.

REPORT Christina Feng Department of Natural Resources	ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED Approval for Registration
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Item 10:* DuPage Co. – Addition to Brewster Creek Marsh Nature Preserve, Preliminary Dedication

The Forest Preserve District of DuPage County (FPDDC) requests preliminary approval to dedicate 8.9 acres of natural area as an Illinois nature preserve buffer. The proposed buffer lies within the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division of Illinois and is adjacent to the Brewster Creek Marsh Nature Preserve (BCMNP) and part of the Pratt’s Wayne Woods Forest Preserve, owned and managed by the FPDDC. Dedicated in 2013, the BCMNP consists of 190.6 acres of nature preserve and 66.2 acres of nature preserve buffer. The proposed buffer addition was acquired by the FPDDC in 2020 and contains approximately 910 linear feet of Brewster Creek, associated floodplain, second-growth woodland, and old field.

BCMNP is currently 256.8 acres (nature preserve and buffer). With approval of this buffer addition (8.9 acres), the nature preserve will increase to 265.7 acres. BCMNP was established to protect unique habitats that support wetland and grassland birds, as well State-listed plant and animal species. Management objectives are to maintain suitable habitat structure for these species and improve native species richness and quality of the natural communities within the preserve.

REPORT Scott Meister Forest Preserve District of DuPage County	ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED Preliminary Approval for Dedication
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Item 11:* Jo Daviess Co. – Rutherford Refuge at Twin Bridges Nature Preserve, Preliminary Dedication

Rutherford Refuge at Twin Bridges is located on the eastern edge of the Wisconsin Driftless Natural Division of Illinois in northwestern Jo Daviess County, approximately 2 miles north-northeast of Apple River Canyon State Park/Nature Preserve/Land and Water Reserve. The site consists of 21.86 acres of proposed nature preserve and 2.18 acres of proposed nature

preserve buffer. It has been recognized by the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory as a Category I for Best-of-Kind Grade C sedge meadow and wet-mesic prairie communities (Rutherford Wetland INAI#1970). Rutherford Refuge contains habitat supporting at least 13 Species of Greatest Conservation Need as defined by the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan (IWAP). Protection and management of the site will serve to help fulfill goals within the Wetlands, Streams, Forest and Woodlands, and Farmland and Prairie IWAP campaigns.

REPORT Angella Moorehouse Nature Preserves Commission	ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED Preliminary Approval for Dedication
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Item 12:* Lake Co. – Chandler Buffer Addition to Skokie River Nature Preserve, Preliminary Dedication

Lake Forest Open Lands Association (LFOLA) proposes to dedicate approximately 1.5 acres as the Chandler Buffer Addition to the Skokie River Nature Preserve. The proposed buffer addition, located in the Morainal Section of the Northern Morainal Natural Division of Illinois, will increase the size of the Skokie River Nature Preserve to 140.31 acres.

Skokie River Nature Preserve encompasses a mosaic of wetlands, mesic prairies, and dry-mesic forest within the Skokie River Valley in Lake County, Illinois. The Skokie River Nature Preserve is 138.8 acres in size and includes the McLaughlin Prairie and Shaw Prairie, two high-quality mesic prairies. Each of these prairie relicts are recognized on the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI) for Grade A and Grade B mesic prairies. With a boundary update approved in 2002, the INAI now recognizes both prairies as the Skokie River INAI site (INAI#0658).

The Skokie River Nature Preserve consists of land originally dedicated by The Nature Conservancy and subsequently conveyed to LFOLA, other lands owned by LFOLA, and six privately owned parcels of land dedicated as buffer additions. It is an outstanding example of land protection within the urban landscape via citizen driven conservation. INPC staff recommends preliminary approval for dedication.

REPORT Ryan London Lake Forest Open Lands Association	ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED Preliminary Approval for Dedication
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Item 13:* Lee Co. – Gremel Wildlife Sanctuary Nature Preserve, Preliminary Dedication

The Illinois Audubon Society (IAS) proposes to permanently protect 392.4 acres as the Gremel Wildlife Sanctuary Nature Preserve. This preserve, located in the Green River Lowland Section of the Grand Prairie Natural Division of Illinois, will include 19.1-acres of dedicated nature preserve and 373.3-acres of dedicated nature preserve buffer. The proposed nature preserve includes the Augustana Sedge Meadow, Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI) site (#1828). This natural community was added to the INAI in 2012 as a Category I site for presence of a 1-acre, Grade B sedge meadow. The entire INAI site is 6.56 acres. The

larger property surrounding the INAI site has significant ecological value, providing habitat for a wide variety of native plants and animals and offers opportunities for restoration of natural communities that were once widespread in the Green River Lowlands, but are rare today.

The site is located in what was once the largest prairie grove in Lee County. The eolian sand dunes, combined with glacial outwash deposits and basins that formed near the base of the Bloomington Moraine, made this landscape uniquely suited to the growth of trees in what was once a seemingly endless expanse of open prairie in the early 1800s. These same characteristics spared the site from the ravages of the plow that erased from existence the original prairies and “great swamps” of Lee County. Today, relicts of this former timbered grove remain at the proposed Gremel Wildlife Sanctuary Nature Preserve. As restoration efforts unfold across the site, these natural communities will improve in structure and composition. The IAS and its volunteers are managing this site for the benefit all native species of plants and animals and for the benefit of the public who are welcome to visit the site and enjoy its beauty and tranquility.

This nature preserve is named in honor of the late Russ Gremel, who championed and generously funded the purchase of this unique natural area. Russ Gremel’s goal was to provide a sanctuary where young people could learn firsthand about native birds, and nature in general. At age 98, he attended, and was the featured speaker, for the IAS dedication of Gremel Wildlife Sanctuary.

<p>REPORT Kaleb Baker And Debra Carey Illinois Audubon Society</p>	<p>ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED Preliminary Approval for Dedication</p>
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Item 14:* McHenry Co. – Buffer Addition to Boloria Fen and Sedge Meadow Nature Preserve, Preliminary Dedication

The Land Conservancy of McHenry County (LCMC) seeks formal dedication of approximately 4.25 acres as a buffer addition to Boloria Fen and Sedge Meadow Nature Preserve, located in the Morainal Section of the Northern Morainal Natural Division of Illinois. The original nature preserve, dedicated in 2005, is 36.4 acres in size and is now owned by the LCMC. In 2006, 6.4 acres were dedicated as buffer by the McAndrews Glen Homeowners Association and in 2010, another 1.5 acres was dedicated as buffer by a private landowner. If approved, this dedication will increase the amount of protected land at Boloria Fen and Sedge Meadow Nature Preserve from 44.3 acres to 48.55 acres. The proposed buffer addition is located along the southern boundary of the existing preserve. This buffer area includes a portion of relict sedge meadow that is contiguous with the high-quality sedge meadow found within the existing preserve. The buffer addition also includes part of an artificial spring-fed pond and a drainage feature (cover picture, proposal document) that conveys water away from the preserve to the south through its historic drainage outlet. The buffer addition also includes upland dry-mesic oak woodland. Dedication of the proposed buffer addition will help protect the high-quality fen and sedge meadow found within the existing preserve and will allow for better land management and restoration activities within

this preserve and prevent future development. This buffer addition also expands the visitor trail system.

Boloria Meadows was named in recognition of an abundance of silver-bordered fritillary (*Boloria selene*) butterflies observed inhabiting the fen and sedge meadow in the spring of 2003. The LCMC is a 501 c3 not-for-profit conservation land trust in McHenry County that owns and manages three dedicated nature preserves: Yonder Prairie, Irish Oaks, and Boloria Fen and Sedge Meadow.

<p>REPORT John C. Nelson Nature Preserves Commission</p>	<p>ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED Preliminary Approval for Dedication</p>
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Item 15:* Lee and Ogle Cos. – Addition to Nachusa Grasslands Nature Preserve, Final Dedication

The Nature Conservancy seeks final approval for dedication of 124.49 acres as a nature preserve addition to the existing 987.76-acre Nachusa Grasslands Nature Preserve. The nature preserve is located in the Oregon Section of the Rock River Hill Country Natural Division of Illinois and was first dedicated in January 2013. Upon approval of this proposed addition, the total area of the nature preserve will increase to 1,112.25 acres. The Nachusa Grasslands Nature Preserve and proposed addition represent a “core area” of a much larger functionally restored prairie ecosystem that is managed by the Illinois Chapter of The Nature Conservancy and its volunteers. This larger area currently encompasses 4,000 acres of restored prairies, oak savannas, woodlands, and wetlands. Together, these lands represent one of the largest prairie landscapes in Illinois. The land proposed as nature preserve addition herein is located within the Nachusa Grasslands Illinois Natural Areas Inventory site (INAI #0685) which encompasses over 5000 acres of natural communities and agricultural lands. This INAI site is recognized for its numerous high-quality relict natural communities, extensive grassland habitat, and suitable habitat for several State-listed plants and animals. The site is especially important habitat for numerous grassland dependent bird species, which are in severe decline throughout much of Illinois and beyond. The existing nature preserve and proposed addition contain a rich diversity of plant species found in several restored high-quality relict natural communities and also within outstanding examples of re-created prairies. The preserve owes much of its restoration success to the many volunteer stewards who donate thousands of hours of personal time every year to help manage and restore this impressive native prairie landscape.

The original dedication of the Nachusa Grasslands Nature Preserve was unique for the Illinois Nature Preserves System as it represented the first time bison grazing was approved as part of a nature preserve dedication. The land proposed herein as nature preserve addition will likewise be available to the Nachusa bison herd.

Preliminary approval for dedication was granted at INPC’s 238th meeting (Resolution 2525). Illinois Nature Preserves Commission staff recommends final approval for dedication of this addition to the Nachusa Grasslands Nature Preserve.

REPORT Bill Kleiman The Nature Conservancy, Illinois Chapter	ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED Final Approval for Dedication
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Item 16:* McHenry Co. – John C. Wilson Woods Addition to Elizabeth Lake Nature Preserve, Final Dedication

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) seeks final approval for dedication of the 52.5-acre John C. Wilson Woods Addition to Elizabeth Lake Nature Preserve located within the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division of Illinois. The existing 213-acre nature preserve is owned and managed by the McHenry County Conservation District (MCCD). The proposed addition contains 16 acres of Elizabeth Lake INAI#1014; and provides protection to Grade C dry-mesic savanna and wetland communities on site, as well as provides buffer to adjacent protected wetlands. The Elizabeth Lake INAI site is recognized as Category I due to its large, diverse, high-quality wetland, pond, and lake natural communities; and Category II due to the presence of State-listed species. The MCCD will perform management and restoration activities for the addition under an INPC-approved management plan and Memorandum of Understanding between landowners. The proposed addition lies within the contribution area for the Elizabeth Lake Nature Preserve’s Class III Special Resource Groundwater Area. If approved, this addition to Elizabeth Lake Nature Preserve will bring the total acreage of protected land at this site to 265.5 acres. Preliminary approval for dedication was granted at the INPC’s 238th meeting (Resolution 2526).

REPORT Melissa Grycan Department of Natural Resources	ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED Final Approval for Dedication
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Item 17:* Hancock Co. – Fiber Optic Cable Installation Project at Cedar Glen Nature Preserve Buffer

Western Illinois University (WIU) and MTC Communications are requesting approval to install a fiber optic cable through the Cedar Glen Nature Preserve Buffer (NPB), owned by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR). The purpose is to provide WIU’s Alice L. Kibbe Life Science Station with broadband internet and voice services to aid in their research, which includes a focus on conservation and natural resource management. Illinois Nature Preserves Commission (INPC) staff have been working with IDNR staff, WIU, and MTC Communications to review options and determine a preferred route. The recommended route is located along an approximate 12-foot wide existing trail within the NPB, that is mowed and maintained. The installation can be completed without impacting the natural community or state-endangered Virginia bunchflower located in the NPB. In 2004, the Commission approved installation of a waterline to the Science Station along the same trail route. The fiber optic line will be plowed in at a depth of four feet and the work will all be contained within the 12-foot trail. The starting and finishing holes for the plow will be constructed outside the NPB boundaries, which will eliminate any unnecessary soil disturbance, and with a continuous inner duct through the entire property, any future replacement of the cable can be done with no additional disturbance to the NPB. If approved, IDNR will enter into a License Agreement with MTC Communications to allow for the fiber optic cable installation. INPC and IDNR staff are supportive of this project.

REPORT Clint Wisslead MTC Communications Angella Moorehouse and Valerie Njapa Nature Preserves Commission	ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED Approval for Fiber Optic Cable Installation
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Item 18:* Monroe Co. – Storment Hauss Nature Preserve, Request for New Trailhead Parking Area

Clifftop NFP, the owner of the 84.5-acre Storment Hauss Nature Preserve, seeks approval from the INPC to construct a 5-6 vehicle, gravel public parking lot for accessing a new, primitive trail system in the preserve. The Storment Hauss Nature Preserve includes all of the Storment Hauss Woods Illinois Natural Areas Inventory site (INAI #1617), with the original 64.5 acres dedicated in March 2002, and the 20-acre addition dedicated in October 2020. The site is listed on the INAI as a Category I for high-quality upland forest and Category VI for the presence of snake hibernacula.

In October 2020, Clifftop acquired the preserve from the estate of the late David Storment. The majority of the funds used to purchase the property came from the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation, which requires some public access to the site. Placement of a parking area within the preserve is the safest alternative to allow for public access to the site and fulfill funding requirements.

The site selected for the parking lot is located in the southwest corner of the preserve adjacent to Reed Road in an area previously impacted by David Storment. Reed is the only public road adjacent to the nature preserve. Parking vehicles along this narrow road is not a safe or secure alternative. The roadway is 16 feet wide (which includes ditches and narrow shoulders - when present) and hilly, with limited sight distance. Mr. Storment had a gated vehicle access area and small primitive cabin, which has since deteriorated and been removed. The parking area will be located between Reed Road and the old cabin site, which will serve as the trailhead with a kiosk (repurposing the concrete foundation of the old cabin). The project will require the removal of 10 trees, all less than 6” diameter (6 oak, 3 hickory, 1 basswood), and several eastern red cedar. No large trees will need to be removed. No rare plants or animals will be impacted in this area.

REPORT Jim Hill, Bob Weck Clifftop NFP Kelly Neal and Debbie S. Newman Nature Preserves Commission	ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED Approval for Proposed Parking Lot
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Item 19: Election of INPC Officers

REPORT Dr. Dave Thomas Nature Preserves Commission	ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED Election of Officers
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Item 20: Election of INPC Advisors and Consultants

REPORT Dr. Dave Thomas Nature Preserves Commission	ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED Election of Advisors and Consultants
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Item 21: Review of Closed Meeting Minutes

In accordance with the Open Meetings Act, Commissioners must review closed minutes at least twice a year to determine if they must remain closed. The following meetings had closed minutes and need to be reviewed: August 2, 2005; May 2, 2006; May 6, 2008; May 5, 2009; May 7, 2013; September 10, 2013; and September 10, 2019.

REPORT Valerie Njapa Nature Preserves Commission	ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED Determination if closed minutes remain closed
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Item 22: Public Comment Period (3 minutes per person)

Item 23: Other Business

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

- Informational update on the legal enforcement process when violations occur to sites in the Illinois Nature Preserves System.

Item 24: Adjournment