

**ILLINOIS NATURE PRESERVES COMMISSION AGENDA
TWO HUNDRED FIFTIETH MEETING**

Vermilion County Conservation District
22296-A Henning Road
Danville, IL 61834

May 13, 2025, 10:00 a.m.

In-person meeting with WebEx option

*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 Special Meeting held on January 27, 2025 and for the 249th Meeting on January 28, 2025

Note: Share Accomplishments Summary of the 249th INPC Meeting

At the 249th Meeting of the INPC, held on January 28, 2025, at the Illinois Department of Natural Resources in Springfield, Illinois, legal protection was completed by the Commission for eight tracts of land totaling 413 acres. Four of these tracts are privately owned, one is publicly owned, and three are owned by not-for-profit organizations. The owners of the private sites donated the value of the protection agreements to the public. Four sites with five tracts were protected as Land and Water Reserves: Additions to Allendale Spring, Barefoot Ridge, Lexington, and Addition to Cedar-Draper's Bluff. Three sites were dedicated as Nature Preserves: Buffer Addition to Allendale Spring, Fountain Bluff, and Casper Bluff Nature Preserve and Nature Preserve Buffer.

There are now 422 dedicated nature preserves with 64,117 acres and 215 registered land and water reserves with 59,960 acres. Altogether, there are 637 sites totaling 124,077 acres protected in the Illinois Nature Preserves System.

Item 4: Next Meeting Date and Location

251	September 9, 2025	Byron Forest Preserve 7993 N River Rd Byron, IL 61010
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Item 5:* INPC Staff Report

REPORT

Todd Strole, Assistant Director

Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Item 6:* IDNR Staff Report

REPORT
Ann Marie Holtrop, Chief
Division of Natural Heritage

Item 7:* Endangered Species Protection Board Report

REPORT
Joyce Hofmann
Endangered Species Protection Board

Item 8:* Friends of Illinois Nature Preserves Report

REPORT
Amy Doll, Director
Friends of Illinois Nature Preserves

Item 9:* Coles County – Addition to Warbler Bottoms North Land and Water Reserve, Registration

Warbler Bottoms North is a 232-acre natural area in Coles County that is owned and managed by Grand Prairie Friends. Grand Prairie Friends wishes to register 21.4 acres, more or less, as an addition to Warbler Bottoms North Land and Water Reserve (LWR). Warbler Bottoms North and the addition lie within the Grand Prairie Section of the Grand Prairie Natural Division in East Central Illinois. The LWR is situated in a forested corridor that extends for several miles along the Embarras River, from north of Lake Charleston to south of Fox Ridge State Park. Warbler Bottoms North protects and buffers about 8450 feet (1.6 miles) of the Embarras River and associated forest habitat. The LWR is found within the Warbler Woods Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI) site (#1585). Warbler Woods INAI includes Category I, II and III features for Grade B dry-mesic upland forest, occurrence of the state-threatened smooth softshell turtle (*Apalone mutica*), and containing one nature preserve and five land and water reserves, respectively. Protections for the Embarras River would be extended and enhanced through registration of the addition. The Embarras River is known as a biologically significant stream by the INAI (#0950), providing habitat for several threatened or endangered species of fish and reptiles in addition to diverse concentrations of freshwater mussels. State and/or federally listed aquatic species include, but are not limited to, eastern sand darter (*Ammocrypta pellucidum*), smooth softshell turtle (*Apalone mutica*) and the mussels monkeyface (*Quadrula metanevra*) and snuffbox (*Epioblasma triquetra*). Both INAI sites provide habitat for several wildlife Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN).

Grand Prairie Friends seeks registration in perpetuity of the 21.4-acre addition. Registration of this site will protect numerous natural resources and benefit current and future visitors, researchers, and residents of Coles County by preserving the unique natural heritage of East Central Illinois.

Grand Prairie Friends reserves the following rights: In consultation with and approval by INPC staff, create a multi-modal trail that connects with other, nearby Grand Prairie

Friends properties. The trail may accommodate hikers, bikers and ATV/UTV access (for management or emergency response purposes only). The total footprint will be no more than 15-20 feet wide and may comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The trail route will avoid impacts to high quality resources, steep slopes, highly erodible soils and any threatened or endangered species that currently occurs or may be discovered in the future.

REPORT

John Griesbaum
Illinois Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Approval for Registration

Item 10:* Kankakee County – Okàn Savanna Land and Water Reserve, Registration

Okàn Savanna is an approximately 60-acre natural area owned by the Community Development Corporation of Pembroke-Hopkins Park and The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Illinois Chapter, located in southeastern Kankakee County. The site is representative of the Kankakee Sand Area Section of the Grand Prairie Natural Division of Illinois. While the site is not currently on the INAI, its dry to dry-mesic sand savanna could be considered Grade B in quality and is a good candidate for inclusion on the INAI as a Category I site. Other natural communities present include mesic sand prairie and old field communities. The proposed Okàn Savanna Land and Water Reserve is one of the many natural areas in the Kankakee Sands contributing to the ecological significance of Pembroke Township, which supports the largest concentration of high-quality sand savannas in the Midwest. The site adjoins other natural lands in private ownership and lies approximately 0.25 miles west of Sweet Fern Savanna LWR. Okàn Savanna provides habitat for a state-threatened reptile, regal fritillary butterfly (*Speyeria idalia*), and the state-endangered highbush blueberry (*Vaccinium corymbosum*). Okàn Savanna also provides habitat for many wildlife SGCN. Uses of the proposed land and water reserve must be compatible with the site's long-term conservation, and include the creation of a foot trail, hiking, nature observation, scientific study, archery hunting, collection of wild edibles and medicinal plants for personal use, removal of undesirable trees for firewood, and horses on approved trails. Okàn Savanna will be managed to sustain and improve its savanna and prairie natural communities, and the habitats of rare and endangered species which occur on site and in the area.

INPC Staff recommend permanent protection of 40 acres, more or less, of the proposed Okàn Savanna Land and Water Reserve owned by the Community Development Corporation of Pembroke-Hopkins Park.

REPORT

Kim Roman
Illinois Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Approval for Registration

INPC Staff recommend permanent protection of approximately 20 acres of the proposed Okàn Savanna Land and Water Reserve owned by The Nature Conservancy, Illinois Chapter.

REPORT

Kim Roman
Illinois Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Approval for Registration

Item 11:* Cook County – Additions and Buffer Additions to Gensburg-Markham Prairie Nature Preserve, Preliminary Dedication

Gensburg-Markham Prairie Nature Preserve (NP) is located in Markham, Illinois and is owned by Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU) and The Nature Conservancy, Illinois Chapter. The site supports a mosaic of high-quality prairie and wetland communities representative of the Chicago Lake Plain Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division of Illinois. The prairie was subdivided into more than 1000 small residential parcels but was never developed. The original 95-acre nature preserve was dedicated in 1980, and the site has since grown to 181.7 acres in size with 14 subsequent nature preserve and buffer additions as new parcels were acquired over the decades. Gensburg-Markham Prairie is recognized on the INAI (#0400) for Category I Grade A and B dry-mesic sand prairie, mesic sand prairie, wet-mesic prairie, and mesic prairie, and Grade B sedge meadow. It is the largest and highest quality prairie of the five sites which comprise the Indian Boundary Prairies in the Markham area. Gensburg-Markham Prairie was designated in 1987 as a National Natural Landmark by the National Park Service as the “largest and highest quality prairie in Illinois and large parts of adjacent states”. The proposed dedicated acreage for both landowners combined is 9.74 acres of nature preserve additions, and 8.0 acres of nature preserve buffer additions, totaling 17.74 acres. Collectively, these proposed additions include portions of INAI communities and help complete good preserve design for Gensburg-Markham Prairie Nature Preserve.

Northeastern Illinois University proposes to dedicate 5.58 acres as nature preserve addition and 5.43 acres as dedicated nature preserve buffer addition. NEIU’s acreage is parceled into small residential lots and vacated road rights-of-way within the preserve.

REPORT

Kim Roman
Illinois Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Preliminary Approval for Dedication

The Nature Conservancy proposes to dedicate 4.16 acres as nature preserve addition and 2.57 acres as nature preserve buffer addition. These proposed additions are similarly parceled into small residential lots throughout the site and vacated street and alley rights-of-way.

REPORT

Kim Roman
Illinois Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Preliminary Approval for Dedication

Item 12:* Kankakee County – Addition to Carl N. Becker Savanna Nature Preserve, Preliminary Dedication

Carl N. Becker Savanna Nature Preserve is owned and jointly managed by TNC, Illinois Chapter, and IDNR. The site is located in the Kankakee Sand Area Section of the Grand Prairie Natural Division. It was originally dedicated in 2009, with subsequent additions dedicated in 2010 and 2012. The proposed 2025 addition is approximately 60 acres in size and owned by TNC. The previously dedicated acres owned by TNC and IDNR include the Leesville Savanna INAI site (#0638), with Category I and II features for high-quality sand savanna communities and for providing habitat for 16 state-endangered or threatened species. The proposed 60-acre addition is partially included on the INAI, and it also includes habitat for two state-endangered plant species, and two

state-threatened animal species, all of which have been recently observed on site. The proposed nature preserve addition provides habitat for numerous other wildlife SGCN, buffers high-quality INAI savanna communities, and contributes to good, defendable preserve design for the Carl N. Becker Savanna Nature Preserve. All uses and management activities are consistent with the Rules for Management and Public Use of Illinois Nature Preserves. The proposed 60-acre addition will increase the total acreage of this nature preserve to 215 acres; protect a portion of the Leesville Savanna INAI site and habitat for rare, threatened, and endangered species; contribute to good preserve design of this site; and promote contiguity of natural habitat on this important landscape.

REPORT

Kim Roman
Illinois Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Preliminary Approval for Dedication

Item 13:* McHenry County – Addition and Buffer Addition to Barber Fen Nature Preserve as part of the Barber Farm and Fen Protection Plan, Preliminary Dedication

The objective of the Barber Farm and Fen Protection Plan is to preserve the natural and agricultural heritage of the Aavang family property and encourage effective stewardship of the land in perpetuity. This objective will be accomplished by dedicating additional lands into the existing Barber Fen Nature Preserve administered by the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission and by enrolling agricultural lands into a farmland preservation easement program administered by The Land Conservancy of McHenry County (TLC). The existing Barber Fen Nature Preserve was established in 1990 with the dedication of 17.2 acres by Rodney and Libbie Aavang. In 2013, the McHenry County Conservation District (MCCD) dedicated 49.2-acres as nature preserve addition and another 19.6 acres as a buffer addition to Barber Fen. These dedications provide legal protection to the existing 86-acre Barber Fen Nature Preserve, which includes portions of the Category I and II Barber Fen INAI site (#1267), with high quality sedge meadow and graminoid fen communities and the presence of two state-endangered plants; as well as a segment of the the Nippersink Creek INAI site (#1506). The nature preserve is located in the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division. The farm has long been known locally as the Spring Hill Farm which was established in 1849. Protecting the agricultural heritage of this landscape is of equal importance to the protection of its natural features. Together, these land protection strategies favor the natural features within the nature preserve which are dependent upon the groundwater resource of the area for their survival. Farmland preservation will prohibit land development and help protect the groundwater recharge system that sustains the natural communities found within the nature preserve.

The Aavang Family proposes to dedicate 4.9 acres as nature preserve addition and 24.4 acres as nature preserve buffer addition. With final approval, the resulting acreage protected as nature preserve by the Aavangs will be 46.5 and the total acreage of land under agricultural preservation will be 76.8. The combined land protected under this plan by the Aavang family will be 123.3 acres. The MCCD currently owns and manages 68.8 acres at Barber Fen Nature Preserve, which brings the total land protection at this site to 192.1 acres.

REPORT

John C. Nelson
Illinois Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Preliminary Approval for Dedication

Item 14:* Peoria County – Addition to Forest Park South Nature Preserve, Preliminary Dedication

The Pleasure Driveway and Park District of Peoria (Peoria Park District; PPD) requests preliminary approval to dedicate 13.6 acres, surrounded on three sides by nature preserve, as an addition to Forest Park South Nature Preserve. The tract was acquired by PPD in late 2023 for the purpose of protecting a key inholding within the current preserve. Forest Park South was dedicated in 1988 to preserve a large, forested block containing 90 acres of Grade B mesic upland forest located in the Illinois River Section of the Illinois River and Mississippi River Sand Areas Natural Division. Although the addition is not currently included in the 660-acre Forest Park INAI site (#0207), the condition of the forest community is much the same as the surrounding preserve and was likely omitted due to private ownership rather than biological quality. Dedication of the addition will increase the size of Forest Park South Nature Preserve to 148.22 acres and, with Forest Park Nature Preserve (368.8 acres), situated immediately to the north, will provide over 517 acres of contiguous forest habitat. Management objectives for the addition will be the same as for the current nature preserve: to promote public awareness, appreciation and understanding of the natural world; to protect the natural environment and scenic beauty of Central Illinois; and to maintain the stability of the watershed.

REPORT

Angella Moorehouse
Illinois Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Preliminary Approval for Dedication

Item 15:* Rock Island County – Indian Bluff Hill Prairie Nature Preserve, Preliminary Dedication

The Rock Island County Forest Preserve District (RICFPD) seeks approval for the dedication of 1.48-acres as Nature Preserve and 2.78-acres as nature preserve buffer, totaling 4.26 acres, on the property known as Indian Bluff Hill Prairie. The site is in Rock Island County within the Indian Bluff Golf Course property which is currently owned and managed by RICFPD. The area lies within the Mississippi River Section of the Upper Mississippi River and Illinois River Bottomlands Natural Division. Because of its ecological significance, the site was added to the INAI (#0139) in 1977 as Category I for having 0.8 acres of Grade A (very high-quality) loess hill prairie and as Category II for supporting a healthy population of the downy painted cup (*Castilleja sessiliflora*), a state-endangered plant. Sixty-seven quality loess hill prairies remain in the state of Illinois with only 30 of those in permanent protection. Loess hill prairies such as Indian Bluff Hill Prairie are limited to the Mississippi River and Illinois River Bluffs and host an assemblage of plants that thrive on deep loess. Forested acreage to the east of this hill prairie, categorized as dry-mesic upland forest, is included in the proposal as nature preserve buffer. The site is accessible to the public via a gravel loop drive and a mowed path on the top end of the hill prairie.

Within the proposed Indian Bluff Hill Prairie Nature Preserve and Nature Preserve Buffer, RICFPD requests to reserve the following rights:

1. Maintain the gravel loop driveway,
2. Continue to use the gravel loop driveway for access and overflow parking,

3. Continue to maintain the mowed areas around the gravel loop driveway, along the ridge above the hill prairie, and to the utility box north of the gravel loop driveway,
4. Maintain the 60' x 102' gravel pad to use for parking/staging equipment, and
5. Restore the gravel pad (remove dumped gravel/material, regrade, and vegetate with INPC-approved species) as resources are available.

Staff of the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission recommend preliminary dedication of 1.48 acres of nature preserve and 2.78 acres of nature preserve buffer as the Indian Bluff Hill Prairie Nature Preserve.

REPORT

Lorraine Foelske
Illinois Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Preliminary Approval for Dedication

Item 16:* Cook County – Addition and Buffer Addition to Busse Forest Nature Preserve, Final Dedication

Preliminary approval was granted for this proposed nature preserve expansion at the 249th meeting of the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission. The Forest Preserves of Cook County (FPCC) now requests final approval to expand their existing 454-acre Busse Forest Nature Preserve (BFNP) by dedicating 493 acres as nature preserve addition and 274 acres as nature preserve buffer addition. This will expand Busse Forest Nature Preserve to 1,221 acres. Busse Forest Nature Preserve and the proposed additions are part of a 3,542-acre block of land owned by the FPCC along Salt Creek in northern Cook County located within the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division. BFNP was added to the INAI (#0534) in 1978 as a Category I site for having Grade A and B northern flatwoods surrounded by high quality mesic upland forest, dry-mesic woodland and shrub swamp as well as former agricultural lands; and as a Category II site for state-listed plant species. Listed plants known from BFNP include Tuckerman's sedge (*Carex tuckermanii*), downy false Solomon's seal (*Polygonatum pubescens*), purple-fringed orchid (*Platanthera psychodes*), dwarf raspberry (*Rubus pubescens*), and marsh speedwell (*Veronica scutellata*). BFNP was dedicated as the third nature preserve in 1965 along with 10 other FPCC sites. These FPCC nature preserve dedications represent the beginning of the Illinois Nature Preserve System in Illinois, with the passage of the Illinois Natural Areas Preservation Act occurring less than two years prior in 1963. Today, the Illinois Nature Preserve System consists of over 420 nature preserves covering more than 64,000 acres. With approval of these additions, Busse Forest Nature Preserve will be the 7th largest nature preserve in the Illinois Nature Preserve System.

REPORT

John C. Nelson
Illinois Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Final Approval for Dedication

Item 17:* Jersey County – Chautauqua Prairie Nature Preserve, Final Dedication

The proposed Chautauqua Prairie Nature Preserve is a 42.89-acre site comprised of two parcels located in the bluff corridor between Chautauqua and Grafton, in Jersey County in the Glaciated Section of the Middle Mississippi River Border Natural Division. The property contains nearly all the remaining unprotected portion of the former 109-acre Chautauqua Prairie INAI site (#0964), now currently known as the Principia Hill Prairies

West-Chautauqua INAI site for Category I Grade A, B, and C loess hill prairie, and as Category II for a state-listed reptile. At least three other known state-listed species occur at the site. The proposed nature preserve contains approximately two acres of Grade A and B loess hill prairie, and 40 acres of dry and dry-mesic upland forest connected to a much larger block of several hundred acres of mature forest. The site also contains Grade A limestone cliff community that includes Outstanding Exposures of the Fern Glen Formation limestone. The two parcels comprising the proposed nature preserve lie adjacent to the 430-acre Palisades Nature Preserve and other sites protected with conservation easements. The properties are owned by the Great Rivers Land Trust (GRLT), who has actively worked to protect the entire Chautauqua Prairie INAI site and negotiated the purchase of the Palisades site for preservation. The GRLT also holds a conservation easement on the proposed nature preserve. The preservation of this site accomplishes important conservation goals for the area. With a large complex of protected lands in the area, the Chautauqua Prairie parcel is a key piece in the efforts by GRLT, INPC and partners to preserve the ecologically important Mississippi River bluff corridor along Route 100. Preliminary approval was granted for Chautauqua Prairie Nature Preserve at the 249th meeting of the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission.

REPORT

Debbie S. Newman
Illinois Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Final Approval for Dedication

Item 18:* Lake County – Addition and Buffer Addition to North Dunes Nature Preserve, Final Dedication

IDNR seeks final approval for dedication of a 91.4-acre addition and 138.6-acre buffer addition to North Dunes Nature Preserve, 230 acres in total. The existing 816-acre nature preserve is owned and managed by IDNR. The proposed additions are located within the Lake Michigan Dunes Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division and is part of Illinois Dunes North INAI site (#1066). These additions will provide protection to 14 INAI Category I high-quality Grades A and B natural communities, including beach, foredune, panne, mesic prairie, wet prairie, dry-mesic sand savanna, sedge meadow, freshwater marsh, graminoid fen, Great Lake, and dry-mesic, mesic, wet-mesic, and wet sand prairie. The Lake Michigan Panne natural community is globally rare and has rare plant assemblages. The INAI is also designated as Category II due to the presence of numerous federally and state-listed species. Twelve state-listed species, one of which is also federally listed, have been recorded from within the boundaries of the proposed additions. Protection of this area will strengthen the resiliency of the existing nature preserve and the multitudes of additional rare species found there. The area is recognized as part of a Conservation Opportunity Area by the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan, is a critical region of the Lake Plain Coastal Restoration Partnership, contains wetlands recognized to be of International Importance by the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, and is recognized in the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency's Kellogg/Dead Dog Creek Watershed Plan, the Upper Mississippi/Great Lakes Water Bird Conservation Plan, and the Chicago Wilderness Biodiversity Recovery Plan. The proposed additions will contribute significantly to national and regional biodiversity, preserve coastal wetland ecosystems, and provide critical habitat for declining plant and animal species. It also serves as a critical avian, mammalian (e.g., bats), and invertebrate (butterflies, dragonflies) migration corridor. Reserved rights include the right to maintain existing trails, allow pets in accordance with the park's pet policy, manage deer, wildlife

diseases, and nuisance wildlife, and perform hydrological maintenance, restoration, or alteration. If approved, these additions to North Dunes Nature Preserve will bring the total acreage of protected land at this site to 1046 acres. Preliminary approval was granted for these proposed additions at the 249th meeting of the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission.

REPORT

John C. Nelson
Illinois Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Final Approval for Dedication

Item 19:* Pope County – Addition and Buffer Addition to Spivey’s Valley Glade Nature Preserve, Final Dedication

The Spivey family seeks final approval for the dedication of 18 acres of nature preserve and 68.2 acres of nature preserve buffer, totaling 86.2 acres, as the Addition and Buffer Addition to Spivey’s Valley Glade Nature Preserve in northeastern Pope County, Illinois. The site is in the Lesser Shawnee Hills Section of the Shawnee Hills Natural Division of Illinois. Spivey’s Valley Glade Nature Preserve received final approval for dedication as an Illinois nature preserve at the 157th INPC meeting in 1998. The proposed nature preserve additions comprise 6.7 acres of Grade B dry-woodland and 11.3 acres of Grade A and B dry-mesic woodland. This protects the entirety of the Category I acreage in the Spivey Valley Glade INAI site (#1526, Categories I, II, and III). The nature preserve buffer addition includes 4.5 acres of Grade C dry-woodland and 63.7 acres of old field communities of varying successional stages and quality. Collectively, this acreage buffers the Category I features. Thirty-three of these acres are comprised of pasture largely dominated by native forbs and grasses. The remaining old field acreage was planted with young oaks 25 years ago. The proposed preserve additions coupled with the existing nature preserve will protect 101.2 acres of natural lands in perpetuity. The preserve resides within the East Shawnee Conservation Opportunity Area.

Dedication of the proposed nature preserve and nature preserve buffer additions should be considered for the following qualifying features and/or reasons:

1. Permanent protection of 18 acres of Category I high-quality natural communities within INAI #1526 including Grade B dry-woodland and Grade A and B dry-mesic woodland;
2. Verified extant populations of two state-threatened species: Chuck-wills-widow (*Antrostomus carolinensis*) and Eastern narrow-mouthed toad (*Gastrophryne carolinensis*);
3. Historic populations of three listed species: state-endangered loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*), Bewick’s wren (*Thryomanes bewickii*) and federally threatened and state-endangered Northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*);
4. Provides 86.2 additional acres of habitat for 37 SGCN including gray bat (*Myotis grisescens*) and 28 avian species that are confirmed as breeding on or proximate to the preserve; and
5. Supports various Illinois Wildlife Action Plan campaigns.

Within the proposed nature preserve addition, the landowner reserves the right to:

1. Manage white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*; INPC 2005) per the most recent Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) wildlife regulations, and

2. Remove downed-woody debris (e.g., cedar slash) off the preserve from glade and woodland communities and to decrease fuel loads prior to prescribed burning.

Within the proposed nature preserve buffer addition, the landowner reserves the right to:

1. Maintain mowed paths north of the NP, and around the two ponds,
2. Maintain an existing mowed primitive camping location,
3. Construct an up to four-car parking area at a pre-determined location to ensure access to the site in the future,
4. Allow an elderly horse to lightly graze a 10-acre section of pasture within the old field community until it passes away,
5. Manage the old field communities as grassland or early successional habitat, or allow to succeed into woodland,
6. Construct vernal wetlands in the old field communities,
7. Manage white-tailed deer per the most recent IDNR wildlife regulations, and
8. Remove downed-woody debris (e.g., cedar slash) off the preserve from woodland communities and to decrease fuel loads prior to prescribed burning.

Preliminary approval for these additions was granted at the 248th Meeting of the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission.

REPORT

Kevin Sierzega
Illinois Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Final Approval for Dedication

Item 20:* Illinois Nature Preserves Commission Consultant Appointment Guidance and Process

At the 248th INPC Meeting, the Consultant Elections were put on hold for the sake of clarifying the Consultant role, qualifications, and selection process. A Special Meeting was held on January 27, 2025, to focus on this, and topics discussed in detail included areas of expertise, expectations, qualifications, general guidance, and process. At the 249th INPC Meeting on January 28, 2025, a slate of Consultants was nominated and elected to serve until September 2025. The discussion from the Special Meeting resulted in the development of the document titled, *Illinois Nature Preserves Commission Consultant Appointment Guidance and Process*. With approval of this document at the 250th INPC Meeting, the new process will be implemented for Consultant Appointments beginning with the 251st INPC Meeting on September 9, 2025.

REPORT

Todd Strole
Illinois Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Approval of Consultant Appointment
Guidance and Process Document

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

Todd Strole
Illinois Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Determination if closed minutes
should remain closed

Item 22: Public Comment Period (3 minutes per person)

Item 23: Other Business

Item 24: Adjournment