

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

Crystal Lake Park District
Rotary Building
431 N. Walkup Ave.
Crystal Lake, IL 60014

May 14, 2019, 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:* Approval of Minutes for the 231st Meeting January 29, 2019

Item 4: Next meeting date and location

September 10, 2019

Douglas-Hart Nature Center, Mattoon, IL

Item 5:* INPC Staff Report

REPORT
Valerie Njapa
Nature Preserves Commission

Item 6: IDNR Staff Report

REPORT
Todd Strole
Division of Natural Heritage

Connie Waggoner, Assistant Director
Office of Realty and Capital Planning

Item 7: Endangered Species Protection Board Report

REPORT
Randy Schietzelt
Endangered Species Protection Board

Item 8:* Cook Co. – Harms Woods Nature Preserve, Dedication

The Forest Preserves of Cook County seeks preliminary approval for dedication of 170 acres of the 342-acre Harms Woods Forest Preserve as Harms Woods Nature Preserve. The eastern 107.6 acres of the Harms Woods Forest Preserve was dedicated as the Harms Flatwoods Nature Preserve at the Commission’s 225th Meeting in January 2017. The proposed Harms Woods Nature Preserve was included on the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI # 1573) as a Category II site and consists of a mosaic of Grade B and Grade C mesic woodland, Grade C mesic upland forest, floodplain forest, and a small cultural community undergoing woodland restoration. The high-quality ranking for the mesic woodland stems from vegetative sampling conducted in 2017 by staff of the Illinois Natural History Survey. A total of 7 State-listed plant species (3 endangered and 4 threatened) have been reported from the proposed Harms Woods Nature Preserve. The proposed Harms Woods Nature Preserve lies at the boundary of the Chicago Lake Plain and Morainal Sections of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division in the northern part of Cook County. At least 12 archaeological sites are known from the proposed nature preserve. Of these, only one has been professionally excavated. Because the proposed nature preserve includes a portion of the North Branch of the Chicago River, it is likely the site includes additional, intact archaeological resources. Harms Woods supports elements of the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan. The Forest Preserves of Cook County reserves the right to continue adaptive management strategies for the site and to monitor and implement projects designed to maintain or improve surface hydrology. The Forest Preserves further reserves the right to maintain the existing unpaved walking trail and to provide trail modifications and amenities as may be necessary with the approval of the Commission. Protection of Harms Woods as part of the Illinois Nature Preserves System is consistent with the recommendations of the Next Century Conservation Plan and the Natural and Cultural Resources Master Plan for the Forest Preserves of Cook County. INPC staff acknowledges the long-term interest and support of the Forest Preserves of Cook County, especially Toni Preckwinkle and Arnold Randall. Rebecca Collins, Chip O’Leary, and John McCabe of the Forest Preserves are also acknowledged for their unflinching support.

REPORT

Steven Byers

Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Preliminary Approval for Dedication

Item 9:* Lake Co. - Wright Woods Nature Preserve, Dedication

The Lake County Forest Preserve District seeks preliminary approval for dedication of 287.8 acres of Captain Daniel Wright Woods Forest Preserve as Wright Woods Nature Preserve. Captain Daniel Wright Woods Forest Preserve (750.2 acres) includes Lloyd’s Woods Nature Preserve (142.1 acres) and Elm Road Woods Nature Preserve (141.5 acres), and is part of a much larger corridor of land (exceeding 4000 acres) extending along the east bank of the Des Plaines River that has been protected by the Lake County Forest Preserve District. The proposed Wright Woods Nature Preserve includes high-quality (Grade B) mesic upland forest and northern flatwoods that extend south from Lloyd’s Woods Nature Preserve, Grade C dry-mesic forest, Grade C floodplain forest, and a small cultural community being restored to forest. Notably, the 67.5 acres of northern flatwoods located within the proposed nature preserve represent a 44% increase in the amount of this forested community Statewide. Two

State-listed plant species have been reported from the proposed Wright Woods Nature Preserve. The proposed Wright Woods Nature Preserve lies within the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division and borders the Des Plaines River in the southern part of Lake County. The large block of forest, including the proposed Wright Woods Nature Preserve, assembled along the east bank of the Des Plaines River is critically important to migratory and resident avifauna. Surveys of Captain Daniel Wright Forest Preserve reveal the following wildlife assemblages; 173 bird species, 22 mammal species, 8 reptile species, 9 amphibian species, and an extensive list of invertebrate species. Protection of the proposed nature preserve supports elements of the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan (IWAP). Additionally, the site provides suitable nesting habitat for 5 bird species, 2 amphibian species, and 3 insects that have been identified in the IWAP as “Species in Greatest Need of Conservation”. The Lake County Forest Preserve District reserves the right to maintain the existing trail network that includes a regional multi-use trail and hiking trails and to provide trail amenities as deemed appropriate. The District also reserves the right to continue an adaptive management strategy that specifically includes the opportunity to conduct tree-thinning and other management activities consistent with the Southern Des Plaines Woodland Habitat Restoration Project (previously approved by the Commission for other District-owned nature preserves). Those management activities (including tree thinning) are currently underway in the proposed nature preserve. The proposal includes detailed management plans for each of the natural plant communities, as well as a list of on-going management activities for the site. INPC staff acknowledges the long-term interest and support of the Lake County Forest Preserve District in assembling, protecting, and managing the forests that extend along the Des Plaines River. The Lake County Forest Preserve District Board of Trustees, Executive Director Ty Kovach, and staff (including Jim Anderson, Rebecca Hegner, and Ken Klick) are acknowledged.

REPORT

Steven Byers
Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Preliminary Approval for Dedication

Item 10:* McHenry Co. – Buffer Addition to Lake in the Hills Fen Nature Preserve, Dedication

The McHenry County Conservation District (MCCD) seeks preliminary approval for dedication of 141 acres as a nature preserve buffer addition to the 211.65-acre Lake in the Hills Fen Nature Preserve. The “larger” nature preserve (352.6 acres) lies within the 577.8-acre Lake in the Hills Fen Conservation Area. Lake in the Hills Fen Nature Preserve is owned in part by the Village of Lake in the Hills (133.8 acres), the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (73.3 acres), and MCCD (4.55 acres). The entire site, however, is subject to an agreement designating MCCD as the primary land management agency. The existing nature preserve and a portion of the proposed addition encompass the Lake in the Hills Fen INAI site (INAI # 1011). The hallmark of Lake in the Hills Fen Nature Preserve is the array of graminoid fen, calcareous seep, sedge meadow wetlands, and dry gravel prairies that collectively support 17 State-listed plant species and 4 State-listed wildlife species. The proposed addition, however, includes Grade C dry gravel prairie, a low-gradient stream, and three cultural communities. The cultural communities include a prairie restoration, an old field being restored to prairie, and an artificial pond. No State-listed plant or animal species have been recorded from the proposed addition. The proposed addition, however, does lie within the Class III – Special Resource Ground-water Area identified for Lake in the Hills Fen Nature Preserve.

Lake in the Hills Fen Nature Preserve and the proposed nature preserve buffer addition are located in the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Division in the southeastern part of McHenry County. Protection of the proposed addition supports elements of the updated Illinois Wildlife Action Plan (IWAP). Additionally, the site provides suitable nesting habitat for 13 bird species, 1 fish species, and 2 reptile species identified in the updated IWAP as “Species in Greatest Need of Conservation”. One additional bird species listed on the Illinois Watch List is also present. A hiking trail, with a primitive overlook, currently exists within the proposed addition. MCCD reserves the right to continue with a master planning process for the site to determine appropriate public access and passive recreational opportunities. The proposal does reserve the right for MCCD to route a regional bike trail along and outside the western border of the proposed addition and across (and just inside) the northern perimeter of the proposed addition. Finally, MCCD reserves the right to continue with an adaptive management strategy, to include measures to control whitetail deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*), and to maintain or restore both surface and groundwater hydrology. INPC staff acknowledges the long-term interest and support of MCCD in protecting and managing Lake in the Hills Fen Nature Preserve. Those management efforts date back to 1987. The MCCD Board of Trustees, Executive Director Elizabeth Kessler, and staff (including Ed Collins, Brad Woodson, Jeff Murrya, Laurie Ryan, Gail Brown, and Cindy Rindel) are acknowledged.

REPORT

Steven Byers

Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Preliminary Approval for Dedication

Item 11:* Pope Co. – Round Pond South Addition to Round Pond Nature Preserve, Dedication

The Illinois Audubon Society (IAS) is seeking preliminary approval to dedicate 347.436 acres as the Round Pond South Addition to Round Pond Nature Preserve #378 in southern Pope County. Round Pond INAI site#812 (Categories I, II, III) is a 526-acre site containing Grade B swamp, six state-listed plant species (Cypress knee sedge [*Carex decomposita*], winged sedge [*Carex alata*], Narrow-leaved crabapple [*Malus angustifolia*], storax [*Styrax americana*], swollen sedge [*Carex intumescens*], and narrow-leaved sunflower [*Helianthus angustifolius*]), historical element occurrence records for a state-listed amphibian and state-listed reptile, a heron rookery, and numerous rare plant and animal species. This site is located in the Bottomlands Section of the Coastal Plain Natural Division and is a spring fed swamp complex that sits upon a historic lake terrace. Ownership is divided among the IAS, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), and private landowners. TNC dedicated their portion (206 acres) as Round Pond Nature Preserve #378 at the 217th INPC meeting (Item 21, Resolution 2300) in 2014. The Round Pond South Addition includes 213 acres of INAI site comprised of 44.5 acres of Grade B swamp, 29 acres of Grade C swamp, 7.45 acres of Grade D swamp, 62 acres of Grade C wet floodplain forest, 7.5 acres of wet-mesic floodplain forest, and 85.55 acres of Grade E agriculture that converted to forest. The remaining 131.5 acres are 110.5 acres of Grade C wet /wet-mesic floodplain forest and 31 acres of agriculture. Agriculture was taken out of production in Fall 2018 and reforestation efforts began in fall 2019 via tree plantings. Dedication of this addition supports the Forest, Wetland, and Invasive Species Campaigns of the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan. Wetland-dependent Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) such as prothonotary warbler (*Protonotaria citrea*) are abundant breeders at the site. Management goals are collaborative between IAS, TNC, and INPC and are to maintain and

restore the natural structure, hydrology, and characteristics of swamp and floodplain forest natural communities, control exotic plant species, and maintain and enhance populations of State-listed species. The Round Pond South Addition permanently protects most of the INAI site and coupled with surrounding private Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) easements, ensures inundation of wetland habitat can occur across the landscape as it once did historically.

REPORT
Sami Childerson/Kevin Sierzega
Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED
Preliminary Approval for Dedication

Item 12:* Cook Co. – Addition to Thornton-Lansing Road Nature Preserve, Dedication

The Forest Preserves of Cook County seeks final approval for dedication of 82.2 acres of the Thornton-Lansing Road Forest Preserve as a nature preserve addition to the 340-acre Thornton-Lansing Road Nature Preserve. The proposed addition received preliminary approval for dedication at the Commission’s 231st Meeting in January 2019. Thornton-Lansing Road Nature Preserve received preliminary approval for dedication at the Commission’s 4th Meeting in September 1964 and was granted final approval for dedication in January 1965 as the 12th Illinois Nature Preserve. The proposed addition lies within the Thornton-Lansing Road INAI site (INAI # 096) and includes Grade C dry-mesic sand savanna, Grade A and Grade C mesic and wet-mesic sand prairie, Grade B sedge meadow, and Grade C sand flatwoods. Of the 18 State-listed plant species recorded from Thornton-Lansing Road Nature Preserve, two have been recorded from the proposed addition. Thornton-Lansing Road Nature Preserve and the proposed addition are located in the Chicago Lake Plain Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division in the southern part of Cook County, Illinois. Embedded within the proposed nature preserve addition are two sites (11CK426 and 11CK04) that are associated with the “Hoxie Farm Complex” archaeological site that extends into the proposed Wampum Lake Nature Preserve. In addition, five other sites of archaeological significance are known from the proposed addition, one of which (11CK550) may be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Protection of this 82.2-acre nature preserve addition to Thornton-Lansing Road Nature Preserve supports elements of the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan (IWAP). Additionally, the site provides suitable nesting habitat for 4 bird species and one amphibian identified in the Plan as “Species in Greatest Need of Conservation.” The proposed addition encompasses virtually the entire balance of the Thornton-Lansing Road INAI site. Protection of the 82.2-acre nature preserve addition to Thornton-Lansing Road Nature Preserve is consistent with the recommendations of the Next Century Conservation Plan and the Natural and Cultural Resources Master Plan for the Forest Preserves of Cook County. INPC staff acknowledges the long-term interest and support of the Forest Preserves of Cook County, especially Toni Preckwinkle and Arnold Randall. Daniel Spencer, Chip O’Leary, and John McCabe of the Forest Preserves have provided unflinching support for protection and management of this nature preserve and proposed addition.

REPORT
Steven Byers
Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED
Final Approval for Dedication

Item 13:* Cook Co. – Wampum Lake Nature Preserve, Dedication

The Forest Preserves of Cook County seeks final approval for dedication of 380.5 acres of the 412-acre Wampum Lake Forest Preserve as the Wampum Lake Nature Preserve. The proposed Wampum Lake Nature Preserve received preliminary approval for dedication at the Commission’s 231st Meeting in January 2019. Wampum Lake was included on the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI # 094) in recognition of Grade B sand seep and Grade A eroding bluff natural communities. The site also supports a Grade C freshwater marsh, Grade C dry-mesic sand savanna, Grade C wet floodplain forest, and a low-gradient stream. Four State-listed plant species are known from the site. The proposed Wampum Lake Nature Preserve is located in the Chicago Lake Plain Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division in the southern part of Cook County, Illinois. Embedded within the proposed nature preserve are several outstanding cultural resources, one of which (11CK4 – Hoxie Farm Site) is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. To date, 24 sites of archaeological significance have been recorded from the proposed nature preserve. Paula Porubcan with the Illinois State Archaeological Survey noted that there is well-documented evidence of continuous human occupation dating back to the Archaic period (from 8,000 to 1,000 B.C.) and that the significance of this site can “not be overstated”. Over 2000 features (houses, pits, burial sites, hearths, ceramic vessels, stone tools, copper items, and an assemblage of floral and faunal remains) have been recorded from the site. Protection of Wampum Lake supports elements of the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan (IWAP). Additionally, the site provides suitable nesting habitat for 4 bird species identified in IWAP as “Species in Greatest Need of Conservation.” The proposed Wampum Lake Nature Preserve encompasses the entire Wampum Lake Seepage Area INAI site and a portion of the Thornton-Lansing Road INAI site. Most notably, the sand seepage areas at this site represent virtually all of the 9.7 acres of the high-quality sand seeps reported by the INAI. Protection of Wampum Lake as part of the Illinois Nature Preserves System is consistent with the recommendations of the Next Century Conservation Plan and the Natural and Cultural Resources Master Plan for the Forest Preserves of Cook County. INPC staff acknowledges the long-term interest and support of the Forest Preserves of Cook County, especially Toni Preckwinkle and Arnold Randall. Daniel Spencer, Chip O’Leary, and John McCabe of the Forest Preserves are also acknowledged for their unflagging support.

REPORT
Steven Byers
Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED
Final Approval for Dedication

Item 14:* Henderson Co. – Ellison Creek Sand Prairie Nature Preserve, Dedication

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources seeks to dedicate the 40-acre Ellison Creek Sand Prairie located in central Henderson County. The site lies within the Mississippi River Section of the Illinois River and Mississippi River Sand Area Natural Division of Illinois and contains moderate quality sand prairie and sand savanna communities with a relatively large population of the State-endangered large-flowered beardstongue (*Penstemon grandiflora*). Located 2.5 miles east of the Mississippi River the site is within the Upper Mississippi River Conservation Opportunity Area identified by the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan (IWAP) and supports at least

four wildlife Species of Greatest Need of Conservation. Protection and management of this preserve will help meet the goals of multiple IWAP campaigns, including: Farm and Grassland, Forest and Woodlands, Streams, Land and Water Stewardship, and Invasive Species.

REPORT
Angella Moorehouse
Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED
Final Approval for Dedication

Item 15:* Livingston Co. – English Prairie Nature Preserve, Dedication

English Prairie, located in Livingston County, is a very high quality prairie remnant owned by Donath and Beverly English. It lies in the Grand Prairie Section of the Grand Prairie Natural Division of Illinois, just south of Kempton. The prairie is one-half acre in size, and is included on the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI) due to its Grade A prairie. English Prairie has been enrolled in the Natural Heritage Landmark program since 1984, and has been regularly burned by the Englishes since that time. It has retained its very high quality over the decades, and is one of the best examples of mesic prairie in Illinois. The English Family wishes to permanently protect English Prairie as a dedicated Illinois Nature Preserve for future generations.

REPORT
Kim Roman
Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED
Final Approval for Dedication

Item 16:* McHenry Co. – Alden Sedge Meadow Nature Preserve, Dedication

McHenry County Conservation District (MCCD) seeks final approval for dedication of 304.5 acres of the 958.6-acre Alden Sedge Meadow/Winding Creek macrosite as Alden Sedge Meadow Nature Preserve. The proposed Alden Sedge Meadow Nature Preserve received preliminary approval for dedication at the Commission’s 231st Meeting in January 2019. Alden Sedge Meadow was included on the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI # 1262) in recognition of Grade A and B graminoid fen, Grade B sedge meadow, Grade B pond, Grade B low-gradient stream, and Grade C freshwater marsh. MCCD also recognizes the presence of Grade A wet mesic prairie, Grade A calcareous seep, Grade C dry-mesic savanna, and an old field cultural community. The proposed Alden Sedge Meadow Nature Preserve also encompasses a short length of the Nippersink Creek INAI site (INAI # 1506). Four State-listed plant species and six State-listed animal species have been recorded from the proposed nature preserve. The proposed Alden Sedge Meadow Nature Preserve is located in the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division in the northern part of McHenry County. MCCD staff have recorded 87 species of birds, 5 species of mammals, 15 species of amphibians and reptiles, 20 species of fish, 6 species of mussels, 23 species of dragonflies and damselflies, 31 species of butterflies, and an undetermined number of aquatic invertebrates from the site. Protection of Alden Sedge Meadow as an Illinois Nature Preserve supports elements of the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan (IWAP). The site provides suitable nesting habitat for 27 species of wildlife identified in the Plan as “Species in Greatest Need of Conservation” and include 17 birds, 2 reptiles, 3 fish, 2 mussels and 3 butterflies. Dedication of the proposed

nature preserve will protect the vast majority of the Alden Sedge Meadow INAI site and supports elements of the IWAP. MCCD reserves the right to conduct a master planning process to determine appropriate public access and recreational opportunities with the approval of INPC. The proposed Alden Sedge Meadow Nature Preserve lies within the footprint of one of the core areas identified for Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge. INPC staff acknowledges the support of the Board of Directors and staff of MCCD, especially Elizabeth Kessler, Ed Collins, Laurie Ryan, Cindy Rendl, and Gail Brown.

REPORT
Steven Byers
Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED
Final Approval for Dedication

Item 17:* Cook Co. – Busse Forest Nature Preserve Pipeline Relocation/Replacement Project

Nicor Gas is requesting conditional approval to relocate and replace two natural gas pipelines at Busse Forest Nature Preserve (NP), owned by the Forest Preserves of Cook County (FPCC) and located in unincorporated Arlington Heights, Cook County, Illinois. The current location of the pipeline corridor is along Route 2, as shown and described in the supporting documentation for this agenda item. Route 2 is located in the interior of the NP, and when the need arose for replacement of the pipelines to protect their integrity, an alternate route materialized and is being pursued. The preferred route is Route 1, also shown and described in the supporting documentation. Route 1 is located along the northern boundary of the NP, south of Interstate 90. Utilizing Route 1 will result in less overall ecological impact to the NP (compared to Route 2) and will prevent recurrent fragmentation of the interior forest habitat with the retirement of the current alignment. The FPCC and INPC staff support Nicor’s proposal. The four conditions listed in the INPC Staff Recommendation must be met before final approval is secured. These include (1) final approval granted by the FPCC at their May 2019 Board Meeting; (2) completion of an Amendment to the existing License Agreement allowing replacement and maintenance of pipelines along Route 1 with no additional infrastructure rights; (3) retirement of pipelines and grouting in place with termination of infrastructure rights along Route 2; and (4) approval by the FPCC and INPC of a mitigation plan for restoration activities at the NP.

REPORT
Valerie Njapa/Steven Byers
Nature Preserves Commission
Julie Paschal
Nicor Gas

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED
Approval for Project

Item 18:* Lake Co. - Illinois Beach Nature Preserve Shoreline Erosion Update

Illinois Beach, dedicated in 1964, was the first Illinois nature preserve. It often is referenced as the “crown jewel” of the Nature Preserve system. Indeed, Illinois Beach is one of the richest and most biologically diverse natural areas in the state. The dune and swale topography, juxtaposition to Lake Michigan, and its unique edaphic and climatic conditions have resulted in a diversity and number of natural communities unlike that found in any other preserve. The 14 distinct community types, including globally rare wetlands and beach and foredune

communities, in turn provide habitats that support over 500 plant and 300 animal species. Of those, 55 species are listed as State endangered or threatened and four are federally-listed: Eastern prairie fringed orchid, Dune thistle, Rusty patched bumble bee, and Piping plover.

Although the preserve's lakeshore represents the highest quality dune and swale coastal ecosystem remaining along the western shoreline of Lake Michigan, natural geologic processes and near historic high water levels have rapidly accelerated the erosional loss of the most significant beach, foredune and interdunal wetlands representative of the natural shoreline communities. Along one segment of the shoreline preserve that is only a half mile in length, over 40 acres of land have been lost, including rare panne wetlands and high quality dry and mesic sand prairies. Increased lake sedimentation and lost carbon storage are also of significant concern. Following collaborative efforts to better understand the bathymetry, littoral drift rates, wave energy dynamics, and off-shore sediment depths, we now recognize what has been lost to erosional forces and what is predicted to be lost in the near future. If we wish to slow this unprecedented loss of rare plant and animal communities, we must consider using engineered alternatives for directing sediment deposition. The ultimate question is whether fourth generation structural designs and the construction of off-shore tuned structures (i.e., submerged reefs and islands) can mitigate erosional losses of high quality natural areas while allowing natural geological processes to continue and not to distract from the biological and ecological significance of the site.

REPORT
Brad Semel
Division of Natural Heritage

NO ACTION REQUIRED

Item 19:* 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 still 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; and September 10, 2013.

REPORT
Valerie Njapa
Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED
Determination if closed minutes remain closed

Item 20: Public Comment Period (3 minutes per person)

Item 21: Other Business

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

Item 22: Adjournment