

**ILLINOIS NATURE PRESERVES COMMISSION AGENDA
TWO HUNDRED FORTY-FOURTH - A (244th-A) SPECIAL MEETING**

Illinois Beach Hotel and Conference Center
Adeline Jay Geo-Karis Illinois Beach State Park
100 Lake Front Drive
Zion, Illinois 60099

August 28, 2023, 2:00 PM
In-person meeting

Welcome – Natalie Phelps Finnie, Director, Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Item 1: Call to Order, Roll Call

Item 2: Adoption of Agenda

Item 3: Presentation of House Resolution 149 Declaring August 2023 as Illinois Nature Preserves Month

PRESENTATION

Jeff Keicher, Illinois House of Representative Member

Item 4: The Natural Areas Movement in Illinois

PRESENTATION

Arthur Melville Pearson - CEO, Roger Tory Peterson Institute; Biographer of George Fell

Item 5: Evolution of the Illinois Nature Preserves System

PRESENTATION

Brian Anderson - Former Director of Illinois Nature Preserves Commission and Illinois Natural History Survey

Item 6: Lake Co. – Addition to Illinois Beach Nature Preserve, Final Dedication

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) seeks final approval for dedication of a 186.42-acre Addition to Illinois Beach Nature Preserve. The existing 1080-acre nature preserve is owned and managed by IDNR. The proposed addition is located within the Lake Michigan Dunes Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division of Illinois and is part of Illinois Beach INAI Site #1083. This addition will provide protection to 14 INAI Category I high-quality Grades A and B natural communities, including Beach; Dry, Dry-mesic, Mesic, Wet-mesic, and Wet Sand Prairie; Dry Sand Savanna; Fore-dune; Freshwater Marsh, Panne, Sedge Meadow, Seep, Pond, and Low-gradient Small Stream. 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 52 State-endangered or threatened species, of

which five are also Federally-listed. The area is recognized as part of a Conservation Opportunity Area by the State 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 addition 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 (e.g., butterflies, dragonflies) migration corridor. Twenty-three State-listed species, of which two are also Federally-listed, have been recorded from within the boundaries of the proposed addition, and protection of this area will strengthen the resiliency of the existing nature preserve and the multitudes of additional rare species found there. If approved, this Addition to Illinois Beach Nature Preserve will bring the total acreage of protected land at this site to 1266.42 acres.

REPORT

Melissa Grycan
Illinois Department of Natural Resources

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Final Approval for Dedication

Item 7: Public Comment Period (3 minutes per person)

Item 8: Adjournment