

ILLINOIS NATURE PRESERVES COMMISSION AGENDA
TWO HUNDRED THIRTY-THIRD MEETING

Douglas-Hart Nature Center
2204 DeWitt Avenue East
Mattoon, IL 61938

September 10, 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 232nd Meeting, May 14, 2019

Item 4: Next meeting dates and locations

January 22, 2020	Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Springfield, IL
May 12, 2020	Starved Rock State Park Lodge, Oglesby, IL
September 15, 2020	Olney Central College, Olney, IL

Item 5:* INPC Staff Report

REPORT
Valerie Njapa
Nature Preserves Commission

Item 6: IDNR Staff Report

REPORT
Ann Marie Holtrop
Division of Natural Heritage

Item 7: * Endangered Species Protection Board Report

REPORT
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: Dave Thomas)

A. Nomination of Advisors

Current Advisors:

Colleen Callahan IL Dept. of Natural Resources (Statutory Advisor)	Dr. Eric M. Schaubert IL Natural History Survey (Statutory Advisor)	Robert Sill IL State Museum (Statutory Advisor)
Joyce Hofmann IL Endangered Species Protection Board	Dr. Thomas Emerson IL State Archaeological Survey	Mike Norris IL Dept. of Natural Resources Office of Historic Preservation
Richard C. Berg IL State Geological Survey	Dr. Kevin O'Brien IL Sustainable Technology Center	Mark Ryan Prairie Research Institute

B. Nomination of Consultants

Current Consultants:

Gerald Adelman	Jill Allread	Randy Heidorn
Harry Drucker	Fran Harty	Jill Riddell
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: Abigail Derby-Lewis
 Secretary: Pen DauBach

Item 9:* Coles Co. – Warbler Bottoms North Land and Water Reserve, Registration

Grand Prairie Friends proposes to permanently register 187.2 acres as Warbler Bottoms North Land and Water Reserve. Warbler Bottoms North is found in Coles county along the Embarras River in the Grand Prairie Section of the Grand Prairie Natural Division and will protect a 5200-foot segment of the Embarras River, recognized as a high-quality stream by the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI #1427) and the associated riparian corridor. Additionally, the state-threatened eastern sand darter (*Ammocrypta pellucidum*), American eel (*Anguilla rostrata*) and Kirtland's snake (*Clonophis kirtlandii*) have been reported from within the river or near the river corridor near the land and water reserve. An astonishing 72 species of fish have been recorded from the Embarras River in this vicinity, including seven fish Species in Greatest Need of Conservation (SGNC) as identified in the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan. It also provides habitat for three other aquatic wildlife SGNC that have been reported nearby: the state-endangered smooth softshell turtle (*Apalone mutica*), and two types of mussels: monkeyface (*Quadrula metanevra*) and the federally and state-endangered snuffbox (*Epioblasma triquetra*). In addition, five bird SGNC occur here, resulting in a total of at least 15 SGNC for this site.

REPORT
 John Griesbaum
 Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED
 Approval for Registration

Item 10:* Coles Co. – Warbler Landing Land and Water Reserve, Registration

Grand Prairie Friends proposes to permanently register 130.66 acres as Warbler Landing Land and Water Reserve. Warbler Landing is located in Coles County along the Embarras River in the Grand Prairie Section of the Grand Prairie Natural Division and will protect a 650-foot segment of the Embarras River, recognized as a high-quality stream by the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI #1427) and the associated riparian corridor. Additionally, the state-threatened eastern sand darter (*Ammocrypta pellucidum*) has been reported from the river near the land and water reserve, and the state-threatened fibrous-rooted sedge (*Carex communis*) occurs on a forested slope of the reserve. An astonishing 72 species of fish have been recorded from the Embarras River in this vicinity, including seven fish Species in Greatest Need of Conservation (SGNC) as identified in the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan. It also provides habitat for three other aquatic wildlife SGNC that have been reported nearby: the state-endangered smooth softshell turtle (*Apalone mutica*), and two types of mussels: monkeyface (*Quadrula metanevra*) and the federally and state-endangered snuffbox (*Epioblasma triquetra*). In addition, five bird SGNC occur here, resulting in a total of at least 15 SGNC for this site.

REPORT

John Griesbaum
Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Approval for Registration

Item 11:* Williamson Co. – Grisley Woods Land and Water Reserve, Registration

Mr. William Grisley seeks permanent registration of ~107.5 acres of contiguous forest-complex in Lake Creek Township of central Williamson County as the Grisley Woods Land and Water Reserve. The reserve is in the Mount Vernon Hill Country Section of the Southern Till Plain Natural Division of Illinois and includes 82 acres of Grade C dry-mesic upland forest and 25.5 acres of Grade C bottomland forest. Within these natural communities are 6.5 pond acres and 5.75 acres of old field consisting of young tree plantings of native hardwoods. Qualifying features include:

- (1) Proximity to Otey-Grisley Nature Preserve, a Grade B dry-mesic upland forest also owned by Mr. Grisley, located 0.25 miles south.
- (2) Breeding habitat for the State-threatened barn owl (*Tyto alba*) which has been breeding successfully in the reserve since 2013.
- (3) 14 avian Species in Greatest Need of Conservation (SGNC) breed in the reserve; and an additional five avian species: four SGNC and the State-endangered northern harrier (*Circus hudsonius*), over-winter in the reserve or utilize it during migration. One reptile SGNC is abundant in the reserve.
- (4) Permanent protection of >100 acres of forest and breeding presence of 20 avian species susceptible to forest fragmentation.
- (5) The reserve supports the Forest and Invasive Species Campaigns of the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan.

Registration approval is subject to severed mineral rights and a gas pipeline easement. The mineral rights were also severed at the Otey-Grisley Nature Preserve when it was dedicated. Past mining operations impacted a surface area < 2 acres on the reserve, and the mine site was permanently closed, and impacted surface area reclaimed.

REPORT

Kevin Sierzega
Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Approval for Registration

Item 12:* Lake Co. – Addition to Gavin Bog & Prairie Nature Preserve, Dedication

The Lake County Forest Preserve District (LCFPD) seeks preliminary approval for dedication of 283.8 acres, which includes 4.6 acres proposed for dedication as a nature preserve and 279.2 acres proposed for dedication as nature preserve buffer. The proposed additions would increase the size of the existing Gavin Bog and Prairie Nature Preserve (Illinois Natural Areas Inventory Site #0794) from 137 acres to 420.8 acres. The site’s existing nature preserve, and this proposed addition are embedded within Grant Woods Forest Preserve, totaling 1,226.2 acres. This site 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 proposed Gavin Bog and Prairie Nature Preserve and buffer additions contain Grade B shrub bog, Grade C tall shrub bog, Grade B and C forested bog, Grade B and C sedge meadow, Grade B wet prairie, Grade B to C mesic prairie and Grade C mesic oak savanna arrayed along well-defined moisture and elevational gradients. A plant inventory of Grant Woods Forest Preserve conducted by the LCFPD annotated 574 plant species. Of these, 20 are State threatened or endangered plant species. The proposed nature preserve expansion includes additional populations of at least four of these 20 listed species and several regionally-rare plant species. Grant Woods Forest Preserve supports a rich assemblage of birds, providing important breeding habitat for both wetland birds and birds requiring large blocks of forested and grassland habitat. Bird surveys conducted by LCFPD confirm 180 species at Grant Woods. Six species, namely the black-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*), cerulean warbler (*Dendroica cerulea*), Forster's tern (*Sterna forsteri*), least bittern (*Ixobrychus exilis*), northern harrier (*Circus cyaneus*), and osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*), are listed as State threatened or endangered. Three were previously listed, including Henslow’s sparrow (*Ammodramus henslowii*), sandhill crane (*Grus canadensis*), and bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*); and four are identified in the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan (IWAP) as Species in Greatest Need of Conservation (SGNC). 28 mammal species have been reported, with one identified in the IWAP as a SGNC. The LCFPD has documented the presence of 11 species of reptiles and 10 amphibians within Grant Woods Forest Preserve, including one amphibian species known as a SGNC and one State endangered reptile. The LCFPD 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; and the right to continue an adaptive management strategy that specifically includes the opportunity to conduct overstocked tree-thinning. INPC staff acknowledge the long-term interest and support of the LCFPD Board of Trustees, Executive Director Ty Kovach, and staff including Jim Anderson, Rebecca Hegner, and Ken Klick.

REPORT

Pati Vitt

Lake County Forest Preserve District

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Preliminary Approval for Dedication

Item 13:* Cook Co. – Harms Woods Nature Preserve, Dedication

The Forest Preserves of Cook County seeks final approval for dedication of 169.2 acres of the 342-acre Harms Woods Forest Preserve as Harms Woods Nature Preserve. The proposed Harms Woods Nature Preserve received preliminary approval for dedication at the Commission’s 232nd Meeting in May 2019. 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 seven State-listed plant species (three endangered and four 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 and John and Jane Balaban with the North Branch Restoration Project are also acknowledged for their unflagging support of Harms Woods.

REPORT

Charles O’Leary

Forest Preserves of Cook County

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Final Approval for Dedication

Item 14:* Lake Co. – Wright Woods Nature Preserve, Dedication

The Lake County Forest Preserve District seeks final approval for dedication of 287.0 acres of Captain Daniel Wright Woods Forest Preserve as Wright Woods Nature Preserve. The proposed Wright Woods Nature Preserve received preliminary approval for dedication at the Commission’s 232nd Meeting in May 2019. 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, eight reptile species, nine amphibian species, and an extensive list of invertebrate species. Protection of the proposed nature preserve supports elements of the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan (“the Plan”). Additionally, the site provides suitable nesting habitat for five bird species, two amphibian species, and three insects that have been identified in the Plan 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 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

Pati Vitt

Lake County Forest Preserve District

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Final Approval for Dedication

Item 15:* Monroe Co. – Milles Fleurs Nature Preserve, Dedication

The proposed Milles Fleurs Nature Preserve (NP) is a 12-acre site in southwestern Illinois' Sinkhole Plain. The site is within the 545-acre Sutterville Sinkhole Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI) site (#1966). The proposed preserve contains eight acres of dry-mesic upland forest, with numerous sinkholes and sinkhole ponds, and four acres of old field in successional restoration. The site contains breeding populations of the state-threatened eastern narrowmouth toad (*Gastrophryne carolinensis*) and the state-threatened black-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*).

Besides protecting the two listed species, the proposed Milles Fleurs NP harbors breeding populations of Species in Greatest Need of Conservation (SGNC) listed in the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan (IWAP), including wood frog (*Lithobates sylvatica*), pickerel frog (*Lithobates palustris*), Red-shouldered Hawk (*Buteo lineatus*), Yellow-breasted Chat (*Icteria virens*), Kentucky warbler (*Oporonis formosus*), Yellow-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*), Red-headed Woodpecker (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*), and bobcat (*Lynx rufus*). The site supports several campaigns identified in the IWAP, including the Farmland and Prairies Campaign, the Forests Campaign, the Invasive Species Campaign, and the Land & Water Stewardship Campaign. The site is located within IWAP's Karst Conservation Opportunity Area, and the Southwestern Illinois Wildlife Action Plan partnership.

The proposed Milles Fleurs NP is owned by long-time conservationists, Penelope P. and D. Carl DauBach. The couple has owned the property for 17 years, working to improve the ecological value of the site and to protect the resources, including the listed species using the proposed preserve.

Preliminary approval for dedication was given at the 231st meeting of the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission, January 29, 2019.

REPORT
Debbie S. Newman
Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED
Final Approval for Dedication

Item 16:* Pope Co. – Round Pond South Addition to Round Pond Nature Preserve, Dedication

The Illinois Audubon Society (IAS) seeks final approval to dedicate 347.44 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 two state-listed herpetofauna (eastern narrow-mouthed toad [*Gastrophryne carolinensis*] and eastern ribbon snake [*Thamnophis sauritus sauritus*]), a heron rookery, and numerous rare plant and animal species. It is 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 (Resolution 2300) in 2014. The Round Pond South Addition includes 216 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 65.55 acres of Grade E agriculture and old field that were converted to forest. The remaining 131.5 acres are 100.5 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 winter 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 in Greatest Need of Conservation (SGNC) such as prothonatory 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
Kevin Sierzega
Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED
Final Approval for Dedication

Item 17:* Pulaski Co. – Cache River Land and Water Reserve, Conservation Plan for Hydraulic Dredging of Buttonland Swamp

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) proposes dredging of Buttonland Swamp, a section of the Lower Cache River Land and Water Reserve, to restore deep-water habitat lost to excessive sedimentation. Restoring deep-water areas of the swamp will improve habitat heterogeneity and provide thermal and low-water refugia for aquatic species. Dredging will occur in the Cache River channel and adjacent open water areas. The total area dredged will not exceed 27 acres (0.11km²). Take of Bantam Sunfish, (*Lepomis symmetricus*), a state-threatened species may result from dredging activities. As landowner of the Cache River Land and Water Reserve, IDNR is seeking an Incidental Take Authorization (ITA) for the take of Bantam Sunfish, with an estimated impact (take) of 6-27 individuals over the course of three years. This will not jeopardize the continued existence of the species in Illinois. As required when seeking an ITA, IDNR must complete a Conservation Plan, which includes a description of proposed activities, evaluation of impacted species' status, estimate of take and proposed conservation measures. Signatures of all participants in the execution of the Conservation Plan are required, including the Commission as easement holder on the impacted property. IDNR is seeking the Commission's approval (with signature) of the Conservation Plan. Following approval by all participating parties, the Conservation Plan will be subject to public review.

REPORT
Brian Metzke
Department of Natural Resources
Kelly Neal
Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED
Approval and Signing of Conservation Plan

Item 18: Election of INPC Officers

REPORT
Dave Thomas
Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED
Election of Officers

Item 19: Election of INPC Advisors and Consultants

REPORT
Dave Thomas
Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED
Election of Advisors and Consultants

Item 20:* 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; and September 10, 2013.

REPORT

Valerie Njapa

Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Determination if closed minutes remain closed

Item 21: Public Comment Period (3 minutes per person)

Item 22: Other Business

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

Item 23: Adjournment