

Illinois Nature Preserves Commission
Minutes of the 199th Meeting
(Approved at the 200th Meeting)

Sugar Creek Administration Center
Forest Preserve District of Will County
17540 W. Laraway Road
Joliet, IL

Tuesday, August 5, 2008

199-1) Call to Order, Roll Call, and Introduction of Attendees

At 10:05 a.m., pursuant to the Call to Order of Chair Ross-Shannon, the meeting began.

Deborah Stone read the roll call.

Members present: Jill Allread, Harry Drucker, Ron Flemal, Jill Riddell, Lauren Rosenthal, Bruce Ross-Shannon, and John Schwegman.

Members absent: Richard Keating and Mare Payne.

Others present: Samantha Adams, Steven Byers, Bob Edgin, Judy Faulkner Dempsey, Tom Lerczak, Angella Moorehouse, Kelly Neal, John Nelson, Debbie Newman, Debbie Reider, Kim Roman, Jenny Skufca, and Mary Kay Solecki, Illinois Nature Preserves Commission (INPC); Mark Guetersloh, Glen Kruse, and John Wilker, Office of Resource Conservation (ORC), Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR); Megan Borrowman, Kathi Davis, Tracy Evans, and Don McFall, Office of Realty and Environmental Planning (OREP), IDNR; Sue Dees, Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT); Leslie Spraggins, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and INPC Consultant; Marilyn Campbell, Endangered Species Protection Board (ESPB) and INPC Consultant; Valerie Spale, Save the Prairie Society and INPC Consultant; Joe Roth, CorLands and INPC Consultant; Gilbert Anderson, and Rita Renwick, Illinois Audubon; Jennifer Hammer, The Conservation Foundation; Hala Ahmed, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning; Bill Byrns, The Daily Journal; Marianne Hahn, representing Sweet Fern Savanna Land and Water Reserve; Steven Bylina, Jr. and Chris Merenowicz, Forest Preserve District of Cook County (FPDCC), representing Deer Grove West Woodland and Wetland; Vince Mosca and Bernie Pallardy, representing Del Webb Sedge Meadow and Grove; Marcy DeMauro, Forest Preserve District of Will County (FPDWC); and Pete Jackson.

199-2) Adoption of Agenda

It was moved by Riddell, seconded by Rosenthal, and carried that the Agenda be adopted as presented.

199-3) Approval of Minutes of the 198th Meeting Minutes, May 6, 2008

Chair Ross-Shannon asked that a correction be made to Item 18 of the 198th Meeting minutes. He stated that Marilyn Campbell was the one who spoke about Dr. Ebinger's contributions to the Endangered Species Protection Board.

It was moved by Rosenthal, seconded by Riddell, and carried that the Minutes of the 198th Meeting be approved as amended.

199-4) 2008 Meeting Schedule

October 28, 2008 10:00 a.m. World Shooting & Recreational Complex, Sparta

Chair Ross-Shannon thanked Kim Roman for leading the field trip to Braidwood Dunes and Savanna Nature Preserve on August 4, 2008. He also thanked Marcy DeMauro for hosting the 199th INPC meeting.

Ms. DeMauro welcomed the Commission to the Sugar Creek Administration Center. She stated that the Administration Center was the first green building in Will County, and it has become a model for other public buildings. She stated that in her 23-year relationship with the FPDWC she has been able to work with the INPC to bring sites within Will County into the INPC's programs. The FPDWC now has 11 nature preserves and three land and water reserves.

Chair Ross-Shannon stated the Commission appreciates its relationship with the FPDWC and all of its partners around the State.

Chair Ross-Shannon reported that at the 198th Meeting of the INPC, held on May 6, 2008, at the Ramada Hotel in Galena, legal protection for three tracts of land, totaling 72.426 acres was approved by the Commission. Of these, two areas totaling 70.996 acres are owned by private individuals or not-for-profit corporations who donated the value of the protection agreement to the public. The dollar value of the tracts of land is \$169,000 based on conservative estimates of the fair market value of the land. This private land was permanently preserved without acquisition of the land by the State. Private lands protected without State acquisition at INPC's 198th Meeting were Casper Bluff Land and Water Reserve in Jo Daviess County and an addition to Dropseed Prairie Nature Preserve in Cook County. Protection of this land came about because the Commission has nine staff members in the field working with private land owners. There are now 341 dedicated nature preserves in 82 counties, totaling 45,457.183 acres and 148 land and water reserves in 61 counties, totaling 41,175.094 acres.

199-5) INPC Staff Report

Kelly Neal presented the INPC staff report, and it is attached as Exhibit A.

199-6) IDNR Staff Report
(Actually presented after Item 8)

Glen Kruse presented the IDNR staff report, and it is attached as Exhibit B.

Don McFall thanked Debbie Newman for her help with the Stemler Cave acquisition and Bob Edgin for his help with the Flag Pond acquisition.

199-7) Endangered Species Protection Board Report
(Actually presented after Item 5)

Marilyn Campbell reported that the ESPB has not yet received the grant that would allow the Board to hire a staff person. The ESPB's next meeting will be on November 14, 2008.

Chair Ross-Shannon stated that the registration agreements for today's land and water reserve presentations are signed and executed by the landowners as required by administrative rule.

198-8) Jasper Co. B Addition to Prairie Ridge State Natural Area Land and Water Reserve, Registration

Bob Edgin presented a proposal on behalf of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources to permanently register a 546-acre addition (McClure tract, Hunt tract, and Newlin tract) to Prairie Ridge State Natural Area Land and Water Reserve. The Land and Water Reserve is located within the Effingham Plain Section of the Southern Till Plain Natural Division. The proposed addition is within the Prairie Ridge Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI) site (#601). The grassland/wetland complex at Prairie Ridge State Natural Area provides habitat for 78 species considered in greatest need of conservation in the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan (IWAP). Included among these species are 23 species listed as threatened or endangered in Illinois, the State's only breeding population of greater prairie-chickens (*Tympanuchus cupido*), and the State's largest breeding populations of northern harriers (*Circus cyaneus*), short-eared owls (*Asio flammeus*), and barn owls (*Tyto alba*). Registration of this addition will be in perpetuity and bring the total number of managed acres at the Jasper County unit of Prairie Ridge State Natural Area to 2,916.72 acres.

Mr. Edgin stated that prior to the State's acquisition of this property, the township had an area where gravel and culverts were stored. Once the State acquired the property, the gravel and culverts were removed by the township. The IDNR would like to maintain this area as a small parking area to provide viewing opportunities for the public. The lot will accommodate three cars. There are also field access lanes that provide access to the north and central part of the Hunt and Newlin tracts. The IDNR would like to maintain the access lane for maintenance and to serve as a fire break. There is a small rock area on the northeast corner that will be maintained as a small parking area. He also stated that the Newlin tract has a 20-foot wide perpetual easement along the west boundary for a water line which was in place prior to the acquisition by the State.

Some of the allowable uses of the site, including photography, nature observation, and scientific research, were discussed. There will be a deer management program on this site. A predator control program will also be implemented during the bird nesting season. The grazing program will run from May to September each year.

It was moved by Schwegman, seconded by Allread, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission grants approval for the registration of an addition to Prairie Ridge State Natural Area Land and Water Reserve in Jasper County, as described in the proposal presented under Item 8 of the Agenda for the 199th Meeting.

(Resolution 1999)

199-9) Kankakee Co. B Additions to Sweet Fern Savanna Land and Water Reserve, Registration
(Actually presented after Item 6)

Kim Roman presented a proposal on behalf of Dr. Marianne Hahn to permanent register two separate tracts totaling 3.4 acres as additions to Sweet Fern Savanna Land and Water Reserve. Sweet Fern Savanna Land and Water Reserve is a 115-acre site that was originally registered in 2002. The Land and Water Reserve is located in the Pembroke Savannas in Kankakee County. It is recognized on the INAI (#1581) for its high-quality dry-mesic sand savanna of the Kankakee Sands Section of the Grand Prairie Natural Division and for the habitat it provides for 12 state-endangered or threatened plants and the state-threatened regal fritillary butterfly (*Speyeria idalia*). In addition, Sweet Fern Savanna is habitat for two reptiles of conservation concern. The majority of the site is owned and managed by Dr. Hahn. Since 2002, several additions to Sweet Fern Savanna Land and Water Reserve have been registered by both Dr. Hahn and the Illinois Chapter of The Nature Conservancy. The proposed additions, totaling 3.4 acres, will bring the total amount of registered acres of Sweet Fern Savanna Land and Water Reserve to approximately 118 acres. The additions will increase the amount of protected habitat for the state-endangered sweet fern (*Comptonia peregrina*), buffer high-quality natural communities within the existing Land and Water Reserve, and promote the conservation goals of the IWAP.

Ms. Roman stated that some of the allowable uses are deer hunting, vehicle access for management purposes, the creation of minimally developed foot paths that will also act as fire breaks, placement of small benches along foot paths, primitive camping, and the collection of firewood for personal use.

It was moved by Allread, seconded by Riddell, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission grants approval for the registration of the additions to Sweet Fern Savanna Land and Water Reserve in Kankakee County, as described in the proposal presented under Item 9 of the Agenda for the 199th Meeting.

(Resolution 2000)

Commissioner Drucker stated that the work taking place in the Kankakee sands area reminds him of northeastern Illinois where OpenLands and The Nature Conservancy have been buying up parcels over the last 35-40 years at the Gensburg-Markham and Indian Boundary Prairies. That project is almost done, but it has been the accumulated efforts of organizations buying tiny parcels over decades. This same thing is taking place in the Kankakee sands area, and we need to keep working

on this to find additional partners to get involved. He stated that even though it takes time, it is his opinion that it will all come together for the protection of the Kankakee sands area.

Chair Ross-Shannon stated that the Commission appreciates Dr. Hahn's work in protecting this site.

199-10) Champaign Co. B Van Hagey's Sangamon River Nature Preserve, Dedication

Mary Kay Solecki presented a proposal on behalf of William Van Hagey for preliminary approval for dedication of Van Hagey's Sangamon River as an Illinois Nature Preserve. The proposed Van Hagey's Sangamon River Nature Preserve is an approximately 14-acre natural area located along the Sangamon River, south of the village of Fisher, in Champaign County. This natural area is owned by Mr. Van Hagey, and it protects an approximately 0.9-mile segment of the Sangamon River stream bed and its riparian corridor. The proposed nature preserve extends 125 feet west of the centerline of the Sangamon River and follows the course of the river. It lies in the Grand Prairie Section of the Grand Prairie Natural Division. This river is recognized by the INAI as a biologically significant stream (#1449) with outstanding aquatic resources, especially fresh-water mussels, including the state-threatened slippershell (*Alasmidonta viridis*) for the river's entire length in Champaign and Piatt counties. This site is one of 12 protected natural areas along the Sangamon River corridor that, taken together, preserve over ten miles of the Sangamon River and over 4,100 acres of forest and other natural land along the Sangamon River corridor in Champaign and Piatt counties. A concentrated effort to preserve the upper Sangamon River corridor in Champaign and Piatt counties is being spearheaded by a coalition of organizations which includes the Land Conservation Foundation, the Champaign County Forest Preserve District, The Nature Conservancy, the University of Illinois, and the INPC. Dedication of the proposed Van Hagey's Sangamon River Nature Preserve is recommended as an important component of this stream corridor protection effort.

Ms. Solecki stated that Mr. Van Hagey also owns the property surrounding the proposed nature preserve. His long term plan for the entire parcel is to sell the adjacent property for residential development. The property is in a highly desirable location in terms of the Champaign/Urbana metro region. She stated that Mr. Van Hagey wants to conserve the forest land and the river prior to selling the property. Mr. Van Hagey is a board member of the Land Conservation Foundation, and he would really like to have the natural area dedicated as a nature preserve before he sells the property.

She stated that she did discuss the land and water reserve program with Mr. Van Hagey, but he decided on the nature preserve designation because he likes the higher level of protection. Ms. Solecki stated that Mr. Van Hagey would like to allow deer hunting as long as deer browse is determined to be detrimental to the proposed nature preserve. Mr. Van Hagey would also retain the right to exclude one to three acres along the banks of the Sangamon River from the final nature preserve. Each potential excluded area will be approximately 300-600 feet in length and may be used for fishing and river access for canoes. A legal description would have to be done to exclude these areas from the nature preserve. The standard signage would be used to mark the access areas. Mr. Van Hagey anticipates that after he sells the property, the developer would put a lake in the drainage way on the property. With the exclusion of the access areas, the nature preserve size would be reduced to 9-12 acres.

Commissioner Flemal asked if any management problems would be associated with this type of linear preserve.

Ms. Solecki stated that this would not be the first nature preserve that includes only half of the river. This type of layout does present certain problems and challenges, but it would protect a long section of the Sangamon River.

The challenges of defending this type of area were discussed at length, including the challenges that may result from the landowner's request to exclude the areas for fishing and access for canoes, as it would be impossible to regulate the use of the excluded areas.

Chair Ross-Shannon asked if a potential residential plat had been designed; and if so, would the lots go up to the boundary of the proposed nature preserve.

Ms. Solecki stated that no formal development design has been done as of this date. Mr. Van Hagey's only plan is to put the land up for sale. He will not be the developer, and he does not know if the person who acquires the property will ever develop it.

After much discussion, Ms. Solecki was asked to talk with the landowner about registering this site as a land and water reserve.

Chair Ross-Shannon stated that before the final proposal comes before the Commission, he would like to have a better understanding of what the landowner wants to do with the property. He stated that he has no objection to proceeding with the preliminary approval.

It was moved by Flemal, seconded by Schwegman, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission grants preliminary approval for the dedication of Van Hagey's Sangamon River in Champaign County as an Illinois Nature Preserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 10 of the Agenda for the 199th Meeting.

(Resolution 2001)

199-11) Cook Co. B Deer Grove West Woodland and Wetland Nature Preserve, Dedication

Steven Byers presented a proposal on behalf of the Forest Preserve District of Cook County (FPDCC) for preliminary approval for dedication of the 1096-acre Deer Grove West Woodland and Wetland as an Illinois nature preserve. The proposed nature preserve encompasses the entire Deer Grove West INAI site (#775) and includes 840 acres as nature preserve and 256 acres as nature preserve buffer. The proposed nature preserve is located in the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division in Cook County. The proposed Deer Grove West Woodland and Wetland Nature Preserve supports savanna, dry-mesic upland forest, mesic upland forest, wet floodplain forest, sedge meadow, and wetland communities that collectively provide habitat for 394 native plant species. Among the plant species are the state-threatened forked aster (*Aster furcatus*), pale vetchling (*Lathyrus ochroleucus*), small sundrops (*Oenothera perennis*), and marsh speedwell

(*Veronica scutellata*) and the state-endangered bulrush (*Scirpus hattorianus*). State-threatened or endangered wildlife species reported from the site include the black tern (*Chlidonias niger*), yellow-headed blackbird (*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*), cerulean warbler (*Dendroica cerulea*), and a reptile. A large and diverse array of wildlife species have been recorded from the proposed nature preserve, including 16 bird species, that are either highly or moderately sensitive to forest fragmentation. The proposed nature preserve supports several action steps identified in the IWAP, most notably management of area-sensitive wildlife species in forests greater than 1,000 acres and support of a specific recommendation for the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division to restore and manage four to five forested sites between 800-1,000 acres in size. In addition, the proposed nature preserve supports 18 species considered wildlife species in greatest need of conservation. Finally, dedication of this site as an Illinois nature preserve reaffirms the significance of Deer Grove as the first acquisition of land by the FPDCC. By doing so, it honors the foresight of many early conservationists, the on-going commitment of the FPDCC to "...preserve, protect, restock, and restore...", and the legacy and significance of the Cook County Forest Preserve District Act, Downstate Forest Preserve Act, and Conservation District Act in acquiring nearly 171,000 acres of land to date in northeastern Illinois.

The reserved rights, allowable uses, internal threats, and management considerations outlined in the proposal were discussed in detail.

Steven Bylina, FPDCC, thanked Mr. Byers for his presentation and efforts to protect this site. He stated that this area was the first site acquired by the FPDCC in 1916. Mr. Bylina stated that the FPDCC is committed to addressing the internal threats at the site.

Chair Ross-Shannon thanked Mr. Bylina for his comments, and he thanked the FPDCC for bringing this site to the Commission.

It was moved by Riddell, seconded by Rosenthal, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission grants preliminary approval for the dedication of Deer Grove West Woodland and Wetland in Cook County as an Illinois Nature Preserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 11 of the Agenda for the 199th Meeting.

(Resolution 2002)

199-12) Jersey Co. B Palisades Nature Preserve, Dedication

Debbie Newman presented a proposal on behalf of the Great Rivers Land Trust for preliminary approval for dedication of 420 acres of bluff land property as Palisades Nature Preserve. The Palisades site contains part of the Chautauqua Prairie INAI site (#964). The proposed nature preserve contains grade A and grade B loess hill prairie and grade A limestone cliff community of the Glaciated Section of the Middle Mississippi Border Natural Division, and a large block forest.

The site also harbors four state-listed species, including two listed reptiles, whitlow grass (*Draba cunefolia*), and bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*). In addition to the three animals listed above, three other bird species found on the site are species of greatest conservation need in the IWAP. Preservation of the site contributes to the larger efforts to preserve the Mississippi River bluff corridor between Alton and Pere Marquette State Park. The proposed nature preserve will have an active management team led by the National Great Rivers Research and Education Center.

Ms. Newman stated that the proposed nature preserve is currently closed to the public, but there are a series of mowed pathways, 15 to 50 feet wide, that traverse the site. The pathways can serve as hiking trails for limited public recreation. A portion of two of the trails allow for ingress, egress, and utility easements. The landowner retains the right for the 50 foot easement, of which 20 feet of that could be paved. All utilities must be buried underground within the easement corridor.

After the dedication, the Great Rivers Land Trust will turn ownership over to the Lewis and Clark Community College Foundation. The main management of the property is going to be overseen by the National Great Rivers Research and Education Center.

It was moved by Allread, seconded by Rosenthal, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission grants preliminary approval for dedication of Palisades in Jersey County as an Illinois Nature Preserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 12 of the Agenda for the 199th Meeting.

(Resolution 2003)

198-13) Kane Co. – Del Webb Sedge Meadow and Grove Nature Preserve, Dedication

Steven Byers presented a proposal on behalf of the Del Webb Communities of Illinois for preliminary approval for dedication of the Del Webb Sedge Meadow and Grove as an Illinois nature preserve. The proposed nature preserve is 24.62 acres in size (14.25 acres as nature preserve and 10.37 acres as nature preserve buffer), and includes a portion of the Hemmer-Kloempken wetland INAI site (#1519). This wetland basin was included on the INAI for high-quality sedge meadow and graminoid fen wetlands. The proposed nature preserve also includes elements of dry-mesic and mesic savanna and wet-mesic prairie that are being restored. The Hemmer-Kloempken wetland complex, which includes the proposed nature preserve, serves as one of the headwaters of the South Branch of the Kishwaukee River which was identified as a high-quality aquatic resource (INAI # 407). The proposed nature preserve is located in the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division. A state-threatened plant and reptile have been reported from the site. Dedication of this site is consistent with recommendations from the “*Biodiversity Recovery Plan for the Chicago Wilderness Region*”, and elements of the IWAP; specifically, action steps to restore and manage high-quality wetland communities. In addition, three habitat-restricted insect species, including the silver-bordered fritillary (*Boloria selene*), black dash (*Euphys dion*), and broadwing skipper (*Poanes viator*), have been recorded from the Hemmer-Kloempken wetland complex and are identified as species in greatest need of conservation. Finally, dedication of a portion of the high-quality Hemmer-Kloempken wetland basin as Del Webb Sedge Meadow and Grove Nature Preserve is consistent

with one of the special conditions set forth in a permit (ACOE Permit No. 200100684) issued by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to Del Webb Communities of Illinois for construction of the Lakehead Residential Development.

Mr. Byers stated that Del Webb Communities of Illinois reserves the right to continue to provide for access and maintenance of the pipeline. They will do monitoring and maintenance of the infrastructure that is designed to provide water quality benefits. Del Webb Communities of Illinois also retains the right to route and construct a pedestrian trail in the buffer.

Bernie Pallardy, Del Webb Communities of Illinois, addressed the Commission. He stated that the opportunity to add a nature preserve to this area is something that is unique to no other Del Webb community. The residents in the area are excited to add this area to their community. He thanked Mr. Byers and Mr. Mosca for their help and support with this project.

Chair Ross-Shannon thanked Mr. Pallardy for his willingness to bring this site before the Commission. He asked when the management of the common areas will be turned over to the homeowners' association.

Mr. Pallardy stated that it should be turned over to the homeowners' association in approximately one year.

Vince Mosca, Hay and Associates, stated that guidance will be provided to the homeowners' association with regard to the management of the area so a seamless transition will take place.

It was moved by Riddell, seconded by Schwegman, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission grants approval for preliminary approval for dedication of Del Webb Sedge Meadow and Grove in Kane County as an Illinois Nature Preserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 13 of the Agenda for the 199th Meeting.

(Resolution 2004)

A lunch break was taken from 12:25 p.m. – 1:10 p.m.

199-14) Massac Co. – Horsefly Ridge Nature Preserve, Dedication

Judy Faulkner Dempsey presented a proposal on behalf of Robert L. and Robyn R. Shapiro for preliminary approval for dedication of a 49-acre natural area known as Horsefly Ridge. The area contains barrens/open woodland community and is located in the Coastal Plain Natural Division, Cretaceous Hills Section in eastern Massac County. The area is significant because it contains the high-quality barrens/open woodland community, which is rare in the State. The barrens/open woodland contains “limby”, open grown trees in the age range of 75-125 years, with a forb/grass component of species found in open rocky areas or prairie-like openings. The site today is

characteristically less dry and open, as it was when the original surveyors described its characteristic growth as “barren land, thinly timbered, shrub oak and briers.” The nature preserve designation helps accomplish goals of the IWAP. The protection of the proposed Horsefly Ridge Nature Preserve also supports action steps identified for the Forests Campaign, i.e. to assist private forest management by protection of open woodlands and barrens.

Deborah Stone stated that the site is not currently on the INAI; however, it will be brought to the Natural Areas Evaluation Committee for consideration to be added the INAI prior to the INPC’s October meeting. Since the act of dedication of a site by the Commission is enough justification to have the site added to the INAI, the Commission could certainly act on its own judgment as to the quality of the site.

Mark Guetersloh, IDNR District Heritage Biologist, stated that he supports the presentation given by Ms. Faulkner Dempsey, and he would like to recommend that this site be given preliminary approval for dedication. He stated that he considers this site to be a barren, and it should be managed as such. He stated that he felt it is one of the rarest communities, particularly in the Cretaceous Hills section, and it is a very diverse site. He stated that the site qualifies for the INAI as a grade C barren. With the proper management, the site could become a grade A barren.

Kelly Neal stated that even though the site was determined to be a grade C barren, the site qualifies for the INAI as a grade C, best of its kind.

Commissioner Schwegman stated that he has seen the area, and he concurs that it is a barrens that has grown up and succeeded. He stated that it was his opinion that the site qualifies for nature preserve status.

It was moved by Schwegman, seconded by Allread, and carried that the following resolution be approved:

The Commission grants approval for preliminary approval for dedication of Horsefly Ridge in Massac County as an Illinois Nature Preserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 14 of the Agenda for the 199th Meeting.

(Resolution 2005)

198-15) Election of Officers – INPC Nominating Committee Report

Commissioner Allread stated that the nominating committee was pleased to offer in nomination the following individuals: for Chair, Commissioner Riddell; Vice-Chair, Commissioner Rosenthal; and for Secretary, Commissioner Keating.

There were no other nominations from the floor.

It was moved by Drucker, seconded by Flemal, and carried that the following Commissioners be elected as Officers of the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission: Jill Riddell as Chair, Lauren Rosenthal as Vice-Chair, and Dr. Richard Keating as Secretary.

199-16) Election of Advisors and Consultants

Commissioner Allread stated that a list of nominated advisors and consultants was on the Agenda under Item 16.

There were no other nominations from the floor.

It was moved by Flemal, seconded by Ross-Shannon, and carried that the following be elected as advisor to the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission: Dr. William Shilts; and the following be elected as consultants to the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission: Gerald Adelman, Marilyn Campbell, Tom Clay, Kenneth Fiske, Jerry Paulson, Joseph Roth, Valerie Spale, Leslie Spraggins, and John White.

Chair Riddell thanked Commissioner Ross-Shannon for his service as Chair of the INPC. Commissioner Ross-Shannon was presented with a plaque with the inscription, "Presented to Bruce Ross-Shannon in appreciation for your service as Chair of the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission from August, 2006 – August, 2008." Chair Riddell also presented Commissioner Ross-Shannon with a book, The Elemental Prairie. She stated that the book has been signed by the Commissioners and staff.

Chair Ross-Shannon thanked everyone for the plaque and the book. He stated that it has been a great experience serving on the Commission. As the Chair, it would have been impossible to do his job without Deborah Stone and Randy Heidorn. The Chair is dependent upon the support and guidance of Ms. Stone and Mr. Heidorn. He stated that the best part of serving on the Commission is being a part of the conservation movement and all of the people around the State that he has been able to meet. He has also been able to see parts of Illinois that he would not have been able to see if he was not part of such an important group.

199-17) Public Comment Period (3 minutes per person)

There was no public comment.

199-18) Other Business

No other business was presented.

199-19) Adjournment

It was moved by Allread, seconded by Rosenthal, and carried that the meeting be adjourned at 1:50 p.m.

Illinois Nature Preserves Commission
One Natural Resources Way
Springfield, IL 62702
217/785-8686

EXHIBIT A

To: Commissioners

From: Kelly Neal, Jenny Skufca, and Randy Heidorn

Date: March 6, 2012

Subject: Staff Report for the 199th Meeting of the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission

I. Illinois Nature Preserves Commission (INPC) Operations:

A. Personnel Action:

1. Jenny Skufca began working in Springfield as the INPC's Natural Areas Defense Specialist on June 2, 2008.
2. Debbie Reider returned to her position as Office Specialist with the INPC on July 16, 2008.
3. Samantha Adams, Graduate Resident Intern, began a one year term with the INPC. Ms. Adams will be working with Bob Edgin in Area 8 (southeastern Illinois). In addition to helping Mr. Edgin with managing natural areas and general administration of INPC field work, she will be assisting other INPC and Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Natural Heritage Biologists in their regions with management and research projects.
4. Angella Moorehouse began working out of a new office located at the Department of Human Services building in Carthage, Illinois. The new contact information for Angella Moorehouse is: 2005 E. Highway 136, Suite B; Carthage, IL 62321; office phone 217-357-9522; fax 217-357-6055.
5. Tom Lerczak temporarily assumed duties of INPC Assistant Director from June 16 through June 20 while Randy Heidorn was deployed to flooding emergencies along the Mississippi River.

B. In the absence of a Natural Area Protection Manager, Mary Kay Solecki reviewed all preservation proposals, nature preserve documents, and land and water reserve documents for the 199th INPC meeting.

C. In the absence of the Office Specialist, Tom Lerczak, Kelly Neal, and Randy Heidorn continued with additional administrative responsibilities to ensure bills were paid; meeting logistics were handled and the completion, execution, and recording of the legal documents continued. Nancy Rogers, IDNR's Division of Watershed Protection, also helped out by taking over the timekeeping duties for the INPC staff, some voucher preparation, preparation of minutes, and assisting with the meeting logistics.

D. Several staff arranged for vehicle and other equipment maintenance prior to the end of the fiscal year.

E. Several field staff converted to a new e-mail system (Outlook). This required some time preparing their e-mail files for the conversion.

F. Kim Roman finished coordinating the design and finalization of an INPC color brochure.

II. Training, Presentations, and Meetings Attended:

A. All INPC staff completed the mandatory ethics training.

B. Kelly Neal, Mary Kay Solecki, and Bob Edgin assisted with training the new regional ecologists working on the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI) update in areas covering natural areas inventory, plant identification, landowner contact procedures, and INPC permit procedures.

C. Debbie Newman and Bob Edgin attended the Fire in Eastern Oak Forests Conference in Carbondale.

D. Jenny Skufca:

1. Attended the INAI regional ecologist training in northeastern Illinois to become acquainted with four nature preserves (Lake in the Hills Fen NP, Boone Creek Fen Nature Preserve (NP), Spring Bluff NP, and Illinois Beach NP).
2. Completed informal ArcView GIS training conducted by the Illinois Natural History Survey staff.
3. Completed informal training on IDNR's consultation process.
4. Toured Area 4 and 5 natural areas of special significance and/or with past, current, or potential threats with Tom Lerczak and Angella Moorehouse.

E. John Nelson:

1. Assisted with "Project Quercus" offered by the Land Conservancy in McHenry County by being a leader in a classroom course and field training of "Quercus" volunteers. The volunteers will collect woodland data at various oak stands located throughout the County to assess the health and status of oak woodlands.

2. Was a guest speaker at the annual meeting of the Upper Rock River Watershed Partnership on July 1, 2008. The presentation subject was the INPC's role in partnerships with landowners to preserve, protect, and manage high-quality natural areas.
- F. Steven Byers:
1. Represented the INPC on the Chicago Wilderness Steering Committee. Served as the Chicago Wilderness co-chair of the Natural Resources Management Team.
 2. Represented the INPC at the Chicago Metropolitan Area Planning/Delta Institute Transportation and Environmental Collaboration Initiative. The purpose was to improve awareness and understanding of different environmental and transportation perspectives.
 3. Represented the INPC at a Chicago Metropolitan Area Planning meeting. The goal was to incorporate the Chicago Wilderness green infrastructure vision into the 2030 Land Use Plan.
 4. Participated in the web-based training offered through the Chicago Wilderness/Futurity Inc. to explore options/opportunities to apply remote sensing to map/quantify existing land cover in Chicago Wilderness region.
 5. Represented the INPC at the opening of the Bolger Bog site by McHenry County Conservation District.
 6. Presented a PowerPoint presentation to Dr. Tom Simpson, the McHenry County Conservation District, and the naturalist certification program regarding the State's perspective on restoration and management; past, present, and future.
- G. Kim Roman:
1. Attended hazardous materials training.
 2. Met with the Natural Resources Conservation Services and The Nature Conservancy (TNC) to discuss opportunities for funding stewardship and increased coordination between the agencies in the Kankakee Sands.
- H. Angella Moorehouse successfully completed a four-day National Wildfire Coordinating Group training course entitled "Introduction to Wildlife Fire Behavior Calculations (S-390)" at the Wildfire Training Academy in Jefferson City, Missouri.
- I. Tom Lerczak:
1. Met with Clare Howard, a reporter for the Peoria Journal Star, at Thomas W. and Elizabeth Moews Dore Seep NP to provide information for an article entitled "Rescue Mission" published on June 28, 2008, which outlined the exotic species control project that is being funded by the INPC at the NP.
 2. Provided a list of hill prairie talking points for Gary Coon, owner of Coon Hill Prairie NHL, for use in a classroom presentation.
 3. Provided landowner Ron Bellrose with information on how to complete a wetland breeding bird survey at Sandra Miller Bellrose NP.
- J. Mary Kay Solecki was interviewed for a Paxton newspaper article on cemetery care and gravestone restoration workshop at Prospect Cemetery Prairie NP.
- K. Debbie Newman:
1. Gave a presentation on Illinois threatened and endangered species in southwestern Illinois and the INPC's role regarding that subject.
 2. Assisted with editing the hill prairie State Wildlife Grant (SWG) brochure.
- L. Bob Edgin:
1. Attended a Plant Endangered Species Technical Advisory Committee meeting in Vienna.
 2. Trained Samantha Adams to use of ArcView and other GIS tools used in mapping and delineating natural areas and tracking stewardship activities.
 3. Submitted a paper entitled "Carya (Hickories) in the Ecotonal Forests of the Illinoian Till Plain" for publication.
- M. Judy Faulkner Dempsey attended a meeting of the Cache River Joint Venture Partnership.
- N. Samantha Adams obtained her herbicide applicators license.
- O. Randy Heidorn participated as treasurer in meetings of the Illinois Prescribed Fire Council.

III. Inventory and Monitoring:

- A. Kelly Neal, Jenny Skufca, and Randy Heidorn participated in the Natural Areas Evaluation Committee meeting.
- B. Randy Heidorn participated in meetings for the development of the natural areas evaluation protocol and other issues relating to the administration and operations of the INAI update.

- C. Breeding bird and other bird surveys were conducted by staff at the following sites:
 1. Elizabeth Lake NP (Nelson)
 2. Iroquois County State Wildlife Area Land & Water Reserve (LWR) (Roman)
 3. Walden West LWR (Lerczak)
 4. Rock Springs Center Woods, Decatur (Lerczak)
 5. Independence Park, Pekin (Lerczak)
- D. Site surveillance was conducted at sites by field staff including:
 1. George S. Park Memorial Woods NP
 2. Crevecoeur NP
 3. Ridgetop Hill Prairie NP
 4. Green Prairie NHL
 5. 12-mile Prairie
 6. Allison Gravel Prairie Natural Heritage Landmark (NHL)
 7. Harman Prairie INAI sites
 8. Lost Creek Marsh LWR
 9. P & E Refuge LWR
 10. Miller Shrub Swamp NP
 11. Robeson Hills NP
- E. John Nelson recorded monthly groundwater monitoring data from piezometers at Gladstone Fen NP.
- F. Kim Roman:
 1. Assisted with a Blanding's turtle survey at Goose Lake Prairie NP.
 2. Surveyed limits of the endangered *Comptonia peregrina* population at Sweet Fern Savanna LWR.
- G. Angella Moorehouse conducted flora and fauna surveys on several INPC sites including: Revis Hill Prairie NP, Sand Prairie-Scrub Oak NP, Long Branch Sand Prairie NP, Meredosa Hill Prairie NP, Charles "Chinee" Colvin Sand Prairie LWR, Nenawakwa LWR, Robert A. Evers LWR, Grubb Hollow Hill Prairie NP, Kopp's Glade NHL, Tartan Bluff Hill Prairie NHL, and Delabar-Pruett Hill Prairie NHL.
- H. Tom Lerczak:
 1. Continued monitoring the trail system at Carpenter Park NP to evaluate effects of the new management policy that allows leashed dogs on the trail system.
 2. Conferred with the INAI update staff regarding undiscovered natural areas in Macoupin County.
- I. Mary Kay Solecki:
 1. Surveyed for eastern massasaugas at Allerton Park and Heartland Pathway INAI sites with an intern.
 2. Surveyed for the state-endangered *Sangamon phlox* at several locations with an intern.
- J. Debbie Newman conducted the annual U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Breeding Bird Survey route.
- K. Bob Edgin:
 1. Confirmed the presence of the state-endangered *Spiranthes vernalis* at Beadles Barrens NP.
 2. Monitored a population of the state-endangered *Stenanthium gramineum* at Big Creek Woods Memorial NP.
 3. Nominated Paint Rock Bluffs, Marion County, for inclusion on the INAI.
- L. Samantha Adams:
 1. Assisted with insect surveys at 12-mile Prairie and Flag Pond INAI sites and Prairie Ridge State Natural Area LWR.
 2. Initiated botanical surveys at Green Prairie NHL and Ping Prairie at Huskey Hollow NHL.
 3. Assisted a District Heritage Biologist and Illinois Natural History Survey staff with herptofauna surveys in Effingham, Marion, and Jasper counties.
 4. Monitored sugar maple and bush honeysuckle control projects at Sam Parr State Park, Jasper County.
 5. Monitored a sassafras control project at Ping Prairie at Huskey Hollow NHL
- M. Judy Faulkner Dempsey facilitated and assisted with data gathering at Horsefly Ridge for an INAI evaluation.

IV. Protection Program:

- A. Staff met with landowners and managers to plan and draft protection proposals that are on the agenda of the 199th meeting.

- B. John Nelson met with representatives of the Jo Davies Conservation Foundation to discuss management issues and protection programs at Keogh Slough effigy mound site.
- C. Steven Byers:
 - 1. Corresponded and held discussions with staff of the Forest Preserve District of Kane County (FPDKC) regarding opportunities for dedication of an addition to Freeman Kame NP.
 - 2. Has continued a discussion with the Natural Land Institute regarding dedication of lots located north of Gensburg-Markham Prairie NP that received preliminary approval for dedication as the George B. Fell addition to Gensburg-Markham Prairie NP.
 - 3. Continues discussions with staff of the McHenry County Conservation District, landowners, and The Land Conservancy of McHenry County regarding land protection and stewardship in the Alden Headwaters region and throughout McHenry County.
 - 4. Continued meeting with staff of USFWS, McHenry County Conservation District, and Friends of Hack-ma-tack to bring a USFWS refuge to northeastern Illinois.
- D. Kim Roman:
 - 1. Met with the landowner of 600+acres near Starved Rock State Park and Percumsaugan Creek/Blackball Mines NP to discuss stewardship/protection.
 - 2. Began drafting protection proposals for two TNC-owned natural areas in the Kankakee Sands.
 - 3. Met with Commonwealth Edison to discuss management and informal protection of its right-of-way adjacent to Superior Street Prairie LWR.
- E. Tom Lerczak:
 - 1. Gathered information for two in-progress LWR proposals located along the Mackinaw River (ParkLands Foundation properties).
 - 2. Reviewed a new NP proposal written by Mary Kay Solecki and proofread a legal description on a final NP dedication document for Mary Kay Solecki.
- F. Mary Kay Solecki:
 - 1. Protection efforts focused on the Salt Fork of the Vermilion, a biologically significant stream, resulted in a new NHL. The 44-acre Jordan Creek of the Salt Fork NHL, Vermilion County, was designated by site owners Ken and Tanya Larimore to protect part of the Salt Fork of the Vermilion River INAI site (#1427) and associated forest.
 - 2. Continued working with Bill Van Hagey to dedicate part of his land on the Sangamon River (a biologically significant stream recognized by the INAI) as a NP and continued working with Heartland Pathways Board to finalize dedication of Heartland Pathways Prairie NP.
 - 3. Contacted landowners on a Sangamon River INAI site and a Salt Fork of Vermilion River INAI site.
- G. Debbie Newman contacted landowners of two unprotected INAI sites.
- H. Bob Edgin discussed protection options with owners of Little Rock Farm, Paint Rock Bluffs and Flag Pond INAI sites.
- I. Judy Faulkner Dempsey:
 - 1. Negotiated preservation of, and wrote, reviewed, edited, and created maps for dedication of the proposed Lafarge Limestone Glade NP. Lafarge is willing to dedicate after many years of INPC working with the company. These proposals will be presented at future meetings.
 - 2. Assisted TNC with continued negotiations on a new parcel at Lovet's Pond.

V. Land Acquisition:

- A. Steven Byers:
 - 1. Participated in an ongoing discussion with staff of the FPDKC regarding opportunities to purchase property adjacent to the Meissner-Corron Forest Preserve.
 - 2. Participated in discussions with Steve Bylina , Forest Preserve District of Cook County (FPDCC) regarding opportunities for land acquisition adjacent to Wolf Road Prairie NP.
 - 3. Worked with the McHenry County Conservation District to review the District's plans for land acquisition adjacent to Brookdale and Goose Lake, in Alden Township.
- B. Kim Roman assisted the Friends of the Cook County Forest Preserve District with the submission of a grant to acquire buffer to Burnham Prairie NP.
- C. Angella Moorehouse assisted the Natural Land Institute with a new land acquisition project located within Milan Bottoms. The 91-acre acquisition will provide an essential buffer and will allow access to a large

tract of bottomland forest and wetlands owned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and managed with the assistance of the IDNR.

- D. Tom Lerczak provided information to the IDNR concerning possible acquisition of land adjacent to Meredosia Hill Prairie NP.
- E. Debbie Newman continued facilitating negotiation of a LWR acquisition with four involved parties.

VI. Defense Program:

- A. Kelly Neal and Jenny Skufca responded to eight reviews for the IDNR's Comprehensive Environmental Review Program (CERP).
- B. Jenny Skufca:
 - 1. Reviewed eight draft Class 3 Special Resource Groundwater technical reports written for the INPC under contract by the Illinois State Water Survey (ISWS) and Illinois State Geological Survey (ISGS) for Elizabeth Lake NP, Braidwood Dunes and Savanna NP, Illinois Beach NP, Romeoville Prairie NP, Lockport Prairie NP, Volo Bog NP, Lake in the Hills Fen NP, and Bluff Spring Fen NP.
 - 2. Assisted Bob Edgin with the response to oil well plugging and clean-up concerns at Beall Woods NP.
 - 3. Reviewed coordination of potential threats to Hybernia NP with Steven Byers.
- C. Randy Heidorn was deployed for five days as a part of the Illinois Type 3 Incident Management Team for the flooding of the Mississippi River. He served as the Planning Section Chief on the general staff of the Sny Island Levee District flood-fighting efforts. In this role, he helped develop plans to coordinate over 1,00 personnel in the successful reinforcement of 52 miles of levees protecting the entire western boundary of Pike County, south of Quincy, and developed contingency plans for the evacuation of incident personnel and the public. The levees in the Sny Island District protect numerous endangered and threatened species habitats and four INAI sites, including Big Britches NHL.
- D. The summer flooding along the Mississippi River inundated bottomland forest habitat and wetlands including several sites within the INPC system including Cedar Glen NP in Hancock County and New Crystal Lake Club NHL. Much of this habitat within the INPC system is not protected by levees. These areas are subject to annual floods and the vegetative communities are likely to respond favorably once the water subsides.
- E. Mary Kay Solecki investigated the suspicious discharge of orange water into the Middle Fork of Vermilion River (an INAI stream) with staff of the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA). The IEPA took water samples for analysis.
- F. Site Threat Report:
 - 1. **Site: Somme Prairie NP, Cook County - Steven Byers**
 - a. **Issue:** Proposed commercial development with request for permit to construct a private sanitary sewage treatment facility.
 - b. **Threat:** Impact to surface water hydrology; specifically, degradation in water quality and changes in flow rates entering Somme Woods Forest Preserve (FPDCC-owned site that is not a dedicated NP), then by surface drainage/culvert a short distance into the West Fork of the North Branch of the Chicago River in Somme Prairie NP.
 - c. **Status:** According to General Superintendent, Richard Lanyon, of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago, the project will undergo thorough review prior to permit approval.
 - 2. **Site: Middlefork Savanna NP, Lake County – Steven Byers**
 - a. **Issue:** Proposed “improvements” to gravel pit (Dalitsch Pond) do not adequately demonstrate the proximity and surface hydrology linkage with Middlefork Savanna NP. The project should be reviewed in the larger context of the City of Lake Forest Municipal Services Center development (old COSTCO site).
 - b. **Threat:** Alterations to water quality and flow rates entering the NP are the primary issues.
 - c. **Status:** U.S. Army Corps of Engineers staff has issued a permit that includes many of the issues and concerns raised by the INPC and the Lake County Forest Preserve District.
 - 3. **Site: Hybernia NP, Lake County - Steven Byers**
 - a. **Issue:** An attorney representing the landowners is attempting to secure permits to build three houses on unprotected lots embedded within the NP.

- b. **Threat:** The proposed development would destroy high-quality prairie that supports the federally-listed prairie white-fringed orchid. Indirect impacts include alteration of surface water hydrology, sedimentation, and erosion.
 - c. **Status:** The attorney has retained V3, a consulting firm, and has initiated consultation with the IDNR. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will determine jurisdictional status of the wetlands on site this summer. It is possible the landowners could get an RP4 permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to build single family dwellings.
4. **Site: Bluff Spring Fen NP, Cook County – John Nelson and Steven Byers**
- a. **Issue:** Routing of water from Gifford Lake and “finger lakes” located adjacent to Bluff Spring Fen is currently under consideration by the FPDCC. Options include surface conveyance of water from Gifford Lake or conveyance of the water via a pipe.
 - b. **Threat:** Conveyance of the water in an open swale represents a threat to the groundwater chemistry upon which the fen wetlands are dependent. Randy Locke, ISWS, and Jim Miner (ISGS) have both recommended the “piping” alternative. The open swale alternative also threatens a previously permitted project to restore surface and groundwater hydrology (and fen wetlands) by filling a shallow gravel pit lake.
 - c. **Status:** INPC, ISWS and ISGS staff provided a PowerPoint presentation to FPDCC staff and its consultant about the resources at risk. The outcome of the meeting was very good, and meetings are on-going with the consultant behind the concept to direct surface water from Gifford Lake to Poplar Creek. The follow-up meeting with Bluff City Materials, Inc., FPDCC staff, City of Elgin staff, Mr. Nelson, Mr. Byers, and the survey scientists to further review options with Bluff City Materials, Inc. was also very good. Bluff City Materials, Inc., committed to install a pipe from Gifford Road to Poplar Creek. Randy Locke, ISWS, provided a very good white paper on the summary of water challenges that remain at Bluff Spring Fen NP.
5. **Site: Fel-Pro Triple R Fen NP – Detrana Fen INAI, McHenry County – Steven Byers**
- a. **Issue:** Residential development to the south (Wynstone 2) along Crystal Lake Avenue (3.6 acres) and development north of Rawson Bridge Road (Chalet Hills) – impacting 30+ acres and Bates Fen NP to the north and east.
 - b. **Threat:** Development as proposed would adversely impact surface hydrology at both sites/locations, impacting high-quality fen wetlands that are sensitive to introduction of increased amounts of surface water.
 - c. **Status:** INPC staff met with City of Cary staff, McHenry County Conservation District staff, McHenry County staff, the developer, and their consultant to review project. The project, as currently configured, violates the McHenry County Stormwater Management Ordinance. McHenry County staff (agency charged with implementing the stormwater management plan) has indicated that the developer will not receive a variance and must comply with the plan. A revised plan has not been submitted. The proposed development north of Rawson Bridge Road has not been submitted for review.
6. **Site: Skokie River NP, Lake County – Steven Byers**
- a. **Issue:** The Lake County Department of Transportation routed and began initial site preparation for construction of a regional bike trail just west of Skokie River NP in Lake Forest.
 - b. **Threat:** The bike trail alignment will destroy high-quality prairie located just outside the boundary of the NP. The bike trail will be routed across a wetland swale on an earthen causeway with a single discharge point and threatens a wetlands/swale located downstream in the NP. The NP will be vulnerable to sedimentation/siltation during the construction phase; and, long term, subject to changes in the surface hydrology. The silt fence was initially installed in the NP.
 - c. **Status:** Staff of the Lake County Department of Transportation has submitted a revised plan that addresses the issues and concerns raised by the INPC and the Lake Forest Open Lands Association. The revised plan is currently under review by Commonwealth Edison – Exelon, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Lake County Stormwater Management Commission.
7. **Site: Palatine Prairie NP, Cook County – Steven Byers**
- a. **Issue:** A private firm (Golf Nation) has erected a structure (with netting) to support a golf driving range. The ground wires that support the structure intrude into Palatine Prairie NP.
 - b. **Threat:** Unauthorized intrusion into an Illinois NP, and the owner of the NP (Palatine Park District) wants the infrastructure removed.

- c. **Status:** INPC staff met with Pat Moser, Palatine Park District, and Tim Wuhrman, Golf Nation, and reached an agreement regarding a timeframe for removal of the infrastructure from the NP.
- 8. **Site: Ferson's Creek NP, Kane County – Steven Byers**
 - a. **Issue:** The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) intends to replace a bridge on Illinois Route 31, located just upstream from Ferson's Creek NP.
 - b. **Threat:** Alterations to surface water quality, primarily sedimentation and siltation associated with the construction phase of the project.
 - c. **Status:** IDOT has initiated consultation with the IDNR. INPC staff will provide additional information about the resources at risk, legal description, and comment on elements of the project when formally submitted by IDOT.
- 9. **Site: Braidwood Dunes and Savanna NP, Will County – Kim Roman**
 - a. **Issue:** In 2006, Exelon released Tritium from its Braidwood facility and has been pumping one of its ponds to capture the Tritium plume in the groundwater.
 - b. **Threat:** The concern regarding the NP is not the radioactive material, but rather the groundwater withdrawal and its potential impacts to its wetland communities.
 - c. **Status:** Discussions with Exelon and the Illinois Attorney General's Office (IAGO) regarding groundwater withdrawals at Braidwood Dunes and Savanna NP continue. The INPC has been engaged in discussions with Exelon, the IEPA, and the IAGO since the release became known. The IAGO, representing the IEPA and the INPC, first presented the consent order to Exelon in April, 2008. While it is anticipated that negotiations for groundwater protection and site management will be ongoing for the next several months, it is a big step toward finalizing resolution.
- 10. **Site: Rockton Bog NP, Winnebago County – John Nelson**
 - a. **Issue:** Nitrogen spill in the road right-of-way adjacent to the IDNR property and nearby Rockton Bog NP.
 - b. **Threat:** A high concentration of nitrogen resulted in a dead zone of approximately one-fourth acre of wetland vegetation. Nitrogen levels were measured above and below the spill area. Initial results indicate an area of high concentration, and this area is targeted for soil removal off-site. Further monitoring is planned to determine if nitrogen migration and concentrations extend to the NP.
 - c. **Status:** IDNR legal counsel and the IEPA have agreed upon a clean-up plan which includes soil excavation, nitrogen monitoring, and herbicide treatments.
- 11. **Beall Woods NP, Wabash County – Bob Edgin**
 - a. **Issue:** The owner/lease holder of mineral and oil rights is in the process of renovating temporarily inactive oil wells on the property.
 - b. **Threat:** There are two oil wells in the NP. One is temporarily inactive. The other is in disrepair and not in use, in violation of oil and gas regulations, and does present a potential threat. There is no current surface agreement between the IDNR and the oil company.
 - c. **Status:** The oil company has agreed to seal the wells and remove all surface equipment. Bob Edgin and Terry Esker, IDNR, have monitored the cleanup and removal.

VII. Stewardship Program:

- A. Kelly Neal continues to review and issue special use permits for research and other permitted activities within NPs and LWRs.
- B. Jenny Skufca and Kelly Neal coordinated purchase of equipment to be used for stewardship activities by volunteers in the Volunteer Stewardship Network.
- C. Randy Heidorn continues to coordinate the development of administrative rules for the implementation of the Illinois Prescribed Burning Act. Draft rules are currently being reviewed by the Office of State Fire Marshall, per the statute.
- D. Involvement with other organizations:
 - 1. Jenny Skufca and Kelly Neal attended a meeting of the Northern Illinois Parks and Preserves Volunteer Managers.
 - 2. Kelly Neal participated in a meeting of the Alligator Snapping Turtle (AST) Recovery Team and has been a part of communications regarding logistics of reintroduction of AST at Heron Pond-Little Black Slough NP.

3. Steven Byers:
 - a. Represented the INPC at a Chicago Wilderness coordinating group meeting in Barrington to review grant/project review protocol.
 - b. Conducted site visits for Jennifer Hammer, grant administrator with The Conservation Foundation, at several dedicated NPs for which The Conservation Foundation is holding funds earmarked for restoration and management.
 4. Angella Moorehouse worked with IDNR Natural Heritage Division staff on the implementation of the statewide Hill Prairie Project and SWG.
 5. Tom Lerczak:
 - a. Attended a meeting with various IDNR staff to discuss an Illinois chorus frog monitoring and recovery plan.
 - b. Provided comments to IDNR staff and Landowner Incentive Program (LIP) staff regarding restoration work completed at Mud Creek Hill Prairie Natural Area and effects of cutting cedar trees on olive hairstreak butterfly populations.
 6. Mary Kay Solecki held a gravestone and graveyard restoration workshop at Prospect Cemetery Prairie NP to continue addressing concerns regarding burial plot maintenance and condition of tombstones. The workshop was led by Hal Hassen, IDNR, and Dawn Cobbs, Historic Preservation Agency, and was attended by approximately 15 interested citizens, including members of Patton Township Board (landowner) and relatives with ancestors buried in the cemetery.
 7. Debbie Newman:
 - a. Attended a LIP Technical Committee ranking meeting.
 - b. Met with the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency and IDNR archaeologist about a newly identified archeological site on a LWR.
 8. Judy Faulkner Dempsey prepared the INPC's comments on scoping for prescribed burning and herbicide use to control exotic species in Shawnee Natural Areas.
- E. Stewardship planning:
1. Kelly Neal reviewed two management schedules and one unscheduled management action.
 2. Angella Moorehouse, Mary Kay Solecki, Tom Lerczak, and Debbie Newman worked with IDNR Natural Heritage Division staff on the implementation of the statewide Hill Prairie Project SWG.
 3. Angella Moorehouse, Debbie Newman, and Tom Lerczak continue to work on the implementation and planning of LIP projects for private landowner.
 4. Tom Lerczak:
 - a. Met with the owner and manager of Funks Grove LWR to discuss and plan execution of the LWR's management plan.
 - b. Worked with Stan McTaggart, LIP coordinator, at Mettler Woods NP to set up a new LIP project at the NP.
 - c. Provided an evaluation and a list of management recommendations to the Pekin Park District for its reforestation project (funded several years ago by the Natural Areas Acquisition Fund [NAAF]) at Dirksen-McNaughton Woods LWR.
 - d. Provided comments to IDNR staff and LIP staff regarding restoration work completed at Mud Creek Hill Prairie Natural Area and the effects of cutting cedar trees on olive hairstreak butterfly populations.
 5. Debbie Newman:
 - a. Wrote four plans for LIP consideration and reviewed 26 LIP plans.
 - b. Worked on collecting GPS coordinates, writing site assessments, management plans, and landowner agreements for the Hill Prairie SWG project.
 6. Judy Faulkner Dempsey met with Ned Enrietto, IDNR's Region 5 Engineer, at Circle B Ranch LWR to determine how best to repair the road and control erosion to protect the LWR resources.
- F. Stewardship project implementation: Several staff implemented or prepared the needed paperwork to implement NAAF stewardship and defense, WHIP, Northeastern Illinois Wetland Conservation Account, and C2000 source projects. Some of the sites where projects are being implemented include:
1. Hybernia NP
 2. Fox River Country Day School (INAI site)
 3. Trout Park NP
 4. Trout Park River's Edge (INAI Site)

5. Sterne's Fen NP
 6. Bates Fen NP
 7. Oakwood Hills Fen NP
 8. Spring Grove Fen NP
 9. Bluff Spring Fen NP
 10. Raceway Woods NHL
 11. Sleepy Hollow Ravine NP
 12. Jamar Haven LWR,
 13. Short Fork Seep NP
 14. Josua Lindahl Hill Prairies NP
 15. Robert A. Evers LWR
 16. Singing Woods NP
 17. Robinson Park Hill Prairies NP
 18. Siloam Springs SP
 19. Thomas W. and Elizabeth Moews Dore Seep NP
 20. Mt. Palatine Cemetery Prairie NP
 21. Speckman-Stelter Woods LWR
 22. Sandra Nukker Bellrose NP
 23. Walden West LWR
 24. Tomlin Timber NP
 25. Blufftop Acres LWR
 26. DesPain Wetlands LWR.
 27. Salt Lick Point LWR
 28. Ping Prairie at Huskey Hollow NHL
 29. Circle B Ranch LWR
 30. Degognia Canyon LWR
- G. Land management conducted by staff:
1. John Nelson:
 - a. Controlled brush and exotics, and planted native grass and trees, at Lee Miglin Savanna buffer addition to Boone Creek Fen NP.
 - b. Cleared trees and brush at Harlem Hills NP with Brad Semel, IDNR, and planted \$1,000 of native grass seed.
 2. Steven Byers:
 - a. Coordinated with Skyline Helicopters, Jack Pizzo and Associates, Brad Woodson with McHenry County Conservation District, and Dan Kirk, IDNR, regarding timing and flight operations for control of phragmites under an NAAF 2008 contract at sites in McHenry County.
 - b. Participated with several volunteer groups to pull garlic mustard at five NPs.
 3. Kim Roman assisted with planting plugs of 1,200 federally endangered *Dalea foliosa* plants at Des Plaines Dolomite Prairie LWR.
 4. Tom Lerczak:
 - a. Replaced NP boundary signs at McCoy Woods NP.
 - b. Replaced LWR boundary signs at Cooper Park Wetlands LWR.
 - c. Posted specialty entrance signs at Stubblefield Woodlots NP, Thaddeus Stubblefield Grove NP, Myer Woods NP, Mt. Palatine Cemetery Prairie NP, and Miller-Anderson Woods NP.
 5. Mary Kay Solecki:
 - a. Assisted with marking boundaries at the Georgetown addition to Little Vermilion River LWR.
 - b. Assisted with prairie restoration/stewardship at Barnhart Prairie Restoration NP, Loda Cemetery Prairie NP, and Doris Westfall Prairie Restoration NP.
 6. Debbie Newman:
 - a. Conducted a workday to train 20 volunteers at Salt Lick Point on hill prairie restoration.
 - b. Discovered and removed three new populations of garlic mustard on LWRs.

EXHIBIT B

**Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Report to the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission
August 5, 2008**

Natural Areas Evaluation Committee

The Natural Areas Evaluation Committee held its 49th meeting in Springfield on July 8. Actions taken at that meeting are summarized below.

District 6 - Fulton County

Kedzior Woodlands - INAI #1746 (Cat. III) - **Approved**

Boundary expansion to include addition of tract #1 which was added to Kedzior Woodlands LWR in August, 2006 and not previously incorporated into the INAI boundary.

District 21 - Marion County

Paint Rock Bluffs - New - **Approved**

This is a new Category I site for the presence of 200 m of Grade A undisturbed north-facing sandstone cliff and 230 m of Grade A undisturbed southeast-facing sandstone cliff.

District 21&22 - Clay, Richland, Wayne & White Counties

Little Wabash River - INAI # 1156 (Category II) - **Approved**

Based upon a freshwater mussel survey of the watershed, the current INAI site will be expanded and Category VI designation will be added based upon the presence of greater than 10 live species of mussels.

Beech Bluff Mussel Bed (#33)

Old Iola Road Mussel Bed (#8)

Section 5 Bridge Mussel Bed (#32)

The motion at the meeting was to add the category VI designation to the existing INAI as well as to expand the current boundary to include non-contiguous sample locations with appropriate buffer and that the above "Mussel Bed" references were to be included in the database as "Sample Sites" and included as aliases. As later pointed out however, the INAI S&G states: "A single Cat VI location is called an "assemblage" and two such locations within 2 miles of each other are called "segments." These aliases should be referred to as such.

District 22 - Wayne County

Skillet Fork - New - **Approved**

Based upon a freshwater mussel survey of the watershed this site will be added for Category VI designation based upon the presence of greater than 10 live species of mussels.

Garrison Bridge Mussel Bed (#35)

Gettins Bridge Mussel Bed (#36)

Rock Bluff Bridge Mussel Bed (#37)

The motion at the meeting was to add the site as a category VI designation with non-contiguous sample locations and appropriate buffer and that the above “Mussel Bed” references were to be included in the database as “Sample Sites” and included as aliases. As above, the INAI S&G dictates that these should be referred to as "assemblage" or "segments".

Land Acquisition

Five tracts of land, totaling 575 acres, have been acquired using the Natural Areas Acquisition Fund since the last INPC meeting.

A total of 255 acres at Flag Pond natural area in Clay County was acquired in May, 2008. Flag Pond is in the bottomlands of the Little Wabash River in southeastern Illinois. It's a rare natural community type in the southern part of the state that's not well represented in the nature preserve system. Bob Edgin alerted us the natural area was for sale. The Nature Conservancy preacquired the tract and held it until IDNR had funding in place. This property has been made a satellite of Prairie Ridge State Natural Area and the Division of Natural Heritage will have primary responsibility for management of Flag Pond.

A 151-acre addition to Piatt County State Fish and Wildlife Area was acquired in June, 2008. This is a bottomland forest with more than ½ mile frontage on the Sangamon River. The new acquisition is near the University of Illinois' 1,500 acre Allerton Park, one of the largest blocks of forest in central Illinois.

A 5-acre addition to Wolf Road Prairie in Cook County was acquired in June, 2008. Wolf Road Prairie is one of the largest and finest mesic tallgrass prairies remaining in the Chicago area. The IDNR has been working in partnership with the Cook County Forest Preserve District and Save the Prairie Society to protect and buffer the prairie since 1981. With this acquisition of buffer land the protected area totals 123 acres.

Two additions to Stemler Cave Woods in St. Clair County were acquired in June, 2008. Stemler Cave Woods is an old growth forest located on a sinkhole plain in southwestern Illinois. An extensive cave system underlays the woods and surrounding land. The cave system supports populations of two endangered species. The IDNR currently owns 195 acres here, most of it dedicated as Stemler Cave Woods Nature Preserve. The 7-acre Fondaw addition buffers the north end of the Nature Preserve. The 156-acre Zoeller acquisition has more than 50 sinkholes. It protects more of the woods and buffers the adjacent Nature Preserve. A federal LAWCON grant, in the amount of \$1,097,000, was combined with Natural Areas Acquisition Fund dollars to acquire the Zoeller tract.

Personnel Changes

Three new graduate student workers started work with the Division of Natural Heritage or the INPC on June 16, 2008. Samantha (Sami) Adams is working with Natural Areas Preservation Specialist

Bob Edgin in southeast Illinois, Jeff Horn will assist District Heritage Biologist Ed Anderson in northwest Illinois, and Jeff Butler is working with District Heritage Biologist Dan Kirk in northeast Illinois. We are very pleased to have the services of these three students through June 15, 2009.

Interviews have been scheduled for later this week to choose two additional graduate student workers. The two candidates selected for these positions will start work on August 16 or September 1, 2008. One student will be assigned to work with Natural Areas Preservation Specialist Steven Byers in northeast Illinois and the other will work with District Heritage Biologist Michelle Simone in the west-central part of the state.

Wildlife Preservation Fund

Donations to the Wildlife Preservation Fund total approximately \$188,000 so far this year.

Governor Blagojevich recently announced the grants awarded from the fund for FY2009, and grant agreements and contracts have been sent to the successful applicants.

Cache River Basin Water Control Structure Restored

In 2007, a water control structure, located on private property in the Cache River basin, was partially removed, resulting in lower water levels on several thousand acres of wetlands, much of which is protected through dedication or registration. Earlier this summer, the landowner terminated the rights granted to a local organization to manage that structure. A representative of that organization removed the remainder of the structure on the day before those rights were terminated. Through negotiations with the landowner, the Department was able to secure a 6-year agreement which grants the IDNR the right to enter the property and manage the structure to enhance management of wetlands in the Cache Basin. IDNR's Office of Realty and Environmental Planning (Connie Waggoner) and Office of Legal Counsel (Jack Price) handled the negotiations. Upon completion of the management agreement, the Department moved quickly to rebuild the structure and restore water levels. The IDNR's Office of Architecture, Engineering and Grants (John Evans) provided the heavy equipment and operators for the construction. The Office of Water Resources (Loren Wobig) was also instrumental in this project by assuring compliance with all pertinent regulations and permitting requirements. The entire effort to secure the management agreement and restore the structure was possible only because of the interest and support of Deputy Directors Leslie Sgro and Deborah Stone, who made this a priority for the Department and facilitated the coordination of the several offices involved.

Landowner Incentive Program

The Landowner Incentive Program (LIP) provides cost-share support to private landowners who are willing to implement habitat improvement projects on their property. Work focuses on parcels that provide habitat for rare species or that include high-quality habitats. This year, LIP was expanded geographically to include the Alton Bluffs area. This project area includes the counties along the Mississippi River from Adams County on the north to Union County on the south. Twenty-six projects have been selected for funding. Those projects will improve a variety of habitats, including hill prairie and glades, upland forest, bottomland forest, wetlands, karst, and streams.

Illinois Natural Areas Inventory Update

The 49th Natural Areas Evaluation Committee (NAEC) meeting was held on July 8, 2008. Four site issues were discussed covering four Natural Heritage districts. One site issue involved a boundary change resulting from an INPC action from a previous meeting. One site issue pertained to a category addition, as well as a boundary expansion. Two new sites were added: one Category I and one Category IV.

The next meeting of the NAEC will occur on September 30, 2008. This will be the 50th meeting of the NAEC.

INAI Update

We have completed the first year of the INAI Update contract. In that first year, many technical and procedural issues were resolved, several workshops were conducted, and regional ecologists were hired and trained. Work on the contract continues to progress, and the contractor is on target for completion of most of the deliverables as outlined within the scope of work. The major accomplishment of the last quarter is that the regional ecologists have, for the most part, completed their training. They have developed lists of potential INAI sites for evaluation through consultation with the District Heritage Biologists and INPC field staff, as well as other local experts. The regional ecologists are in various stages of site evaluations. The assignment of the INAI contract to the University of Illinois and the Illinois Natural History Survey is progressing, but not yet complete. It is anticipated that when this assignment agreement is in place, the effective date will be back dated to July 1, 2008.