

Illinois Nature Preserves Commission
Minutes of the 200th Meeting
(Approved at the 201st Meeting)

World Shooting & Recreational Complex
One Main Event Lane
Sparta, IL

Tuesday, October 28, 2008

200-1) Call to Order, Roll Call, and Introduction of Attendees

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

Deborah Stone read the roll call.

Members present: Ron Flemal, Richard Keating, Mare Payne, Lauren Rosenthal, and John Schwegman.

Members absent: Jill Allread, Harry Drucker, Jill Riddell, and Bruce Ross-Shannon.

Others present: Samantha Adams, Steven Byers, Bob Edgin, Judy Faulkner Dempsey, Randy Heidorn, Jason Inczauskis, Tom Lerczak, Kelly Neal, John Nelson, Debbie Newman, Debbie Reider, Kim Roman, Jenny Skufca, and Mary Kay Solecki, Illinois Nature Preserves Commission (INPC); Jeannie Barnes, Russell Blogg, Martin Kemper, Jeff Horn, Glen Kruse, Diane Tecic, Office of Resource Conservation (ORC), Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR); Megan Borrowman, Kathi Davis, Don McFall, and Justin Ramey, Office of Realty and Environmental Planning (OREP), IDNR; Sue Dees, Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT); Dr. Brian Anderson, Illinois Natural History Survey and INPC Advisor; Marilyn Campbell, Endangered Species Protection Board (ESPB) and INPC Consultant; Dr. Stan Harris, John Sommerhof, and Edmund Thornton, former INPC Commissioners; Fran Harty, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), representing the proposed Carl N. Becker Savanna Nature Preserve; Bob Mohr, Jim Pflasterer, and Dennis Valentine, Village of Valmeyer, representing the proposed addition to Salt Lick Point Land and Water Reserve; Les and Mary Moore representing the proposed Lafarge Limestone Glade Nature Preserve; Alley Ringhausen, Great Rivers Land Trust, representing the proposed Palisades Nature Preserve; Robert Shapiro representing the proposed Horsefly Ridge Nature Preserve; Tim Huber and Keith McKinney, Norris Electric Cooperative; Kathy Andria, American Bottom Conservancy; Roger Beadles, Ralph and Karen Buettner, Lila Lehnerr, Jim Payne; Martha Schwegman, and Paul and Carol Soderholm.

Vice-Chair Rosenthal thanked Debbie Newman for the field trip to Buck Hill Bottom Land and Water Reserve on October 27, 2008. She also thanked Martin Kemper, District Heritage Biologist, for helping with the field trip. Vice-Chair Rosenthal stated she would like to thank Mr. and Mrs. Shuetz for allowing the Commission to tour their Land and Water Reserve. She stated that three former INPC Commissioners attended the field trip, Stan Harris, Judith Joy, and Edmund Thornton.

Vice-Chair Rosenthal thanked the IDNR for allowing the Commission to hold its meeting at the World Shooting and Recreational Complex. The Complex opened approximately two years ago, and it has brought hundreds of visitors to southwestern Illinois.

200-2) Adoption of Agenda

Item 9, Horn Prairie Grove Land and Water Reserve, has been deferred. Item 16 will be presented after Item 7.

It was moved by Flemal, seconded by Keating, and carried that the Agenda be adopted as amended.

200-3) Approval of Minutes of the 199th Meeting Minutes, August 5, 2008

It was moved by Schwegman, seconded by Flemal, and carried that the Minutes of the 199th Meeting be approved.

Vice-Chair Rosenthal reported that at the 199th Meeting of the INPC, held on August 5, 2008, at the Sugar Creek Administration Center, Joliet, legal protection for two tracts of land, totaling 549 acres was approved by the Commission. Of these, one area totaling 3.4 acres is owned by private individuals or not-for-profit corporations who donated the value of the protection agreement to the public. This private land was permanently preserved without acquisition of the land by the State. Private lands protected without State acquisition at INPC's 199th Meeting was an addition to Sweet Fern Savanna Land and Water Reserve in Kankakee 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 45,457.23 acres and 148 land and water reserves in 61 counties, totaling 41,742.434 acres.

200-4) Proposed 2009 Meeting Schedule

January 27, 2009	10:00 a.m.	Department of Natural Resources Building, Springfield
May 5, 2009	9:00 a.m.	Starved Rock State Park Visitors Center, Utica
September 22, 2009	10:00 a.m.	Illinois Beach Resort and Conference Center, Zion

It was moved by Flemal, seconded by Keating, and carried that the proposed 2009 meeting schedule be accepted.

200-5) INPC Staff Report

Deborah Stone stated that Chair Riddell called a small think group together to help the Commission plan an appropriate way to celebrate the Commission's 500th site that will be brought into its programs in the near future. This benchmark is a remarkable achievement, and it could be used as a way to carry the message about the nature preserve system and the importance of preserving land to a wider audience. In addition to the group assembled by Chair Riddell, former Commissioner and

current INPC Consultant Jerry Adelman and INPC Advisor Bonnie Styles are working on this plan. The idea was to do something participatory such as a photo contest to involve people, including children, across the State in learning about the sites protected by the INPC. Ms. Stone stated that if any of the Commissioners have ideas they would like to share, they should contact her.

Randy Heidorn presented the INPC staff report, and it is attached as Exhibit A.

Mr. Heidorn introduced Jason Inczauskis. Mr. Inczauskis is the resident intern working with Steven Byers in Area 2.

Mr. Heidorn stated that there have been some questions related to the proposed State Park closures as it relates to the Illinois Nature Preserve System. He stated that Kelly Neal put together a list comparing the sites that were proposed for closure in relation to the properties enrolled in the INPC programs. As it turns out, there is only one site, George B. Fell Nature Preserve, which is totally within a State Park that is slated for closure. George B. Fell Nature Preserve is located in Castle Rock State Park. There is some concern because of the deer management program, and a deer hunt was scheduled. Because of the proposed closure, that deer hunt will not take place this year. All of the other sites are either not involved in the proposed closures or they are areas where they are satellites to the State Parks on the proposed closure list. At this time it appears that those areas are not going to be affected, however, the INPC does not have the final word on how this will affect some of the uses of the sites. There will be some impact at one site and probable minimal impact at the other sites.

Mr. Heidorn stated that with the addition of Jenny Skufca, the Commission will move forward on the Class III groundwater project. The Class III groundwater designation is a classification that pertains to areas that support natural areas. The groundwater that supports a nature preserve, by definition, could be considered Class III groundwater; however, to receive that classification, a petition needs to be prepared. Over the last number of years, through a contract, the data has been collected for some initial petitions. Ms. Skufca has been assembling that information. The list of the sites that will be included in the first petition are outlined in the staff report.

Mr. Heidorn stated that discussion is ongoing regarding the threat at Hickory Creek Barrens Nature Preserve. He asked that the Commission discuss the litigation pending for this site under the Other Business portion of the meeting.

Vice-Chair Rosenthal thanked the staff for the great work that has been done over the past months.

200-6) IDNR Staff Report

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

Mr. Kruse stated that the Natural Areas Evaluation Committee held its 50th meeting on September 30, 2008. He stated that new Category 1 natural areas evaluated by the natural areas inventory update project staff were added to the inventory. The update field staff are out and

doing the evaluations, and they are finding additional Category 1 areas. It is anticipated that more Category 1 sites will be added in the coming meetings.

Mr. Kruse stated that Russell Blogg, resident intern, started with the IDNR on September 2, 2008. Mr. Blogg is working with Michelle Simone, District Heritage Biologist in central Illinois.

200-7) Endangered Species Protection Board Report

Marilyn Campbell reported that the ESPB has hired Anne Mankowski as the new coordinator. She will start on November 3, 2008. Ms. Mankowski brings extensive experience to this position. The ESPB's next meeting will be on November 14, 2008. The preliminary changes to threatened and endangered species will be submitted at that meeting.

Commissioner Keating presented a resolution in recognition of Dr. John Ebinger's conservation efforts.

It was moved by Keating, seconded by Payne, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Illinois Nature Preserves Commission wishes to recognize the exceptional conservation efforts of Dr. John Ebinger. John was a Member of the Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board from 1988 - 2008, and he served as Vice-Chair of the Board from 2001 - 2008. He was the Board's long-standing Chair of the Endangered Species Technical Advisory Committee for Plants. John has also authored, co-authored, and edited a number of publications on behalf of the Board. His diligent efforts have protected threatened and endangered species of Illinois. He is a tireless partner of the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission in its efforts to protect natural areas throughout the State. His legacy will be the long-term survival of many elements of Illinois' natural heritage.

(Resolution 2006)

Vice-Chair Rosenthal 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.

200-8) Bureau Co. B McCune Sand Prairie Land and Water Reserve, Registration
(Actually presented after Item 16)

Tom Lerczak presented a proposal on behalf of the Bureau County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) to register McCune Sand Prairie as a land and water reserve. The 200-acre McCune Sand Prairie is owned by the Bureau County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), and it is included within the 263-acre McCune Sand Prairie Natural Area, which is listed on the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI #350) as a Category II site for its populations of the state-threatened broomrape (*Orobanche ludoviciana*) and a reptile. Five species in greatest need of conservation, as defined by the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan (IWAP), have been documented at this site: western hognose snake, ornate box turtle (*Terrepenne ornata*), dickcissel (*Spiza americana*), field sparrow (*Spizella pusilla*), and grasshopper sparrow (*Ammodramus savannarum*). McCune Sand Prairie supports grade C sand prairie, grade D sand prairie, and

grade D sand forest. Characteristic plants in the prairies include sand lovegrass (*Eragrostis trichodes*) and little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*). Black oak (*Quercus velutina*) is characteristic of the forest. These sand communities are representative of the Green River Lowland Section of the Grand Prairie Natural Division. Registration of this site will help implement the IWAP through the following priority action campaigns: Forests (sand savanna), Prairies, Invasive Species, and Land and Water Stewardship. McCune Sand Prairie is currently protected by a conservation easement that has been held by the Natural Land Institute since 1984. The Bureau County SWCD wishes to ensure a higher level of continued protection and restoration management of McCune Sand Prairie by having it permanently registered as a land and water reserve.

Mr. Lerczak stated that some of the allowable uses at the site are archery deer hunting with the taking of a doe before a buck can be taken and tree planting and/or harvesting in a designated area to facilitate restoration of the natural communities. Any trees that are brought in must follow the INPC's translocation policy. ATVs can be used for management purposes. A wetland may be restored at the site in a designated area. Wetlands are a normal part of communities like this, and at this point, there are certain low-lying areas which may hold water during certain times of the year. The conservation easement specifies using a well and a windmill to maintain water levels. He stated that no one has ever made any plans to do this, and at this time there are no plans to do this. He stated that it was his opinion that it would be compatible with the land and water reserve designation if the well and windmill were used to restore a natural wetland.

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

The Commission grants approval for the registration of McCune Sand Prairie in Bureau County as an Illinois Land and Water Reserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 8 of the Agenda for the 200th Meeting.

(Resolution 2007)

200-9) Fayette Co. B Horn Prairie Grove Land and Water Reserve, Registration

Item 9 was deferred.

200-10) Jo Daviess Co. B Keough Effigy Mounds Land and Water Reserve, Registration

John Nelson presented a proposal on behalf of the Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation (JDCF) to register 34.68 acres to be known as the Keough Effigy Mounds Land and Water Reserve. The JDCF purchased the site with a grant from the North American Wetlands Conservation Account (NAWCA) which provides matching grants to organizations to carry out wetland conservation programs. To meet the funding criteria, the JDCF partnered with the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation's Upper Midwest Wildlife Habitat Protection Initiative, which matched the NAWCA grant 2:1. The site is in the Wisconsin Driftless Division and includes significant Native American archaeological features known as the Reynick Mound Group. It also contains a pre-historic rock shelter and shell midden. Although archaeological features are not recognized as

part of the INAI, the Illinois Nature Preserves System does consider significant archaeological resources as qualifying features for protection in nature preserve dedication and land and water reserve registration programs. The site is unique in that it includes the only known intact bear effigy mound within the State of Illinois. If approved, this will be the second land and water reserve to be protected based exclusively on its significant archaeological features. The first archeological site afforded such protection by the INPC was Casper Bluff Land and Water Reserve (198th meeting). The justification to register the Keough Effigy Mounds as a land and water reserve is to permanently protect a highly significant archeological site as well as to permanently protect important waterfowl and migratory bird habitat identified in the IWAP.

Mr. Nelson stated that recreational and educational activities will be promoted within the proposed land and water reserve. Future plans include the development of a hiking trail system with an informational kiosk and interpretive signage extending from the parking area through the various community types. The landowner would like the ability to construct wooden boardwalks, wildlife viewing platforms, and bridges to traverse some ravines and/or drainage features. All trails, interpretive signs, posts, and other structures will be at least ten feet away from any of the mounds or other significant archaeological features and will not adversely impact state-threatened or endangered species. All trails, interpretive signs, and other structures will require INPC approval before construction.

Mr. Nelson stated that the landowner would also like to reserve the right to harvest and sell a small number of trees, chiefly black walnut and black cherry, to obtain money for land stewardship. Any harvest/potential sale of timber from the proposed land and water reserve will be addressed in an approved management plan for the site. The landowner also wishes to reserve the right to utilize a variety of management tools such as mowing, grazing, and prescribed burns to maintain vegetation appropriate for the archaeological features as well as for the areas to be restored to natural vegetation.

Mr. Nelson stated that the landowner granted an easement for ingress/egress to the adjacent property owner of Lot 2 in Galena Bluff Estates. Said easement is 40 feet wide across a small portion of the proposed land and water reserve along the northwestern property line between lots 1 and 2. This easement area is already being used as a trail/road access by the landowner.

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

The Commission grants approval for the registration of Keough Effigy Mounds in Jo Daviess County as an Illinois Land and Water Reserve as described in the proposal presented under Item 10 of the Agenda for the 200th Meeting.

(Resolution 2008)

200-11) Monroe Co. B Addition to Salt Lick Point Land and Water Reserve, Registration

Debbie Newman presented a proposal on behalf of the Village of Valmeyer to register a 145.48-acre, mostly forested, addition to Salt Lick Point Land and Water Reserve. The site includes approximately 21 acres of the 456-acre Columbia Hill Prairies INAI site (#201), including

approximately one acre of grade A loess hill prairie and two acres of grade B limestone glade, with the remainder in grade C dry and dry-mesic upland forest. The site is home to two listed species, the state-endangered woolly buckthorn (*Bumelia lanuginosa*) and a state-threatened reptile. In addition, the proposed addition to the Land and Water Reserve contains a large tract of forest with several forest interior bird species observed during breeding season. Several of these are also listed as species in greatest need of conservation in the IWAP: Kentucky warbler (*Oporornis formosus*), flicker (*Colaptes auratus*), worm-eating warbler (*Helmitheros vermivorus*), Acadian flycatcher (*Empidonax vireescens*), wood thrush (*Hylocichla mustelina*), yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*), and ovenbird (*Seiurus aurocapillus*). The proposed addition to Salt Lick Point Land and Water Reserve also provides habitat for at least two mammal species in greatest need of conservation. These include the state and federally endangered Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*), and the bobcat (*Lynx rufus*). The site also harbors the striped scorpion (*Centruroides vittatus*), an invertebrate species in greatest need of conservation. The proposed addition is also an important part of a regional bluff protection effort. This effort involves a 35-mile corridor that includes 17 sites preserved in the INPC programs. This corridor contains 4000 acres of INAI sites. Protection of the site was facilitated with funding by the American Bottom Conservancy, the Missouri Coalition for the Environment, Sierra Club, and Webster Groves Nature Study Society, and from a mitigation settlement with Holcim, Inc. The IDNR provided substantial administrative assistance for the project.

Ms. Newman stated that the Village of Valmeyer is retaining the right to install future underground utilities (water, sewer, and electric) across part of the proposed addition at an agreed upon location between the Village of Valmeyer, the INPC, and the IDNR. The utility corridor would be no more than 35 feet wide. The line will not go through any part of the glade or prairie. The Village also retains the right to access the existing lift station, sediment basins, and storm sewers for maintenance work or repair.

Ms. Newman stated that the landowner also retains the right for the following allowable uses: hiking, mushroom picking, firewood collection, hunting, placing of benches and interpretive signs along hiking trails, and the right to develop up to two new trails as approved by INPC or IDNR staff. The Village would also like to reserve the right to use the cedars that are cut from the site from the prairie restoration as Christmas trees for Village residents or for use in building benches in the Land and Water Reserve.

Ms. Newman stated that the addition to Salt Lick Point Land and Water Reserve was a collaborative project between the Village of Valmeyer, the INPC, the IDNR, the American Bottom Conservancy, the Missouri Coalition for the Environment, the Sierra Club, and the Webster Groves Nature Society. She stated that she wanted to thank everyone involved in this project. She also stated that the Valmeyer Boy Scout troop and the Salt Lick Point Land and Water Reserve Committee have been working on the site, and they are ready to put in the signs if this addition is approved today.

Ms. Newman introduced Dennis Valentine, Village of Valmeyer Administrator, and Jim Pflasterer and Bob Mohr from the Village of Valmeyer Board. She also introduced Kathy Andria, American Bottom Conservancy.

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

The Commission grants approval for an addition to Salt Lick Point Land and Water Reserve in Monroe County, as described in the proposal presented under Item 11 of the Agenda for the 200th Meeting.

(Resolution 2009)

Vice-Chair Rosenthal thanked those involved with putting this project together.

Bob Mohr thanked the Commission for its approval of the addition to Salt Lick Point Land and Water Reserve. He stated that he has been walking this site for over 60 years, and he did not realize, until he met Ms. Newman, how unique it was. The people who walk the first trail seem to really enjoy the 1.8 mile trip. They are working on another trail that will be longer and better than the original trail.

Kathy Andria stated that she grew up in Granite City with steel mills. She stated that she was appreciative of the Commission and what it does. She was also appreciative of Ms. Newman's dedication and of the Village of Valmeyer. She stated that she first fell in love with the bluffs many years ago, and she was glad that Valmeyer cares enough to preserve this important piece of land.

Vice-Chair Rosenthal stated that it is great that the Boy Scouts are ready to help with the land because that is truly the way that the next generation of conservationists are developed. Many people here today can recall when they first fell in love with a piece of land, the idea of the outdoors, or the conservation of the land as a child. It is terrific that the children are getting involved at this site.

200-12) Hardin Co. B Collier Limestone Glade Nature Preserve, Dedication

Judy Faulkner Dempsey presented a proposal on behalf of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) for preliminary approval for dedication of the proposed 105.65-acre Collier Limestone Glade Nature Preserve. The site is a high-quality grade A and B limestone community. The site protects the east part of the Collier Limestone Glade INAI site (#12). A unique assemblage of prairie and glade plants occurs in this rare community type. The Collier Limestone Glade natural area is an oak-hickory mosaic containing remnant dry oak woodlands and limestone glades. In southern Illinois, limestone glades are small prairie-like areas which occur on shallow soils over limestone outcrops. This glade occurs in the Lesser Shawnee Hills Section of the Shawnee Hills Natural Division. Collier Limestone Glade is one of the last remnants of what was once the largest continuous glade system that existed in Illinois. This site also includes Frailey's Landing Natural Area (INAI #437), a geological area. Preservation of Collier Limestone Glade will address several action steps in the Forest Campaign for the IWAP by conserving an INAI site, assisting private forest management in improving the latter categories, and assisting with the exotic species campaign by the management that will occur on the site to remove exotic and invasive species.

Commissioner Schwegman stated that he has visited this site, and it was his opinion that it is a good limestone glade. He stated that this site was very worthy of preservation.

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

The Commission grants preliminary approval for dedication of Collier Limestone Glade in Hardin County as an Illinois Nature Preserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 12 of the Agenda for the 200th Meeting.

(Resolution 2010)

200-13) Hardin Co. – Lafarge Limestone Glade Nature Preserve, Dedication

Judy Faulkner Dempsey presented a proposal on behalf of the Lafarge North America Corporation for preliminary approval for dedication of the proposed 51-acre Lafarge Limestone Glade Nature Preserve. The site is a high-quality grade A and B limestone glade community. The site protects the western part of the Collier Limestone Glade INAI site (#12). A unique assemblage of prairie and glade plants occurs in this rare community type. The Lafarge Limestone Glade natural area is an oak-hickory mosaic containing remnant dry oak woodlands and limestone glades. In southern Illinois, limestone glades are small prairie-like areas which occur on shallow soils over limestone outcrops. This glade occurs in the Lesser Shawnee Hills Section of the Shawnee Hills Natural Division. Lafarge Limestone Glade is one of the last remnants of what was once the largest continuous glade system that existed in Illinois. Preservation of Lafarge Limestone Glade will address several actions steps in the Forest Campaign for the IWAP by conserving an INAI site, assisting private forest management in improving the latter categories, and assisting with the exotic species campaign by the management that will occur on the site to remove exotic and invasive species.

Commissioner Schwegman thanked the Lafarge Corporation for its involvement. The Lafarge Corporation owns land next to other Illinois nature preserves. He stated that it is always good to have a corporation involved.

Ms. Faulkner Dempsey stated that the Lafarge Corporation is interested in working with the INPC on additional areas.

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

The Commission grants approval for preliminary approval for dedication of Lafarge Limestone Glade in Hardin County as an Illinois Nature Preserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 13 of the Agenda for the 200th Meeting.

(Resolution 2011)

Les Moore, plant manager for the Lafarge Corporation, stated that he would like to thank the INPC for taking the time to consider this site. He would also like to thank Ms. Faulkner Dempsey for the work

she has done. He stated that the Lafarge Corporation is working with the IDNR regarding a prescribed burn at the site.

Vice-Chair Rosenthal thanked Mr. Moore for his comments, and she asked that he convey the thanks of the Commission to the Lafarge Corporation.

200-14) Kane Co. – Ed Meagher Savanna and Sedge Meadow Addition to Freeman Kame Nature Preserve, Dedication

Steven Byers presented a proposal on behalf of the Forest Preserve District of Kane County (FPDKC) for preliminary approval for dedication of the Ed Meagher Savanna and Sedge Meadow as an addition to the 35-acre Freeman Kame Nature Preserve. The proposed addition, consisting of 61 acres as nature preserve and 35 acres as nature preserve buffer, is located within the larger 442.7-acre Freeman Kame-Meagher Forest Preserve owned by the FPDKC. Freeman Kame Nature Preserve and the proposed addition are located in the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division. Freeman Kame Nature Preserve is currently included on the INAI (#1474) as a Category III site (nature preserve). During the initial INAI survey, the sedge meadow and dry-mesic savanna were considered high-quality. Ultimately, because these communities failed to meet the minimum size requirements, Freeman Kame was designated as a notable site and not included on the initial INAI. The proposed addition includes sedge meadow and dry-mesic savanna considered high-quality (grade B) by the initial INAI and more recent assessments, grade C dry-mesic forest, and grade C or D mesic prairie. Recent surveys reveal the presence of six state-listed plant and animal species: purple-flowering raspberry (*Rubus odoratus*), bog-panicked sedge (*Carex diandra*), buckbean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*), sandhill crane (*Grus canadensis*), American bittern (*Botaurus lentiginosus*) and a reptile. In addition, the site supports elements of the IWAP; specifically, action steps to restore and manage high-quality wetland communities and six wildlife species considered species in greatest need of conservation. Those species include the Dion skipper (*Euphyes dion*), broad-winged skipper (*Poanes viator*), American bittern, sandhill crane, northern flicker (*Colapates auratus*), and a reptile. Dedication of the proposed addition will protect high-quality sedge meadow and dry-mesic savanna within the proposed addition and beyond the boundary of Freeman Kame Nature Preserve and provide habitat for six state-listed plant and animal species and six wildlife species identified by the IWAP. Formal protection of the proposed addition is also consistent with the recommendations of the “*Biodiversity Recovery Plan for the Chicago Wilderness Region*”.

Mr. Byers stated that the FPDKC reserves the right to continue adaptive management strategies at the proposed addition. The landowner also reserves the right to monitor the groundwater within the proposed addition and maintain the current trail that parallels the railroad tracks. That trail is currently used as a trail and access for management activities. The FPDKC also reserves the right to provide trail amenities (benches, educational signs, etc.).

It was moved by Flemal, seconded by Keating, and carried that the following resolution be approved:

The Commission grants approval for preliminary approval for dedication of the Ed Meagher Savanna and Sedge Meadow addition to Freeman Kame Nature Preserve in Kane County, as described in the proposal presented under Item 14 of the Agenda for the 200th Meeting.

(Resolution 2012)

Vice-Chair Rosenthal asked that the thanks of the Commission be conveyed to the FPDKC.

200-15) Kankakee Co. – Carl N. Becker Savanna Nature Preserve, Dedication

Kim Roman presented a proposal on behalf of The Illinois Chapter of The Nature Conservancy (TNC) for preliminary approval for dedicating 68 acres of the Leesville Savanna INAI site (#638) as Carl N. Becker Savanna Nature Preserve. The proposed Carl N. Becker Savanna Nature Preserve is comprised of two units and is located in the Kankakee Sand Area Section of the Grand Prairie Natural Division of Illinois. The site is also within a conservation opportunity area identified in the IWAP. The natural communities within the site include high-quality dry and dry-mesic sand savanna, sand flatwoods, sand prairie, and old field. It supports 12 state-listed species: yellow wild indigo (*Baptisia tinctoria*), crowded oval sedge (*Carex cumulata*), narrow-leaved sundew (*Drosera intermedia*), northern cranesbill (*Geranium bicknellii*), old plainsman (*Hymenopappus scabiosaeus*), shore St. John's wort (*Hypericum adpressum*), orange fringed orchid (*Platanthera ciliaris*), Carey's smartweed (*Polygonum areyi*), bristly blackberry (*Rubus setosus*), eastern blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium atlanticum*), primrose violet (*Viola primulifolia*), and regal fritillary butterfly (*Speyeria idalia*). The proposed Carl N. Becker Savanna Nature Preserve also supports numerous wildlife species including four species considered to be in greatest need of conservation. This site is well suited for a nature preserve dedicated in Mr. Becker's memory because of its outstanding natural character and the partnership it exemplifies in the Kankakee Sands (and entire State of Illinois) between TNC and the IDNR, both agencies in which Mr. Becker devoted his career in conservation.

Ms. Roman stated that there is a pre-existing petroleum pipeline right-of-way on the eastern unit that runs in a northerly direction. Once this site is formally dedicated, she will contact the owner of the pipeline to advise them of the special status of the site.

Ms. Roman stated that allowable uses will be limited to passive recreation such as hiking, bird watching, nature observation, and research compatible with the site's conservation. TNC reserves the right to create a minimally developed foot trail. A small parking area to facilitate access and visitation of the site may also be placed in the old field of the west unit.

Fran Harty, TNC, thanked Ms. Roman for her hard work on this project.

Commissioner Flemal asked if the pipeline management would be a problem at this site.

Ms. Roman stated that she will work with the pipeline company to manage the easement in a responsible manner.

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

The Commission grants approval for preliminary approval for dedication of Carl N. Becker Savanna Nature Preserve in Kankakee County as an Illinois Nature Preserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 15 of the Agenda for the 200th Meeting.

(Resolution 2013)

Vice-Chair Rosenthal stated that TNC has chosen this site to honor the memory of a beloved member of the conservation community in such a tremendous, appropriate, thoughtful way.

Ms. Roman stated that Peggy Becker and her children, along with other staff from TNC, will be present when this site comes before the Commission for final dedication approval.

200-16) Jersey Co. – Palisades Nature Preserve, Dedication
(Actually presented after Item 7)

Debbie Newman presented a proposal on behalf of the Great Rivers Land Trust (GRLT) for final 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. The Commission conferred preliminary approval for dedication at its 199th Meeting in August, 2008 (Resolution 2003).

Ms. Newman introduced Alley Ringhausen, Executive Director of the GRLT.

Mr. Ringhausen stated that this is the largest tract along the bluff corridor that the GRLT has proposed for dedication as a nature preserve. The acquisition and protection of this tract was a goal of the GRLT since the group's inception 15 years ago.

Ms. Newman praised the work of the GRLT for its efforts in bringing this site before the Commission, and she would like to recognize the efforts of Mr. Ringhausen to protect this site. She stated that Mr. Ringhausen has worked many years on the acquisition of the property.

She stated that at some point after the site has received final approval for dedication, the property will be turned over to the Lewis and Clark Community College Foundation. The management of this site will be a collaborative effort with the College Foundation, the GRLT, the National Great Rivers Research and Education Center, the INPC, and the IDNR.

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

The Commission grants final approval for dedication of Palisades in Jersey County as an Illinois Nature Preserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 16 of the Agenda for the 200th Meeting.

(Resolution 2014)

Vice-Chair Rosenthal thanked Mr. Ringhausen for bringing this site before the Commission, and she asked that he convey the thanks of the Commission to the Board of the GRLT.

200-17) Jo Daviess Co. – Addition to Hanover Bluff Nature Preserve, Dedication

John Nelson presented a proposal on behalf of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) for final approval for dedication of a third addition, totaling 48.4 acres, to Hanover Bluff Nature Preserve located in the Wisconsin Driftless Natural Division approximately 1.5 miles southwest of

Hanover. The Hanover Bluff INAI site (#1058) includes approximately 1,390 acres and is recognized as a Category I (high-quality dry dolomite prairie and sand hill prairie), Category II (12 state-listed species), and Category III (dedicated nature preserve) natural area. The IDNR dedicated 361.7 acres as Hanover Bluff Nature Preserve at the 113th Meeting of the INPC in February, 1987. At the 183rd Meeting of the INPC in August, 2004, the Commission approved the dedication of a 48.466-acre addition, owned by The Nature Conservancy (TNC), to Hanover Bluff Nature Preserve. The INPC approved dedication of a second TNC-owned addition to the Nature Preserve (67.09 acres) at its 185th Meeting in February, 2005. This proposal is for the dedication of a third addition, totaling 48.4 acres, and will increase the size of Hanover Bluff Nature Preserve to 525.66 acres. Of that total, 410.1 acres are owned by the IDNR. The remaining 115.56 acres of dedicated land are owned by TNC. Twelve state-listed species, ten plants and two animals, are found within the Hanover Bluff area. Hanover Bluff provides sanctuary for one of the few viable populations of a state-threatened reptile remaining in northwest Illinois. In addition, the proposed nature preserve addition provides habitat for numerous species of conservation concern as identified in the IWAP. The Commission conferred preliminary approval for dedication at its 198th Meeting in May, 2008 (Resolution 1990).

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

The Commission grants final approval for an addition to Hanover Bluff Nature Preserve in Jo Daviess County, as presented under Item 17 of the Agenda for the 200th Meeting.

(Resolution 2015)

A lunch break was taken from 11:55 a.m. – 12:25 p.m.

200-18) Massac Co. – Horsefly Ridge Nature Preserve, Dedication

Judy Faulkner Dempsey presented a proposal on behalf of Robert L. and Robyn R. Shapiro for final approval for dedication of Horsefly Ridge as an Illinois Nature Preserve. The site is a 49-acre natural area that is significant because it contains grade C dry and dry-mesic barrens that were recently recognized by the INAI (#1786) as a “best of its kind” within the Cretaceous Hills Section in the Coastal Plains Natural Division, where it occurs. Barrens are 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 than 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. The Commission conferred preliminary approval for dedication at its 199th Meeting in August, 2008 (Resolution 2005).

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

The Commission grants final approval for dedication of Horsefly Ridge in Massac County as an Illinois Nature Preserve, as described under Item 18 of the Agenda of the 200th Meeting.

(Resolution 2016)

Bob Shapiro thanked Ms. Faulkner Dempsey, Mark Gutersloh, and John Schwegman for their efforts in protecting this site. He said that he sought out the INPC because he was looking for a way to protect this land. He stated that the surrounding woods have been logged over the last 20-30 years, and his land is the last of the older woods in his entire neighborhood. The pressure on this property has been building, and he wanted to protect it.

Ms. Faulkner Dempsey thanked Mr. Shapiro for his willingness to forfeit any economic rights that he would have had to the property by preserving it in perpetuity.

Vice-Chair Rosenthal thanked Mr. Shapiro for protecting his property.

200-19) Jasper Co. – Request to Procure a Utility Easement, Prairie Ridge State Natural Area Land and Water Reserve

The Jasper County unit of the Prairie Ridge State Natural Area Land and Water Reserve (PRSNALWR) is a 2,916-acre grassland and wetland complex located in the Effingham Plain Section of the Southern Till Plain Natural Division. The proposed project would occur within the boundary of the Hunt Tract, a 320-acre addition approved by the Commission at the 199th Meeting in August, 2008 (Resolution #1999). It is adjacent to existing land and water reserves and nature preserves and is managed in conjunction with them. PRSNA provides habitat to 23 species listed as threatened or endangered in Illinois, including the State's only breeding population of greater prairie chickens (*Tympanuchus cupido*).

Tim Huber, Engineering Manager for Norris Electric Cooperative, presented a proposal for a permanent right-of-way easement (1.83 acres) within Prairie Ridge State Natural Area Land and Water Reserve (PRSNALWR) for relocation of an electric distribution line to improve accessibility and enhance quick restoration of service during outages. Mr. Huber stated that Norris Electric Cooperative is a rural non-for-profit electric cooperative with the goal of supplying reliable electric energy to its members in a cost effective way. He stated that this request was brought about because a member of the electric cooperative wants to increase his electric service because of some grain bins. After inspecting the member's current service, it was discovered that, along with the line being along a private right-of-way, a machine shed had been constructed under part of the power line. Due to this hazard, it was decided that work needed to be done to relocate the power lines. The existing line was built in 1949, and it is not very accessible. He stated that reliability is becoming an important part of the Cooperative's business. Legislation is pending to improve the reliability and making the coops accountable for every outage.

Mr. Huber stated that they have reviewed four alternatives to move the existing power line. One alternative is to rebuild the existing line on the same side of the road which would require the clearing of existing trees. He stated that one problem with this option was that most of the rebuilt line would be inaccessible from the road, and it would be difficult to reach the line if the ground was soft due to excessive moisture. This would delay the restoration of service if that line would go down. Another option would be to build the line on the south side of the road, but there are several trees on the south side of the road. The owners of the trees did not want the trees cleared so the line could be built on the south side of the road. A third alternative would be to install the line underground. If the line is installed near any trees, it could kill the trees because the root systems would be disturbed. An underground line also carries liability issues because of lightning. There is nothing that the Cooperative can do to prevent a heavy lightening strike that could fault the underground cable. If that would happen, the members in the area could be out of power for an extended period of time while the Cooperative

finds the faulted location and gets the line repaired. With an overhead line, the linemen can see the problem in a short amount of time. He stated that it is the Cooperative's opinion that a fourth alternative of placing the line through IDNR's property would be the most logical resolution to this problem.

Mr. Huber gave a detailed PowerPoint presentation to support his request and to show the Commissioners where the Cooperative would like to place the power poles.

Commissioner Schwegman asked if this line would interfere with the prescribed burning of the vegetation under it.

Mr. Huber stated that burning of the prairie grass should not affect the poles or the line. He said the line would be approximately 30 feet in the air. He did not feel that the burning of grass would be a hot enough fire to affect the power line.

Bob Edgin stated that the Hunt tract is 320 acres in size, and the proposed power line easement would go across the south boundary line of the tract. He stated that this site provides critical grassland habitat for 78 species that are listed as in greatest need of conservation by the IWAP. The proposed utility line relocation would require the installation of ten utility poles. Two of the poles would be spaced at a distance of 255 feet, and the others would be spaced at approximately 275 feet apart along the entire one-half mile stretch of the PRSNALWR boundary.

The open horizon on the north side of the road was due to the management of the Land and Water Reserve. Within the last two or three years, the IDNR has spent nearly \$75,000 to clear the trees and brush from this tract to create the open vistas and unobstructed horizons that many of the grassland dependant bird species prefer for their habitat. Installation of the power line would interfere with those objectives and management goals for the site. The management for the Hunt tract calls for routine prescribed burning on a two to four year burn rotation based on the condition of the grass and forbs stand and amount of woody vegetation encroachment. Fire is essential to maintaining woody control in a grassland area of this size. Mr. Edgin stated that he does not agree with Norris Electric Cooperative's opinion that the wooden utility poles and overhead power lines would not represent a management issue for PRSNALWR. He stated that it is not uncommon to have 12-18 foot flame lengths coming off a prescribed burn of the type of grass found on this tract. There is a tremendous amount of radiant heat, as well as direct heat, which comes off of a fire of this intensity and magnitude.

Mr. Edgin stated that based on the obstruction that this power line would present onto the horizon and the management issues associated with prescribed burning, staff at Prairie Ridge feel that this easement would not be consistent with the objectives for which the Land and Water Reserve was established.

Jenny Skufca presented the INPC staff recommendation with regard to the Norris Electric Cooperative's proposal. She stated that the critical purpose of PRSNALWR is to provide habitat for rare grassland dependant birds. The unique grassland/wetland complex is part of a much larger mosaic that the Prairie Chicken Foundation, along with the IDNR, TNC, and the Audubon Society, began piecing together in 1959. INPC staff recommend that the Commission deny the Norris Electric Cooperative's proposal. The reasons for recommending denial are as follows:

1. The greater prairie chicken, as with other sensitive grassland dependant birds, has the requirement of open vistas. The proposed highline support poles would diminish the open horizon of the site. Radio telemetry studies conducted at Prairie Ridge in the late 1990s

indicated high avoidance of areas with any vertical structure, tall fence lines, tall trees, and wooded waterways.

2. The management regime necessary to sustain the grassland habitat requires prescribed burning. Highline poles would compromise the land manager's ability to maintain the habitat identified as the goal for putting this land into protection.
3. Norris Electric Cooperative has offered viable alternatives.

Ms. Skufca stated that staff believe that the needs of the public can still be met by keeping the lines south of the road and out of the Land and Water Reserve. Approval of the easement would require a finding by both the Commission and the IDNR. The IDNR's legal counsel reviewed the easement included with the proposal and determined that it is inadequate as it stands. Administrative rules charge the INPC with long-term protection and stewardship of land and water reserves in the interest of the public. Taking into account the site's high level of protection status, its state-wide significance, and its provision of habitat for state-listed species, it is the recommendation of staff that locating the electric line in PRSNALWR is not in the interest of the public.

Mr. Huber stated that he understands the concerns regarding the openness of the land; however, even if the lines were placed on the other side of the road, the lines would still be obstructing the horizon. With regard to the prescribed burning issue, the poles will not burn on their own. If the fire is out around the pole, the pole will not continue to burn. The height of the power line should not be a concern.

Mr. Edgin stated that having served as an ignition crew leader for over ten years and having participated in over 250 prescribed burns, he is well aware of the intensity of the heat that comes off of a prescribed burn. He stated that he does not agree that the wooden utility poles do not represent an issue. If a burn is done with a straight south wind, there is some assistance from the wind blowing the heat and flames away from the poles and overhead power lines. However, as it stands at this time, a prescribed burn can be conducted at this site with winds coming from any direction except the northeast because that would put smoke toward a house. If this easement were granted and the overhead lines were installed, wind coming from the west, northwest, north, or east, would cause the heat and flames to be directed toward that power line or parallel to the power line. He stated that it was his opinion that placement of the power lines on IDNR's property would severely restrict the conditions under which the staff at Prairie Ridge could conduct this 100-acre burn.

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

The Commission denies the proposal for a utility easement for the Hunt tract at Prairie Ridge State Natural Area Land and Water Reserve in Jasper County, as presented under Item 19 of the 200th Meeting.

(Resolution 2017)

Commissioner Flemal stated that he would welcome Norris Electric Cooperative to return to the Commission with an alternative proposal if they were able to satisfy the concerns that have been expressed by staff.

200-20) Jasper Co. – Request for Parking Lot Placements, Jasper County Prairie Chicken Sanctuary Nature Preserve

Bob Edgin stated that the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, owner of Jasper County Prairie Chicken Sanctuary Nature Preserve, proposes to construct two 30-foot by 40-foot hunter parking areas to enhance the safety offered to deer hunters supporting the deer management program at the site. The 407-acre site is recognized on the INAI (#601) as critical grassland habitat for state-listed species, most notably the Illinois-endangered greater prairie chicken (*Tympanuchus cupido*). Additionally, the instrument of dedication identifies that the sanctuary “may be managed for said primary purpose [provision of habitat for the prairie chicken] with or without the preservation...of natural conditions.” In consultation with INPC staff, the location of the two parking areas were chosen due to the close proximity to areas known for high concentrations of white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) and the already open and disturbed condition. The site’s deer management program is in full compliance with the INPC’s Management Guidelines for control of white-tailed deer populations.

Mr. Edgin stated the deer travel through the area most of the year, however, during the deer hunting season the deer are being forced from the surrounding areas onto the Nature Preserve. Considerable damage is occurring to the vegetation that is providing the critical habitat for the grassland dependant bird species. The IDNR implemented a deer management program in conjunction with the guidelines of the INPC. The deer management program is included in the three-year management program, and it had been limited to a late winter season harvest. The season may be extended to both firearm seasons on some of the additional tracts because the hunter participation was not at the level to achieve the goal of removing a sufficient number of deer. In order for the deer management program to be successful, the hunters need to be able to get to the YFM and Mark 40 tracts within Jasper County Prairie Chicken Sanctuary Nature Preserve.

After looking at the different options for parking area placement, it was recommended that the parking areas be placed within the Nature Preserve. The YFM tract option was chosen because at the time of the dedication there was an existing oil lease on this tract. That oil lease is still active, and the well is pumping. The oil company routinely accesses the area to service the oil well and to pump from the holding tanks. There is a rock bed in place that was put into place by the oil company. Most of the rock has been compressed into the soil and does not provide a lot of stability. Due to the freeze and thaw cycles that occur in the area, it was recommended that a rock base needed to be installed to prevent the vehicles rutting the site. The IDNR is requesting a 30-foot by 40-foot access area on the YFM tract.

The Mark 40 tract is spider-webbed with deer trails. Mr. Edgin discussed the options available for this site. The requested site for the parking area is a 30-foot by 40-foot area on the northwest corner of the Nature Preserve tract. A portion of the parking area (20-foot by 40-foot) would be placed in an existing fescue lane that has been used for an access area for maintenance.

The parking area would be constructed using a non-biodegradable material that is covered with three to four inches of limestone. The purpose of the non-biodegradable material is to provide a bed on which the rock would rest. The vehicles compress the limestone onto the material instead of pressing the rock into the soil. This will extend the life of the parking area and reduce the necessity of adding additional rock in the future. The non-biodegradable material does not serve as a weed barrier and vegetation is able to grow up through the material and the rock. Each parking area would accommodate two to three vehicles. The parking areas will only be used by the deer hunters. Mr. Edgin stated that there are plenty of other access areas for those who want to do bird watching. The YFM and Mark 40 tracts are not the prime bird watching areas.

Commissioner Keating asked if the deer browse was a serious threat for the Nature Preserve.

Mr. Edgin stated that after the deer hunting season is over it is not uncommon to see herds of 20-25 deer traveling along the ridge. In some cases, herds as large as 50 deer can be seen migrating along the ridge. He stated that two years ago he developed a recovery plan for the royal catchfly within the Prairie Ridge Conservation Opportunity Area. The plan was implemented a year and half ago and royal catchfly plants were introduced to Prairie Ridge. Mr. Edgin stated that between 40 and 60% of those plots were being destroyed by trampling, lying on, or otherwise adversely affected by deer. Browsing on a state-threatened plant is also documented on some of the western most tracts. Deer are also a problem during the nesting season for the grassland birds. He stated that he has seen studies showing documentation that white-tailed deer will browse on the nest and nestlings of grassland nesting birds. He stated that the deer are creating significant problems to the resources. Browse lines would be hard to detect because of the large grassland areas, but there are a significant number of deer trails.

Commissioner Keating stated that it was his opinion that placing the two parking areas within the Nature Preserve may be a small price to pay in order to protect the habitat.

Jenny Skufca presented the INPC staff recommendation with regard to the request for parking area placements within Jasper County Prairie Chicken Sanctuary Nature Preserve. The primary purpose of the Nature Preserve is the provision of habitat for the greater prairie chicken. The lack of hunting pressure on white-tailed deer has resulted in the degradation of this critical grassland habitat. The recommendation for approval is focused on the need of site managers to conduct an approved deer management activity to protect the rare grassland. The site's dedication document uniquely supports this use by stating that the Nature Preserve "may be managed with or without the preservation or restoration of natural conditions." The proposed locations, already disturbed, will facilitate getting hunters safely to the areas of highest deer density which will provide benefits well beyond the boundaries of the Nature Preserve. Land managers for Jasper County Prairie Chicken Sanctuary Nature Preserve have determined that deer have caused negative impacts to the Nature Preserve's flora and fauna, as well as to the surrounding protected tracts. These negative impacts are also interfering with restoration efforts. It has been documented that deer are seeking refuge in the areas with no hunting pressure. The location of the parking areas chosen by the site managers will ensure that the proposed activity will enhance the natural features of the Nature Preserve, consistent with its dedication. This is a requirement in the rules for management of nature preserves with regard to changes in use. She stated that INPC staff believe that the parking areas would cause no adverse impacts to the Nature Preserve and would improve the natural conditions.

Ms. Skufca stated that INPC staff recommend approval of the IDNR's request to create and maintain two hunter parking areas to support the successful implementation of an imperative deer management program and to maintain the natural quality of the Nature Preserve on a long-term basis.

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

The Commission grants approval of the Illinois Department of Natural Resource's request to construct and maintain two 30-foot by 40-foot parking areas at Jasper County Prairie Chicken Sanctuary Nature Preserve in Jasper County, as presented under Item 20 of the 200th Meeting.

(Resolution 2018)

200-21) Public Comment Period (3 minutes per person)

Paul Sodderholm thanked the Commission for the opportunity of attending the meeting. He stated that he wanted to also thank Mr. Shapiro, his family, and others like him for giving to the people and future generations the land that they dedicated. He stated that he listens to a radio program in Chicago, and the commentator says that we are borrowing the land from our children's children's children. He stated that he has been in Chicago for approximately 35 years, and he can remember when there was open land between Chicago and Aurora. The land is being asphalted and concreted faster than ever. The land discussed at this meeting is very precious, unique property. There are other sites that may not be as special or unique but area equally as valuable from the standpoint of once it is destroyed, it will never be there again. He wanted to know if there were any programs that would set aside less unique areas from permanent destruction and/or degradation. He stated that he is trying to re-establish prairie on his land, and he wanted to know if there was a program that would guide his efforts.

Deborah Stone thanked Mr. Sodderholm for his comments. She stated that the INPC has nine field staff that cover the State of Illinois, and the appropriate staff person for his area would be happy to contact him to discuss the programs available. She stated that the Commission is delighted to have him and his wife at the meeting, and the Commission would like to work with him to inform him about options available.

Brian Anderson, Illinois Natural History Survey and INPC Advisor, stated that the INAI update is interested in locating the areas that still have ecological integrity and potential for restoration. They are in the process for trying to find those areas.

Commissioner Keating stated that the Commission has certain criteria that must be met for dedication of land, but there are other ways by which one can preserve open land. Some counties have county park and reserve programs, and there are local land trusts that may be able to provide some guidance.

200-22) Other Business

Commissioner Keating stated that the Commission has three statutorily set advisors. The statutory advisors are the Chief of the Illinois Natural History Survey (Dr. Brian Anderson); the Director of the Illinois State Museum (Dr. Bonnie Styles); and the Director of the IDNR (Acting Director Sam Flood). At this time, the Commission is proposing to add five more advisors: Dr. William Shilts, Director of the Institute for Natural Resource Sustainability; E. Donald McKay, III, Interim Director of the Illinois State Geological Survey; Dr. Brian Anderson, Interim Director of the Illinois State Water Survey; Gary Miller, Interim Director of Illinois Sustainable Technology Center; and Janet Grimes, Director of the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency.

It was moved by Keating, seconded by Payne, and carried that the following resolution be adopted:

The Commission appoints Dr. William Shilts, Director of the Institute for Natural Resource Sustainability; E. Donald McKay, III, Interim Director of the Illinois State Geological Survey; Dr. Brian Anderson, Interim Director of the Illinois State Water Survey; Gary Miller, Interim Director of Illinois Sustainable Technology Center; and Janet Grimes, Director of the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency as advisors to the Commission.

(Resolution 2019)

Vice-Chair Rosenthal stated that seven sets of minutes from closed meetings of the Commission were included in the Commissioners' packets. The meeting dates are August 7, 2001; August 6, 2002;

August 3, 2004; August 2, 2005; May 2, 2006; May 1, 2007; and May 6, 2008. These meetings were closed in accordance with the Open Meetings Act to discuss the purchase of real property. Section 2.06 of the Open Meetings Act provides that public bodies, “shall periodically, but no less than semi-annually, meet to review minutes of all closed sessions. At such meetings, a determination shall be made and reported in an open session that: 1. the need for confidentiality still exists as to all or part of those minutes, or 2. that the minutes or portions thereof no longer require confidential treatment and are available for public inspection.”

Don McFall, Office of Realty and Environmental Planning, IDNR, stated that he has carefully reviewed all seven sets of closed session meetings. He stated that it is his recommendation that the following closed session minutes be opened to the public: August 7, 2001; August 6, 2002, and August 3, 2004. He stated that the projects listed in these minutes have either been acquired or are no longer active projects. In some cases dollar figures are listed, however, appraisals through the IDNR are only valid for six months so this should not be a factor. It is also his recommendation at the minutes from the May 1, 2007 be opened to the public because only a list of the proposed areas was given.

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

The minutes from the August 7, 2001, August 6, 2002, August 3, 2004, and May 1, 2007, are no longer confidential and will be released to the public. In accordance with the Open Meetings Act, the closed session minutes from the August 2, 2005, May 2, 2006, and May 6, 2008, meetings will remain confidential but will be reviewed semi-annually to ascertain the need to be kept confidential.

(Resolution 2020)

Vice-Chair Rosenthal stated that pursuant to Section 2(c)(5) of the Illinois Open Meetings Act [5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11)] for purposes of discussing litigation, the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission will go into closed session. Section 2 (c)(11) of the Illinois Open Meetings Act provides that a public body may go into closed session to discuss, “Litigation, when an action against, affecting or on behalf of the particular public body has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal, or when the public body finds that an action is probable or imminent, in which case the basis for the finding shall be recorded and entered into the minutes of the closed meeting.” A unanimous roll-call vote was taken. Closed session started at 1:25 p.m.

The meeting was called back to order at 1:40 p.m. by Vice-Chair Rosenthal.

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

The Commission authorizes the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission to sign a consent order in the case of the People of the State of Illinois v. Insite Real Estate, LLC, Insite New Lenox, LLC, O’Donnell Construction, Inc., and Larjan Enterprises, Case Number 07-CH-69, when fully agreed to by Illinois Nature Preserves Commission staff and Illinois Department of Natural Resources legal counsel.

(Resolution 2021)

200-23) Adjournment

It was moved by Flemal, seconded by Keating, and carried that the meeting be adjourned at 1:42 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: February 17, 2009

Subject: Staff Report for the 200th Meeting of the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission (INPC)

I. INPC Operations:

- A. Deborah Stone and Randy Heidorn participated in a work group convened by INPC Chair Jill Riddell and made up of an additional commissioner, and INPC advisors and consultants to develop an event to celebrate the dedication or registration of the 500th natural area. Tentatively the group decided to investigate the development of a digital photo contest. Ms. Stone and Mr. Heidorn met with State Museum and *Outdoor Illinois* staff to get their advice on such a contest since they both have experience with photo contests and exhibitions. A handout with more detail on the proposed photo contest concept will be handed out at the meeting.
- B. Randy Heidorn has been working very closely with Office of Resource Conservation and Office of Realty and Environmental Planning on FY09 budget issues, including the INPC operations budget and the NAAF capital budget (acquisition, defense, stewardship).
- C. Kelly Neal and Jenny Skufca assisted Randy Heidorn in the preparation of the INPC biennial reports for 2003-2006.
- D. Tom Lerczak met with Debbie Reider to provide an update on INPC paperwork that he had processed during her absence.
- E. In the absence of a Natural Area Protection Manager, Mary Kay Solecki reviewed all preservation proposals and Nature Preserve (NP)/Land and Water Reserve (LWR) documents for the 200th INPC meeting. Proposals prepared by Mary Kay Solecki were reviewed by Tom Lerczak.
- F. Kim Roman, Debbie Reider, and Jenny Skufca worked in the Heritage Tent at the State Fair.
- G. Jenny Skufca assisted a consultant in Lake County with the necessary documentation for advanced mapping of NP boundaries in that county.
- H. Jason Inczauskis began employment as a resident intern working with Steven Byers in Area 2. He will be housed in the Natural Resource Office of the McHenry County Conservation District (MCCD) with Mr. Byers.

II. Training, Presentations, and Meetings Attended:

- A. Samantha Adams and Jason Inczauskis, resident interns, completed basic training courses which included topics on wildland fire, pesticide application, and chainsaw use.
- B. John Nelson gave a presentation, along with Brad Semel (IDNR), about Harlem Hills NP to the neighbors in the adjacent Preservation Point Homeowners Association.
- C. Steven Byers and Jason Inczauskis represented the INPC at the Chicago Wilderness Ravines Restoration Workshop hosted by the Lake County Forest Preserve District (LCFPD) at Fort Sheridan; reviewed restoration techniques used to stabilize slopes.
- D. Kim Roman presented information about habitat conservation to a Boy Scout troop.
- E. Angella Moorehouse:
 - 1. Gave a presentation on the status of hill prairies in western Illinois at a meeting for the Western Prairie Audubon Society in Macomb on August 12, 2008. This was followed up by a radio interview on hill prairies for the local public radio station, WIUM, in Macomb which aired on August 22, 2008.
 - 2. Attended the Stewardship Conference at Wildlife Prairie Park in Peoria on September 25, 2008, which involved a meeting primarily of IDNR Natural Heritage biologists and INPC field staff to discuss management issues on natural areas.
- F. Tom Lerczak:
 - 1. Attended a meeting of the *Boltonia decurrens* working group at the University of Illinois' Emiquon Field Station, Fulton County, on July 25, 2008.
 - 2. Gave a presentation on wildlife habitats and natural areas to the Schuy-Rush Chapter of the Illinois Audubon Society in Rushville on September 13, 2008.
 - 3. Provided information to Kathy Andrews, editor of *Outdoor Illinois* magazine, regarding Sandra Miller Bellrose NP.
- G. Mary Kay Solecki:
 - 1. Participated in a guided assessment of Grand Prairie Friends facilitated by Land Trust Alliance staff, to assess strengths and weaknesses of organization using land trust standards and practices.
 - 2. Attended a portion of Illinois Natural History Surveys' 150th Anniversary Scientific Symposium
- H. Debbie Newman:

1. Gave a presentation on threatened and endangered species in southwestern Illinois and the INPC's role regarding this issue.
 2. Gave a presentation on INPC programs at the Kaskaskia Valley Audubon Society's Kaskaskia Valley Nature Festival.
 3. Organized and conducted a ceremony for Buck Hill Bottom LWR.
- I. Kelly Neal:
1. Represented the INPC at the quarterly meeting of the Endangered Species Protection Board.
 2. Attended informal training on the Wetland Impact Review Tool (WIRT) mapping program.
- J. Jenny Skufca:
1. Initiated planning for, and attended, informal training on the WIRT mapping program for better identification of threats locations.
 2. Met with Kim Roman and toured natural areas of special significance; obtained information on past, current, or potential threats in INPC Area 3.
 3. Met with Mary Kay Solecki and toured natural areas of special significance; obtained information on past, current, or potential threats in INPC Area 6.
 4. Met with John Nelson and toured natural areas of special significance; obtained information on past, current, or potential threats in INPC Area 1.
- K. Randy Heidorn
1. Attended, as a volunteer, the 35th Natural Areas Conference and Natural Areas Association Board of Directors meeting in Nashville, Tennessee. Mr. Heidorn was re-elected to another two-year term as Treasurer of this international, professional, conservation organization.
 2. Participated in a meeting of the Illinois Terrorism Task Force's Incident Management Team meeting, where his performance as Planning Section Chief during the recent Mississippi River flood fight was evaluated and his NIMS qualification task book for Type 3 All Hazards Planning Section Chief was updated.

III. Inventory and Monitoring:

- A. Randy Heidorn, Angella Moorehouse, Kelly Neal, and Jenny Skufca participated in the Natural Areas Evaluation Committee.
- B. Field staff provided the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI) update staff with landowner contact information for Category I INAI sites in their assigned areas.
- C. Steven Byers represented the INPC at a Chicago Wilderness meeting to utilize the Illinois Natural History Survey Critical Trends Analysis Program as model for region-wide monitoring with county resource agencies.
- D. Kim Roman coordinated an INAI review and update of Leesville Savanna INAI site and assisted with sampling for INAI data.
- E. Angella Moorehouse:
1. Nominated two new sites to the INAI (both of which were approved): Bald Bluff, Henderson County (Category I loess hill prairie) and Lost Grove Wetland, McDonough County (Category II site suitable habitat supporting state-threatened plant, queen of the prairie).
 2. Assisted staff from Augustana College with research and site visits for a study of the impacts of grazing on Bald Bluff Hill Prairie, Henderson County.
- F. Tom Lerczak:
1. Conducted a plant inventory and site inspection of McCune Sand Prairie Natural Area for use in a LWR proposal.
 2. 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.
 3. Assisted Tim Kelley (IDNR) with completing assessments of hill prairies at Jim Edgar/Panther Creek State Fish and Wildlife Area for State Wildlife Grant (SWG) project.
 4. Completed a site assessment of Ridgetop Hill Prairie NP for use in a SWG project.
- G. Mary Kay Solecki assisted with mussel surveys on the North Fork of the Vermilion River and Little Vermilion River (both INAI streams).
- H. Debbie Newman monitored several populations of endangered plants at five sites.
- I. Bob Edgin:
1. Conducted semi-annual site surveillance at Ramsey Railroad Prairie, Lost Creek Marsh, and Emma Vance Woods NPs; Padgett Pin Oak Woods, Padgett Brothers Sweet Gum Woods, Lost Creek Marsh, and Marjorie J. Brines White Oak Woods LWRs; Lake Sara Flatwoods, Huddleston Woods, Cox Timber, and Dry Fork Woods natural heritage landmarks; Ramsey Marsh, Flag Pond, Pelican Pouch Woods, and Harmann Prairie INAI sites.
 2. Conducted vegetation sampling at Green Prairie Natural Heritage Landmark (NHL).
- J. Samantha Adams:

1. Conducted semi-annual site surveillance at Ramsey Railroad Prairie, Lost Creek Marsh, and Emma Vance Woods NPs; Padgett Pin Oak Woods, Padgett Brothers Sweet Gum Woods, Lost Creek Marsh, and Marjorie J. Brines White Oak Woods LWRs; Lake Sara Flatwoods, Huddleston Woods, Cox Timber, and Dry Fork Woods NHLs; Ramsey Marsh, Flag Pond, Pelican Pouch Woods, and Harmann Prairie INAI sites.
 2. Continued with botanical surveys at Green Prairie and Ping Prairie at Huskey Hollow NHLs.
 3. Assisted Dr. Ebinger with woody vegetation sampling at Prairie Ridge State Natural Area.
- K. Judy Faulkner Dempsey met with INAI Update Contract Regional Ecologist, Chris Benda, to discuss potential natural area sites.

IV. Protection Program:

- A. Impact of Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Park Closures: Staff examined the list of park closures to determine which IDNR-owned or managed nature preserves or land and water reserves would be directly impacted by these closures. Although several sites staff of parks scheduled to be closed manage satellites, which are in INPC programs, only George B. Fell Nature Preserve, in Castle Rock State Park, is located in a closed park. This will have an impact on deer management of this site, which involves hunting during the deer firearm season. The draft proposal is that all satellites will remain open, however, loss of staff may impact the ability to manage these sites from a work load perspective. Similarly, the draft proposal will allow volunteers to continue their efforts on natural areas that are satellites.
- B. Staff met with landowners and managers to plan and draft protection proposals for the sites on the agenda for the 200th meeting.
- C. Steven Byers:
1. Represented the INPC at a meeting with the City of Highland Park, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and the attorney representing individual landowners regarding protection/stewardship of Hybernia HP.
 2. Correspondence/discussion with staff of the Forest Preserve District of Kane County (FPDKC) regarding opportunities for dedication of an addition to Freeman Kame NP. Mr. Byers and Jason Inczauskis did a follow-up site visit to the proposed addition to assess management needs, threats, and to take photos.
 3. Ongoing dialogue/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 NP addition to Gensburg-Markham NP.
 4. Ongoing dialogue with staff of the MCCD, landowners, and The Land Conservancy of McHenry County regarding land protection and stewardship in the Alden Headwaters region and throughout McHenry County.
 5. Continued meetings with staff of the USFWS, Openlands Project, MCCD, and Friends of Hack-ma-tack to bring a USFWS refuge to northeastern Illinois. Mr. Byers is close to finalizing a plan with Fermatta (consulting firm) to identify/document the economic value of a refuge in the region. Non-state funds have been identified to support this effort.
- D. Kim Roman landowner of a Leesville Savanna INAI site and lands neighboring Long Run Seep NP.
- E. Tom Lerczak:
1. Continued compiling information for two in-progress LWR proposals for sites located along the Mackinaw River (ParkLands Foundation properties).
 2. Obtained landowner signatures for Bill and Mike's Hill Prairie and Orlandini's South Fork of the Sangamon River to be designated as an Illinois NHLs.
 3. Provided information on land appraisals to the owners of Speckman-Stelter Woods LWR.
 4. Provided boundary information for Miller-Anderson Woods Natural Area to Dana Walker, a consulting forester hired by a landowner who owns part of the natural area next to Miller-Anderson Woods NP.
- F. Debbie Newman contacted landowners of two unprotected INAI sites.
- G. Mary Kay Solecki:
1. Drafted a proposal to dedicate an addition to Loda Cemetery Prairie NP and worked with the Grand Prairie Friends (site owner) toward dedication of an addition.
 2. Landowner contact with a landowner of an Embarras River INAI site.
- H. Bob Edgin and resident intern Samantha Adams conducted a landowner contact in Wabash County. Protection options were discussed with the landowner, and the area was referred to the INAI update staff for evaluation.
- I. Judy Faulkner Dempsey
1. Attended a meeting of the Cache River Joint Venture Partnership. Discussion of reconnection of the Upper and Lower Cache River through Grassy Slough LWR and other options occurred. Court proceedings on the legality of the Diehl Dam continue.
 2. Met with Mike Baltz, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), to discuss the INPC's unique role in contacting landowners in the LaRue Pine Hills -Western Shawnee-Trail of Tears conservation opportunity area. A plan for the INPC to partner with TNC and others for protection in this area was designed.

- J. Samantha Adams: developed probable pre-settlement vegetation patterns for townships, including Green Prairie and Ping Prairie at Huskey Hollow NHLs and the proposed Horn Prairie Grove LWR.
- K. Jason Inczauskis conducted site visits to Wauconda Bog, Freeman Kame, Bluff Spring Fen, and Fort Sheridan..

V. Land Acquisition:

- A. Steven Byers:
 - 1. Discussions with the FPDKC regarding opportunities to purchase property adjacent to the Meissner-Corron Forest Preserve.
 - 2. Discussion with Steve Bylina of the Forest Preserve District of Cook County (FPDCC) regarding dedication of vacated streets and alleys at Wolf Road Prairie NP.
 - 3. Met with Ed Collins (MCCD) to review the District's plans for land acquisition adjacent to Bystricky Prairie NP. Follow-up discussions with Attorney Roger Stelle regarding NHL status for the Route 47 Balsam Poplar site and an existing right of first refusal that existed between the owners and the IDNR. Worked with Don McFall (IDNR) to recommend the IDNR relinquish rights to first refusal since the MCCD is purchasing the property.
- B. Site visit/correspondence to properties located in Lake Forest and Highland Park on behalf of George Covington. The sites need to be revisited during the growing season.
- C. Angella Moorehouse has been assisting IDNR staff in the possible acquisition of several priority lands in Adams, Brown, and Schuyler counties which could involve increasing IDNR ownership near Siloam Springs State Park and the acquisition of a forested INAI site containing state-listed plant species.
- D. Judy Faulkner Dempsey, as the local INPC contact, continued to assist with TNC's acquisition of a second parcel at Lovets Pond, Jackson County.

VI. Defense Program:

- A. Impacts of IDNR Park closures: See Protection Program, Part A.
- B. John Nelson, Kim Roman, and Mary Kay Solecki took Jenny Skufca on tours of their INPC areas highlighting some defense issues
- C. Randy Heidorn and Jenny Skufca continue to coordinate INPC involvement in the management of Illinois Beach State Park including North Dunes NP and Illinois Beach NP. This includes dealing with issues relating to beach erosion, prescribed fire and asbestos containing material remediation.
- D. Jenny Skufca and Kelly Neal responded to eleven reviews for IDNR's CERP.
- E. Jenny Skufca:
 - 1. Responded to seven reviews for the IDNR's Consultation Program.
 - 2. Coordinated a meeting including Deborah Stone and Randy Heidorn with Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) staff to better understand implications of the Class III Special Resource Groundwater designation. The INPC plans to move forward with Class III designations at for the following ten NP:
 - a. Illinois Beach NP, Lake County
 - b. Bluff Spring Fen NP, Cook County
 - c. Braidwood Dunes and Savanna NP, Will County
 - d. Lake in the Hills Fen NP, McHenry County
 - e. Volo Bog NP, Lake County
 - f. Elizabeth Lake NP, McHenry County
 - g. Lockport Prairie NP, Will County
 - h. Romeoville Prairie NP, Will County
 - i. Armin Krueger Speleological Area NP, Monroe County
 - j. George B. Fell NP, Ogle County (data being collated under current contract)
 - k. Spring Grove Fen NP, McHenry County (data being collated under current contract)
 - l. Goose Lake Prairie NP, Grundy County (data being collated under current contract)
 - 3. Attended a meeting with IDNR Natural Resources Damage Assessment staff to better understand the implementation of advance action plans for large-scale threats involving multiple agencies.
 - 4. Reviewed and made corrections, in conjunction with an Illinois State Water Survey (ISWS) consultant, to two Class III groundwater petitions.
 - 5. Began assembling data and reference materials for an advance action plan document related to large-scale threats to sensitive natural areas.
- F. John Nelson:
 - 1. Provided the consultants for the Busse Woods spillway modification project with state-listed plant species information consistent with a valid license agreement they have with the IDNR for use of the Natural Heritage database for this site. Heavy rains in early September, 2008, caused extensive flooding in the Chicagoland area and renewed calls for flood protection.

2. Assisted the USACE in site meetings for wetland fill enforcement actions near Moraine Hills State Park and Volo Bog State Natural Area.
- G. Angella Moorehouse visited several sites which incurred severe wind-throw damage from June and July, 2008, storms. The storms impacted forested communities at Black Hawk Forest NP and Josua Lindahl Hill Prairie NP, Rock Island County, and Thistle Hills LWR, McDonough County. While these sites are expected to recover with little or no long-term negative impacts, the immediate concerns are public safety, trail maintenance, increase fuel load for prescribed burns, and increased bank erosion.
- H. Tom Lerczak investigated a proposed riverbank filtration project by the city of Bloomington that could impact the Mackinaw River Natural Area.
- I. Mary Kay Solecki researched and began to address concerns that bike use may damage natural resources at Woodyard Memorial Conservation Area LWR, working in conjunction with Roger Jansen (IDNR), City of Charleston Parks and Recreation Department staff (owner of the LWR), and concerned citizens.
- J. Bob Edgin:
1. Continued monitoring the oil well removal at Beall Woods NP.
 2. Investigated a report of trespass and timber theft at Robeson Hills NP. No evidence of trespass or timber harvest was observed within the NP. All activity was on private land adjacent to the NP.
- K. **Threats to sites within INPC Programs :**
1. **Site: Woodyard Memorial Conservation Area LWR, Coles County – Mary Kay Solecki**
 - a. **Issue:** Unauthorized trails extending from neighboring city park into the LWR.
 - b. **Threat:** Bicyclists are creating new trails which are damaging the natural resources in the LWR.
 - c. **Status:** INPC staff, in conjunction with Roger Jansen (IDNR), researched and began to address intrusions reported by concerned citizens. The landowner, City of Charleston, is fully engaged in process and its Parks and Recreation Department will assist in repairing damage and educating users about the high value and protection of the LWR.
 2. **Site: Bluff Spring Fen NP, Cook County – 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 (Illinois State Geological Survey) have 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:** No change. A site visit on September 18, 2008, found that surface water from heavy rainfall from the previous week caused regional flooding in the Poplar Creek watershed which was diverted by a temporary ditch. There was no impact on sensitive fens.
 3. **Site: Old Plank Road Prairie NP, Cook County – Kim Roman, Jenny Skufca**
 - a. **Issue:** During a site visit, INPC staff observed earth-moving and silt deposition within the NP.
 - b. **Threat:** The area of encroachment is estimated to cover approximately 35 feet x 130 feet. It is presumed the responsible party is a pipeline company which recently performed maintenance/upgrading of its facilities adjacent to the NP.
 - c. **Status:** INPC staff alerted the landowner and is in the process of locating the pipeline's contact information to begin resolving violations to the Illinois Natural Areas Preservation Act.
 4. **Site: Palatine Prairie NP, Cook County – Steven Byers**
 - a. **Issue:** 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 the NP and the Palatine Park District (owner of the NP) wants the infrastructure removed.
 - c. **Status:** Golf Nation has developed a plan that supports the netting and will not intrude into Palatine Prairie NP. The Palatine Park District will provide oversight when the ground wires are removed.
 5. **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 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 the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRDGC) General Superintendent, Richard Lanyon, the project will undergo thorough review prior to the permit approval. This development is still undergoing review by the MWRDGC.
- 6. **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. Commission staff provided input regarding the legal description and the previously stated concerns regarding the aquatic resources in the creek.
- 7. **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, erosion, etc.
 - c. **Status:** On August 27, 2008, Mr. Byers met with the USACE, the USFWS, V3 consultants, the City of Highland Park, and the attorney. The USACE has determined that all of two of the lots and most of the third lot are jurisdictional wetlands. The USACE has also determined that the landowners can still apply for an RP4 permit, but that the landowners would be required to mitigate for wetland losses. In this case, the mitigation would be high and may further discourage the landowners from moving forward with development. No update has been received from the attorney on whether the landowners will attempt to secure a permit.
- 8. **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.
 - 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. In the long term, the NP will be subject to changes in the surface hydrology. The silt fence was initially installed in the NP.
 - c. **Status:** A revised plan, acceptable to the INPC and the Lake Forest Open Lands Association, was submitted for USACE approval.
- 9. **Site: Black-Crown Marsh LWR, McHenry County – John Nelson**
 - a. **Issue:** IDNR consultation has been opened on the Village of Lakemoor public works and salt storage facility being constructed adjacent to the LWR.
 - b. **Threat:** Concerns about detrimental effects of increased salinity and changes in flow and volume of stormwater to the LWR.
 - c. **Status:** INPC staff met with Village of Lakemoor staff and legal counsel regarding INPC concerns. Further investigation, monitoring, and recommendations on this project will be required.
- 10. **Site: Sterne's Fen NP, McHenry County – Steven Byers**
 - a. **Issue:** Existing vacant house located just outside boundary of the NP will be replaced by a picnic shelter.
 - b. **Threat:** Increased public use may put pressure on the septic field located close to the NP.
 - c. **Status:** INPC staff met with Crystal Lake Park District staff and the consultant on September 3, 2008.
- 11. **Site: George B. Fell NP, Ogle County – John Nelson, Jenny Skufca**
 - a. **Issue:** Recent studies reveal potential mining impacts to groundwater and plants in the NP.
 - b. **Threat:** Decreasing groundwater levels sustaining the NP may be adversely affecting success of state-listed plant species in the NP.
 - c. **Status:** INPC and IDNR staff met to discuss possible mining impacts to the NP. Additional groundwater studies will be released in November, 2008. If the studies reveal further evidence for concern, a meeting will be called with the mining company.
- 12. **Site: Crevecoeur NP, Tazewell County – Tom Lerczak, Jenny Skufca**
 - a. **Issue:** Water main leak near the NP boundary.
 - b. **Threat:** Concern that access could damage the NP.
 - c. **Status:** INPC staff met with the City of Creve Coeur Water Department to inspect water main break. Further inspection was done by the INPC, the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, and volunteer staff of Ft. Crevecoeur Park to determine if cultural resources might be affected; none were found. After IDNR consultation was terminated, INPC staff was present for repair to ensure no disturbance to the NP.
- 13. **Site: Dirksen-McNaughton Woods LWR, Tazewell County – Tom Lerczak, Jenny Skufca**

- a. **Issue:** Proposed road realignment and bridge replacement within the LWR.
 - b. **Threat:** Road realignment would require use of land registered as a LWR.
 - c. **Status:** A letter was sent to the City of Pekin informing them of the level of protection conferred upon the LWR and the requirement to go before the Commission prior to any action outside of the existing footprint.
 - d.
14. **Site: Hickory Creek Barrens NP, Will County – Kim Roman**
- a. **Issue:** In 2006, INPC staff reported to the Commission that 3.3 acres of Hickory Creek Barrens NP had been impacted by silt deposition.
 - b. **Threat:** The origin of silt was from a neighboring development project that had inadequate sediment controls in place. Silt/fill material within the NP was deposited up to 12 inches deep.
 - c. **Status:** The IDNR, on behalf of the INPC, filed a complaint with the Illinois Attorney General's Office (IAGO) against two parties: Larjan, the previous landowner who introduced the fill material with no silt control measures, and InSite, the current landowner in the process of developing the property. The defendants violated four provisions of the Illinois Natural Areas Preservation Act. INPC staff is working with the IAGO, the owner of the NP, the Forest Preserve District of Will County (FPDWC), and consultants representing the defendants. The 10-acre development site has since been re-graded and stabilized and is no longer the origin of silt deposition. The FPDWC and INPC staff estimated the damage to the NP to be at a minimum of \$300,000. The current landowner of the ten acres is wishing to settle out of court through a consent order. The consent order will require InSite to provide \$150,000 toward restoration of Hickory Creek Barrens NP. IDNR's legal staff is in the process of finalizing the consent decree with the IAGO and InSite. The IAGO will continue to pursue the remaining restoration funds from Larjan.
15. **Site: Long Run Seep NP, Will County – Kim Roman**
- a. **Issue 1:** Major bridge replacement on a road dissecting the NP.
 - b. **Threat 1:** Concern over changes to surface water hydrology, erosion, and silt deposition in the NP.
 - c. **Status 1:** INPC staff met with contractors performing the bridge replacement and provided guidance on how to minimize impacts to the site (which is located on both sides of the county bridge). INPC staff regularly inspected the site and requested changes and improvements to sediment controls and access. The bridge is now complete, and its side slopes are stabilized.
 - d. **Issue 2:** A gas/oil pipeline running along the west boundary of Long Run Seep NP is in need of on-the-ground maintenance and repair.
 - e. **Threat 2:** Detrimental impacts to the sensitive natural area.
 - f. **Status 2:** INPC staff met with the pipeline company to discuss site access and restrictions in order to minimize impacts to the site.
16. **Site: Rockton Bog NP, Winnebago County – John Nelson**
- a. **Issue:** Nitrogen spill in the road right-of-way adjacent to IDNR property and nearby NP during early summer 2008.
 - 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 indicated an area of high concentration, and this area was targeted for soil removal off-site. Further monitoring is planned to determine if nitrogen migration and concentrations extend to the NP.
 - c. **Status:** Worked with Brad Semel (IDNR) and Site Superintendent Dan Riggs to oversee the excavation of contaminated soil adjacent to the NP. Weather conditions, negotiations, and legal procedures delayed the clean-up until late August, 2008.
17. **Site: Stone Bridge Reserve LWR, Winnebago County – John Nelson, Jenny Skufca**
- a. **Issue:** Unauthorized trail access points and installation of trail material along the linear LWR.
 - b. **Threat:** Lack of a response by the landowner could lead to further intrusions and damage. Additional trail entry points require prior approval by all easement holders: INPC, IDNR, and Natural Land Institute.
 - c. **Status:** A letter was sent to the landowner, Roscoe Township, requesting that accountability be sought, installation of informational signage to direct trail users to legal entries, and to inform them of consequences of installing additional entries.

VII. Stewardship Program:

- A. Tom Lerczak assisted TNC's Volunteer Stewardship Network coordinator at an IDNR storage facility in finding and loading the herbicide order purchased by the INPC for statewide use by volunteer groups.
- B. Stewardship planning:
 - 1. Staff completed management plans for the following sites:
 - a. Crevecoeur NP
 - b. Sandy Creek Bluffs LWR
 - 2. Kelly Neal reviewed 20 management schedules and two unscheduled management actions.

3. John Nelson
 - a. Participated in a Region I stewardship meeting with IDNR staff.
 - b. Participated in a government agency review meeting for the master management plan for the MCCC Rothschild property adjacent to Lake in the Hills Fen NP.
4. Steven Byers:
 - a. Continued to seek the Crystal Lake Park District's support for restoring hydrology and the stream corridor at Sterne's Fen NP. A meeting and site visit is scheduled.
 - b. Participated with Maggie Cole (IDNR) in a Save the Prairie Society board meeting to review the current status of properties on Hickory Lane (some owned by the IDNR and some by the FPDCC). Also reviewed the intent of the pending Stakeholders meeting to review current protection/stewardship efforts and to move forward with development of a three year management schedule.
 - c. Met with the FPDCC, Openlands Project, and consultants regarding protection/stewardship of McMahon Woods and provided an understanding of the surface/groundwater hydrology.
 - d. Met with the staff of the FPDCC to review NP issues regarding off-trail bike use at Deer Grove West Forest Preserve.
5. Angella Moorehouse worked with staff from Tri-County Regional Planning and Peoria Park District to utilize funds from an EPA 319 non-point source pollution grant to be used for stewardship on INPC sites and natural areas owned by the Peoria Park District, as well as private landowners of INAI sites.
6. Tom Lerczak:
 - a. Contacted the owners of Elwin Botanical Area NHL to discuss an updated management plan.
 - b. Met with the owner of Sandy Creek Bluffs LWR and volunteers to provide information on vegetation management techniques and to discuss updating the site management plan.
 - c. Met with the owners of Hopewell Hill Prairies NP and Oak Bluff Savanna NP to discuss updating site management plans.
 - d. Met with Ft. Crevecoeur Park volunteers and Barrie McVey (IDNR) to discuss forest management at Ft. Crevecoeur Park, including Crevecoeur NP.
 - e. Worked with Eric Golden, Landowner Incentive Program (LIP) and Tim Kelley (IDNR) at Illinois River Sand Areas LWR to plan restoration projects that will be funded through the LIP.
 - f. Met with Diane Tecic (IDNR) and other IDNR staff at the Sterling IDNR office to review management plans and work orders for hill prairies included in the SWG project.
7. Mary Kay Solecki prepared a management plan that allows for deer control at Jordan Creek of the North Fork NP.
8. Debbie Newman worked with LIP staff on management plans for INAI/INPC sites.
9. Bob Edgin discussed short and long-term management goals and practices with owners of Edward V. Price Woods LWR, Marjorie J. Brines White Oak Woods LWR, Lost Creek Marsh LWR, and Beadles Barrens NP.
- C. Stewardship project implementation:
 1. John Nelson met with staff of the Boone County Conservation District to discuss implementation of a stewardship project at Kinnickinnick Creek NP, Boone County.
 2. Steven Byers:
 - a. Continued to monitor and execute USFWS LIP grants for stewardship of Hybernia NP with Jennifer Hammer (The Conservation Foundation).
 - b. Conducted site assessments of Fox River Country Day School, Trout Park NP, Trout Park River's Edge, and Dixie Fromm Briggs Prairie NP following restoration activities executed by contractors. Recommended disbursement of the balance of IDNR C2000 funds to The Conservation Foundation.
 - c. Conducted a site visit with Maggie Cole and Dan Kirk (IDNR) at several dedicated NPs for which The Conservation Foundation is holding funds earmarked for restoration and management.
 - d. Coordinated with Brad Woodson (MCCD) for contractual services for Skyline Helicopters and Jack Pizzo and Associates for control of phragmites under a 2008 Natural Areas Acquisition Fund contract. Executed the final contract agreements/paperwork on behalf of the contractors for payment of the invoices by the IDNR.
 3. Jason Inczauskis attended a pre-bid meeting for winter exotics removal at Wauconda Bog.
 4. Angella Moorehouse:
 - a. Continues to administer a SWG for the Siloam Springs State Park area, including work on private lands in Adams and Brown counties.
 - b. Worked with IDNR Natural Heritage Division staff to complete work orders to aid in the implementation of the statewide hill prairie project and SWG.
 - c. Assisted in the implementation of the LIP by serving on various technical committees, proposing and selecting various projects, evaluating the success of stewardship work projects completed, and working

- with landowners in an effort to use this source of funds for stewardship of natural areas within INPC programs and conservation opportunity areas identified by the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan.
5. Tom Lerczak met with Mitch King (owner of King Forest NP and NHL), Mark Phipps (IDNR), and Eric Golden (LIP assistant coordinator) to inspect restoration funded through the LIP program.
 6. Mary Kay Solecki conducted site assessments of exotic/invasive control work at two glacial drift hill prairie INAI sites near Charleston with the IDNR District Heritage Biologist.
 7. Debbie Newman:
 - a. Continued administering Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program grant to conduct restoration activities at Blufftop Acres LWR.
 - b. Worked on writing site assessments, management plans, landowner agreements, and GPS sites. Meeting with contractors for Hill Prairie SWG project for several sites.
 8. Judy Faulkner Dempsey prepared job specification forms and submitted the bid packet for exotic species control at Ren-Dill Shale Glade NP and Faulkner-Franke Pioneer Railroad Prairie NP. The bid packet was submitted to three bidders, and a successful bidder was determined. The contract request form was prepared and submitted.
- D. Land management conducted by staff:
1. John Nelson:
 - a. Performed management activities, primarily herbiciding, at five private NPs and one IDNR-owned NP with the help of Jason Inczauskis .
 - b. Provided signs to landowners for posting at Hazelwood Forest NP and Lowell Forest NP, Lee County.
 2. Steven Byers and Jason Inczauskis provided leadership in restoration/management of Queen Anne Cemetery Prairie – Eckert Cemetery NHL; cut woody invasives, coordinated with local scouts on an Eagle Scout project, and led a workday with 12-14 McHenry County College students with Instructor Mark Kuhlman.
 3. Jason Inczauskis :
 - a. Assisted the MCCD with seed collection at Glacial Park.
 - b. Assisted the Friends of the Bluff Spring Fen with seed collection at Bluff Spring Fen.
 - c. Helped the MCCD burn brush piles.
 4. Kim Roman:
 - a. Posted signs at Short Pioneer Cemetery Prairie, Tucker-Millington Fen, O'Hara Woods NPs, and Emmons' Woods LWR.
 - b. Herbicided honeysuckle, buckthorn, autumn olive, quaking aspens, teasel, and cemetery spurge at Long Run Seep NP, Hooper Branch Savanna NP, Grant Creek Prairie NP, Des Plaines Dolomite Prairies LWR, Voight Pauper Cemetery Prairie LWR, and Sweet Fern Savanna LWR.
 5. Bob Edgin and Samantha Adams:
 - a. Supervised installation of a firebreak at Ping Prairie at Huskey Hollow and Shellbark Bottoms NHLs .
 - b. Led a 30-acre grassland burn at Shellbark Bottoms NHL.
 - c. Conducted brush removal at Mulberry Grove Railroad Prairie INAI site and Allison Gravel Prairie NHL.
 - d. Conducted Japanese stiltgrass control at Beall Woods NP.
 - e. Conducted sugar maple control at Edward V. Price Woods LWR and Emma Vance Woods NP.
 6. Tom Lerczak:
 - a. Posted boundary signs at Funks Grove LWR, Crevecoeur NP, and Margaret Guzy Pothole Wetlands LWR.
 - b. Replaced faded LWR boundary signs at Anderson Prairie LWR.
 - c. Posted a specialty entrance sign at McMaster Woods NP.
 7. Mary Kay Solecki:
 - a. Continued work on a stewardship project to obtain/collect localecotype prairie seed for restoration of Loda Cemetery Prairie NP buffer area.
 - b. Led or assisted with stewardship activities at Barnhart Prairie Restoration NP (prairie restoration, boundary posting), Larimore's Salt Fork of the Vermilion River LWR (boundary posting and exotics control), and Prospect Cemetery Prairie NP (address issues concerning woody control, install signs).
 - c. Coordinated car repairs and the repair of a water pumper unit on the truck used in prescribed burns.
 8. Debbie Newman led a workday to train volunteers at Salt Lick Point LWR on hill prairie restoration, endangered species monitoring, and seed collection (nine volunteers).

Exhibit B

**Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Report to the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission
October 28, 2008**

Natural Areas Evaluation Committee

The Natural Areas Evaluation Committee held its 50th meeting in Springfield on September 30. Actions taken at that meeting are summarized below.

Jo Daviess County

Casper Bluff - Addition to INAI

This is a new Category III site for the Land and Water Reserve status that was conferred at the 198th INPC Meeting. Casper Bluff includes significant archeological features known as the Aiken Mound Group.

Rice Algific Slope - INAI# 1441 (Category I & II) - New category and boundary change

This is a site modification to add Category III and to expand the boundary to include Rice Algific Slope Natural Heritage Landmark.

Peoria County

Mossville Road Hill Prairie - INAI# 0143 (Category I) - New category and boundary change

This is a site modification to add Category III and to expand the boundary to include Mary Taylor's Mossville Road Hill Prairie Natural Heritage Landmark.

Henderson County

Bald Bluff - Addition to INAI

This is a new Category I site for the presence of 0.8 acres of Grade C loess hill prairie. The site qualifies under "Best of Kind" as there are less than 140 acres of this natural community within the Glaciated Section of the Middle Mississippi Border Natural Division. There are 26 high quality loess hill prairies totaling just over 100 acres in this section of the natural division.

McDonough & Fulton Counties

Lost Grove Wetland - Addition to INAI

This is a new Category II site for the presence of specific suitable habitat for the State Endangered *Filipendula rubra*.

Lake County

Elm Road Forest - INAI# 0512 (Category II) - New category

This is a site modification to add Category I for the presence of Grade B dry-mesic upland forest and northern flatwoods.

Gavin Bog and Prairie - INAI# 0794 (Category II & III) - New category

This is a site modification to add Category I for the presence of Grade A wet-mesic prairie and Grade B mesic & wet prairie and sedge meadow.

Kankakee County

Leesville Savanna - INAI# 0638 (Category I & II) - Boundary change

This is a site modification to expand the boundary to include additional Category I Grade B dry and dry-mesic sand savanna and Category II suitable specific habitat for *Hymenopappus scabiosaesus*. Leesville Savanna (#0638) and Leesville Savanna East (#0976) were combined and boundary was expanded in 2003. It is unknown why this portion was not included in the original INAI.

Sweet Fern Savanna - INAI# 1581 (Category II & III) - Boundary change
Boundary Expansion to include addition to Sweet Fern Savanna LWR as approved at the 199th INPC meeting & boundary changes to accurately portray location of LWR as per Kim Roman.

Livingston County

Broughton Cemetery Prairie - Addition to INAI

This is a new Category I site for the presence of Grade B mesic prairie. The site was inventoried and Graded as “B” during the initial survey but was not included because it did not meet the minimum acreage requirement at the time.

Champaign & Vermilion Counties

Salt Fork Vermilion River - INAI# 1427 (Category II, III & IV) - Boundary change

This is a site modification to expand the boundary to include the Larimore 40 and the R. W. Larimore’s Salt Fork River Natural Heritage Landmarks.

Coles & Douglas Counties

Embarras River - Camargo - INAI# 1120 (Category I, III, & VI) - Boundary change

This is a site modification to expand the boundary to include the Embarras Bluffs and the Embarras Bend Natural Heritage Landmarks.

Jackson County

SW Kinkaid Route 3 - INAI# 1732 (Category II & VI) - New category

This is a site modification to add Category I for the presence of Grade B mesic upland forest.

Alexander County

Miller Hills - Addition to INAI

The proposed area contains specific suitable habitat (Category II) for the state threatened timber rattlesnake (*Crotalus horridus*) and birthing rookery (Category VI) for the species. Boundaries were drawn based upon the 2002 NAEC guidelines for denning and birthing areas for the species.

Johnson County

Round Bluff - INAI# 0963 (Category II & III) - New category

This is a site modification to add Category I based upon the presence of Grade A Sandstone Glade and Mesic Sandstone Cliff communities. The sandstone glade was graded as “A” during the original survey but as the site was already a Nature Preserve, sample data was never collected for this feature and the category was not officially recorded.

Massac County

Horsefly Ridge - Addition to INAI

This is a new Category I site for the presence of Grade C dry and dry-mesic barren. The site qualifies under “Best of Kind” as there are less than 140 acres of this natural community within the Cretaceous Hills Section of the Coastal Plain Natural Division.

Other Committee Actions

Proposed naming convention for stream or river sites that supports Cat VI INAI mussel features - it was decided that individual aquatic records will be named “reach” and multiple contiguous records will be termed “Stretch”. Existing sites that do not conform to this naming convention will be tabulated and brought to the NAEC as a group to record the name changes.

Oversight of Standards and Guidelines edits - Any changes to the INAI Standards and Guidelines need to be brought to the NAEC before changes can be implemented. With the ongoing INAI

Update, this is not always feasible for minor changes. Natural Areas Program staff will be given the authority to make minor changes when needed but will compile any changes and provide them to the NAEC once yearly. A formal proposal for consideration of this authority will be formulated for approval at a later meeting.

Land Acquisition

Two tracts of land totaling 43 acres have been acquired using the Natural Areas Acquisition Fund since the last INPC meeting. Forty acres were acquired at Chauncey Marsh State Natural Area in Lawrence and Crawford counties. Chauncey Marsh is a large wetland complex along the Embarras River. With this new acquisition, the natural area covers 649 acres. Twenty of these 40 acres were donated to the Department of Natural Resources by the landowner, Richard Gotshalk.

Three acres were purchased at Mississippi Palisades State Park in Carroll County. This acquisition adds to one of the largest protected blocks of forest in northern Illinois and provides access for management of one of the hill prairies within the park.

Personnel Changes

Two new graduate student workers started work on September 2. Russell Blogg is working with District Heritage Biologist Michelle Simone in central Illinois and Jason Incauskis is providing assistance for Natural Areas Preservation Specialist Steve Byers in northeast Illinois. There are now five graduate student workers on the staff of the division/commission. These students assist in all aspects of field-based activities, greatly enhancing our ability to get needed work done.

Cache River Basin Water Control Structure

On the same day as the Commission's August meeting, the Department received a letter from the Big Creek Levee and Drainage District in southern Illinois concerning the rock water control structure that maintains water levels in large portions of the Cache River wetlands. That structure had been removed by the District in 2007 and replaced by the Department earlier this year after an agreement for access and maintenance was worked out between the Department and the owner of the private property on which the structure is located. The District's August letter gave the Department 30 days to remove the structure. If it was not removed by the Department within that time, the District intended to take it upon themselves to remove the structure once again. On behalf of the Department, the Office of the Attorney General requested and was granted a temporary restraining order to prevent removal of the structure by the District. Subsequently, the Pulaski County circuit court scheduled a hearing to consider the state's request for a permanent injunction. That hearing commenced in September and is continuing today.

Illinois Natural Areas Inventory Update

During this last quarter, the regional ecologists developed over 160 potential natural areas worthy of evaluation for inclusion on the INAI. The first group of new high quality natural communities were accepted and included on the INAI at the last meeting of the Natural Areas Evaluation Committee. This first field season resulted in a refinement of procedures that will make the remaining seasons more productive. A standardized Natural Lands Evaluation Procedure was developed that will ensure consistent and well documented evaluations of high quality natural communities. This refined and transparent procedure will allow for greater applicability and transportability to future generations of natural areas practitioners both of which were important secondary goals of this project. The Grand Victoria Foundation has indicated that they will commit up to \$2 million to the Illinois Natural History Survey to re-evaluate and monitor existing category I INAI sites and to produce a Strategic Natural Areas Preservation Plan. Outside funding for both of these projects was sought as they were identified within the INAI contract scope of work but were unfunded by IDNR. Re-evaluating the existing INAI

Category I sites will ensure that both old and new sites have consistent and up to date information. The strategic plan will outline ways to maintain and or increase the INAI relevance to the various public and private natural resource planning efforts statewide. Lastly, the assignment of the INAI contract to the University of Illinois has not been completed. All parties have agreed to the assignment and resulting details but as of the end of the quarter, LLCC has not yet signed the assignment. As the assignment will be retroactive to July 1st, this has not held up work on the contract and the vendor remains on targets and deadlines established within the scope of work.