

ILLINOIS NATURE PRESERVES COMMISSION

Minutes of the 224<sup>th</sup> Meeting  
(Subject to approval at the 225<sup>th</sup> Meeting)

Danada House  
3S501 Naperville Road  
Wheaton, IL 60189

Tuesday, September 13, 2016

224-1) Call to Order, Roll Call, and Introduction of Attendees

Commissioner Dann called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. He welcomed, introduced and thanked Scott Meister for hosting the field trip.

Scott thanked the Commissioners for coming to Springbrook Prairie Nature Preserve. He gave a brief history of the Danada House.

Commissioners Present: George Covington, Donnie Dann, Pen Daubach, Abigail Derby Lewis, William McClain, Jo-Elle Mogerma, Deborah Stone, David Thomas

Commissioners Absent: Charles Ruffner

Commission Advisors Present: Joyce Hofmann, Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board (IESPB); Ryan Prehn, Illinois Historical Preservation Agency (IHPA); Mark Ryan, Prairie Research Institute (PRI); Thomas Emerson, Illinois State Archaeological Survey (ISAS)

Commission Consultants Present: Fran Harty, The Nature Conservancy (TNC); Randy Heidorn; Joe Roth, Openlands; Kerry Leigh, Natural Land Institute (NLI)

Others Present: Marni English, Valerie Njapa, Kelly Neal, Steven Byers, John Nelson, Kim Roman, Angella Moorehouse, Emma Plotts, Tom Lerczak, Debbie Newman, Illinois Nature Preserves Commission (INPC) Staff; Brad Semel, Ann Holtrop, Jim Herkert, Maggie Cole, Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR); Rachel Goad, Chicago Botanic Garden; Ben Haberthur, Forest Preserve District of Kane County; Becky Collings and Chip O'Leary, Forest Preserve District of Cook County; Scott Meister, Forest Preserve District of DuPage County

224-2) Adoption of Agenda

It was moved by Commissioner Daubach, seconded by Commissioner Thomas, and carried that the Agenda be adopted.

224-3) Approval of Minutes for the 223<sup>rd</sup> Meeting, May 3, 2016

It was moved by Commissioner Derby Lewis, seconded by Commissioner Covington, and carried that the minutes from the 223<sup>rd</sup> Meeting, May 3, 2016, be approved.

Commissioner Dann read the following:

At the 223<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the INPC, held on May 3, 2016, at the University of Illinois Extension Office, 901 Illinois Avenue, Waterloo, Illinois, legal protection was completed by the Commission for 2 tracts of land totaling 48.13 acres. These areas are privately owned by individuals, corporations or not-for-profit groups who donated the value of the protection agreement to the public. This private land was permanently preserved without further acquisition of the land by the State. The dollar value of the tracts of private land is one million dollars based on conservative estimates of the fair market value of the land. Lands protected included additions to Sweet Fern Savanna Land and Water Reserve and Otey-Grisley Forest Nature Preserve.

Protection of these lands came about because the Commission had seven staff in the field working with private and public landowners. There are now 387 dedicated nature preserves totaling close to 58,300 acres and 181 land and water reserves totaling in access of 50,580 acres.

224-4) Next meeting dates and locations

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| January 24, 2017   | Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Springfield, IL |
| May 9, 2017        | Nachusa Grasslands, Franklin Grove, IL                    |
| September 12, 2017 | Peoria Park District, Peoria, IL                          |

It was moved by Commissioner Covington, seconded by Commissioner Thomas, and carried that these meeting dates be approved.

224-5) INPC Staff Report (Appendix I)

Tom Lerczak presented the INPC staff report. He indicated that the FY2016 bills are being paid and staff is preparing stewardship project proposals, purchase of signs, herbicides and other things for the FY2017 budget. He indicated staff is increasingly doing work themselves which takes them away from other tasks. Bob Edgin and Debbie Newman have taken part in growing season burns. John Nelson fought wildfires out west in August. Angella Moorehouse has been conducting biological surveys. Steve Byers has had eight high-level threats in his area that have involved staff at Springfield Headquarters. INPC staff is engaging more in the hands-on stewardship, herbicide application, pulling exotics, brush cutting and using volunteers. He thanked Valerie, Kelly and Marni for pitching in wherever they can to fill the gaps while not having a Director or the two other management positions filled. Tom has had less time to work in his area since taking on more administrative duties.

Tom acknowledged receipt of a Notice of Termination for Miller's Rocky Branch Land and Water Reserve which will expire February 7, 2018. He indicated Culp Conservancy Land and Water Reserve will expire May 15, 2017, and the owners are not renewing it. The INAI will have to be updated and Category III designation removed for these sites.

Commissioner Dann asked if these landowners received any tax benefit from the original registration.

Tom answered landowners can only get a tax benefit with permanent registration. However, they derived benefit from the staff's time managing the site. He didn't feel we should look at these sites as being lost forever, that they may come back into the system.

Commissioner Stone, referring to the Category V Outreach Strategies on the INPC Staff Report, asked if there were areas of the Strategic Plan that Commissioners could contribute to. She asked if any of the Commissioners would want to meet before the Monday meeting in January.

Randy Heidorn answered yes but at this point without central management staff it is difficult to coordinate. He indicated he is working on getting the vacant positions filled. The Strategic Plan does call for a review at the January meeting. He stated they need to get someone to do the summarizing.

Randy Heidorn commented on the Revolving Door Policy Commissioners received prior to the meeting. A new interpretation has come out from the Executive Inspector General's Office (EIGO) that all Commissioners, paid or not, are covered under this policy. He explained that if a Commissioner seeks employment within a year after leaving the Commission, he or she is required to notify the EIGO so they can rule whether there is a conflict of interest before the employment can be accepted.

224-6) IDNR Staff Report

(Appendix II)

Ann Holtrop, Acting Chief of the Division of Natural Heritage (DNH), reported the Division hired four residents. One for INPC and one for DNH started September 1, 2016 and two more for DNH will start September 16, 2016. Initially with this hire they targeted eight resident positions but only filled four and intend to start the process again in January to fill the other positions.

On July 16, 2016, Diane Shasteen started with DNH as the new Stewardship Program Manager bringing with her a wealth of grant and program administration experience.

Illinois Natural Areas Inventory training has been conducted for INPC and DNH field staff. Classroom training was held regionally in August and regional field training will be held in September. The classroom training was to learn about natural community grading and the field training will be for staff to work together to do the grading.

The Natural Areas Acquisition Fund (NAAF) Land Acquisition and Stewardship activities are still on hold even though a stop-gap budget was approved because these projects are tied to the

capital budget. As soon as a capital budget is received, projects will be reviewed for approval and implementation. Forty-four stewardship project proposals were received by staff in FY17.

She updated Commissioners on DNH management plans and schedules. The Department is responsible for 191 sites. There are three agreements with other entities and those management plans and schedules are up-to-date. Of the 191, 104 have current schedules with an additional 17 tasked to staff this year to work on. There are 30 sites that are not believed to have ever had a management schedule.

Comments were received in August from the United State Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) on their Draft Implementation Guide for the Wildlife Action Plan. There were some items flagged as needing attention and DNH is working with the USFWS to establish a timeline for finalizing the plan and addressing those comments. Commissioners will be notified when it has a final date and officially approved.

Commissioner Thomas asked Ann to summarize some of the issues they are facing with the USFWS.

Chief Holtrop answered that it has to do with formatting issues and also felt USFWS were expecting an Action Plan 2.0 and were informed they would get a Draft Implementation Guide. There is a difference of opinion about what the content of the document should be. She thought there might be material from the original DNH would have to pull back in but it wouldn't be material that has to be created. She indicated USFWS had a more science-based review team this time. As a whole, across the region, USFWS are looking for these documents to be more scientific and maybe less strategic which is not what was expected going into the review process. Overall, she felt the issues were relatively minor and will be addressed, it just may take a little longer.

Commissioner Dann introduced Jim Herkert, Director of the Office of Resource Conservation and asked for a progress report for the Commission.

Jim explained the Commission has a partial which was enough to pay all FY16 bills. He said there was a full year FY17 budget for the Office of Resource Conservation that covers INPC and DNH from NAAF funds. The General Revenue budget was not for a full year. The only way the 'Stop-Gap Budget' effects INPC and DNH is if the Department never gets general revenue and has to look for funds elsewhere. There are two budgets as part of State Government, the operating budget and the capital budget. The operating budget is what we have and the capital budget is the one we do not have which is where the grant money is housed (i.e. stewardship and land acquisition money).

Commissioner Dann asked if we can use the NAAF funds.

Jim answered we have NAAF funds for operations and part of that is contractual money that can be used to do some contractual stewardship. It will be very limited compared to the grant side which would come from NAAF, State Wildlife Grants (SWG) or other grants. The bulk is still stuck in a capital budget which is not expected to be discussed until after the first of the year.

Commissioner Dann commented staff needs have a huge gap.

Jim explained the hiring freeze and the hiring made through positions determined to be critical hires. The biggest issue with the INPC Director's position, even though the authority is there to hire, is that it is in a class of positions that are Rutan exempt and are in a bargaining unit. The Administration is trying to get those positions out of the Union and is reluctant to fill those while they do so.

Commissioner Dann asked Jim if he could estimate a timeframe to when this position would be filled.

Jim answered that he did not know but stated it is crippling to INPC's operations as well as IDNR's operations.

Commissioner Dann thanked Jim for doing everything he can to move this along on behalf of the Commission.

Jim commented that it is incredible how staff are keeping things running.

224-7) Endangered Species Protection Board Staff Report (Appendix III)

Commissioner Dann introduced and thanked Dr. Joyce Hofmann for being at the meeting and providing an IESPB staff report.

Commissioner Dann commended Dr. Hofmann on what they are trying to accomplish with a limited Board and no staff.

Commissioner Thomas thanked Dr. Hofmann for attending and acknowledged the importance of what the Board does.

224-8) Committee of the Whole Meeting to propose nominations for Illinois Nature Preserves Commission Advisors, Consultants and Officers. (Committee Chair: David Thomas)

C. Nomination of Officers

Current Officers:

Chair: Donnie Dann  
Vice Chair: George Covington  
Secretary: Abigail Derby Lewis

Commissioner Thomas asked for nominations of officers.

There were no new nominations.

It was moved by Commissioner Daubach, seconded by Commissioner Stone, and carried for the slate of current officers to remain another year.

Commissioner Thomas asked for nominations of advisors and consultants.

Randy Heidorn explained that the Commission’s rules indicate that advisors are elected once a year with the exception of statutory advisors which are set by statute.

A. Nomination of Advisors

Current Advisors:

|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| Wayne A. Rosenthal<br>IL Department of Natural Resources<br>(Statutory Advisor) | Dr. Brian Anderson<br>IL Natural History Survey<br>(Statutory Advisor) | Dr. Michael Wiant<br>IL State Museum<br>(Statutory Advisor) |
| Dr. Misganaw Demissie<br>IL State Water Survey                                  | Dr. Thomas E. Emerson<br>IL State Archaeological Survey                | Ryan Prehn<br>IL Historic Preservation Agency               |
| Dr. Richard C. Berg<br>IL State Geological Survey                               | Dr. Mark Ryan<br>Prairie Research Institute                            | Dr. Kevin O’Brien<br>IL Sustainable Technology Center       |
| Dr. Joyce Hofmann<br>IL Endangered Species Protection Board                     |  |   |

Randy Heidorn indicated that Wayne Rosenthal and Dr. Michael Wiant will remain as statutory advisors and that Dr. Demissie, Dr. Emerson, Ryan Prehn, Dr. Berg, Dr. Ryan, Dr. O’Brien, and Dr. Hofmann, indicated a willingness to continue to serve as elected advisors to the Commission. Dr. Lee Solter, as the new Acting Director for INHS, will replace Dr. Brian Anderson as statutory advisor and Dr. Brian Anderson is willing to serve as an elected advisor. Randy explained that it has always been the practice of the Commission to allow any Prairie Research Institute staff who wish to, serve as an elected advisor.

B. Nomination of Consultants

Current Consultants:

|                |                  |                    |
|----------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Gerald Adelman | Jill Allread     | Michelle Carr      |
| Tom Clay       | Harry Drucker    | Kenneth Fiske      |
| Fran Hart      | Randy R. Heidorn | Kerry Leigh        |
| Jill Riddell   | Lauren Rosenthal | Bruce Ross-Shannon |
| Joseph Roth    | John Schwegman   | Valerie Spale      |
| John White     |                  |                    |

Randy Heidorn indicated that Tom Clay has left the state and has agreed to remain as a consultant but will no longer be representing the Illinois Audubon Society and that the Commission would eventually want to get a consultant from the Illinois Audubon Society.

It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Covington, and carried for the slate of current advisors with the following change: Dr. Lee Solter as Statutory Advisor and Dr. Brian Anderson as an elected advisor; and the current slate of consultants to remain the same.

224-9) Kane Co. – Trout Park River’s Edge Land and Water Reserve, Registration

Steve Byers, on behalf of the City of Elgin, requested registration approval for Trout Park River's Edge as a land and water reserve – its qualifying feature is that lands and waters included on the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory are eligible for registration. The proposed Trout Park River's Edge Land and Water Reserve is 9.51 acres in size and encompasses the balance of the Trout Park INAI site (INAI # 0625) not already dedicated by the City of Elgin as Trout Park Nature Preserve. Trout Park River's Edge is located in the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division in Elgin (Kane County), Illinois. Trout Park River's Edge consists largely of Grade C mesic upland forest. A small portion of the site includes Grade C dry-mesic upland forest. At least six small spring runs, emanating from groundwater discharge zones in nearby Trout Park Nature Preserve, traverse the proposed land and water reserve before entering the Fox River. Trout Park River's Edge has been well-managed by the Friends of Trout Park with support from the City of Elgin and Illinois Nature Preserves Commission. Registration of Trout Park River's Edge as a land and water reserve supports recommendations of the “*Biodiversity Recovery Plan for the Chicago Wilderness Region*” and elements of the Illinois Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan; specifically action steps to restore and manage high-quality examples of all forest communities, and a recommendation to contribute to ecological connectivity among forests and other habitat patches. Reserved rights include fishing along the Fox River and maintenance of an existing parking lot and amenities, a hiking/biking trail, and educational kiosks. Registration of Trout Park River's Edge will increase the amount of land protected within the Trout Park INAI site from 26.8 to 36.31 acres. The Illinois Nature Preserves Commission staff recommends registration of Trout Park River's Edge as a land and water reserve.

Randy Heidorn asked if the document had been signed by the owner.

Steve confirmed the registration document as well as the management schedule has been signed.

It was moved by Commissioner Covington, seconded by Commissioner Mogerma, and carried that the following resolution be approved:

The Commission grants approval for the registration of Trout Park River's Edge as an Illinois Land and Water Reserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 9 of the Agenda for the 224<sup>th</sup> Meeting.

(Resolution 2362)

224-10) Kankakee Co. - Addition to Tallmadge Sand Forest Land and Water Reserve, Registration

Kim Roman, on behalf of the Illinois Chapter of The Nature Conservancy, requested registration approval for an addition to Tallmadge Sand Forest Land and Water Reserve. Originally registered as an Illinois Land and Water Reserve in 2004, the 157-acre site, located in Kankakee County, is comprised of sand savanna, sand forest, and sand flatwoods communities, and provides habitat for four state-listed species: crowded oval sedge (*Carex cumulata*), Carey's heartsease (*Polygonum careyi*), primrose violet (*Viola primulifolia*), and bristly blackberry (*Rubus schneideri*). Additionally, it lies within the Kankakee Sand Area Section of the Grand Prairie Natural Division and the Kankakee Sands Conservation Opportunity Area, and provides habitat for at least four Species in Greatest Need of Conservation. The Illinois Chapter of The Nature Conservancy wishes to register in perpetuity eight individual parcels, which total 155.6

acres, and adjoin the existing 157-acre Land and Water Reserve. These parcels share many of the same natural features and communities as the original Land and Water Reserve, and are comprised of Grade C dry-mesic sand savanna, sand flatwoods, and old field communities. A state-threatened butterfly occurs in the old field and open savanna habitats within the proposed additions. Registration of the eight parcels as an addition to Tallmadge Sand Forest Land and Water Reserve will protect additional acreage of natural communities in a regionally important landscape, protect habitat for at least one state-listed animal species, buffer habitat of known occurrences of endangered and threatened plant species within the existing Land and Water Reserve, and help complete good reserve design by nearly doubling its size. It is therefore recommended by the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission field staff that the eight parcels totaling 155.6 acres be registered in perpetuity as an addition to Tallmadge Sand Forest Land and Water Reserve. Registration of these tracts will bring the total registered acreage of this site to approximately 312.6 acres. Kim spoke of a timber theft that occurred on the property. TNC reserves the rights for hunting and camping.

Commissioner Dann asked if the terms of the settlement with the violators had been disclosed.

Kim answered that TNC's attorney handled the negotiations and was not aware if that was made public.

Fran Harty assured Commissioner Dann that word spread among other area loggers as to the consequences the violating logger faced.

Commissioner Dann asked how this area would be managed.

Kim answered the loggers removed the most desirable and largest trees but that sassafras, aspen and cherry trees are growing and will control that succession. It will be managed with fire, promoting oak and doing invasive species sweeps.

Commissioner Dann asked if Kim was working with TNC on this.

Kim answered yes, with Rob Littiken who is very active at this site.

Fran Harty thanked Kim for all her work on this site.

Commissioner Derby Lewis asked about the response Rob Littiken has received locally on the hunting stewardship program.

Kim did not believe he has gotten a huge response locally.

Commissioner Covington asked about the total protected acres in the Sand Prairie area on the Illinois side.

Kim answered that she did not have an exact total of acres but said there are nine sites in the nature preserves system.

Fran Harty answered that TNC owns about 2,000 acres in Kankakee County.

Kim answered that TNC has four square miles in Iroquois County, Marianne Hahn owns almost 100 acres and Friends of Kankakee own a couple hundred acres.

Commissioner Covington commented that it is really one of the great success stories in Illinois conservation.

Fran Harty commented that if you take what TNC, Illinois DNR and Indiana DNR own, it is nearly 30,000 acres.

Randy Heidorn commented that this is an example of the role of the Commission's defense of natural areas and a success story in how defense has helped in the protection of the area.

It was moved by Commissioner Daubach, seconded by Commissioner Mogergerman, that the following resolution be approved:

The Commission grants approval for the registration of the addition to Tallmadge Sand Forest as an Illinois Land and Water Reserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 10 of the Agenda for the 224<sup>th</sup> Meeting.

(Resolution 2363)

Commissioner McClain thanked Kim for putting all the pieces together in the Kankakee Sand Region and for her persistence and consistency.

Commissioner Dann thanked the TNC and Marianne Hahn.

224-11) Randolph Co. – Rockcastle Creek Nature Preserve, Dedication

Debbie Newman, on behalf of Priscilla Bollinger and Tony Hernandez, requested preliminary approval for the proposed Rockcastle Creek Nature Preserve (NP), an 87.42-acre site located in the Central Section of the Ozark Natural Division, that is part of the Rockcastle Creek Illinois Natural Areas Inventory site (INAI #828). The proposed preserve includes approximately 37 acres of the 71-acre INAI site. The proposed Rockcastle Creek NP contains several qualifying features, including 2.9 acres of Grade B dry-mesic barrens, 2 acres of Grade C dry-mesic barrens, 38 acres of Grade C dry-mesic upland forest, 8 acres of Grade C mesic woodland, ¼ acre of Grade C glacial drift hill prairie, 1 acre of Grade A mesic sandstone cliff, and ¼ acre of Grade B dry sandstone cliff, two state-endangered plant species, and one state-threatened bird species. The site also contains 25 acres of cultural community, including 18 acres of planted prairie with all local ecotype seed, and 7 acres of old field. The proposed preserve has populations of 14 documented Species in Greatest Need of Conservation (SGNC) listed in the Illinois Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan (ICWCP). Besides protecting the natural communities and habitat for listed species, the proposed addition supports several campaigns identified in the ICWCP, including the Forests Campaign, the Invasive Species Campaign, and the Land & Water Stewardship Campaign. The site is located in the Illinois Ozarks Resource Rich Area. The proposed Rockcastle Creek Nature Preserve is owned by Priscilla Bollinger and Tony Hernandez. The couple has a long-standing commitment to conservation. During 14 years of ownership, they have conducted over 40 prescribed burns, done an immense amount of exotics species control, and worked on restoration of the oak forest, barrens, and glacial drift hill prairie. They hand collected local seed for the prairie plantings. And they kept

excellent records of species and restoration work. Their contribution to the restoration and protection of this natural area is significant and greatly appreciated by INPC staff.

Commissioner McClain commented that there are some very old growth trees that line the stream corridor of this site. He also thanked Debbie for addressing the flora and fauna communities.

Commissioner Daubach thanked Priscilla Bollinger, Tony Hernandez, Debbie Newman and Commissioner McClain for all of the work they have done at this site.

Commissioner Derby Lewis expressed interest in knowing how climate change, rain shifts and long-term sustainability affects the reintroduction of the short-leaf pine and asked about how it is going with the reintroduction.

Debbie answered that she was not aware of it being introduced anywhere else in Illinois but she believed it had been in Missouri and Arkansas. She indicated the ESPB funded a study several years ago to look at the factors that affect the short-leaf pine reintroduction and are still in the early stages and will be looking at these factors.

It was moved by Commissioner McClain, seconded by Commissioner Daubach, and carried that the following resolution be approved:

The Commission grants preliminary approval for dedication of Rockcastle Creek as an Illinois Nature Preserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 11 of the Agenda for the 224<sup>th</sup> Meeting.

(Resolution 2364)

Break for lunch from 11:50 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

224-12) Cook Co. – Harms Flatwoods Nature Preserve, Dedication

Steve Byers, on behalf of the Forest Preserves of Cook County (FPCC), requested preliminary approval to dedicate 107.6 acres of the 250-acre Harms Woods Forest Preserve as the Harms Flatwoods Nature Preserve. Harms Flatwoods consists of 97.6 acres proposed for dedication as nature preserve and the balance (10 acres) as nature preserve buffer. The proposed nature preserve lies within the boundary of the Harms Woods Forest Preserve INAI site (INAI # 1573) and supports populations of two state-listed plant species; the brome hummock sedge (*Carex bromoides*) and dwarf raspberry (*Rubus pubescens*). Harms Flatwoods is located in the Chicago Lake Plain Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division in the northeast part of Cook County. Harms Flatwoods consists primarily of northern flatwoods (93.3 acres) that were considered Grade B/C by the Illinois Natural History Survey. The balance of the site includes Grade B/C mesic upland forest (4.277 acres) and a cultural community (10 acres) undergoing restoration. Harms Flatwoods has been managed by staff of the FPCC and volunteer stewards since the late 1970's. That effort has consisted primarily of control of invasive woody and herbaceous species. Reserved rights include the continuation of an adaptive management strategy, monitoring and restoration of the surface hydrology, and continued maintenance of the existing trail system. The proposal specifically provides the FPCC with the right to route and construct a multi-use trail along the northern boundary of the site. Dedication of Harms Flatwoods as an Illinois Nature Preserve supports recommendations of the “*Biodiversity*

*Recovery Plan for the Chicago Wilderness Region*” and elements of the Illinois Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan; specifically action steps to restore and manage high-quality examples of all forest communities, and a recommendation to contribute to ecological connectivity among forests and other habitat patches. Dedication of Harms Flatwoods as an Illinois Nature Preserve is consistent with the recommendations of the FPCC’s *“Next Century Conservation Plan”* and the *“Natural and Cultural Resource Plan for the Forest Preserves of Cook County.”* The Illinois Nature Preserves Commission staff and staff of the FPCC recommend preliminary approval for dedication of Harms Flatwoods as an Illinois Nature Preserve.

Commissioner Dann commented that he wanted to pay tribute to John and Jane Balaban who have been hardworking volunteers and have been instrumental in making this site what it is.

Chip O’Leary thanked the commission for looking at the proposal.

Commissioner Stone recused herself from voting since she works for Cook County.

It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Covington, that the following resolution be approved:

The Commission grants preliminary approval for the dedication of the Harms Flatwoods as an Illinois Nature Preserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 12 of the Agenda for the 224th Meeting.

(Resolution 2365)

224-13) Lake Co. – William Kurtis & Donna LaPietra Buffer Addition to Grainger Woods Nature Preserve, Dedication

Steve Byers, on behalf of William Kurtis and Donna LaPietra, requested final approval for dedication of 8.08 acres as a nature preserve buffer addition to Grainger Woods Nature Preserve. Grainger Woods Nature Preserve was granted final approval for dedication at the Commission’s 204<sup>th</sup> Meeting in January 2010 (Resolution No. 2061). This proposal represents the second privately-owned addition to Grainger Woods Nature Preserve. Grainger Woods Nature Preserve (187.6 acres) and the proposed addition are located in the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division in southern Lake County, Illinois. The proposed addition includes Grade C dry-mesic upland forest located within the Grainger Flatwoods INAI site (INAI # 0667) and a cultural community that is being restored to prairie. William Kurtis conveyed a Grant of Conservation Right and Easement to Lake Forest Open Lands Association (LFOLA) in December 1995. The purpose of that easement is “...to assure that the Property will be retained forever predominantly in its natural, scenic, and open space condition and that any natural plant and animal communities located on the Property which are indigenous to northeastern Illinois will be preserved to the extent feasible.” Rights reserved by William Kurtis include all rights of ownership that are not expressly prohibited and that are not inconsistent with the above-referenced purpose of the easement. The proposal provides the landowner with the right to utilize an adaptive management approach, the right to maintain and use an existing mown trail with an ATV, the right to route and construct a foot path with amenities, and the right to place and maintain 10 bee hives on the parcel with the permission of the Commission. Protection and

stewardship of the proposed addition supports several elements of the Illinois Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan; specifically the forests campaign and efforts to “...restore and manage high-quality examples of all forest communities.” Outstanding features of nearby Grainger Woods Nature Preserve are the wet-mesic upland forest and northern flatwoods communities that are sensitive to changes in surface hydrology. Protection of the proposed William Kurtis and Donna LaPietra Nature Preserve buffer addition will further protect the existing surface hydrology upon which Grainger Woods Nature Preserve is dependent and increase its size from 187.6 to 195.68 acres. The Illinois Nature Preserves Commission conferred preliminary approval of this nature preserve buffer addition at its 223<sup>rd</sup> meeting, May 3, 2016 (Resolution No. 2355).

Commissioner Covington abstained from voting due to his professional relationship with William Kurtis.

It was moved by Commissioner Daubach, seconded by Commissioner Derby Lewis, that the following resolution be approved:

The Commission grants final approval for the dedication of the William Kurtis and Donna LaPietra Buffer Addition to Grainger Woods Nature Preserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 13 of the Agenda for the 224th Meeting.

(Resolution 2366)

224-14) Monroe Co. – Addition to Brickey-Gonterman Memorial Hill Prairie Nature Preserve, Dedication

Debbie Newman, on behalf of Bill and Barbara Gonterman, requested final approval for the 7-acre site as an addition to the Brickey-Gonterman Memorial Hill Prairie Nature Preserve (NP). The site is comprised of approximately 5 acres of Grade C dry, dry-mesic, and mesic upland forest, ¼ acre of Grade C loess hill prairie, and Grade A limestone cliff community. Approximately 4 acres of the proposed preserve addition is part of the 232-acre Renault Herpetological Area Illinois Natural Areas Inventory site (#761) located in the Northern Section of the Ozark Natural Division. The proposed preserve contains habitat for several threatened or endangered reptiles and amphibians and an invertebrate. The state-threatened bluehearts (*Buchnera americana*) occurs just a few hundred feet from the proposed addition. The addition also provides habitat for several Species in Greatest Need of Conservation (SGNC) listed in the Illinois Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan (ICWCP). Besides protecting the loess hill prairie, limestone cliff, upland forests and habitat for listed species, the proposed addition supports several campaigns identified in the ICWCP, including the Forests Campaign, the Invasive Species Campaign, and the Land & Water Stewardship Campaign. The site is located within IWAP’s Bluff Corridor Conservation Opportunity Area, and the Southwestern Illinois Wildlife Action Plan partnership. The proposed preserve addition is adjacent to the 19.5-acre Brickey-Gonterman Memorial Hill Prairie Nature Preserve and Buffer and the 42-acre Brickey-Gonterman at Renault Bluffs Land and Water Reserve, and the nearby 283-acre Angela’s Prairie Land & Water Reserve. The proposed addition to the Brickey-Gonterman Memorial Hill Prairie Nature Preserve was given preliminary approval at the 223<sup>rd</sup> INPC Meeting, May 3, 2016 (Resolution No. 2356).

Debbie commented that this is the fifth site that the Gonterman's have dedicated or registered with the INPC in the last 20 years and they will be happy to know this has been finalized.

It was moved by Commissioner Daubach, seconded by Commissioner Thomas, that the following resolution be approved:

The Commission grants final approval for the dedication of the 7-acre Addition to Brickey-Gonterman Memorial Hill Prairie Nature Preserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 14 of the Agenda for the 224th Meeting.

(Resolution 2367)

224-15) Winnebago Co. – Gorsegner Addition to Harlem Hills Nature Preserve, Dedication

John Nelson, on behalf of David and Kimberly Gorsegner, requested final approval for 1.5 acres as the Gorsegner Addition to Harlem Hills Nature Preserve, located within the Winnebago Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division, encompassing the largest, and perhaps the best, surviving example of a dry-mesic gravel prairie within the state. This addition is the last remaining unprotected relict prairie to be found at Harlem Hills. The goal of legally protecting the gravel prairies at Harlem Hills, first envisioned by George B. Fell and his father in the early 1950s, will be complete with the approval of this dedication proposal. The preserve was established in 1973 with the dedication of 52.4 acres by the Illinois Department of Conservation (as the Illinois Department of Natural Resources was then known). Over the past 40 plus years, the preserve has grown as other parcels were dedicated as additions and buffer additions. While some of the gravel prairies that George Fell first saw in the early 1950s were lost to development over the same time period, most of the prairies were indeed preserved and survive today. The proposed Gorsegner Addition will bring the total acreage of land permanently protected at Harlem Hills Nature Preserve to 96.1 acres. It is fitting that private landowners are dedicating the last surviving prairie at this preserve, the legislation for which was also championed by George B. Fell and the Natural Land Institute. The dedication of this prairie is made in memory of Helen Hatfield and Marcia Gorsegner, mothers of Kimberly and David Gorsegner, respectively. Preliminary approval of this nature preserve addition was conferred at the 223<sup>rd</sup> INPC meeting, May 3, 2016 (Resolution No. 2357).

Commissioner Dann asked Brad Semel how he convinced David Gorsegner to dedicate his land.

Brad answered that Mr. Gorsegner asked him what he was going to do with the trees he was cutting down on the adjacent Harlem Hills Nature Preserve, so they worked out some stewardship and Brad has given Mr. Gorsegner the trees. Mr. Gorsegner especially enjoys the beauty of the land after seeing how the prairie grasses and flowers grew back after a prescribed burn.

It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Daubach, that the following resolution be approved:

The Commission grants final approval for the dedication of the Gorsegner Addition to Harlem Hills Nature Preserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 15 of the Agenda for the 224th Meeting.

224-16) Winnebago Co. – Stone Bridge Reserve Land and Water Reserve Use Agreement

John Nelson requested approval for an agreement with Roscoe Township which owns and manages the Stone Bridge Trail Reserve Land and Water Reserve (INAI #1042), which is located in the Winnebago Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division. This site was registered by Roscoe Township at the 148<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission in 1995 (Resolution# 1280). The township also owns land along a portion of the registered reserve that is used for offices, a parking lot, and a maintenance yard. These facilities are located off Elevator Road in the Village of Roscoe. Portions of the parking lot, facility fencing, and maintenance yard are located inside the legally defined boundary of the registered reserve. These areas/uses were not described, mapped, or even noted, in the original registration proposal or registration agreement presented to the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission in 1995, but they were, in fact, pre-existing structures and uses by the township. This fact was verified using historic aerial photography and on-site ground truthing. The Natural Land Institute (NLI) also holds a conservation easement on this portion of the reserve separate from the INPC. Problems have arisen between the township, INPC, and NLI staff over the past 20 years regarding this area of the reserve and its use by the township. After lengthy discussions regarding this area of dispute, staff of the township, INPC, and NLI agreed that this area should have been excluded from the reserve and conservation easement boundaries in 1995. To resolve this issue of pre-existing use, the township requests approval of a Use Agreement that clearly defines the area in question. Another issue that has arisen over the past 20+ years pertains to public access. The Use Agreement references an updated management plan for the reserve which has been prepared and clearly identifies approved public access locations throughout the reserve.

Kelly Neal delivered the staff opinion. (Appendix IV)

Commissioner Dann asked whether this was overlooked when it was originally registered.

John answered that since it was such a linear legal description, they accepted what was provided and inserted that into the registration agreement. With our current policy with boundary documentation, this would not happen.

Commissioner Dann asked if the Commission was being asked to approve this given the existence and number of years that have passed.

John answered that was correct. Recognizing their legal rights to this portion of the reserve and that it is a pre-existing encumbrance, this seems to be the best solution.

Randy Heidorn answered that this would be considered a pre-existing use and would not have normally come in front of the Commission but the landowner wanted it to.

Commissioner Daubach asked if a relationship would be able to be built with the Township to help with restoration that is needed.

John answered that he thought so. He said that historically the Township has not understood its role. There is indication from the new Township Board that they want to do things differently.

Kerry Leigh commented that through this process, John has been able to shift how the Township thinks about being stewards of this property.

It was moved by Commissioner Daubach, seconded by Commissioner Thomas, that the following resolution be approved:

The Commission grants approval of the Use Agreement for Stone Bridge Reserve Land and Water Reserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 16 of the Agenda for the 224th Meeting.

(Resolution 2369)

224-17) Update on Bee and Pollinator Protection within the Illinois Nature Preserves System

(Appendix V)

At the request of the Commissioners, INPC and IDNR staff have prepared a “white paper” on the protection of native bees and other pollinators at sites within the Illinois Nature Preserves System. Staff will present a brief summary of the problems facing pollinators including concerns over conflicts with domesticated honey bees and other factors such as pesticide over-use, habitat loss, and the impact of invasive plants. Suggestions on steps to improve conditions for the protection of pollinators on preserves/reserves will be presented.

Commissioner Derby Lewis asked for more information on the Illinois Pollinator Protection Plan, what it is and how some of these aspects could or should be incorporated into the management plans for preserves/reserves.

Angella Moorehouse answered that the Department of Agriculture just sent out the draft Pollinator Protection Plan and she will be commenting on it. She liked that it says pollinators and not honey bees.

Commissioner Derby Lewis asked if the protection plan is to be considered on a voluntary basis.

Angella answered that she hoped it would dictate how the Illinois Department of Agriculture regulates pesticide use.

Commissioner Daubach commented that based on the Illinois Department of Agriculture’s recommendation of spraying early in the morning and later in the day, it can continue to harm bumble bee species because of when they are active.

Angella answered that the Illinois Department of Agriculture’s recommendations are based on honey bees.

Commissioner Dann asked Angella if she had recommendations since she concluded her report with questions.

She recommended educating farmers and working with bee keepers to lessen impacts.

Commissioner Dann asked what action the Commission should take.

Angella answered that her recommendations might be considered for a policy.

Commissioner Thomas asked if the Commission should vote on the minimum distance of 0.6 miles from INPC protected sites.

Randy commented that the pollinator protection could go forward as a management guideline.

Commissioner Dann commented that staff should consider drawing up management guidelines for the Commission.

Commissioner Covington recommended that maybe staff needs to discuss whether they should be discouraging landowners or imposing a rule.

Commissioner Dann recommended educating landowners.

Angella agreed and felt that ecologically, bees are already there.

Commissioner Dann commented that maybe it is more important to discourage neonicotinoids.

Angella was okay with this.

Commissioner Daubach recommended that we might do much better to remain flexible in our approach than look at hard and fast rules since new information will become available. She also recommended having an update on pollinator protection at future meetings.

Angella answered that if the Commission wants a guideline, it is something staff will do.

Commissioner Dann commented that the white paper is a good working document and the recommendations are sound.

Commissioner Derby Lewis commented that at some point it would be helpful to have management guidelines, see where the Illinois Pollinator Protection plan goes, understanding how it can be built upon and how it fits into specific management plans for INPC. She suggested that maybe it is something Commissioners can help with.

Angella agreed and asked Bill if she answered his question about host plants.

Commissioner McClain commented that there were a lot of things that concerned him and asked why we do not know more about the bees at sites.

Angella answered Jarod Ruholl did two years of research at selected sites.

Commissioner McClain commented that maybe we could get bee inventories done and asked if we could engage with the agriculture community. The only pollinators the public know are the honey bees and monarchs, and maybe we could get them to help create pollinator habitat around their homes.

Angella answered that master naturalists are doing this and that she is doing a lot of surveys. During his internship, Jarod and his professor, went to several Illinois nature preserves and did baseline inventory.

Commissioner McClain explained that things are being done backwards by destroying areas and then trying to put them back together.

Angella commented that we need corridors to connect all our preserves and natural areas so the insects can travel. It was discussed at the Monarch Summit. The Department of Transportation staff are becoming good partners and have been very active in helping create a corridor that will run north and south through the center of the state to help the monarchs migrate. Pheasants Forever is encouraging delayed mowing until August. There is a lot of good coming out of the Monarch Summit.

Commissioner Dann commented that this is great work even though it is inconclusive as to where the Commission goes from here. This is terrific in raising awareness.

224-18) Election of INPC Officers

Commissioner Thomas requested the approval for the slate of nominated officers described under Item 8C of the Agenda for the 224<sup>th</sup> Meeting.

It was moved by Commissioner Daubach, seconded by Commissioner Stone, that the following remain as officers to the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission: Donnie Dann, Chair; George Covington, Vice Chair; and Abigail Derby Lewis, Secretary.

(Resolution 2370)

224-19) Election of INPC Advisors and Consultants

Commissioner Thomas asked for a motion to elect the slate of advisors and consultants nominated under Items 8A & 8B of the Agenda for the 224<sup>th</sup> Meeting.

It was moved by Commissioner Daubach, seconded by Commissioner Mogeran, that in addition to statutory advisors that Dr. Misganaw Demissie, Dr. Thomas E. Emerson, Dr. Ryan Prehn, Dr. Richard Berg, Dr. Mark Ryan, Dr. Kevin O'Brien, Dr. Joyce Hoffman and Dr. Brian Anderson, be elected as Advisors with Dr. Lee Solter replacing Dr. Brian Anderson as Statutory Advisor; and that Gerald Adelman, Jill Allread, Michelle Carr, Tom Clay, Harry Drucker, Kenneth Fiske, Fran Harty, Randy R. Heidorn, Kerry Leigh, Jill Riddell, Lauren Rosenthal, Bruce Ross-Shannon, Joseph Roth, John Schwegman, Valerie Spale and John White, be elected as Consultants to the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission.

(Resolution 2371)

224-20) Public Comment Period (3 minutes per person)

No Public Comments.

224-21) Other Business

No Other Business

224-22) Adjournment

Commissioner Thomas motioned to adjourn. It was seconded by Commissioner Derby Lewis and approved. The INPC adjourned at 2:00 PM.