

ILLINOIS NATURE PRESERVES COMMISSION

Minutes of the 230th Meeting
(Subject to approval at the 231st Meeting)

Henry N. Barkhausen
Cache River Wetlands Center
8885 IL-37
Cypress, IL 62923

September 11, 2018

230-1) Call to Order, Roll Call, and Introduction of Attendees

Commissioner Dann called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and Valerie Njapa read the roll call.

Commissioners Present: George Covington, Donnie Dann, William McClain, Charles Ruffner, David Thomas, Pen Daubach, Deborah Stone

Commissioners Absent: Abigail Derby Lewis and Jo-Elle Mogerman

Commission Advisors Present: Dr. Joyce Hofmann, Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board (ESPB); Dr. Eric Schauber, Illinois Natural History Survey (INHS); Dr. Kevin O'Brien, Illinois Sustainable Technology Center (ISTC) and Illinois State Water Survey (ISWS);

Commission Consultants Present: Fran Harty, The Nature Conservancy (TNC); Jim Herkert, Illinois Audubon Society (IAS).

Others Present: Marni English, John Nelson, Steven Byers, Valerie Njapa, Kelly Neal, Angella Moorehouse, Heather Osborn, Kim Roman, Kevin Sierzega, Debbie Newman and John Griesbaum, Illinois Nature Preserves Commission (INPC); Ann Holtrop, Todd Strole, Terry Esker, Roger Jansen, Ray Geroff and Phil Borsdorf, IDNR Division of Natural Heritage (DNH); Chris Young, IDNR, Office of Resource Conservation (ORC); George Bellovics, IDNR; Kathleen O'Connor, Libertyville Township; Nancy Williamson;

230-2) Adoption of Agenda

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

230-3) Approval of Minutes for the 229th Meeting, May 8, 2018

Commissioner Dann asked for a motion and approval of the 229th Meeting minutes.

It was moved by Commissioner Ruffner, seconded by Commissioner Thomas, and carried that the minutes from the 229th Meeting be approved.

At the 229th Meeting of the INPC, held on May 8, 2018, at The DeSoto House, Galena, Illinois, legal protection was completed by the commission for 7 tracts of land totaling 803.94 acres. These areas are privately owned by individuals, corporations, or non-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. Lands protected included an Addition to Wapello Land and Water Reserve, Raceway Woods and Fen Land and Water Reserve, Spring Creek Land and Water Reserve, and Pilcher Park 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 390 dedicated nature preserves totaling nearly 59,172 acres; and there are 190 land and water reserves totaling 53,036 acres.

230-4) Next meeting dates and locations

January 29, 2019	Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Springfield, IL
May 14, 2019	Crystal Lake Park District, Crystal Lake, IL
September 10, 2019	Douglas-Hart Nature Center, Mattoon, IL

230-5) INPC Staff Report

APPENDIX I

See Appendix I, presented by Valerie Njapa

230-6) IDNR Staff Report

APPENDIX II

See Appendix II, presented by Chief Ann Holtrop, Division of Natural Heritage.

Commissioner McClain asked if efforts were being made to increase the size of some of the natural areas to make them more viable.

Chief Holtrop answered that is always their goal.

Commissioner McClain commented that some have remained the same size for many years and asked if anyone is looking at land acquisition being beneficial to those.

Chief Holtrop answered that they recognize it as a need and are trying to look at those more closely. She also explained that stewardship projects considered for approved with FY19 NAAF Funds must have up-to-date management plans.

Commissioner Stone asked what impact the NAPS vacancy is having on updating the management plans for those areas.

Chief Holtrop referred that question to Todd Strole. He answered that as proposals come in it is indicated if there is a current management schedule for the site. He wasn't aware if that was big impact but if it is they can look at that.

Kim Roman commented that she did not think the work was getting done. She is struggling applying for money at sites she's worked at a decade or more and covering extra counties, it just isn't getting done.

Valerie Njapa commented that it is a good question because the INPC staff covering those areas between Area 5 and Area 8 are serving as the point of contact to landowners but to go beyond that, she didn't know. She felt they did need to look at that.

Commissioner Stone was curious if there were plans poised to go but were not moving forward because nobody was in that position.

Valerie thought any paused or stopped projects could be looked at.

Chief Holtrop commented that she thought all paused projects were restarted.

Todd Strole commented that some of the paused projects were not restarted either because it was no longer viable or the contract had expired. Twenty of the thirty paused projects were restarted.

Commissioner Dann asked Chief Holtrop what criteria was being applied in the ranking of projects.

Chief Holtrop deferred to Todd Strole, the Statewide Stewardship Coordinator for the Division of Natural Heritage. She commented that the Regional Stewardship Specialists have been working with INPC to determine the priorities. She indicated there has not been any ranking as of now but that they would be meeting the next day to figure out the ranking.

Todd Strole answered that they will be looking at the protection status of the site, is the INAI qualifying feature being addressed, the urgency of the project and rarity of the feature at the site.

Chief Holtrop commented that they are also looking to see if other financial resources can be used to fund as many of these projects as possible.

Chris Young, ORC Director, thanked the Commissioners for the open and wide-ranging discussion that occurred at the 229th meeting regarding the proposed reorganization. Discussions within ORC brought them to the decision that the next thing that would have to happen would be to get with a point person from the Commission to discuss the 16-year old MOU between INPC and IDNR. He would like to work together with a point person or two from the Commission to make the MOU

interface more with the way we are doing business now. He felt it was important when moving through things this important, that we take our time and work with the Commission's meeting schedule. Since the Commission only meets three times a year, the only way to have open discussions and full participation from Commissioners is to move through it slowly and methodically. He asked Commissioners if they were agreeable in discussing the MOU.

230-7) Endangered Species Protection Board Staff Report

APPENDIX III

Dr. Joyce Hofmann, Endangered Species Protection Board Chair, reported the following:

The Board held its 178th meeting on 18 May 2018 at Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie in Wilmington. The Board gave preliminary approval to petitions to remove the Iowa Darter (*Etheostoma exile*) and Mississippi Kite (*Ictinia mississippiensis*) from the Illinois List of Endangered and Threatened Species (List). The Board also approved several nomenclature changes for species on the List.

The Board held its 179th meeting on 17 August 2018 at Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie in Wilmington. The Board gave preliminary approval to a petition to change the status of the Bigeye Chub (*Hybopsis ambiops*) from endangered to threatened.

To date, the Board has given preliminary approval to sixteen petitions concerning the status of animal species. There have been four petitions to reclassify a species from threatened to endangered, three to reclassify a species from endangered to threatened, eight to remove a species from the List, and one to add the Monkeyface (mussel) to the List as a threatened species.

The Board has submitted its 2016-2018 Biennial Review.

The Plant Endangered Species Technical Advisory Committee (ESTAC) held its first regional meeting on 25 May 2018 at the Illinois Natural History Survey in Champaign, reviewing about 100 listed plant species from central and western Illinois. The second meeting was held on 24 August 2018 at Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie to review northern Illinois plants. The ESTAC members received input from regional botanical experts who attended the meetings. The date and venue for the third meeting, which will review plants of southern Illinois, will be posted on the Board's website.

The Board's next quarterly meeting will be 16 November 2018 at the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie Visitor Center in Wilmington, beginning at 10 am.

Commissioner Thomas asked for a quick summary of the petition process.

Dr. Hofmann explained there are 3 different petition forms; 1) for adding a species to the list; 2) to change the status of a species on a list; 3) to remove a species from the list. The petition forms are available online and can be completed by anyone and then emailed to the ESPB. Once they are reviewed by Dr. Hofmann, the completed petition form is presented to the entire Board and a vote for preliminary approval is taken.

Commissioner Thomas thanked her for the review of process.

Dr. Hofmann commented that it is an attempt to be rigorous in using scientific data and being transparent. Everyone is filling out the exact same form in exactly the same way and then there is no question in how the ESPB makes their decisions.

230-8) Committee of the Whole Meeting to propose nominations for Illinois Nature Preserves Commission Advisors, Consultants and Officers (Committee Chair: Dave Thomas)

A. Nomination of Advisors

Current Advisors:

Wayne A. Rosenthal IL Dept. of Natural Resources <i>(Statutory Advisor)</i>	Dr. David Soucek IL Natural History Survey <i>(Statutory Advisor)</i>	Robert Sill IL State Museum <i>(Statutory Advisor)</i>
Dr. Kevin O'Brien Illinois State Water Survey & IL Sustainable Technology Center	Dr. Thomas E. Emerson IL State Archaeological Survey	Rich Brauer IL Dept. of Natural Resources Office of Historic Preservation
Richard C. Berg IL State Geological Survey	Dr. Mark Ryan Prairie Research Institute	Joyce Hofmann IL Endangered Species Protection Board

Commissioner Thomas read the slate of Advisors:

The following are Statutory Advisors:

- Dr. Eric Schauber, Director, Illinois Natural History Survey
- Robert Sill, Director, Illinois State Museum
- Wayne Rosenthal, Director, Illinois Department of Natural Resources

The following current Advisors are willing to serve and may be nominated:

- Richard Berg, Director, Illinois State Geological Survey
- Thomas Emerson, Director, Illinois State Archaeological Survey
- Joyce Hofmann, Chair, Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board
- Kevin O'Brien, Director, Illinois Sustainable Technology Center and Illinois State Water Survey
- Mark Ryan, Director, Prairie Research Institute

New Advisors to be nominated:

- Rich Brauer, Director, IDNR Historic Preservation Division. He is replacing Heidi Brown-McCreery, who is no longer with IDNR.

B. Nomination of Consultants

Current Consultants:

Gerald Adelman	Jill Allread	Michelle Carr
Harry Drucker	Fran Harty	Randy Heidorn
Jim Herkert	Kerry Leigh	Jill Riddell
Lauren Rosenthal	Bruce Ross-Shannon	Joseph Roth
John Schwegman	Valerie Spale	John White

Commissioner Thomas read the following slate of Consultants:

- Gerald Adelman
- Jill Allread
- Michelle Carr
- Harry Drucker
- Fran Harty
- Randy Heidorn
- Jim Herkert
- Kerry Leigh
- Jill Riddell
- Lauren Rosenthal
- Bruce Ross-Shannon
- Joseph Roth
- John Schwegman
- Valerie Spale
- John White

C. Nomination of Officers

Current Officers:

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

Commissioner Thomas indicated following past protocol that the Vice Chair, George Covington will move up to Chair and that Secretary, Abigail Derby Lewis will move up to Vice Chair. The Committee of the Whole reached out to commissioner Daubach as serving as Secretary and she accepted. He asked if there were any other nominations. With no other nominations made, this is the slate of officers for nomination.

It was moved by Commissioner Dann, seconded by Commissioner Stone and accepted that the slate of Advisors, Consultants and Officers be nominated.

230-9) Hancock Co. – Addition to Cecil White Prairie Land and Water Reserve, Registration

Angella Moorehouse requested registration of a 0.34 acre addition to Cecil White Prairie Land and Water Reserve, owned by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR). 33 acres were registered in 2002 at the 177th meeting (resolution #1679). This addition is located in the southeast corner which was acquired from the Illinois Department of Transportation in 2006 during negotiations involving the expansion of US Route 336. Cecil White Prairie is located in east-central Hancock County on the north side of US Route 336, within the Galesburg Section of the Western Forest-Prairie Natural Division. The site is recognized as a category 1 site by the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI #0155) for having one acre of Grade B and one acre of Grade C loess hill prairie. The site also contains significant archaeological features, most notably a Late Woodland Mortuary Mound known as the Cecil White Mound Complex. Cecil White Prairie is located immediately upstream from the northern reaches of the Lower LaMoine River Conservation Opportunity Area identified by the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan (IWAP) as significant for the amount of acreage enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program. Protection and management of this reserve will help meet the goals of multiple IWAP campaigns including: Farm and Grassland, Forest and Woodlands, Streams, Land and Water Stewardship, and Invasive Species. At least 6 wildlife Species on Greatest Need of Conservation have been reported within the reserve.

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

The Commission grants approval for the registration of a 0.34 acre addition to Cecil White Prairie Land and Water Reserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 9 of the agenda for the 230th meeting.

(Resolution 2433)

230-10) Sangamon Co. – Sangamon Bottoms Land and Water Reserve, Registration

Debbie Newman, on behalf of the Springfield Park District, requested registration of Sangamon Bottoms Land and Water Reserve, a 112.99-acre site located within the Springfield Park District's 275.60-acre Riverside Park along a 0.45-mile reach of the Sangamon River. The Sangamon County site is located in the Springfield Section of the Grand Prairie Natural Division. Sangamon Bottoms contains 103.6 acres of forested bottomlands supporting breeding populations of 14 bird species recognized as being sensitive to forest fragmentation. These two factors (over 100 acres of forest, area-sensitive breeding bird species) qualify Sangamon Bottoms for registration as a land and water reserve. Natural communities consist of Grade C wet-mesic floodplain forest, the most widespread community; Grade C wet floodplain forest; Grade C mesic floodplain forest; Grade D maturing floodplain forest; and pond communities in the form of oxbow lakes (about 9.4 acres). Eight bird species breeding at the Sangamon Bottoms are listed as Species in Greatest Need of Conservation in the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan (IWAP). The proposed reserve also directly supports four priority action campaigns of the IWAP. The registration agreement for this reserve will be subject to an Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement Between the City of Springfield and the Springfield Park District (Ordinance 529-10-02) and is planned for a 20-year time-limited period with automatic renewal.

Commissioner Ruffner asked if the trail went through the oxbow.

Debbie answered that since she was not able to walk through the entire site with Tom prior to his retirement, due to flooding, asked Chris Young if he was aware.

Chris answered that they are very primitive trails.

Commissioner McClain commented that you cannot get through some of those trails after a big rain.

Debbie conveyed that Tom Lerczak had begun working on this site in 1986. He worked with the City of Springfield and wrote very extensive management recommendations to address ecological issues and concerns for Riverside Park. There was a long history of the INPC staff working with the owners of this site, first the City of Springfield, and then the Springfield Park District. Per Tom's request, Debbie acknowledged and thanked Chuck Smith, Springfield Park District Arborist; Margaret Johnson, Bridget Henning, Justin Dillard, Alexandria Davis, resident interns; and Faith Wheaton, IDNR Volunteer; who have worked on various aspects, over the last 6 years, trying to collect photo documentation of the plants and animals at this site.

Commissioner Daubach asked if this site is utilized by the public to just take a walk.

Chris Young commented that it does have a trail system but isn't used extensively. The road to it seems is utilized more for access to fishing and picnicking.

Commissioner Daubach commented that it seems the work we do could be enhanced by people having better experiences.

It was moved by Commissioner McClain, seconded by Commissioner Ruffner, that the following resolution be approved:

The Commission grants approval for the registration of Sangamon Bottoms Land and Water Reserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 10 of the agenda for the 230th meeting.

(Resolution 2434)

230-11) St. Clair Co. – Zoeller Farm Land and Water Reserve, Registration

Debbie Newman requested registration of Zoeller Farm Land and Water Reserve, located in St. Clair County, Illinois, and is 160 acres of farm land and wooded sinkholes in the Stemler Karst Area (Illinois Natural Areas Inventory site #0835.) The Stemler Karst Area contains high-quality aquatic and terrestrial cave communities, including 14 globally rare cave invertebrates. The INAI site also provides habitat for one state and one federally listed species, and contains high-quality upland forest. Protection of the Zoeller Farm will help maintain water quality in the Stemler Karst Area by preventing residential development. Protection will meet objectives of the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan's Sinkhole Plain Conservation Opportunity Area; and the Southwestern Illinois Wildlife Action Plan Partnership goals of protecting the recharge area of a cave that provides habitat for the Illinois cave amphipod, restoring acres of prairie, savanna, and woodland, and providing habitat for Species in Greatest Need of Conservation. The Zoeller Farm is owned

by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR). The site is adjacent to the IDNR-owned 195-acre Stemler Cave Woods Nature Preserve, and the 35-acre Four Our Future Natural Heritage Landmark, and in the vicinity of five other privately-owned nature preserves and natural heritage landmarks within the Stemler Karst. Reserved rights are hiking, nature observation, hunting, trapping, picnicking, off road vehicles for disabled hunters and site maintenance, improve/construct maintenance infrastructure for public use and remove or bury existing structures.

Commissioner Ruffner asked about the pushing over of stone walls within the site.

Debbie answered that would be an internal conflict within the IDNR and would not be allowed per the land and water reserve, Dawn Cobb and the other archaeological staff. That would not be allowed to occur.

Commissioner Ruffner read the following excerpt from the 265th page of the proposal, “According to a post-fire assessment (Mansberger 2011) of the house, the remaining walls present a safety hazard and should be demolished. The immediate area surrounding the walls contains highly sensitive archaeological features”.

Debbie answered that it was her understanding it was a safety hazard if they allow public access to the site and the walls be removed if they could not be stabilized any other way. The summer kitchen would not be since it is still completely intact.

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

The Commission grants approval for the registration of Zoeller Farm Land and Water Reserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 11 of the Agenda for the 230th meeting.
(Resolution 2435)

230-12) Adams Co. – Allendale Springs Nature Preserve, Dedication

Ray Geroff, on behalf of Edward Behrensmeyer, requested preliminary approval of Allendale Springs as a nature preserve. This site is 2.27 acres and located in southern Adams County in the Galesburg Section of the Middle Mississippi Border Natural Division. The site is not presently listed on the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory but it qualifies as a category 2 site for suitable habitat supporting two federally listed bat species: Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*), which breeds within the vicinity of the proposed preserve, and northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*), which is thought to overwinter on site. The site is also listed within the Illinois Inventory of Archaeological and Paleontological Sites and was used as a settlement by various prehistoric peoples of the Dalton, Hardin, Archaic, Sedalia, and, late woodland cultures. Allendale Spring contains habitat supporting a least five Species in Greatest Need of Conservation as defined by the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan (IWAP). Protection and management of the site will serve to help fulfill goals within both the Forest and Woodland and Streams IWAP campaigns.

Commissioner Covington asked if the right to get water from the stream includes the right to exploit it commercially. If so, how much additional infrastructure would be necessary to do that.

Ray Geroff answered that there would be no additional infrastructure since the equipment is there and on the outside of the nature preserve. The owner would just want the right to maintain the concrete shoot that comes from the nature preserve to his weir.

Commissioner McClain commented that the archaeological significance of this site is very important.

Ray agreed.

Commissioner Dann asked what his sense of the water quality was there.

Ray answered he has seen the water quality reports and it tested as high quality.

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

The Commission grants preliminary approval for the dedication of Allendale Springs Nature Preserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 12 of the Agenda for the 230th meeting.

(Resolution 2436)

230-13) Lake Co. – Donnelley Prairies and Oaks Buffer Addition to Liberty Prairie Nature Preserve, Dedication

Steve Byers, on behalf of Libertyville Township, requested final approval for dedication of the 46-acre Donnelley Prairies and Oaks Buffer Addition to Liberty Prairie Nature Preserve (INAI #1252). The proposed addition received preliminary approval for dedication at the Commission's 229th Meeting in May 2018. Liberty Prairie received final approval for dedication at the Commission's 129th Meeting in November 1990 (Resolution # 1062). Since that time, Libertyville Township has formally protected three nature preserve buffer additions to Liberty Prairie; the first addition receiving final approval for dedication at the Commission's 180th Meeting in October 2003 (Resolution #1743), the second addition receiving final approval at the Commission's 212th Meeting in October 2012 (Resolution #2206), and at the Commission's 226th Meeting in May 2017 (Resolution #2389). The 184-acre Liberty Prairie Nature Preserve, and the 46-acre proposed addition, are located within the 5,770-acre Liberty Prairie Reserve located in south-central Lake County, Illinois. Liberty Prairie Nature Preserve and the proposed addition are located in the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division. The proposed Donnelley Prairies and Oaks Buffer Addition consists of a cultural community (agricultural lands) that will be restored to dry-mesic, mesic, and wet prairie and dry-mesic oak savanna. Efforts to begin conversion of the agricultural lands to natural communities began in 2014 when the Township adopted the Casey Road Land Use Plan. Libertyville Township has adopted a 5-year management plan for the proposed addition that will begin during the autumn of 2018 that includes disabling field drain tiles, prairie seeding, and tree plantings. Protection and restoration of the proposed nature preserve buffer addition supports elements of the Illinois Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan; specifically action steps to "...establish or restore grasslands...". The proposed addition will provide water quality benefits to Bull Creek and Liberty Prairie Nature Preserve, meet the needs of a suite of grassland birds that require large blocks of habitat, and

further buffer Liberty Prairie Nature Preserve from incompatible land uses. The proposed Donnelley Prairies and Oaks Buffer Addition (the fourth addition) will increase the size of Liberty Prairie Nature Preserve from 184 to 230 acres in size. The Illinois Nature Preserves Commission acknowledges the leadership of Kathleen O'Connor with Libertyville Township for protection and stewardship of Liberty Prairie Nature Preserve and also acknowledges Sarah Surroz with Openlands and David Eubanks for their support.

Kathleen O'Connor thanked the Commission for their approval and support.

Commissioner Dann asked how close they were to getting the 5,000 acres on their preserve design.

Kathleen answered they would have a stakeholder meeting soon and would be able to give the Commission an update at their January meeting.

Commissioner Covington voted present due to his professional relationship with Libertyville Township.

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

The Commission grants final approval for the dedication of the Donnelley Prairies and Oaks Buffer Addition to Liberty Prairie Nature Preserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 13 of the Agenda for the 230th meeting.

(Resolution 2437)

Break for lunch 12:01 PM to 12:45 PM.

230-14) Winnebago Co. – Roadway Rehabilitation Project at Plum Grove Nature Preserve

George Bellovics, on behalf of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), in association with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), requested approval for Phase I of a multi-phase, multi-million-dollar roadway rehabilitation project at Rock Cut State Park. A small segment of the roadway lies in the northwest corner of Plum Grove Nature Preserve, which is situated in the center of the state park. Rock Cut State Park is an urban park with more than a million visitors annually, and its roadway system is crumbling and failing. The rehabilitation project will repair and replace all pavement areas and accommodate cyclists and pedestrians with a widened shoulder area to create a safer system for visitors. IDNR Planning and Engineering staff, with Natural Heritage and INPC biologists, completed work on-site to provide a basis for acknowledging existing right of way and to determine the least intrusive width to achieve constructability of the new roadway and its necessary drainage components. If approved, this project will allow for the continuation of subsequent phases of the comprehensive roadway project at the state park. Repairing and re-constructing the roadway will provide stability and reduce erosion into the nature preserve.

Commissioner Dann asked how much wider the overlap is from the existing roadway.

Mr. Bellovics answered that the current roadway is 51 feet and we are asking for additional nine feet of width in right-of-way.

Commissioner Dann asked if that was 4 ½ on each side of the roadway.

Mr. Bellovics answered in essence. The new roadway is centered where the old roadway was.

Commissioner Covington asked if the proposed pavement was 22-feet.

Mr. Bellovics answered that the pavement width would be 30 feet, with two 5-foot shoulders and two 10-foot lanes within a 60-foot right-of-way.

Commissioner Covington commented that this is a pretty big road.

Mr. Bellovics commented that usually city roads are 11-foot lanes. State highways are 12-foot lanes (24-foot wide) and most have 5 to 8-foot shoulders. In the park today, we have a 20-foot wide road with no shoulder and it is being used for walking, biking and vehicles. This will increase the interior safety of the park road for walking and biking.

Commissioner Covington asked what the proposed pavement width would be for vehicles.

Mr. Bellovics answered it would be 20-foot wide with 5-foot shoulders on each side marked for multi-purpose use.

Commissioner Dann asked what the total square footage is that would impact the nature preserve.

Mr. Bellovics answered 3,600 square feet.

A discussion ensued between Commissioners and Mr. Bellovics regarding the different alternatives for the roadway rehabilitation project.

Valerie Njapa commented that it is important to remember there is a pre-existing use and the roadway was there prior to the dedication of the nature preserve. Thirty-one years later we have a roadway that is failing and is not an isolated segment of a roadway but an extensive internal roadway system to the 3,000+ acre Rock Cut State Park which has more than a million visitors each year. She thought it was unfortunate that when the parcel was dedicated the roadway was not excluded or documented in the dedication document. Taking the roadway outside the nature preserve would impact restored prairie and where the road is now is degraded habitat and there would not be any impacts to the high-quality area of the nature preserve itself. She indicated they had received a lot of feedback from INPC and Natural Heritage biologists. Valerie thanked George Bellovics and explained that a lot of time and effort were put into how to present the roadway rehabilitation in a way that would have a positive outcome so as not to have an impact past the existing right-of-way. An acceptable right-of-way needs to be established to allow for the Phase I roadway project to be completed and to address any future maintenance needs. If not, we would have to come back each time road maintenance needs done. Typically, when roadways are within property boundaries of parcels dedicated or registered, those parcels are subject to existing roadways, right-of-ways and drainage features. However, the language was not included in the dedication for this nature preserve.

Commissioner Daubach asked John Nelson if he seen any difficulties with this project.

John answered that this should reinforce how important it is to include descriptions like this in the proposals and dedication documents. It should have been exempted from the legal description. In a proposal coming forward today, the road would be exempt from the dedication. He asked the Commissioners to look at this as a pre-existing right and use that was undefined in the proposal or dedication document. It is a right the landowner has that pre-existed the dedication that we did not have a dimension for. After today, we will have a dimension for it. He indicated they are following the legal process and accommodating the landowner.

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

The Commission grants approval for the roadway rehabilitation project at Plum Grove Nature Preserve, as described in the proposal presented under Item 14 of the Agenda for the 230th meeting.

(Resolution 2438)

Commissioner Thomas commented that we have run into this situation where a nature preserve was dedicated that included areas that were not of general nature preserve quality. Portions of it got used for children. He was unsure if there were procedures for dealing with this. He felt that when we are dealing with this if we are not removing areas of high quality or typical nature preserve quality but is serving a greater purpose, like for education or safety, we should have a means for doing that.

Donnie commented that the Commissioners roles were not that of absolutists. Like a good judge, he measures justice with mercy. In a sense, that is the kind of action we are doing. At times, the nature preserves rules have to be tempered. It is difficult to have hard and fast rules because every situation will be different.

Commissioner Covington commented that you could have a list of factors to be considered and then it becomes discretionary.

Mr. Bellovics thanked the Commissioners for their consideration. He also thanked John, Brad and Valerie, and was very proud of the process they came up with to identify the existing aspects of the roadway right-of-way.

Mr. Bellovics commented that outside of the nature preserve they have incorporated in special provisions for the contract to do certain things at certain times of the year to lessen impacts on plants and wildlife. They have made sure that their stewardship extends out past the nature preserve and is done in a sensitive way.

Commissioner Daubach congratulated Mr. Bellovics on the number of visitors to this site and that in itself is making an impact.

Mr. Bellovics commented that he felt we did not need to put a fence up around nature preserves to keep everyone out but to open them up as a wonderful outdoor classroom.

230-15) Election of INPC Officers

Commissioner Thomas requested the approval for the slate of nominated officers described under Item 8C of the Agenda for the 230th Meeting.

It was moved by Commissioner Ruffner, seconded by Commissioner Stone, that the following officers be elected to the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission: George Covington, Chair; Abigail Derby Lewis, Vice Chair; and Pen Daubach, Secretary.

(Resolution 2439)

230-16) Election of INPC Advisors and Consultants

Commissioner Thomas asked for a motion to elect the slate of advisors and consultants nominated under Items 8A and 8B of the Agenda for the 230th Meeting.

It was moved by Commissioner Daubach, seconded by Commissioner McClain, that in addition to statutory advisors that Richard Berg, Thomas Emerson, Joyce Hofmann, Kevin O'Brien, Mark Ryan and Rich Brauer, be elected as Advisors; and that Gerald Adelman, Jill Allread, Michelle Carr, Harry Drucker, Fran Harty, Randy Heidorn, Jim Herkert, 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 2440)

230-17) Review of Closed Minutes

In accordance with the Open Meetings Act, Commissioners are to review the closed minutes at least twice a year to determine if they must still remain closed. The following meetings had closed minutes and need to be reviewed: August 2, 2005; May 2, 2006; May 6, 2008; May 5, 2009; May 7, 2013; and September 10, 2013.

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

The Commission agreed that the closed meeting minutes from August 2, 2005; May 2, 2006; May 6, 2008; May 5, 2009; May 7, 2013; and September 10, 2013, remain closed, as described in the proposal presented under Item 16 of the Agenda for the 229th Meeting.

(Resolution 2441)

230-18) Public Comment Period (3 minutes per person)

None.

230-19) Other Business

No other business.

230-20) Adjournment

Commissioner Ruffner motioned to adjourn. It was seconded by Commissioner Stone and approved. The INPC adjourned at 1:23 PM.

Commissioner Dann commented that his life has been devoted to conservation, and no work or anything he has ever done, gave him more satisfaction or taught him as much as having served as a Commissioner and the Chair. He thanked everyone.