

# MINUTES

## from the 25th Meeting of the Illinois Fish and Wildlife Action Team

Aug 20th 2014 – 1:30 pm

Illinois Department of Natural Resources  
One Natural Resources Way, Springfield, IL  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Director's Board Room

### **In attendance were:**

**Members:** Randy Heidorn, Jim Renn, Jamie Diebol, Kim Martin, Gregg Good, Mike Redmer, Trent Thomas, Eric Schenk

On the conference phone: Abigail Derby Lewis, Doug Dufford, Cindy Skrukud

**Campaign Leads:** Ann Holtrop, Stan McTaggart, Randy Smith, Chris Evans, Nancy Williamson, Mike Wefer

**Interested Parties:** Eric Smith, Matt Allender, Tracy Boutelle-Fidler

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**ORC Ann Holtrop** called the meeting to order and welcomed all attendees to the 25<sup>th</sup> meeting of the IL Fish and Wildlife Action Team.

**ORC Ann Holtrop** - asked for all present to introduce themselves with their name and organization.

**ORC Ann Holtrop** requested that the minutes from the 24<sup>rd</sup> meeting be approved. Randy Heidorn motioned for approval for the 24<sup>rd</sup> minutes and Mike Redmer seconded the motioned.

**Matt Allender, IL Natural History scientist** - gave an update on snake fungal disease in IL and the importance of addressing disease/pathogens in Plan revision. Matt stated that he believes that a two pronged approach would be best. First, view the situation in terms of Wildlife Health instead of number of deaths. And look at habitats to see if all the wildlife within that seemingly healthy habitat are indeed healthy. Matt also felt that Wildlife Health should be added to the IWAP Revision as a category to track.

**Randy Heidorn** asked what the framework would look like?

**Matt Allender** suggested to seek volunteer veterinarians within the state to help, look at invasive species and are they carrying diseases that affect the local population.

**Mike Redmer** asked the team to research their contacts for volunteers to help with research and taxonomy work.

**Guest Presenter: Eric Smith, IDNR biologist,** gave his presentation on the final results of the SWG T-61 “*Sand Community Restoration in the Kankakee Sands Opportunity Area*” grant. Eric provided an very insightful and compelling review of the conservation work being done in the Kankakee Sands Conservation Opportunity Area. His presentation power point slides will be posted on the IWAP public website.

**Ann Holtrop** – said that there had been a request for a boundary change to the Lake - McHenry Wetlands COA and Brian Anderson of the IL Natural History Survey offered to revisit the GIS mapping of that area and provide new updated maps which would then be used to finalized new boundary lines. Unfortunately that effort was never completed and the effort floundered. Now that the interest has been renewed, the task will be taken up again by IDNR’s COA Task Force and moved forward.

**ACTION ITEM:** Nancy Williams & Mike Redmer asked for COA Task Force materials. Jim Renn will send out.

**Eric Schenk** asked what the COA Task Force was. An explanation was given and

**Tracy Boutelle-Fidler** gave a short description of what her COA approach will be as she embarks on communicating with the various COA partnerships around the state, under here additional duties.

**ORC Ann Holtrop** - talked about State Wildlife Grant funding for 2013 and 2014. Eleven projects will be funded for year 2013. SWG 2014 will be a Call for Proposals. There will be themes for the call. Further information will be released shortly.

**ACTION ITEM:** Ann will send out the project list for 2013.

**Campaign Leads** gave their reports:

**Mike Wefer – Forest and Woodlands** Hidden Springs is the latest area where good work is being done.

**Randy Smith –Wetlands:** Two students hired for fall project – North American waterfowl project will have a big human dimension aspect to it.

**Chris Evans – Invasive Species:** SWG T-77 grant has been funded and will look for more effective ways to stop invasives.

Have been working with other states on their invasives; working with Eric Smith in Region II and IDOT on roadside invasives

**Ann Holtrop – Streams:** Report to follow soon.

**Stan McTaggart - Farmland/Prairie:** Doing Cover Crop research. Purchased 160 acres of prairie.

**Nancy Williamson – Green Cities:** Urban areas research mapping going on with help from Dave Eustis of the Heartlands Conservancy.

### **Team Members - updates:**

**Eric Schenk – Ducks Unlimited** – Middle Mississippi River – awarded a 1 million grant to do work with hardwoods and at Oakwood Bottoms. Work going on along the Illinois River with 1000 acres bought for 3.5 million and future purchase of 2800 acres and work going on in Lake Co and McHenry Co; a 1 million dollar grant in the works and partnering with Open Lands.

**Jamie Diebol – Farm Svc Agency** – On June 9<sup>th</sup>, FSA was authorized to renew some CRP applications – there will be 96,000 CRP acres expiring this year – some will be eligible for a one year extension; all 15 yr. agreements will not be allowed an extension – some CRP agreements will be allowed an “early out” due to high corn prices.

**ORC Ann Holtrop** asked to adjourn the 24<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Illinois Fish and Wildlife Action Team. It was motioned to adjourn by Eric Schenk and seconded by Randy Heidorn.

**The next IFAWAT meeting will be the 26<sup>th</sup> meeting on Nov 19<sup>th</sup>, 2014 at 1:30 pm at IDNR Headquarters, 3rd Floor Director’s Board Room.**