

MINUTES

from the 18th Meeting of the Illinois Fish and Wildlife Action Team

May 10th 2012 - 1 pm

Illinois Department of Natural Resources
One Natural Resources Way, Springfield, IL
3rd Floor - Director's Board Room

In attendance were:

Members: John Rogner, Jim Herkert, Jim Anderson, Mike Redmer, Elliot Brinkman, Kent Adams, Greg Good, Randy Heidorn, Eric Schenck, Trent Thomas, Mike Wefer, Jim Renn, Gene Barickman

Campaign Leads: John Buhnerkempe, Paul Brewer, Mike Wefer, Nancy Williamson, Ann Holtrop

Interested Parties: IDNR: Don McFall, Kathy Andrews, Jeff Hoover (INHS)

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All documents/Power Points presentations that were presented at the meeting are posted under meetings on the left-hand panel on the team's SharePoint website.
<https://dnr.partner.illinois.gov/ifawat/default.aspx>

Asst Dir John Rogner Called the meeting to order and welcomed all attendees to the 18th meeting of the IL Fish and Wildlife Action Team

Asst Dir John Rogner asked for all present to introduce themselves with their name and organization.

Asst Dir John Rogner asked that the minutes for the last meeting be approved. A motion was made and they were unanimously approved.

Ann Holtrop-IDNR gave an update on the Campaign approach to IWAP implementation. Campaign Leads have been assigned for six of the campaigns. These leads meet monthly with the IWAP coordinator, and provide updates at the IWAT meetings. Each campaign has a different organizational structure (e.g., steering committee, science team, implementation), but each meets regularly with partners interested in that campaign. Each campaign is working toward narrowing the focus of its efforts, and establishing priority goals and actions to address that focus. Currently Campaign Leads are summarizing management implications for past SWG-funded projects, identifying gaps with SGNC (listings and effort), creating success stories, coordinating research needs, and identifying ways to track progress made on goals and actions.

A short conversation ensued about the **NRCS** new **"Working Lands for Wildlife"** initiative.

ORC Chief Jim Herkert discussed research needs. In the WAP revision, Illinois will need to identify what research needs and information gaps currently identified in the Plan have been addressed with SWG funding. He asked the IWAT members to think about what support was needed to implement the campaigns. The group then discussed research needs related to climate change. Several members in the room attended the Northeast Climate Science Center's listening session in Champaign on May 1. During the listening session, participants were divided into teams and asked to identify research needs. These notes will be shared with IWAT members when they are share with session participants. Also discussed was TNC's vulnerability analysis that was conducted for Illinois. Jim Renn will forward TNC's report to IWAT members.

Jeff Hover – IL History Survey- As the PI on the project, Jeff gave an update on his work to date on the T-71 R-1 "The Effects of Bottomland Forest Restoration on the Breeding Bird Community in the Cache River Watershed" project

Jim Anderson said that Lake County is doing similar work as Jeff Hoover's project on their forested land.

ACTION ITEM: *AMENDED* Jim Anderson was to lead a subcommittee on the topic of feral wildlife, however he is unable to lead the effort at this time. The subcommittee was to contact several entities and scientists who are dealing with this issue, to draft a white paper on the issues, actions, and desired outcomes, and to share the findings with the Action Team.

John Buhnerkempe-IDNR – gave an update on the issue of Feral Hogs within the State of Illinois. John said that the problem is exploding and there is some evidence that feral hogs are being imported to the state for sport hunting. IDNR is working with private land owners to trap the hogs, which seems fairly successful. There seem to be two areas where the feral hogs are increasing and that is S.E. and N.W. Illinois. John said that the hunting of feral hogs just tends to scatter them, making them harder to trap.

Kent Adams-National Wild Turkey Federation – asked if logging was being done on public lands.

ORC Chief Jim Herkert said that the NWTF could help with PR and logging on private lands.

Randy Heidorn – IL Nature Preserve – said that there was work being done with the Pine Stands in Winnebago County and lands are being put into the highest restrictive category.

Campaigns updates -

- **[FOREST and WOODLANDS CAMPAIGN](#) - Lead Paul Brewer**

Paul's report is on the Sharepoint website under IFAWAT meeting minutes on the main page left hand column.

- **[WETLAND CAMPAIGN](#) - Lead John Buhnerkempe gave his report.**

- **[GREEN CITIES CAMPAIGN](#) - Lead Nancy Williamson gave her report.**

- **[STREAMS CAMPAIGN](#) – Lead Ann Holtrop gave her report on updates for the campaign.**

Streams Campaign met for the second time on May 3. The focus was to discuss an approach for defining rare (those occurring at 1% or fewer of DNR sampled stream locations) and

declining (loss of 50% or more of locations since 1999) fish species. Fifty-seven fish species meet the criteria used for this preliminary analysis. The group will be refining this approach, but expects that a subset of identified fish will become the focus of the campaign's goals and actions. Similar analyses are proposed for mussels and sensitive aquatic insects.

- **FARMLAND and PRAIRIE CAMPAIGN** - **Lead Mike Wefer**
Farmland & Prairie campaign report is on the website under IFAWAT meeting minutes on the main page left hand column.
- **INVASIVE SPECIES CAMPAIGN** - **Jodi Shimp** gave his report.

Jim Herkert – Dir Office of Resource Conservation gave an update on SWG 2011 funds saying that 1.58 Million was going to be distributed to:

- T-26D-1** The Statewide Public Lands Native Woodlands Wildlife Habitat Restoration Project-\$500K (65% fed share);
- T-77D-1** Implementation of the Invasive Species Campaign of the IWAP throughout Illinois with additional directed coordination within the River to River Cooperative Weed Management Area (CMMA)-\$279,607(65% fed share);
- T-28M-1** Public Land Native Wildlife Habitat Restoration Project-\$500K (65%fed share);
- T-43D-1** Hill Prairie/Bluff Habitat Restoration-\$150K (65%fed share);
- T-80D-1** Southern Illinois Conservation Opportunity Area Coordinator -\$150K (65% fed share).

Success Story Discussion – Jim Renn indicated that IWAP stories previously published in Outdoor Illinois had been extracted and places as individual files on the website. A template is being developed for additional success stories.

TEAM MEMBER UPDATES:

Elliot Brinkman, Prairie Rivers, said their work has been at the Kickapoo SP, a Dynergy Proj and that he was attending the Teaming with Wildlife **Fly-In** in Washington DC to talk about what Illinois has accomplished with SWG funding.

Asst Dir John Rogner updated the team on the efforts by Rep. Frank Mautino to win votes to pass legislation for dedicated funding for IL DNR.

Eric Schenk – Ducks Unlimited – They will coordinate with new T-80 coordinator and feel that all of the organizations in the lower part of state should work together.

Elliot Brinkman-Prairie Rivers Org – went to Wash DC fly-in and the results were good. Met with some congressmen.

Randy Heidorn - Nature Preserve Commission– 12 new sites were inducted into the Nature Preserve System.

Gene Barickman - NRCS – Talked about the new federal initiative that NRCS is rolling out called **Working Lands for Wildlife**. It will prioritize \$33 million in restoration actions on a large regional scale to most cost effectively focus on conservation. In return for voluntarily making habitat improvements on their lands, the NRCS will provide landowners with regulatory certainty that they will not be asked to take additional conservation actions.

Jim Anderson – Chicago Wilderness – said that they are working on mapping all historical areas, using land trusts for oak restoration
Woodland areas have increased by 87%

Trent Thomas – IL Fisheries Society - said that there were an abundance of fish that survived the winter in the new restored Kickapoo River.

The team agreed that the next meetings will always be the second Wednesday of the month each quarter of the year. The next team meetings for 2012 will be:

Aug 09 and Nov 14

The next IFAWAT meeting will be **Aug, 9th 2012 1 pm IDNR Hdqrts 3rd Flr**
Director's Board Room

Asst Dir John Rogner adjourned the 18th meeting of the **Illinois Fish and Wildlife Action Team**