

MINUTES FROM THE 6th Meeting of the Illinois Fish and Wildlife Action Team

Sept 25th 2007 10:00 am – 2 am

Illinois Department of Natural Resources
One Natural Resources Way, Springfield, IL
DNR Board Room – 3rd Floor

Members Present: Dick Little, Don King, Eric Schenck, Jim Anderson, Jim Herkert, Jim Renn, Jim Ross, Joe Seten, Joel Cross, Kent Adams, Kevin Bennett, Leslie Sgro, Marshall Plumley, Mel Gajewski, Mike Conlin, Mike Redmer, Nick Giannettino, Randy Heidorn, Richard Nichols, Rudy Habben, Steve Byers, Tim Schweizer Trent Thomas, **Interested Parties:** Debbie Bruce, John Buhnerkempe, Glen Kruse, Mike Mason, Andrew Hulin

INTRODUCTIONS/ Opening Statement.....Leslie Sgro, Wildlife Action Team Chair

***** Next meeting Feb 20, 2008 10 am – 2 pm *****

*** ROUND TABLE - Updates from Action Team members ***

IL Federation of Outdoor Recreation– Joe Seten – Working on supporting HR 3441

Farm Service Agency – Don King – Working all of the CRP renewals that have been coming in as deadline is Sept 30th. Don estimates that probably 90% of all CRP in IL have renewed.

Chicago Wilderness - Jim Anderson – Jim is the new Action Team member representing Chicago Wilderness. He is with the Lake Co Forest Preserve District. Chicago Wilderness is working on the INAI sites as well as Wetlands.

USFWS – Mike Redmer – USFWS is working on National Wetland Initiative re-mapping by Ducks Unlimited, and the Wetland Important Bird Initiative project.

Ducks Unlimited – Eric Schenck – Working on the Doris Duke Foundation’s Lands Protection Initiative

IL Nature Preserve Commission - Randy Heidorn – A number of natural areas have been added in 2007. Campbell Lake L&WR “a high quality wetland”/Franklin County / Sweet Fern L&WR (Kankakee Sands / Buckhill Bottom L&WR /Calumet City NP “wetland”/ West Chicago Prairie-DuPage Co/ Lowell Forest / Powder Horn – Cook County (1st Nature Preserve inside Chicago Area) Spring Hill Buffer - Boone Creek / Pine Rock NP

TNC – Jim Herkert – Providing match funds for a State Wildlife Grant that SIU was awarded.
New IL TNC Director, Ms. Leslee Spraggins

TNC – Kevin Bennett - IL State Gov’t signed new **HB1638** “Prescribed Buring–Allowance” (Prescribed Fire) (Provides that the property owner and any person conducting a prescribed burn under this Act shall be liable for any actual damage or injury caused by the fire or resulting smoke upon proof of negligence (instead of gross negligence). Provides that nothing in the Act shall be construed as affecting any obligations or liability under the Environmental Protection Act or any other federal laws or rules that apply to prescribed burning. Effective immediately.) **House Sponsors=Rep. Sidney H. Mathias - Donald L.**

Moffitt - Karen May - Dave Winters - Paul D. Froehlich, John A. Fritchey, Elaine Nekritz, Kathleen A. Ryg, Robert W. Pritchard, Naomi D. Jakobsson, Lisa M. Dugan, Patricia R. Bellock and Elizabeth Coulson

Senate Sponsors=(Sen. Michael W. Frerichs - Larry K. Bomke - M. Maggie Crotty - Dale E. Risinger - Susan Garrett, Gary Forby, Todd Sieben, Pamela J. Althoff, William R. Haine, Louis S. Viverito, Linda Holmes, A. J. Wilhelmi, David Koehler and Deanna Demuzio)

Quail Unlimited – Mel Gajewski - Nothing to report at this time

IL Fisheries Assoc - Trent Thomas- Nothing to report at this time

US Forest Service – Nicholas Giannettino – Working extensively on Invasive species assessment in the Shawnee Forest and TNC is providing help.

IL Assoc of Soil, Water and Conservation Districts – Rich Nichols- Working on Carbon Credit program.

Army Corps of Engineers – Marshall Plumley – Nothing to report at this time.

IL Sierra Club – Rudy Habben – Nothing to report at this time.

National Turkey Federation – Kent Adams – Kent has been busy working on over 100 Habitat Plans for landowners so far in 2007.

IDNR – Leslie Sgro notified the Action Team that IDNR’s IL Natural History Survey’s Director, Dave Thomas was retiring and that IDNR/UIC is looking for a replacement. Job ads have been placed in several journals.

OLD BUSINESS

IDNR - Mike Conlin- Mike gave an update on the IDNR Workgroup and the three committees activities. Mike deferred to John Buhnerkempe to give an update on the Public Lands Committee. John said that at their meeting they discussed the need to add two more seats on his committee: 1- Office of Water Resources and 1- Mines and Minerals.

SAFE Project Update - John Buhnerkempe – gave an update on the **S.A.F.E. project**. The SAFE project group is working on achieving the proposals wildlife objectives in the two areas, Grand Prairie / Southern Till Plain. There are lots of challenges. Workshops will be started with landowners soon.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Jim Herkert** from TNC gave an excellent presentation on the subject: “ Conservation by Design, a hierarchical concept “ Key wisdom: “strategy has to match the scale” This is the same approach that was followed in developing the IL Wildlife Action Plan and was intended to be used when implementing the action items from the Plan.

- **Steve Byers – IL Nature Preserve Commission**- presented the developing facts surrounding the potential purchase of a high quality piece of land that lies between North Branch Preserve and Glacial Park LWR in McHenry County. If purchased for conservation, it would, when combined with the two listed natural areas become the largest public land natural area in Illinois at 1,100 acres. The purchase would be called the **Hack-Ma-Tack National Wildlife Refuge**. Support for this purchase has been from: Friends of Hack-ma-tack National Wildlife Refuge/Friends of Big Foot Beach State

Park/McHenry County Audubon/McHenry County Conservation Foundation/McHenry County Defenders/Nippersink Creek Watershed Planning Committee/OpenLands/Corlands/Sierra Club, Illinois Chapter/The Land Conservancy of McHenry County/The Nature Conservancy/The Trust for Public Land

- **Andrew Hulin – IDNR Watershed Protection Section GIS specialist-** gave a presentation on the preliminary boundary definitions for the IL Wildlife Action Plan's Conservation Opportunity Areas. Maps graphically showing some of the boundaries of the COA's were passed out.
- **Eric Schenck – Ducks Unlimited** - Discussed DU's commitment to working with IDNR to help delineate and define the COAs that their organization would be interested in keeping in tact.
- **Joel Cross – IDNR Watershed Protection Section Chief** -informed the team about the latest State Wildlife Grant award for the Plan's Conservation Opportunity Areas and the applicant being Southern IL Univ. who will provide the person(s) to work under the grant to provide out-reach/ GIS expertise/ and scientific definition for the first batch of COA's to begin to narrow down the real definition of the Plan's COA's.
- **Joel Cross – IDNR Watershed Protection Section Chief** – gave a presentation on the scientific research that is being done through State Wildlife Grants in three different areas: Multi-Metric Habitat Index (This project intends to measure habitat independent of biota (disturbance) to provide an separate assessment of stream quality) /Cold Water Streams Project (Define coolwater and coldwater streams) / Biologically Significant Streams (Combine and update the biological stream characterization and biologically significant stream processes) / Inventory of Freshwater Mussels (All basins sampled during a five year basin survey)
- **Jim Renn – Wildlife Action Plan Coordinator** - gave a presentation on what other states are doing to address Wildlife Action Plan issues (global warming & wetlands) and implementation.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

The Team picked December 5th Wednesday for the next meeting of the IL Fish and Wildlife Action Team. It will be at IDNR building again, in the same room, 10 am - 2 pm and lunch will be provided.

***** rescheduled for Feb 20th, 2008

Minutes prepared by:

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Send all comments/ changes/ improvements to Jim Renn