Grassland Habitat at Prairie Ridge State Natural Area

Project # T4 - L1

Final Report - June 2006

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) was not successful in implementing this grant and requests that the grant be terminated.

The objective of the T4 - L1 grant was to acquire a tract of land in southeastern Illinois near the IDNRs Prairie Ridge State Natural Area in Jasper and Marion counties. The tract would be restored to grassland habitat capable of supporting grassland dependent birds that are declining in Illinois and the Midwest. These birds include greater prairie chicken, upland sandpiper, northern harrier and Henslow's sparrow. The grant was from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the amount of $250,000.

DNR made three attempts to acquire a tract of land meeting the objectives of the grant and under the terms of the grant. Acquisition was on a willing seller basis at fair market value. All three acquisition attempts failed, or were successful but failed to comply with the terms of the grant. No additional tracts can be located that are for sale and meet the objectives of the grant.

Specifically, IDNR attempted to acquire a 226 acre parcel in Jasper County from the Illinois Audubon Society under the terms of the grant. Unfortunately the appraisal was rejected on this parcel. DNR acquired the property on March 2, 2005, but was not able to use US FWS funds for the acquisition.

The second attempt was for a 620 acre tract in Jasper County (the Hunt tract) that was for sale through auction. There was not enough lead time to secure a Yellow Book appraisal for this tract. The tract was acquired February 9, 2006 but DNR was not able to use FWS funds for the acquisition.

The third attempt was a 440 acre tract in Marion County (the Ford tract). The landowner had an unrealistic expectation of the value of the property and we were not able to convince the landowner that we could offer only fair market value as determined by appraisal. Acquisition efforts for this tract have been dropped. Since we can't locate another tract that is for sale and can be acquired under the terms of the grant, we request that the grant be terminated.

From: KATHY JUSTISON
To: SWEET_MIKE@FWS.GOV
Date: 3/8/05 10:35:24 AM
Subject: Fwd: T-04-L-1 Annual Report

Attached is the annual report for T-04-L-1. Please let me know if you need a hard copy in the mail.

If you have any questions, let me know.

Thanks!

Kathy

CC: VEHLOW, PAUL

Annual Report

Project Number T-04-L-1
Grant Title Acquisition of Grassland Habitat at Prairie Ridge State Natural Area

The IDNR expects to purchase approximately 226 acres of land that will be purchased within Prairie Ridge State Natural Area. The area will be managed to provide habitat for prairie chickens and other grassland birds with secondary management priorities to benefit grassland dependent wildlife species.

An tract had been identified for purchase under the terms of this agreement. Unfortunately, the appraisal submitted did not meet yellow book guidelines IDNR is currently working to identify other parcels within project area to accomplish the objectives as stated. IDNR has the expectation to full-fill the objectives of this grant within the grant period.