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Final Report
Important Bird Area project
January 2006 through September, 2007
Audubon Chicago Region

This report summarizes the accomplishments of the Illinois Important Bird Areas program during the period funded by the State Wildlife Grant.

## EXPECTED BENEFITS AND RESULTS:

Focus attention on the most critical sites for bird conservation

Use science-based, standardized criteria to identify and select the most important areas.

Involve birders (both amateur and professional) and other volunteers in "citizen science" – gathering crucial data about bird populations and habitat – and motivate them to be constructive advocates for their local areas.

Encompass both public and private lands, and a wide range of conservation and management options for public land managers and private landowners.

Build new productive partnerships within the state, bringing together key ornithologists, wildlife agencies, land trusts, environmental groups, and others around a common cause.

Advance the goals of the North American Bird Conservation Initiatives, including the Partners in Flight program, the Bird Conservation Action Plan for North America, which is subscribed to by hundreds of government agencies, conservation groups and others.

## TIMELINE:

**The following steps in the IBA process were completed before its inception and are not considered part of this project for federal aid or match reimbursement purposes:**

Form IBA committees; develop criteria; print and distribute data collection materials; introduce IBA Program to conservation organizations, birders, and other volunteers.

Compile preliminary list of potential IBAs; collect data from volunteers via workshops, mailings and phone contacts.

Review data and identify qualifying sites (Technical Committee); continue to compile additional data as needed; enter data into database and report.

Announce second round of nominations.

Announce identified IBA's at press event, hold additional recognition events at 2 IBA sites

Work with INHS to produce a GIS layer of current identified IBA's.

Form conservation team at 1 priority site

| Evaluation Criteria | Performance |
|---|---|
| At least 75 sites are nominated and assessed for inclusion on the IBA list. | 84 sites have been nominated and 75 have been assessed; 66 sites have been selected as IBAs |
| An IBA kick-off event is held to name the first IBA's and publicize the program. | Held October '04 |
| State IBAs are included in the state, national, and international IBA databases and incorporated into regional and national Partners in Flight Bird Conservation Action Plans. | State IBAs are included in the Audubon state IBA database and the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan, which incorporates information from Partners in Flight. Sites have been recommended for the international database and are awaiting decisions. |
| Conservation committees are established for at least 10 sites as ongoing working groups beyond the first phase of the project. | Some of the sites around the state have conservation committees in place. Audubon has been directly involved with conservation committees at 5 sites, and provides support to effective conservation planning at another 5. |
| Realistic, useful conservation plans are created for the next phase of the IBA program: implementation of protection strategies and ongoing monitoring for IBAs. | New conservation plans are in place at five sites. |
| Protection strategies, based on the conservation plans, are implemented on at least 10 sites. | Audubon has directly contributed to implementation of protection strategies at 8 sites and provided support to another 4. |
| IBA reports that are useful in developing and updating the State Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan are completed and distributed according to a schedule agreed on by the IBA Coordinator and IDNR's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan Coordinator. | On line report completed; web site completed; IBA map completed. |

**Job 1 Objectives:**

1. Complete a statewide inventory of Important Bird Areas, build an infrastructure of participants from interested groups and the public who are willing to nominate sites and help advance conservation efforts at IBAs, and hold well-publicized recognition ceremonies at high-profile IBAs. *Sixty-six IBAs have been identified. Although the inventory is not entirely complete, these IBAs substantially represent the key species of concern in the state. It is anticipated that another 15-20 sites might be eligible to become IBAs.*

2. Set priorities among IBAs, develop conservation plans at priority sites, and develop an IBA database with GIS linkages. *Priority sites were determined with feedback from the technical committee and conservation committee. At all priority sites Audubon has attempted to stimulate conservation planning efforts, and plans have been developed at some sites. All site information has been entered into the Audubon IBA database, and a GIS layer has been completed by the DNR.*

3. Work with state conservation organizations and birding groups to develop necessary information on species, sites, populations, threats and management recommendations, and produce a report describing each site, including priority bird populations and conservation recommendations. *Completed*

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

*'06:*

Held 1 recognition ceremony at Pyramid State Park attended by 80 people including state and local politicians and academics, community members, birders and key constituent groups.

Organized a 40-member volunteer crew to find remaining nesting Swainson's Hawks in Swainson's Hawk IBA; completed research on possible protection strategies, reaching out to partners for possible conservation team effort

Worked with public and private conservation organizations and birding groups to develop necessary information on species, sites, populations, threats and management recommendations, and produced a draft report describing all 48 identified sites, including priority bird populations and conservation recommendations. Entered detailed site information into Audubon database. (see Appendix 1 for list of sites entered)

Released detailed criteria about migratory stopover sites and invited nominations for IBAs based on criteria (see Appendix 2)

Solicited and received 19 new IBA nominations, primarily from the technical committee list of most likely IBA sites

Compiled extensive list of interested parties associated with each site; including 10 groups that have worked on IBA conservation activities, primarily maximizing opportunities presented by the dedication ceremony. (See Appendix 3)

Worked with editors and authors to generate media stories about IBAs, most notably a long article by Bob Fisher in Volume 14 #4 (spring 06) of *Meadowlark,* our state ornithological journal, plus a follow up series of articles featuring individual IBAs, and coverage of the Pyramid State Park IBA dedication.

Gave presentations on IBA to the Midwest Regional Audubon Conference in Madison, WI and the Lake County Audubon Society.

*'07:*

Worked with public and private conservation organizations and birding groups to develop necessary information on species, sites, populations, threats and management recommendations, and produced a draft report describing all 18 additional identified sites, including priority bird populations and conservation recommendations. Entered detailed site information into Audubon database. (see Appendix 1 for list of sites entered)

Held technical committee meeting to review 32 new nominations and determine rare and unique habitat criteria

Invited the participation of Audubon chapters and other interested groups around the state to plan monitoring, stewardship and public outreach activities at IBA's.

Prepared web report including all information collected on species, sites, populations, threats and management recommendations

Reviewed pilot monitoring plan developed by national IBA staff

Supported Audubon-initiated IBA stewards program at 3 sites: Bartel, Spring Creek and a new effort at Lost Mound, and existing stewardship efforts at eight others

Continued to pursue additional nominations for sites that appear eligible.

Identified second round of Important Bird Areas

Held one dedication ceremony at the Chicago Lakefront with Mayor Daley and city officials

Completed conservation plans for 3 sites: Bartel, Spring Creek, Chicago Lakefront and contributed to planning efforts at Lost Mound and Paul Douglas.

Worked with national staff to review and refine monitoring plan for pilot in '08

Worked with editors and authors to generate media stories about IBAs, most notably an upcoming article in Illinois Steward and coverage of the Chicago Lakefront IBA dedication.

Organized 5 workshops of birders and biologists throughout the Chicago Wilderness area to map and characterize migratory bird habitat; worked with TNC staff to create a GIS layer showing the results.

**Job 2 Objective:** Work with conservation organizations and birding groups to protect or improve habitat at a minimum of seven high-priority IBAs. The priority IBAs will be chosen by the IBA conservation committee after a review of the State Wildlife Conservation Plan and after considering the importance of the habitat, opportunity, and existing partnerships.

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

'06-'07

Conservation work is underway at four sites and in the beginning stages at one other.

At Bartel Grassland, an active IBA stewardship group regularly meets to plan events, communicate with the landowner, and engage in restoration of the grassland. Gathering and sowing seeds, monitoring and herbiciding invasive weeds, controlling invasive brush, and coordinating with contractors and interns on heavy duty work are the main activities of the group. Audubon recruited the members of this group and actively coaches them. This IBA was featured in a recent Audubon magazine, and was the featured IBA at its national web site. Audubon is part of a partnership that has secured new funding to more than double the size of the grassland and wetland habitat on this project; work will begin this summer.

At the Kane McHenry Swainson's Hawk IBA, Audubon formed a coordinating group for a summer fieldwork project for local birders. The group developed protocols, and recruited and

trained volunteers. Over 40 volunteers searched for the hawk's nests. Audubon also engaged a contractor, Eric Secker, to make a website for this project: www.bcnbirds.org/shp. Audubon and other volunteers were able to influence Com Ed to relocate a power line project that was scheduled to destroy the longest-know nesting woods of this hawk.

At the Chicago Lakefront, Audubon worked with the City of Chicago Department of the Environment to produce *Chicago's Bird Agenda 2006.* We wrote an accompanying piece to inform all city landowners about how to create habitat for migrants on their property, and distributed it to all major landowners in the city. We worked with the Park District to solicit a donation to add shrubland habitat to Winnemac Park, joined the planning team to design restoration of Wooded Island, and advised stewardship plans for Montrose Point.

At the Spring Creek Preserves, a proposed IBA, Audubon has organized a community habitat restoration effort, as well as engaged partners in larger scale restoration contracting. Funding from the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act funded the removal of tree plantations that were fragmenting a 110-acre grassland, resulting in the return of significant numbers and species of grassland birds (see results below; temporary resumption of hay mowing for brush control after 8/1/04 resulted in the decrease of two species.) Additional funding from the Bobolink Foundation funded further removal of tree plantations from another grassland, as well as additional staff support for Audubon's efforts at this IBA, and Joint Ventures funded yet another tree removal project in a wetland on the site.

| | June 04 | June 05 | June 06 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bobolink | 2 | 5 | 19 |
| Dickcissel | 0 | 0 | 33 |
| Eastern Meadowlark | 3 | 1 | 14 |
| Grasshopper Sparrow | 0 | 11 | 14 |
| Henslow's Sparrow | 29 | 0 | 12 |
| Savannah Sparrow | 0 | 8 | 21 |
| Sedge Wren | 5 | 0 | 0 |

At Bergman Slough, Audubon worked with the site monitor and the landowner (Cook County FPD) to protect Osprey nests from disturbance by people fishing.

At Fort Sheridan, a potential IBA for migrants (one of the largest wooded areas remaining on the Illinois lakefront) that is undergoing a large restoration, Audubon recruited a team of bird monitors and provided input to the conservation planning process.

At Lost Mound, Audubon participates in the planning team and organized a birders' work day to raise awareness of the value of the site and improve habitat.

At Paul Douglas, Audubon worked with the monitor and landowner to develop a mowing plan to increase grassland bird habitat.

At Pyramid State Park, Audubon is part of the team working to protect the site from commercial development.

At Rollins Savanna, Audubon is part of the team working to halt snowmobiling.

At Elsen's Hill, Lake Calumet, Bartel Grassland, Chicago Lakefront, Bergman Slough, Spring

Creek, Naval Station Great Lakes, Upper Des Plaines River Corridor, Pratt's Wayne,/Philip State Park, Paul Douglas, Rollins Savanna and Illinois Beach State Park, Audubon provides support to stewards and monitors through its Habitat Project.

More information about the Illinois IBA project is available at the following web sites:
http://www.habitatproject.org/iba.asp
http://iba.audubon.org/iba/viewState.do?state=US-IL

Appendix 1

| Illinois Important Bird Areas designated as of March 2008 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Acpt. | Ded. | Site | Criteria |
| 1 | Oct. '04 | | Illinois Beach State Park | Raptors |
| 2 | Oct. '04 | F 04 | Kane/McHenry Swainson's Hawk Habitat | Swainson's Hawk |
| 3 | Oct. '04 | | Naval Station Great Lakes | Common Tern |
| 4 | Oct. '04 | | Rollins Savanna | Yellow-headed Blackbird |
| 5 | Oct. '04 | | Lake-McHenry wetlands complex | Pied-billed Grebe, Least Bittern, Sandhill Crane, Common Moorhen, Forster's Tern, Willow Flycatcher, Yellow-headed Blackbird |
| 6 | Oct. '04 | | Goose Lake Prairie State Park | American Bittern, King Rail, Wilson's Snipe, Sedge Wren, Henslow's Sparrow |
| 7 | Oct. '04 | F 04 | Lake Calumet Area | Black-crowned Night-heron, Common Moorhen, Willow Flycatcher |
| 8 | Oct. '04 | F 05 | Pratt's Wayne /Phillip State Park Grassland Complex | Sandhill Crane, Yellow-headed Blackbird |
| 9 | Oct. '04 | S 05 | Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie | Upland Sandpiper, Willow Flycatcher, Sedge Wren, Loggerhead Shrike, Bell's Vireo, Grasshopper Sparrow, Bobolink |
| 10 | Oct. '04 | S 05 | Bartel Grassland | Bobolink |
| 11 | Oct. '04 | | Upper Mississippi NWR | Waterfowl, Wading Birds, Shorebirds, Raptors, Sandhill Crane, Red-headed Woodpecker, Brown Creeper |
| 12 | Oct. '04 | W 05 | Lost Mound Unit, Savanna District of the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge | Waterfowl, Raptors, Wading Birds, Upland Sandpiper, Red-headed Woodpecker, Brown Creeper, Loggerhead Shrike, Grasshopper Sparrow |
| 13 | Oct. '04 | | Mississippi Palisades State Park | Raptors, Cerulean Warbler |
| 14 | Oct. '04 | | Donnelly and Lake Depue State Fish and Wildlife Areas | Wading Birds |
| 15 | Oct. '04 | | Marshall State Fish and Wildlife Area | Waterfowl |
| 16 | Oct. '04 | S 05 | Chautauqua National Wildlife Refuge | Shorebirds, Waterfowl, Wading Birds |
| 17 | Oct. '04 | S 05 | Banner Marsh State Fish and Wildlife Area | Shorebirds |
| 18 | Oct. '04 | S 05 | Rice Lake State Fish and Wildlife Area | Shorebirds |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 19 | Oct. '04 | S 05 | Pekin Lake State Fish and Wildlife Area | Wading Birds |
| 20 | Oct. '04 | S 05 | Sanganois State Fish and Wildlife Area | Waterfowl, Wading Birds |
| 21 | Oct. '04 | S 05 | Anderson Lake State Fish and Wildlife Area | Waterfowl |
| 22 | Oct. '04 | | Calhoun Division of the Two Rivers National Wildlife Refuge incl. Mississippi SFWA | Waterfowl, Wading Birds, Brown Creeper, Prothonotary Warbler |
| 23 | Oct. '04 | | Red's Landing State Fish and Wildlife Area and Batchtown division of Two Rivers NFWR | Waterfowl, Wading Birds, Prothonotary Warbler |
| 24 | Oct. '04 | | Union County State Conservation Area | Waterfowl |
| 25 | Oct. '04 | S 05 | Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge | Waterfowl, Barn Owl, Henslow's Sparrow, Orchard Oriole |
| 26 | Oct. '04 | | Horseshoe Lake State Fish and Wildlife Area | Waterfowl, Brown Creeper |
| 27 | Oct. '04 | | Mark Twain NWR Long Island Division | Wading Birds, Shorebirds, Waterfowl |
| 28 | Oct. '04 | F 05 | Hennepin and Hopper Lake | Waterfowl, Pied-billed Grebe |
| 29 | Oct. '04 | S 05 | Meredosia Lake | Waterfowl |
| 30 | Oct. '04 | F 05 | Grassy Slough Preserve | Short-eared Owl (winter), Barn Owl |
| 31 | Oct. '04 | | Oakwood Bottoms, Shawnee National Forest | Waterfowl, Shorebirds, Yellow-crowned Night-heron |
| 32 | Oct. '04 | | Crab Orchard NWR | Waterfowl, Wading Birds |
| 33 | Oct. '04 | S 05 | Cache River SNA | Wading Birds, Yellow-crowned Night-heron, Brown Creeper, Prairie Warbler |
| 34 | Oct. '04 | | Pyramid State Park | Waterfowl, Willow Flycatcher, Bell's Vireo, Grasshopper Sparrow, Dickcissel, Loggerhead Shrike, Henslow's Sparrow, Northern Harrier, Short-eared Owl (winter) |
| 35 | Oct. '04 | | Double T Fish and Wildlife Area | Upland Sandpiper |
| 36 | Oct. '04 | S 05 | Prairie Ridge State Natural Area - Jasper unit and Marion Unit | Shorebirds, Greater Prairie-chicken, American Bittern, King Rail, Upland Sandpiper, Northern Harrier, Short-eared Owl, Sedge Wren, Loggerhead Shrike, Henslow's Sparrow, Dickcissel |
| 37 | Oct. '04 | | Castle Rock State Park & Lowden-Miller SF | Cerulean Warbler |
| 38 | Oct. '04 | | Iroquois County State Conservation Area | Red-headed Woodpecker, Sedge Wren |
| 39 | Oct. '04 | S 05 | Sand Prairie Scrub Oak | Red-headed Woodpecker |
| 40 | Oct. '04 | | Kaskaskia River Corridor | Brown Creeper, Cerulean Warbler |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 41 | Oct. '04 | | LaRue-Pine Hills Ecological Station, Shawnee National Forest | Kentucky Warbler, Worm-eating Warbler |
| 42 | Oct. '04 | | Trail of Tears State Forest | Kentucky Warbler, Worm-eating Warbler |
| 43 | Oct. '04 | | Pomona Nongame Bird Management Area | Cerulean Warbler, Kentucky Warbler |
| 44 | Oct. '04 | | Jim Edgar Panther Creek State Fish and Wildlife Area | Yellow-breasted Chat, Dickcissel |
| 45 | Oct. '04 | | Douglas - Goose Lake & Woodford CCA | Waterfowl |
| 46 | Oct. '04 | S 05 | Spoon River - Emiquon NWR | Waterfowl |
| 47 | Oct. '04 | | Trelease Woods | Research Site |
| 48 | Oct. '04 | | Des Plaines State Conservation Area | Orchard Oriole |
| 49 | May '07 | | Alorton Thicket | Wading Birds, Snowy Egret, Little Blue Heron |
| 50 | May '07 | | Baker's Lake Nature Preserve | Wading Birds |
| 51 | May '07 | | Bergman Slough | Osprey |
| 52 | May '07 | | Clinton Lake State Recreation Area | Waterfowl |
| 53 | May '07 | | Herrick Lake / Danada West | Wading Birds, Willow Flycatcher |
| 54 | May '07 | | Lake Renwick Heron Rookery | Wading Birds |
| 55 | May '07 | | Lake Senachwine Conservation Area | Waterfowl |
| 56 | May '07 | | LaSalle Lake | Waterfowl |
| 57 | May '07 | | McGinnis Slough | Black-crowned Night-heron |
| 58 | May '07 | | Paul Douglas Forest Preserve | Yellow-headed Blackbird |
| 59 | May '07 | | Pembroke Township | Red-headed Woodpecker |
| 60 | May '07 | | Tony's Pond | Yellow-headed Blackbird |
| 61 | May '07 | | Beall Woods | Migrants |
| 62 | May '07 | | Carpenter Park Nature Preserve and surrounding areas | Migrants |
| 63 | May '07 | S 07 | Chicago Lakefront | Migrants |
| 64 | May '07 | | Elsen's Hill | Migrants |
| 65 | May '07 | | Forest Glen County Preserve | Migrants |
| 66 | May '07 | | Upper Des Plaines River Corridor | Migrants |

# Migrant Stopover IBA's - Nomination Form Instructions

## Importance:

Migrant Stopover IBA's are sites that regularly host large concentrations of warblers and other migrant species in the spring and fall. Sites that shelter high concentrations of migrant landbirds and/or sites that are important due to their isolation from other areas with similar habitat will be reviewed.

Although these sites may or may not qualify for breeding birds, they may be very important for warblers, thrushes, flycatchers, vireos, sparrows, and other birds that migrate through Illinois.

Migrant birds can travel considerable distances during the night (and into the day). Their continued survival is highly dependant upon the availability of food at the locations where they stop to rest between flights and upon the availability of necessary cover to avoid predators and elements of natures.

**Isolated sites** are surrounded by areas with little migrant bird habitat. They provide food and shelter for migrating birds that would otherwise not be present. Without these sites, birds must either exert undue energy to continue further or stop at a site with little food, decreased cover, and increased threat from predators.

**Complex or Corridor sites** are large sites that provide sustenance to great numbers of migrants, such as the Chicago Lakefront, a river corridor or very large tract of woodland or forest (20,000 acres or more).

The Chicago Lakefront is a prime example of an important Migrant Stopover Site. The stretch of parks along Lake Michigan act as a haven for the thousands of birds that migrate up and down the Lake Michigan Flyway each year. The Chicago area is also heavily developed, increasing the vital role that these small green spaces play in the survival of birds.

## Deciding whether to nominate a site:

The IBA forms have a column entitled "Significant If At Least" which is developed from state high count information. If your totals exceed these for 15 or more of the species listed, or you have observed an exceptional number of rare species, the IBA Technical Committee would like to review your data.

## Nominating a Migratory Stopover site:

The IBA Technical Committee will review historical data of high counts at the site during multiple years, and/or data from a series of visits in one year. Most preferred is a series of at least 3 counts from '06, and high counts from up to 2 additional years in the last five years.

***To submit historical high count data***, use the form with "5 Year Form" in the upper right corner. At least three years of high counts from within the last 5 years are *preferred*. For each species, record the highest number of birds you observered at the site on any one day during that year. These counts can come from multiple observers, please note that on the form.

***To submit data from a series of visits in one year***, use the form with "1 Year Form" in the upper right corner. At least three visits of at least 2.5 hours in length (starting near sunrise) are preferred. Only submit data from the days with the highest numbers of

migrants. Visits should preferably be spaced out in order to show that the site routinely has large numbers of migrants during the course of the season.

***Instructions for both forms***

- Please enter data for all species that you can.
- Data will be accepted from the time period ***between April 1 and May 31.***
- Please be sure to describe your site and the surrounding landscape at the end of the form.

Forms are available at http://www.habitatproject.org/default.asp?cid=38

If you have any questions, please contact the IBA coordinator (see below):

Send completed forms by fax, mail or email to:

Judy Pollock
Coordinator, Illinois Important Bird Areas
Audubon Chicago Region
5225 Old Orchard Road, Suite 37
Skokie, IL 60077
ph. 847 965-1150
fax 847 965-9282
jpollock@audubon.org

Appendix 3

| Conservation Activities at IBAs | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Site** | Conservation Planning | Monitoring | Stewardship | Protection Strategies |
| 1 | Illinois Beach State Park | | x | x | |
| 2 | Kane/McHenry Swainson's Hawk Habitat | | x | | x |
| 3 | Naval Station Great Lakes | x | x | x | x |
| 4 | Rollins Savanna | x | x | x | x |
| 5 | Lake-McHenry wetlands complex | | x | x | |
| 6 | Lake Calumet Area | x | x | | x |
| 7 | Bartel Grassland | x | x | x | x |
| 8 | Lost Mound Unit, Savanna District of the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge | x | | x | x |
| 9 | Hennepin and Hopper Lake | | | | x |
| 10 | Pyramid State Park | | | | x |
| 11 | Bergman Slough | x | x | | x |
| 12 | Herrick Lake / Danada West | | x | x | |
| 13 | Paul Douglas Forest Preserve | x | x | | x |
| 14 | Chicago Lakefront | x | x | x | x |
| 15 | Elsen's Hill | | x | x | |
| 16 | Upper Des Plaines River Corridor | | x | x | |
| 17 | Spring Creek Preserves (potential IBA) | x | x | x | x |
| 18 | Fort Sheridan Openlands Preserve (potential IBA) | x | x | | |

Appendix 4

**Illinois Nominated Sites and their Status**

| Name | Status | Species Criteria | Site Criteria |
|---|---|---|---|
| Alorton Thicket | Identified | no | no |
| Anderson Lake State Fish and Wildlife Area | Recognized | no | yes |
| Baker's Lake Nature Preserve | Identified | no | yes |
| Banner Marsh State Fish and Wildlife Area | Recognized | no | yes |
| Bartel Grassland | Recognized | no | yes |
| Bergman Slough | Identified | no | yes |
| Bogus Island Heron Colony | Nominated | no | yes |
| Busey Woods | Pending | no | yes |
| Cache River SNA | Recognized | no | yes |
| Calhoun Division of the Two Rivers NWR including Mississippi River SFWA | Identified | no | yes |
| Campbell Pond Wildlife Management Area | Potential | no | yes |
| Carlyle Lake | Nominated | no | no |
| Castle Rock State Park and Lowden-Miller SF | Identified | no | yes |
| Chautauqua National Wildlife Refuge | Recognized | no | yes |
| Chicago Lakefront | Recognized | no | yes |
| Chicago River Corridor | Potential | no | yes |
| Clear Lake | Nominated | no | yes |
| Clinton Lake State Recreation Area | Identified | no | yes |
| Crab Orchard NWR | Identified | no | yes |
| Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge | Recognized | no | yes |
| Des Plaines State Conservation Area | Identified | no | yes |
| Dirksen - McNaughton Woods Land and Water Reserve | Potential | no | yes |
| Donnelley and Lake DePue State Fish and Wildlife Areas | Identified | no | yes |
| Double T Fish and Wildlife Area | Identified | no | yes |
| Douglas - Goose Lake & Woodford CCA | Identified | no | yes |
| East Fork Lake | Potential | no | yes |
| Forest Glen County Preserve | Identified | no | yes |
| Goose Lake | Nominated | no | yes |
| Goose Lake Prairie State Park | Identified | no | yes |
| Grassy Slough Preserve | Recognized | no | yes |
| Green River State Wildlife Area | Potential | no | yes |
| Greene Valley Forest Preserve | Potential | no | yes |
| Hennepin and Hopper Lake | Recognized | no | yes |
| Herrick Lake / Danada West | Identified | no | yes |
| Horseshoe Lake State Fish and Wildlife Area | Identified | no | yes |
| Iroquois County State Conservation Area | Identified | no | no |
| Jim Edgar Panther Creek State Fish and Wildlife Area | Identified | no | yes |
| Kane/McHenry County Swainson's Hawk Habitat | Recognized | no | yes |
| Kaskaskia River Corridor | Identified | no | yes |
| Keck's Marsh | Nominated | no | yes |
| LaRue-Pine Hills Ecological Station, Shawnee National Forest | Identified | no | yes |
| LaSalle Lake | Identified | no | yes |
| Lake Calumet Area | Recognized | no | yes |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Lake Renwick Heron Rookery | Identified | no | yes |
| Lake Senachwine Conservation Area | Identified | no | yes |
| Lake Shelbyville | Nominated | no | yes |
| Lake-McHenry Wetlands Complex | Identified | no | no |
| Little Black Slough Nature Preserve | Nominated | no | yes |
| Lost Mound Unit, Savanna District of the Upper Mississippi River NWR | Recognized | no | yes |
| Mark Twain NWR Long Island Division | Identified | no | yes |
| Marshall State Fish and Wildlife Area | Identified | no | yes |
| McGinnis Slough | Identified | no | yes |
| Meredosia Lake | Recognized | no | yes |
| Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie | Recognized | no | no |
| Mississippi Palisades State Park | Identified | no | yes |
| Naval Station Great Lakes | Identified | no | no |
| Newton Lake State Fish & Wildlife Area | Potential | no | yes |
| Oakwood Bottoms, Shawnee National Forest | Identified | no | yes |
| Paul Douglas Forest Preserve | Identified | no | yes |
| Pekin Lake State Fish and Wildlife Area | Recognized | no | yes |
| Pembroke Township | Identified | no | yes |
| Pomona Nongame Bird Management Area | Identified | no | yes |
| Prairie Ridge State Natural Area - Jasper and Marion Units | Recognized | no | yes |
| Pratt's Wayne/Phillip State Park Grassland Complex | Recognized | no | yes |
| Pyramid State Park | Identified | yes | yes |
| Red's Landing SFWA and Batchtown Division of Two Rivers NWR | Identified | no | yes |
| Rend Lake | Identified | no | yes |
| Rice Lake State Fish and Wildlife Area | Recognized | no | yes |
| Richardson Wildlife Area | Potential | no | no |
| Rollins Savanna | Identified | no | yes |
| Sand Prairie Scrub Oak Nature Preserve | Recognized | no | no |
| Sangchris Lake State Park | Potential | no | yes |
| Siloam Springs Area | Rejected | no | yes |
| Spoon River - Emiquon NWR | Recognized | no | yes |
| Spring Creek Preserves | Potential | no | no |
| Spring Lake Heron Colony | Nominated | no | yes |
| Springbrook Prairie | Potential | no | yes |
| Starved Rock Eagle Habitat - Plum Island, Leopold Island, Starved Rock Nature Preserve | Rejected | no | yes |
| Ten Mile Creek - State Fish & Wildlife Area | Potential | no | yes |
| Tony's Pond | Identified | no | yes |
| Trail of Tears State Forest | Identified | no | no |
| Trelease Woods | Identified | no | yes |
| Union County State Conservation Area | Identified | no | yes |
| Upper Des Plaines River Corridor | Identified | no | yes |
| Upper Mississippi National Wildlife Refuge | Identified | yes | yes |
| Vandalia Lake | Potential | no | yes |

Appendix 5

# Illinois IBA Nominations Sought

The third round of Illinois IBA nominations is now being sought. (The first 48 IBA sites were identified in October 2004; the second group is currently being readied for announcement.)

This list contains sites that the technical committee identified as potentially meeting the state IBA criteria named below. If you would consider preparing a nomination for one of these sites, or know of someone who could do a good job, please let us know. The committee will also welcome nominations for other sites that you believe may meet the criteria. Nomination forms, criteria, instructions, and helpful information is available from www.habitatproject.org, or by contacting the Illinois IBA coordinator.

**Waterfowl:**
Clear Lake
*Goose Lake - Illinois River*
Rend Lake
Wabash River junction with Embarras
Burning Star Mine

**Shorebirds:**
Lake Shelbyville
Carlyle Lake
Rend Lake
Glacial Park
Cent. IL AGPL Habitat

**Black-crowned Night-heron**
McGinnis Slough

**Common Moorhen**
Hennepin
Lake Calumet
Lake-McHenry Complex

**Least Tern**
South Jackson County near Ohio River
Area Below Lake Girardeau
Horseshoe Lake

**Bald Eagle**
Savannah Army Depot

**Osprey**
Ohio River at Metropolis
Carlyle Lake

**Mississippi Kite**
Thebes Area, Union Co. Conservation Area, Lower Cache River (cmplx?)

**Whip-poor-will**
Siloam Springs
Sand Ridge

**Chuck Will's Widow**
Ferne Clyffe
Lake Murphysboro

**Willow Flycatcher**
Green River

**Bell's Vireo**
Lake Shelbyville

**Prairie Warbler**
Pennant Bar Ranch *(also HESP, YBCH?)*
Ferne Clyffe ?

**Yellow-breasted Chat**
Pyramid S.P. See Blitz Data

**Bobolink**
Richardson, Nachusa, Green River (cmplx – in preparation)
Double-T, Campton Municiple Sanitary District (nomination received)

**Yellow-headed Blackbird**
Hennepin-Hopper

**Migrant IBA's**
Vermilion Co. Areas *(CE)*
Allerton Area *(CE)*
Sanganoi *(CW)*
Siloam Springs *(CW)*
Pere Marquette *(CW)*
Quad Cities Area *(NW)*
Pecatomica Area *(NW)*
Revis Hill Prairie, Mason Co. *(NW)*
Lake Carlyle *(S)*

**Data Needed on Best Nesting Areas:**
Hooded Merganser
American Woodcock
White-eyed Vireo
Yellow-throated Vireo
Louisiana Waterthrush
Red-shouldered Hawk
Black Rail
Black-billed Cuckoo
Wood Thrush
Blue-winged Warbler

Appendix 6 – Sample of site report from web site

**Site Name:** Cache River SNA
**IBA Code:**

**Status:** Recognized
**State:** Illinois

**Species Criteria:** D1
**Country:** US

**Site Criteria:** D1, D4iii
**Counties:**
Johnson, Pulaski

**Latitude:** 37.362
**Longitude:** 88.965

**Area (ha):** 5247.0

**Elevation (m):**
Min 107.0 Max 152.0 Avg 0.0

**Bird Conservation Region:**
Central Hardwoods

**Endemic Bird Area:**

**Site Description:**
Cache River State Natural Area is situated in southernmost Illinois within a floodplain carved long ago by glacial floodwater of the Ohio River. When the Ohio River adopted its present course, it left the Cache River to meander across rich and vast wetlands. Despite intensive efforts to convert land along the Cache River to cropland, the land that today makes up the Cache River State Natural Area has managed to hold onto some of the highest quality aquatic and terrestrial natural communities remaining in Illinois. Wetlands within this area are so important to migratory waterfowl and shorebirds that in 1996 the RAMSAR Convention collectively designated them a Wetland of International Importance, only the 19th wetland in the United States to receive the distinction. It is within southern Illinois that north meets south and east meets west. With its diversity of soils, bedrock and landforms, the Cache River Valley contains four distinct ecological regions. Its hodgepodge of ecological factors has resulted in a collage of natural communities, including the bald cypress-tupelo swamp, each with its own unique assemblage of physical attributes, plants and animals.

**Ornithological Significance:**
Meets IBA criteria for wading birds, Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, Brown Creeper and Prairie Warbler. More than 13,000 acres of prime wetland and forest habitat in the Cache River State Natural Area provide homes for breeding and migratory birds of nearly all species of birds found in Illinois. These include waders such as the Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, which breeds along backwater sloughs and swamps, as well as Great Egrets and Great Blue Herons. A variety of raptors including Missisipi Kite, Red-shouldered Hawk and Broad-winged Hawk nest within this complex. Copious warbler species and other songbirds migrate through or remain to nest. Nesting songbirds include Red-headed Woodpecker, Brown Creeper, Kentucky Warbler, Worm-eating Warbler, Prothonotary Warbler, Cerulean Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Black-and-White Warbler, Northern Parula, American Redstart, Louisiana Waterthrush, Hooded Warbler, Ovenbird, Acadian Flycatcher, Blue Grosbeak, White-eyed Vireo, Dickcissel, Grasshopper Sparrow and Henslow's Sparrow. Pileated Woodpeckers are also common breeders as well as Wild Turkey and Fish Crow. Northern Harriers, Short-eared Owls and Red-headed Woodpeckers winter in the Cache River region.

**Species Data and Criteria (abbreviated):**
(for the full table, click here...)

| Common | Date | Seasonal/ | Season | # | Density | Units | Proposed | Confirmed |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

| Name | | Daily | | Observed | (#/km2) | | Criteria | Criteria |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Red-headed Woodpecker | 2000 | S | breeding | 300 | | Breeding pairs | D1 - State Species of Conservation Concern | D1 - State Species of Conservation Concern |
| | **Source Text:** | 100-500 pairs, Illinois Bird Conservation Plan: Phase II, Robinson, S. K. et al. 2000 | | | | | | |
| Yellow-crowned Night-Heron | 2000 | S | breeding | 6 | | Breeding pairs | D1 - State Species of Conservation Concern | D1 - State Species of Conservation Concern |
| | **Source Text:** | 3-10 pairs, Illinois Bird Conservation Plan: Phase II, Robinson, S. K. et al. 2000 | | | | | | |
| Brown Creeper | 2000 | S | breeding | 60 | | Breeding pairs | D1 - State Species of Conservation Concern | D1 - State Species of Conservation Concern |
| | **Source Text:** | 20-100 pairs, Illinois Bird Conservation Plan: Phase II, Robinson, S. K. et al. 2000 | | | | | | |
| Prairie Warbler | 2000 | S | breeding | 55 | | Breeding pairs | D1 - State Species of Conservation Concern | D1 - State Species of Conservation Concern |
| | **Source Text:** | 10-100 pair, Illinois Bird Conservation Plan: Phase II, Robinson, S. K. et al. 2000 | | | | | | |
| Prothonotary Warbler | | | | | | | | |
| Worm-eating Warbler | | | | | | | | |

## Ownership

Illinois Department of Natural Resources Cache River State Natural Area 930 Sunflower Lane Belknap, IL 62908

| % of IBA | Ownership |
|---|---|
| 100.0 | State / State Wilderness/ Natural Area |

## Habitat

The swamps of Cache River SNA are in low ridges of the Lesser Shawnee Hills. At the base of these hills, bottomland hardwood forests dominated by overcup oak, pin oak, cherrybark oak and sweetgum give way to red oak, white oak and shagbark hickory. Barrens occur on the highest ridge tops where soils are thin and bedrock is exposed. These sites are dominated by small post oak and blackjack oak trees scattered about open expanses of land

dominated by grasses and forbs.

| % of IBA | Habitat |
|---|---|
| 3.0 | Forested Upland / Deciduous forest / Upland Hardwood Forest |
| 24.0 | Wetlands / Woody Wetlands / Cypress Swamps |
| 73.0 | Wetlands / Woody Wetlands / Forested Wetland (=bottoml forest) |

## Land Use

| % of Total Use of IBA | Land Use |
|---|---|
| | hunting / Deer Hunting |
| | hunting / Small Game Hunting |
| | hunting / Turkey Hunting |
| | hunting / Waterfowl Hunting |
| 100.0 | nature conservation and research / Conservation/ Natural Area |
| | tourism/recreation / Birdwatching |
| | tourism/recreation / Fishing |
| | tourism/recreation / Hiking |
| | tourism/recreation / Mt. Biking |

## Threats

| Level | Threat |
|---|---|
| 3 | Agricultural intensification/expansion / Conversion to agriculture |
| 3 | Filling-in of wetlands / Other |
| 3 | Invasive species / Non-native plants |
| 3 | Natural events / Drought |
| 3 | Natural events / Erosion |
| 3 | Natural events / Flood |

Citation: National Audubon Society 2005. The Important Bird Areas Historical Results.
Available at http://www.audubon.org/bird/iba 12.2004

## Appendix 7 - COMPLETION OF OBJECTIVES:

1. **Complete a statewide inventory of Important Bird Areas for incorporation into the Illinois Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan (CWCP), building on the work of Scott Robinson of the Illinois Natural History Survey and Vern Kleen of IDNR.**

    - *Solicited and received 19 new IBA nominations, primarily from the technical committee list of most likely IBA sites*
    - *Held technical committee meeting to review 32 nominations and determine rare and unique habitat criteria*
    - *Sixty-six IBAs have been identified. Although the inventory is not entirely complete, these IBAs substantially represent the key species of concern in the state. It is anticipated that another 15-20 sites might be eligible to become IBAs.*

2. **Build an infrastructure of participants from interested groups and the public who are willing to nominate sites and help advance conservation efforts at IBAs, including at least 100 individuals throughout the state to act as "monitors and advocates."**

    - *Compiled extensive list of interested parties associated with each site; including over 150 contacts and 10 groups that have worked on IBA conservation activities, including maximizing opportunities presented by the dedication ceremony and working strategically to address issues at sites. (See Appendix 3)*
    - *Gave presentations on IBA and recruited interested individuals at the Midwest Regional Audubon Conference in Madison, WI and the Lake County Audubon Society.*
    - *Reviewed pilot monitoring plan developed by national IBA staff and agreed to serve as pilot state; pilot process will begin when new national staff member is hired.*

3. **Hold a well-publicized recognition ceremony for or otherwise honor and dedicate a few high-profile IBAs. Communicate the IBA message of bird and habitat conservation to the major media outlets in the state.**

    - *Held a dedication ceremony at Pyramid State Park attended by 80 people including state and local politicians and academics, community members, birders, reporters and key constituent groups.*
    - *Held a dedication ceremony at the Chicago Lakefront featuring Mayor Daley and city officials and attended by approximately 75 community members, city staff, birders and reporters; worked with city's press office on public relation for event.*
    - *Worked with editors and authors to generate media stories about IBAs, most notably a long article by Bob Fisher in Volume 14 #4 (spring 06) of Meadowlark, our state ornithological journal, plus a follow up series of*

*articles featuring individual IBAs, an article in Illinois Steward and coverage of the Pyramid State Park and Chicago Lakefront IBA dedications.*

4. **Set priorities among IBAs, participate in the development of conservation plans where they do not already exist, and review and offer amendments to existing management plans if appropriate, in cooperation with land owners.**

    - *Priority sites were determined with feedback from the technical committee and conservation committee. At all priority sites Audubon has attempted to stimulate conservation planning efforts, and plans have been developed at some sites.*
    - *At Elsen's Hill, Lake Calumet, Bartel Grassland, Chicago Lakefront, Bergman Slough, Spring Creek, Naval Station Great Lakes, Upper Des Plaines River Corridor, Pratt's Wayne,/Philip State Park, Paul Douglas, Rollins Savanna and Illinois Beach State Park, Audubon provides support to stewards and monitors through its Habitat Project.*

5. **Work with state conservation organizations and birding groups to develop necessary information on species, sites, populations, threats and management recommendations for the Illinois CWCP.**

    - *Released detailed criteria about migratory stopover sites and invited nominations for IBAs based on criteria (see Appendix 2)*
    - *Organized 5 workshops of birders and biologists throughout the Chicago Wilderness area to map and characterize migratory bird habitat; worked with TNC staff to create a GIS layer showing the results.*
    - *See #9 for additional details*

6. **Initiate a conservation planning process on a minimum of seven high-priority IBAs, which will result in measurable actions taken to protect or better manage the habitat on these sites by the end of year 2.**

*Completed conservation plans for 3 sites: Bartel, Spring Creek, Chicago Lakefront and initiated or contributed to planning efforts at seven additional sites. Measurable action to protect or better the habitat was taken at eight sites*

- *At Bartel Grassland, an active IBA stewardship group regularly meets to plan events, communicate with the landowner, and engage in restoration of the grassland. Gathering and sowing seeds, monitoring and herbiciding invasive weeds, controlling invasive brush, and coordinating with contractors and interns on heavy duty work are the main activities of the group. Audubon recruited the members of this group and actively coaches them. This IBA was featured in a recent Audubon magazine, and was the featured IBA at its national web site. Audubon is part of a partnership that has secured new funding to more than double the size of the grassland and wetland habitat on this project; work will begin this summer.*

- *At the Kane McHenry Swainson's Hawk IBA, Audubon formed a coordinating group for a summer fieldwork project for local birders. The group developed protocols, and recruited and trained volunteers. Over 40 volunteers searched for the hawk's nests. Audubon also engaged a contractor, Eric Secker, to make a website for this project: www.bcnbirds.org/shp. Audubon and other volunteers were able to influence Com Ed to relocate a power line project that was scheduled to destroy the longest-known nesting woods of this hawk.*

- *At the Chicago Lakefront, Audubon worked with the City of Chicago Department of the Environment to produce Chicago's Bird Agenda 2006. We wrote an accompanying piece to inform all city landowners about how to create habitat for migrants on their property, and distributed it to all major landowners in the city. We worked with the Park District to solicit a donation to add shrubland habitat to Winnemac Park, joined the planning team to design restoration of Wooded Island, and advised stewardship plans for Montrose Point.*

- *At the Spring Creek Preserves, a proposed IBA, Audubon has organized a community habitat restoration effort, as well as engaged partners in larger scale restoration contracting. Funding from the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act funded the removal of tree plantations that were fragmenting a 110-acre grassland, resulting in the return of significant numbers and species of grassland birds (see results below; temporary resumption of hay mowing for brush control after 8/1/04 resulted in the decrease of two species.) Additional funding from the Bobolink Foundation funded further removal of tree plantations from another grassland, as well as additional staff support for Audubon's efforts at this IBA, and Joint Ventures funded yet another tree removal project in a wetland on the site.*

| | *June 04* | *June 05* | *June 06* |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Bobolink* | *2* | *5* | *19* |
| *Dickcissel* | *0* | *0* | *33* |
| *Eastern Meadowlark* | *3* | *1* | *14* |
| *Grasshopper Sparrow* | *0* | *11* | *14* |
| *Henslow's Sparrow* | *29* | *0* | *12* |
| *Savannah Sparrow* | *0* | *8* | *21* |
| *Sedge Wren* | *5* | *0* | *0* |

- *At Bergman Slough, Audubon worked with the site monitor and the landowner (Cook County FPD) to protect Osprey nests from disturbance by people fishing.*

- *At Fort Sheridan, a potential IBA for migrants (one of the largest wooded areas*

*remaining on the Illinois lakefront) that is undergoing a large restoration, Audubon recruited a team of bird monitors and provided input to the conservation planning process.*

- *At Lost Mound, Audubon participates in the planning team and organized a birders' work day to raise awareness of the value of the site and improve habitat.*
- *At Paul Douglas, Audubon worked with the monitor and landowner to develop a mowing plan to increase grassland bird habitat.*
- *At Pyramid State Park, Audubon is part of the team working to protect the site from commercial development.*
- *At Rollins Savanna, Audubon is part of the team working to halt snowmobiling.*

**7. Encourage IBA participants to bring information, recommendations and proposals to local ecosystem partnerships where this would produce useful results.**

*No specific progress to report; shared general information as needs arose.*

**8. Coordinate with the Illinois Natural History Survey to develop an IBA database with GIS linkages, and produce web-based IBA products.**

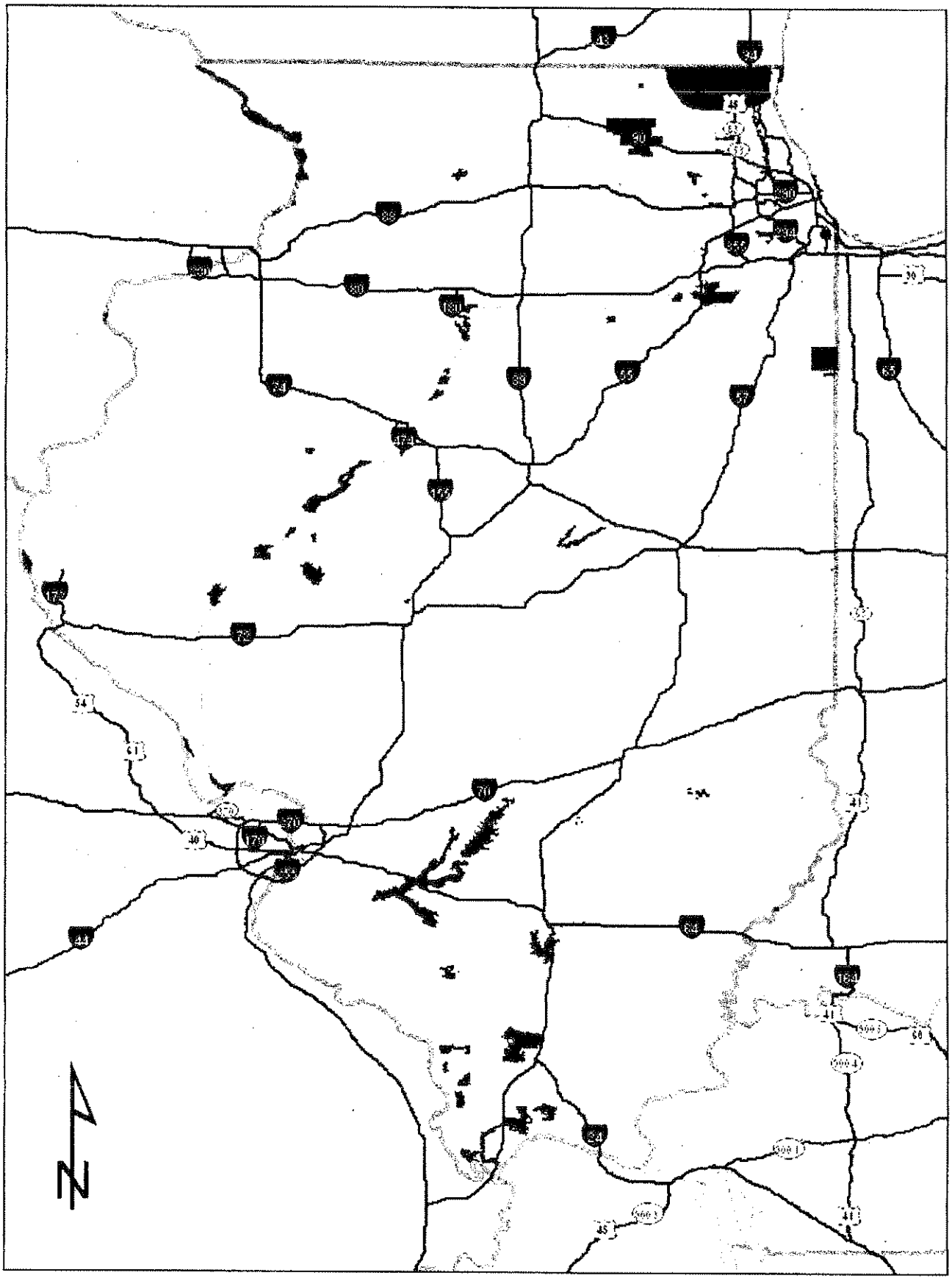
*All site information has been entered into the Audubon IBA database, and a GIS layer has been completed by the DNR .See also #9 below.*

**9. In collaboration with the Illinois CWCP, produce a report describing each site, including priority bird populations and conservation recommendations.**

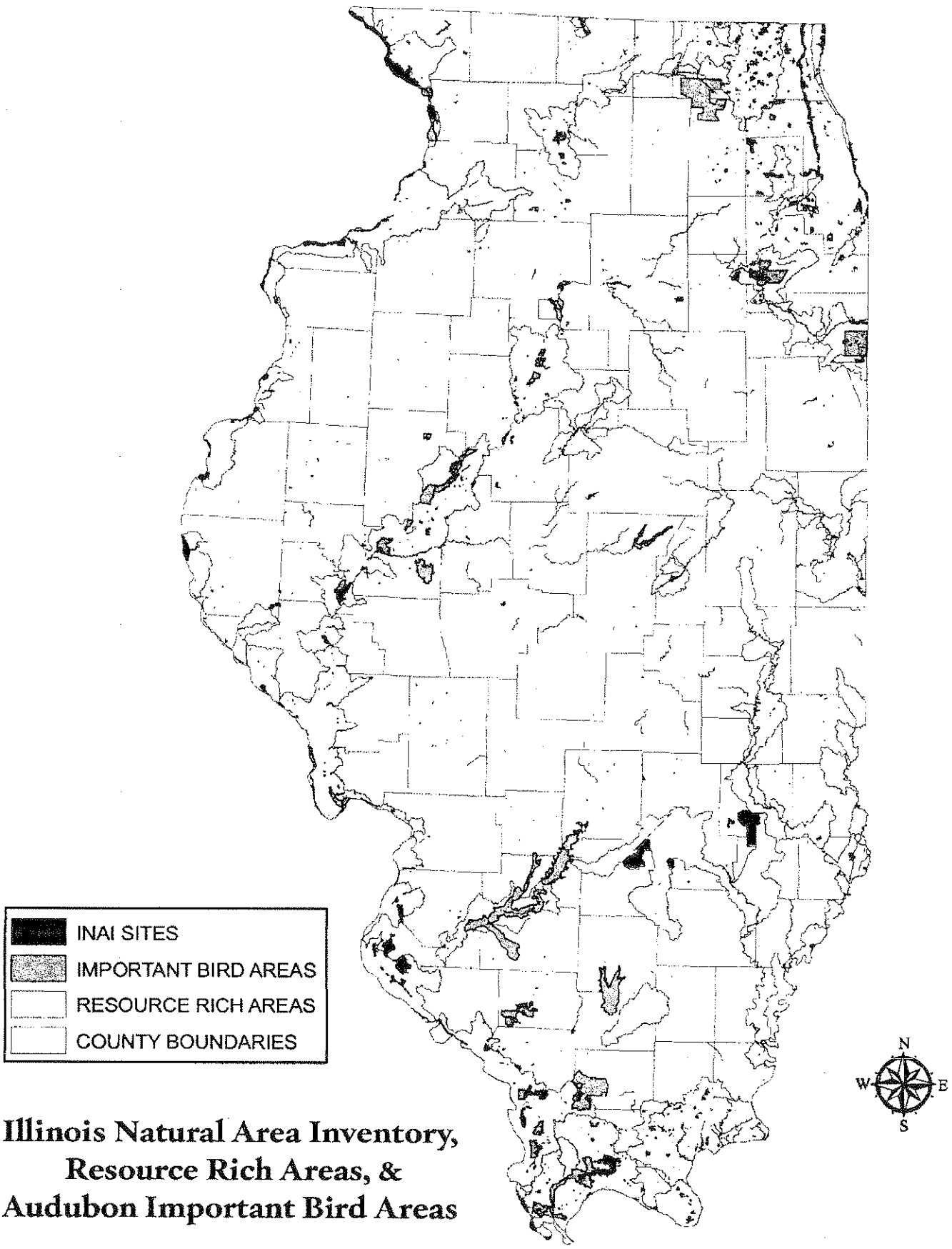
*Worked with IDNR and IWAP coordinator, public and private conservation organizations and birding groups to develop necessary information on species, sites, populations, threats and management recommendations, and produced a web-based report describing all 66 identified sites, including priority bird populations and conservation recommendations. Entered detailed site information into Audubon database. (see Appendix 1 for list of sites entered)*

Results of the Illinois IBA project are available at the following web sites:
http://www.habitatproject.org/iba.asp
http://iba.audubon.org/iba/viewState.do?state=US-IL

# Illinois Important Bird Areas



The Nature Conservancy




# Illinois Natural Area Inventory, Resource Rich Areas, & Audubon Important Bird Areas