

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 1, 2012

IDNR ANNOUNCES WILDLIFE PRESERVATION FUND PROJECT GRANTS

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Natural Resources today announced the award of grants funded by donations to the Illinois Wildlife Preservation Fund.

The Wildlife Preservation Fund is a voluntary contribution check-off option on the Illinois state income tax form. In the 27 years of the program, a combined total of more than 1,150 large and small projects benefitting wildlife throughout Illinois have been funded through check-off donations totaling more than \$5.4 million. The funds have been used to support projects ranging from habitat enhancements to species restoration.

Donations to the Wildlife Preservation Fund are tax deductible and may be made on Schedule G, line 1a of the IL-1040 form. Donations to the fund may also be addressed to the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Office of Resource Conservation, Division of Natural Heritage, One Natural Resources Way, Springfield, IL 62702-1271.

The Illinois Wildlife Preservation Fund Advisory Committee approved more than \$152,000 in funding for 29 projects this year. They include eight projects with funding ranging from \$2,000 to \$34,000, which are outlined below:

- Chicago Botanic Garden; \$14,000.00 for Plants of Concern– To study and protect Illinois rare plants in northeastern Illinois through long-term monitoring. Cook, DuPage, Will, McHenry, Kane, Lake and Kendall Counties (Contact: Susanne Masi (847) 835-6896)
- Illinois Audubon Society; \$7,000.00 for Restore the Loy Prairie - a Southern Till Plain Prairie Preserve - proposes to purchase ecotype native prairie plants, forb seed, native prairie grasses and sedges and native shrubs that focus on Illinois species of conservation concern. Marion County (Contact: Tom Clay (217) 544-2473)
- Illinois Department of Natural Resources; \$34,000.00 for Surveys to update historic (>10 yrs old) endangered and threatened species occurrences in Illinois (year two of anticipated five-year project) - To contract one field season of surveillance to revisit endangered and threatened animal species occurrences that are greater than 10 years old in IDNR Region 2. McHenry, Lake, Kane, DuPage, Cook, Kendall, Will, Grundy and Kankakee Counties (Contact: Tara Kieninger (217) 782-2685)
- Illinois Department of Natural Resources; \$4,000.00 for Earth Day in the Park – To provide approximately 1,500 students annually with the opportunity to perform meaningful natural resources stewardship activities at about 30 Illinois state parks. Various Counties (Contact: Valerie Keener (217) 785-0973)

- Midewin Tallgrass Prairie Alliance; \$14,840.00 for Loggerhead Shrike research proposal at Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie - Locate nesting territories, assess site re-use/fidelity rates, trap and band adult shrikes, recapture previously banded shrikes, determine age ratio of breeding and number of breeding pair & single birds. Will County (Contact: Amy Chabot (613) 336-1702)
- The Board of Trustees of Southern Illinois University Carbondale; \$6,000.00 for Statewide Prescribed Fire Needs Assessment for Illinois - develop a survey document that queries prescribed fire needs and programs across the state for standardized criteria. Statewide (Contact: Charles M. Ruffner (618) 453-7469)
- The Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois; \$30,000.00 for INAI Update of Select Areas of the State - this money would provide a seed match for the Illinois Natural History Survey to obtain up to \$300,000 from private foundations/organizations/companies. Statewide (Contact: Brian Anderson (217) 333-6830)
- The Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois; \$3,470.00.00 for Ecological factors affecting reproduction and survival in cave-hibernating bats - determine the relationship between roost temperature and parturition date in cave-hibernating bat species and monitor cave-hibernating bat species for fungus associated with White-Nose Syndrome. Vermilion, Piatt, Champaign, and Adams Counties (Contact: Lisa Powers (217) 333-5136)

Funding of \$2,000 or less was awarded for 21 other projects to be conducted by a variety of organizations, groups, institutions and individuals throughout the state. They are outlined below:

- Ashford University; \$2,000.00 for Conservation and Management of the Imperiled Ornate Box Turtle in Northwest Illinois. Whiteside, Carroll, and Jo Daviess Counties (Contact: John Zimmerman (563) 242-4023)
- Ballard Nature Center; \$1,900.00 for Creating a Nature Center - the nature center proposes to develop an approximately 1/2 mile long self-guided interpretive trail on Steffensen Woods. Fayette County (Contact: Karan Greuel (618) 483-6856)
- Boy Scout Troop 54; \$1,500.00 for Boy Scout Troop 54 Exotic Species Removal Team - To purchase the mechanical and safety equipment that can be used by Boy Scouts (under supervision) to remove bush honeysuckle and autumn olive in the natural areas they frequent. Menard County (Contact: Steve Territo (217) 632-6312)
- Champaign County Forest Preserve District; \$2,000.00 for 100 Discoveries: Across the Landscape of Central Illinois - IDNR WPF will help to create an interpretive natural and cultural history exhibit that will include hands-on, interactive, and multi-sensory displays. (Create a temporary traveling museum exhibit.). Statewide (Contact: Mary Ellen Wuellner (217) 586-3360)
- Chicago Academy of Sciences; \$1,150.00 for Illinois Butterfly Monitoring Network Training Workshops -this project will fund the cost of presenting 6 training workshops in the coming year. Statewide (Contact: Vincent Olivares (773) 755-5131)
- Chicago Academy of Sciences; \$1,700.00 for Silver-bordered Fritillary Repatriation at Indian

Boundary Prairies - repatriate captive-bred silver-bordered fritillaries. Cook County (Contact: Doug Taron (773) 755-5166)

- Douglas-Hart Nature Center; \$2,000.00 for Restoration on the Douglas-Hart Nature Center Woodland Incorporating Management Techniques and Education - requests monies to support the purchase of trees, shrubs and spring ephemerals for the D-HNC. Coles County (Contact: Marissa Grant (217) 235-4644)
- Green Earth, Inc.; \$2,000.00 for Cargo Trailer for Trail Steward and Habitat Management Tools - to securely store and safely transport equipment to Green Earth properties for volunteer workdays. Jackson County (Contact: Stephanie Eichholz (618) 201-3774)
- Illinois Native Plant Society – Southern Chapter (SINPS); \$2,000.00 for Wildflowers of Southern Illinois Poster and Plant Identification Workshops - these posters will be made widely available for free to a variety of individuals, schools, and agencies in the southern half of the state. Jackson, Johnson, Pope, Saline, Union and Williamson Counties (Contact Christopher Benda (217) 417-4145)
- Illinois Raptor Center; \$2,000.00 for Replacement of Intensive Care Units - need to replace old and deteriorating units; the heating elements have went out of the old units. Macon County (Contact: Jane Seitz (217) 963-6909)
- McDowell, William T.; \$1,950.00 for Field Survey of the Eastern Collard Lizard (*Crotaphytus collaris*) at Ferne Clyffe State Park, Johnson Co. Illinois. This herpetological project is to determine whether or not the Eastern Collard Lizard is still present at Ferne Clyffe State Park. Johnson County (Contact: William McDowell (618) 549-3897)
- Murray State University; \$1,973.00 for Red Mulberries (*Morus rubra*) in Illinois: What is the "Real" Species, and Where is its "Real" Range? - sample trees from at least 35 percent of the counties across the state; analyze the DNA and identify each as Red Mulberry, White Mulberry, or hybrid. Statewide (Contact: Dayle Saar (630) 247-5655)
- Shawnee Resource Conservation and Development Area, Inc.; \$2,000.00 for Printing and dissemination of invasive plant identification booklet - print 1,000 booklets - full color photographs.. Alexander, Gallatin, Hardin, Jackson, Johnson, Massac, Pope, Pulaski, Saline, Union and Williamson Counties (Contact: Melissa Wilson (618) 993-5396)
- The Board of Trustees of Eastern Illinois University; \$1,933.00 for Conservation strategies for migrating populations of leaf-litter snakes at an Illinois State Park - the research outlined in this proposal concerns the small snake species inhabiting the leaf-litter microhabitat, at Fox Ridge State Park. Coles County (Contact: Robert Chesnut (217) 581-8453)
- The Board of Trustees of Eastern Illinois University; \$1,938.00 for The Effects of Microhabitats on the Population Structures of Forest Floor Small Mammals - this study is to explore if the spatiotemporal patterns of rodent activity in a central Illinois hardwood forest are random. Coles County (Contact: Robert Chesnut (217) 581-8453)
- The Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois; \$1,683.00 for Preparation of Eastern Massasauga Tissues for Genetic Analysis - extract DNA from the 500+ individual tissue samples collected and use PCR protocols to select 16 microsatellite loci that amplify and show great

variability. Clinton County (Contact: R.K. Iyer (217) 333-2187)

- The Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois; \$1,958.00 for Ground Beetle Assemblages on Illinois' Algific Talus Slopes: A rare habitat threatened by climate change -travel expenses and materials for data from the Ground Beetle collections that will be analyzed to calculate seasonal & site specific species diversity, evenness and richness. JoDaviess and Carroll Counties (Contact: R.K. Iyer (217) 333-2187)
- The Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois; \$2,000.00 for Survey and Status of the Eastern Massasauga (*Sistrurus c. catenatus*) and Kirtland's Snake (*Clonophis kirtlandii*) at Allerton Park, Piatt County, Illinois - Further surveys and continued monitoring will increase the degree of accuracy in abundance estimates and aid in the conservation of these species. Piatt County (Contact: R.K. Iyer (217) 333-2187)
- The Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois; \$2,000.00 for Exotic species management through volunteerism at Allerton Park, Piatt Co., Illinois - This project will outfit volunteer groups the proper hand tools needed to effectively control the exotic species that occur within the park. Piatt County (Contact: R.K. Iyer (217) 333-2187)
- West, K. Andrew; \$1,870.00 for Investigations of native *Pinus echinata* (shortleaf pine) in southwestern Illinois - funds are requested for covering a portion of travel, special services, materials and shipping to investigate the presence & distribution of known and suspected native shortleaf pine in Southern Illinois. Jackson, Monroe, Union, and Randolph Counties (Butler, Bollinger and Wayne Counties in Missouri) (Contact: K. Andrew West (618) 993-5114)
- Wright, Eric; \$2,000.00 for Evaluating Created Wetlands for Amphibian Diversity and Persistence - to evaluate the quality of created vernal wetlands of different ages for amphibian diversity and persistence. Shelby, Fayette, Marion, Effingham, Jasper, Clark, Crawford, Lawrence and Vermilion Counties (Contact: Eric Wright (618) 593-0 776)