



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, Sept. 19, 2024

Media contact: jayette.bolinski@illinois.gov

IDNR announces nearly \$1 million for Natural Areas Stewardship grants

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) today announced nearly \$1 million in grants to support 14 stewardship programs managed by land trusts on land protected by the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission (INPC).

The grants are part of the [Illinois Natural Areas Stewardship Grant program](#), which aims to increase the delivery of much-needed land and water stewardship activities to natural areas permanently protected within the INPC system. Given the growing stewardship needs of natural areas throughout Illinois, this grant program funds projects that help land trusts expand staff and purchase equipment for these activities.

The following grants were awarded for fiscal year 2025:

Clifftop – Conserving Lands in Farm, Forest, Talus, or Prairie (Monroe County)

\$72,275

Enlist contractual services to perform ecological restoration through invasive species removal and permanent fire break installation to facilitate prescribed burns at White Rock Nature Preserve.

Friends of Illinois Nature Preserves (Cook County)

\$58,761

Enlist contractual services, purchase equipment, and support staff to perform ecological restoration through prescribed fire implementation and invasive species removal at Morton Grove Prairie Nature Preserve, Superior Street Land and Water Reserve, and Old Plank Road Prairie Nature Preserve.

Friends of Illinois Nature Preserves (McHenry County)

\$98,907.16

Enlist contractual services and support staff to recruit volunteers and perform ecological restoration through prescribed fire implementation and invasive species removal at Kishwaukee Fen Nature Preserve and Gladstone Fen Nature Preserve.

Friends of Illinois Nature Preserves (Will and Grundy counties)

\$99,439.56

Enlist support staff to recruit volunteers and purchase equipment to perform ecological restoration through prescribed fire implementation and invasive species removal at Short Pioneer Cemetery Prairie Nature Preserve and Pilcher Park Nature Preserve.

Friends of Sangamon Valley (Mason County)

\$92,047.20

Enlist contractual services and purchase a tractor to perform ecological restoration through prescribed fire implementation and invasive species removal at Walden West Land and Water Reserve.

Great Rivers Land Trust (Madison and Jersey counties)

\$68,700

Enlist contractual services to perform ecological restoration through invasive species removal and permanent fire break installation to facilitate prescribed burns at Palisades Nature Preserve, Missionary Oblates Woods Nature Preserve, and Great Rivers Addition to John M. Olin Nature Preserve.

Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation (Jo Daviess County)

\$67,900

Enlist contractual services to perform geophysical archaeological survey. Enlist contractual services to perform ecological restoration through invasive species removal, and purchase a trailer to transport a skid steer for stewardship at Casper Bluff Land and Water Reserve and Rutherford Refuge at Twin Bridges Nature Preserve.

Lake Bluff Open Lands Association (Lake County)

\$71,760

Enlist contractual services and support staff to perform ecological restoration through prescribed fire implementation and invasive species removal at Skokie River Prairie Land and Water Reserve.

Natural Land Institute (Winnebago, Ogle, and Whiteside counties)

\$21,624

Purchase a utility task vehicle to support efficient and effective performance of ecological restoration at Beach Cemetery Nature Preserve, Burr Oak Valley Nature Preserve, Howard D. Colman Dells Nature Preserve, Kyte River Bottoms Land and Water Reserve, and Lyndon Prairie Nature Preserve.

Natural Land Institute (Whiteside County)

\$20,000

Enlist contractual services to perform ecological restoration through invasive species removal at Lyndon Prairie Nature Preserve.

ParkLands Foundation (Woodford and McLean counties)

\$84,855.01

Purchase a truck, mower, and supplies to support ecological restoration through prescribed fire implementation and invasive species removal at Letcher Basin Land and Water Reserve, Ridgetop Hill Prairie Nature Preserve, Chinquapin Bluffs Land and Water Reserve, and Weston Cemetery Prairie Nature Preserve.

Prairie Hills Resource Conservation and Development (McDonough County)

\$60,276.92

Enlist contractual services, purchase equipment, and support staff to perform ecological restoration through prescribed fire implementation and invasive species removal at Nenekwaka Land and Water Reserve, Thistle Hills Land and Water Reserve, Stony Hills Nature Preserve and Jamar Haven Land and Water Reserve, and Chandlerville Cemetery Hill Prairie Land and Water Reserve.

The Nature Conservancy (Lee and Ogle counties)

\$100,000

Purchase a track loader to support efficient and effective performance of ecological restoration at Nachusa Grasslands Nature Preserve and Nachusa Grasslands Land and Water Reserve.

The Nature Conservancy (Cook County)

\$80,000

Support staff, purchase supplies, and rent equipment to perform ecological restoration through invasive species removal at Paintbrush Prairie Nature Preserve, Markham Prairie East Nature Preserve, and Sundrop Prairie Nature Preserve.

Eligible applicants under the Natural Areas Stewardship Grant program are conservation land trusts exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the federal Internal Revenue Code and whose originating documents include in its purposes the restoration, stewardship, or conservation of land for the preservation of native plants or animals, biotic communities, geologic formations, or archaeological sites of significance.

Funding for this grant program is derived from a portion of the [Illinois Natural Areas Acquisition Fund](#). The fund must be used by the IDNR for the acquisition and stewardship of natural areas, including habitats for endangered and threatened species.

###