

ILLINOIS NATURE PRESERVES COMMISSION  
TWO HUNDRED TWENTY-NINTH MEETING  
May 8, 2018

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ILLINOIS NATURE PRESERVES COMMISSION AGENDA  
TWO HUNDRED TWENTY-NINTH MEETING

The DeSoto House  
Ballroom  
230 S. Main St.  
Galena, IL 61036

May 8, 2018, 10:00 a.m.

\*Documentary Material Enclosed

**Item 1: Call to Order, Roll Call, and Introduction of Attendees**

**Item 2:\* Adoption of Agenda**

**Item 3:\* Approval of Minutes for the 228<sup>th</sup> Meeting January 23, 2018**

**Item 4: Next meeting dates and locations**

September 11, 2018                      Barkhausen-Cache River Wetlands Center, Cypress, IL

**Item 5:\* INPC Staff Report**

REPORT  
Tom Lerczak  
Nature Preserves Commission

**Item 6: IDNR Staff Report**

REPORT  
Ann Holtrop  
Department of Natural Resources

**Item 7\*:\* Endangered Species Protection Board Report**

REPORT  
Joyce Hofmann  
Endangered Species Protection Board

**Item 8\*:\* JoDavieess Co. – Addition to the Wapello Land and Water Reserve, Registration**

The Jo Davieess Conservation Foundation (JD CF) seeks permanent registration of 94.71 acres as an Addition to the Wapello Land and Water Reserve, located in the Wisconsin Driftless Natural Division. The proposed Addition will protect significant Native-American cultural resource features of the John Chapman and Grace Chapman archeological sites. The proposed Addition will also protect approximately ¼-mile of the Apple River Illinois Natural Area Inventory Site (INAI #1647), which was recognized in 2003 by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) as a Category II site that supports suitable habitat for one state-threatened animal. The

INAI also designates this same portion of the lower Apple River as a Category VI site - high-quality mussel stream segment. The Wapello Land and Water Reserve and the proposed Addition are within close proximity to numerous other protected lands along the lower Apple River INAI site and the adjacent Hanover Bluff INAI site (#1058). If approved, the total land protected at this site will increase to 173.45-acres. The name “Wapello” is from a Mesquakie Chief for whom the nearby town of Hanover was originally named.

REPORT

John Nelson

Nature Preserves Commission

Jim Johannsen (JDCF)

JoDavie County Conservation Foundation

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Approval for Registration

**Item 9\*: Kane County – Raceway Woods and Fen Land and Water Reserve, Registration**

Raceway Woods and Fen Land and Water Reserve is a 180.4-acre site owned in part by the Patrick P. Shaw Trust (25.81 acres), Dundee Township (64.39 acres) and the Forest Preserve District of Kane County (90.17 acres). The proposed land and water reserve lies within the larger 313-acre Raceway Woods complex, with most of the balance of the site owned by Dundee Township (67.9 acres) and the Forest Preserve District of Kane County (64.4 acres). Patrick P. Shaw had formerly approved designation of his land as a Natural Heritage Landmark (Shaw Fen and Woods, NHL #158) in 1999 and, in 2014, conveyed a Grant of Conservation Right and Easement to Openlands. The purpose of that easement was to “...ensure that (those properties that do not include homesites) will be retained forever predominantly in its natural, scenic, and open space condition and that the natural flora and fauna...will be preserved to the extent possible.” The proposed Raceway Woods and Fen envelopes the Shaw Woods Illinois Natural Areas Inventory site (INAI # 1771) and includes Grade B and Grade C graminoid fen (20 acres total), Grade B and Grade C mesic woodlands (135 acres total), and a cultural community being restored to prairie (26.4 acres). Raceway Woods and Fen is located in the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division in northeastern Kane County, Illinois. The qualifying features for designation of Raceway Woods and Fen as an Illinois Land and Water Reserve include: 1.) inclusion of the Shaw Woods INAI site, 2.) presence of high-quality graminoid fen and mesic woods, 3.) more than 100 acres of mature forest with forest-interior birds, 4.) presence of the State-threatened bunch flower (*Melanthium virginicum*), 5.) presence of a state and federally listed invertebrate, and 6.) presence of a significant archeological site that qualifies for the National Register of Historic Places. Raceway Woods and Fen takes its name in part from the presence of a race track (known as the Meadowdale Raceways) that traverses the proposed land and water reserve. The race track was in operation from 1958 to 1970. Now, the race track serves as a recreational trail. Several rights have been reserved for each of the landowners. Specifically, Patrick P. Shaw has reserved the right to access two homesites (which have been excluded from the boundary of the land and water reserve) along an easement conveyed to Patrick P. Shaw by Dundee Township. The Patrick P. Shaw Trust has further reserved those rights identified in the pre-existing Grant of Conservation Right and Easement conveyed to Openlands. All three landowners reserve the right to adopt an adaptive management strategy (to include monitoring the response of plants and animals), restore surface hydrology, and maintain and provide trail amenities. All three landowners are provided the right to route and construct hiking and biking trails with the permission of the Commission. The Patrick P. Shaw Trust has further reserved the right to offer primitive camping to guests and route, construct, and maintain hiking trails. Patrick P. Shaw Trust further reserves the right to maintain a small pond provided that the necessary permits to do so are secured and to control populations of deer and raccoons in accordance with State law.

Management priorities include continued efforts to control invasive woody and herbaceous species, use of controlled burns, and continued species enrichment (via seeding and plantings of the prairie restoration). The Patrick P. Shaw Trust reserves the right to implement the management plan that was included in the Grant of Conservation Right and Easement conveyed to Openlands. The Forest Preserve District of Kane County reserves the right to maintain a formal relationship with the Chicago Area Mountain Bikers Association regarding use and maintenance of biking trails and a relationship with the Midwest Racing Preservation Association regarding use of property (showcasing vintage automobiles) within the land and water reserve on portions of the old racetrack near the entrance along Illinois Rte. 31.

The Illinois Nature Preserves Commission recognizes the long-term interest of the Patrick P. Shaw Trust in protection and stewardship of their property. That long-term interest included sale of 50 acres of the Raceway Woods complex to Dundee Township in 1998. That same year, the Patrick P. Shaw Trust executed an agreement with the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission to recognize the site as the Shaw Fen and Woods Natural Heritage Landmark. In 2014, the Patrick P. Shaw Trust conveyed a Grant of Conservation Right and Easement on all their remaining property (save for two homesites) to Openlands. The Illinois Nature Preserves Commission is pleased to recognize the Patrick P. Shaw Trust for their commitment to the site and recommend Registration of 25.81 acres of the proposed Raceway Woods and Fen Land and Water Reserve as the Shaw Fen Conservation Easement and Registration Agreement.

**REPORT**

Steve Byers  
Nature Preserves Commission

**ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED**

Approval for Registration

The Illinois Nature Preserves Commission has had a long and productive relationship with Dundee Township dating back to protection of nearby Dixie Briggs Fromm Prairie as an Illinois Nature Preserve. Dundee Township is to be commended for its commitment to protection and stewardship of significant parcels of land in the Township, including Raceway Woods and Fen. The Illinois Nature Preserves Commission is pleased to recommend Registration of 64.39 acres owned by Dundee Township as Raceway Woods and Fen Land and Water Reserve.

**REPORT**

Steve Byers  
Nature Preserves Commission

**ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED**

Approval for Registration

The Forest Preserve District has had a long-standing interest in protection and stewardship of the Raceway Woods Complex and has adopted a resolution supporting registration of Raceway Woods and Fen as an Illinois Land and Water Reserve. The Illinois Nature Preserves Commission is pleased to recommend Registration of 90.17 acres owned by the Forest Preserve District of Kane County as Raceway Woods and Fen Land and Water Reserve.

**REPORT**

Steve Byers  
Nature Preserves Commission

**ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED**

Approval for Registration

**Item 10:\* PULLED Sangamon Co. – Sangamon Bottoms Land and Water Reserve, Registration**

The proposed Sangamon Bottoms Land and Water Reserve is a 112.99-acre site located within the Springfield Park District's 275.60-acre Riverside Park along a 0.45-mile reach of the Sangamon River in the Springfield Section of the Grand Prairie Natural Division. Sangamon Bottoms contains 103.6 acres of forested bottomlands supporting breeding populations of 14 bird species recognized as being sensitive to forest fragmentation: yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*), hairy woodpecker (*Picoides villosus*), pileated woodpecker (*Dryocopus pileatus*), Acadian flycatcher (*Empidonax vireescens*), yellow-throated vireo (*Vireo flavifrons*), red-eyed vireo (*Vireo olivaceus*), tufted titmouse (*Baeolophus bicolor*), white-breasted nuthatch (*Sitta carolinensis*), blue-gray gnatcatcher (*Polioptila caerulea*), wood thrush (*Hylocichla mustelina*), yellow-throated warbler (*Dendroica dominica*), Kentucky warbler (*Geothlypis formosus*), northern parula (*Parula americana*), scarlet tanager (*Piranga olivacea*). These two factors (over 100 acres of forest, area-sensitive breeding bird species) qualify Sangamon Bottoms for registration as a land and water reserve.

Natural communities consist of Grade C wet-mesic floodplain forest, the most widespread community, dominated by silver maple (*Acer saccharinum*), green ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*), sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*), and eastern cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*); Grade C wet floodplain forest with black willow (*Salix nigra*) a dominant species; Grade C mesic floodplain forest on areas with slightly higher ground; Grade D maturing floodplain forest; and pond communities in the form of oxbow lakes (about 9.4 acres).

Allowable activities within the proposed reserve include: hiking, picnicking at designated areas (tables), birding, horseback riding on established trails, leashed dog walking on trails, bank fishing on the Sangamon River, nature observation and study, scientific research with an INPC special-use permit, and photography. Management will be focused on protecting existing features and controlling non-native plant species.

Staff of the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission recommends, on behalf of the Springfield Park District, registration of 112.99 acres at Riverside Park, Springfield, known as Sangamon Bottoms, as a land and water reserve for a 20-year time-limited period with automatic renewal.

REPORT

Tom Lerczak

Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Approval for Registration

**Item 11:\* Tazewell Co. – Spring Creek Land and Water Reserve, Registration**

The proposed Spring Creek Land and Water Reserve is a 235.86-acre site located within the Fondulac Park District's 344-acre Spring Creek Preserve property in the Grand Prairie Section of the Grand Prairie Natural Division. Spring Creek contains about 222.5 acres of forest supporting breeding populations of 19 bird species recognized as being sensitive to forest fragmentation: yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*), hairy woodpecker (*Picoides villosus*), pileated woodpecker (*Dryocopus pileatus*), Acadian flycatcher (*Empidonax vireescens*), yellow-throated vireo (*Vireo flavifrons*), red-eyed vireo (*Vireo olivaceus*), tufted titmouse (*Baeolophus bicolor*), white-breasted nuthatch (*Sitta carolinensis*), blue-gray gnatcatcher (*Polioptila caerulea*), veery (*Catharus fuscescens*), wood thrush (*Hylocichla mustelina*), yellow-throated warbler (*Dendroica dominica*), Kentucky warbler (*Geothlypis formosus*), northern parula (*Parula americana*), black-and-white warbler (*Mniotilta varia*), American redstart (*Setophaga ruticilla*), Louisiana

waterthrush (*Seiurus motacilla*), ovenbird (*Seiurus aurocapilla*), scarlet tanager (*Piranga olivacea*). This exceeds the criteria for registration as a land and water reserve as stipulated in the Illinois Register (Title 17, Chapter V, Part 4010 Register of Land and Water Reserves) in Section 4010.150.b.3 Eligible Lands and Waters: forests at least 100 acres in size that support breeding populations of area sensitive forest wildlife species. The proposed Spring Creek Land and Water Reserve also contains two archaeological sites recognized by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources: a mound group (11T4) and prehistoric scatter site (11T125).

Natural communities include old field, dry-mesic upland forest, mesic upland forest, mesic floodplain forest, wet-mesic floodplain forest, and a high-gradient small stream (i.e., Spring Creek and its tributaries). Mesic upland forest (Grade C and D) is the most common type, occurring on more than half of the site. Dry-mesic upland forest (Grade C and D) occurs on the ridge tops. Sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*) is a common species in all upland forest layers. Old fields (13.4 acres) are undergoing natural succession with some supplemental planting of oak species.

Management of this site will initially build on restoration efforts that began in the early 2000s, and will focus on control of non-native and invasive plant species. Later, efforts will be expanded to include focus areas (to be determined) where efforts can be maximized. Protection of the site's archaeological features will be done in consultation with state archaeologists. Existing trails and roads will be maintained as established. Activities allowed by the landowner include hiking, picnicking, camping in designated areas, birding, nature observation and study, scientific research with an INPC special-use permit, and photography.

Staff of the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission recommends, on behalf of the Fondulac Park District, permanent registration of 235.86 acres, known as Spring Creek, as a land and water reserve.

REPORT  
Tom Lerczak  
Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED  
Approval for Registration

**Item 12:\* Lake Co. – Donnelley Prairies and Oaks Buffer Addition to Liberty Prairie Nature Preserve, Dedication**

Libertyville Township seeks preliminary approval for dedication of the 46-acre Donnelley Prairies and Oaks Nature Preserve Buffer addition to Liberty Prairie Nature Preserve (INAI # 1252). The 47-acre Liberty Prairie received final approval for dedication at the Commission's 129<sup>th</sup> Meeting in November 1990 (Resolution # 1062). Since that time, Libertyville Township has formally protected three nature preserve buffer additions to Liberty Prairie; the first addition receiving final approval for dedication at the Commission's 180<sup>th</sup> Meeting in October 2003 (Resolution # 1743), the second addition receiving final approval at the Commission's 212<sup>th</sup> Meeting in October 2012 (Resolution #2206), and the most recent addition receiving final approval at the Commission's 226<sup>th</sup> Meeting in May 2017 (Resolution #2389). The 184-acre Liberty Prairie Nature Preserve, and the 46-acre proposed addition, are located within the 5,770-acre Liberty Prairie Reserve located in south-central Lake County, Illinois. Liberty Prairie Nature Preserve and the proposed addition are located in the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division. The proposed Donnelley Prairies and Oaks Buffer addition consists of a cultural community (agricultural lands) that will be restored to dry-mesic, mesic, and wet prairie and dry-mesic oak savanna. Efforts to begin conversion of the agricultural lands to natural communities on lands owned by Libertyville Township began in 2014 when the Township

adopted the Casey Road Land Use Plan. Restoration of the proposed addition is scheduled to begin in the fall of 2018. Libertyville Township has adopted a 5-year management plan for the proposed addition that includes disabling field drain tiles, prairie seeding, and tree plantings. Protection and restoration of the proposed nature preserve buffer addition supports elements of the Illinois Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan; specifically action steps to "...establish or restore grasslands...." The proposed addition will provide water quality benefits to Bull Creek and Libertyville Prairie Nature Preserve, effectively meeting the needs of a suite of grassland birds that require large blocks of habitat, and further buffer Liberty Prairie Nature Preserve from incompatible land uses. The proposed Donnelley Prairies and Oaks Nature Preserve Buffer addition (the fourth addition) will increase the size of Liberty Prairie Nature Preserve from 184 to 230 acres in size. The Illinois Nature Preserves Commission acknowledges the leadership demonstrated by Kathleen O'Connor with Libertyville Township in protection and stewardship of Libertyville Prairie Nature Preserve and would like to thank Sarah Surroz with Openlands and David Eubanks for their support.

REPORT  
Steve Byers  
Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED  
Preliminary Approval for Dedication

**Item 13:\* Will Co. – Pilcher Park Nature Preserve, Dedication**

Joliet Park District (JPD) owns and manages Pilcher Park Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI) site, located on the east side of Joliet in Will County. Pilcher Park is a large and diverse forest complex recognized on the INAI for its high-quality mesic upland forest, wet-mesic upland forest, and seep communities representative of the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division of Illinois. Pilcher Park is one of northeastern Illinois' premiere woodlands with outstanding spring wildflower displays and old-growth trees. More than 270 native plant species have been documented within Pilcher Park, and at least 11 species of birds with moderate to high sensitivity to habitat fragmentation breed on site. The Commission approved the permanent registration of 110 acres of Pilcher Park as a Land & Water Reserve, and also conferred preliminary approval of dedicating 293 acres of this site as Nature Preserve at its 228<sup>th</sup> meeting. Final approval of dedication is now requested.

Pilcher Park is a well-established urban natural area, with miles of hiking trails and roads, outdoor recreation, and a nature center with many park district-sponsored activities and education programs. Allowable uses within the proposed Nature Preserve include maintenance of existing roads and parking areas, trails, geocaching, Joliet Park District sponsored 5K races on surfaced trails, bicycling and leashed dogs on trails, and cross-country skiing. These uses support the mission of the Joliet Park District by engaging children and adults with nature, and are compatible with the long-term preservation of Pilcher Park. Future management and stewardship will promote the high-quality natural communities and resources of statewide significance.

REPORT  
Kim Roman  
Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED  
Final Approval for Dedication

**Item 14:\* Northwest Illinois – Requested membership in the Northwest Illinois Stewardship Co-op**

IDNR and INPC field staff are participating with local conservation agencies and organizations in support of the formation of the “Northwest Illinois Stewardship Co-op.” The intent of the Co-op is to perform stewardship work on conservation lands in NW Illinois via grant funds. The Co-op is based on a similar cooperative agreement which created the NW Illinois Strike Team, but which has since expired. The lead organizations for the Co-op are the JoDaviess Conservation Foundation (JDCF) and the Natural Land Institute. Once funding is secured, the Co-op plans to hire a full-time grant program administrator and the JDCF will provide field staff during the “launch period.” The Co-op is now official with several member organizations executing a non-binding Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). These members are listed in Appendix A of the MOU. The INPC is requested to become an official member of the Co-op.

The INPC has executed numerous MOUs and inter-governmental agreements during its 50-year history. Three examples are:

Intergovernmental Agreement between the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, the Forest Preserves District of Will County, and the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission regarding natural community and hydrologic restoration project in the Kankakee Sands. 2015.

Millennium Reserve Natural Areas Compact. 2014.

Memorandum of Understanding between the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission. 2002.

Staff of the INPC reviewed the current request and recommend the Commission execute the MOU to become a member in support of the NW Illinois Stewardship Co-op. The IDNR has also been asked to become a member of the Co-op, but separate from this request.

**REPORT**

Jim Johannsen  
JoDaviess County Conservation Foundation

**ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED**

Execution of MOU

**Item 15:\* Report to the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission, May 8, 2018**

Advisors and Consultants to the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission (Commission) provided a brief history of the Commission and the influence the Commission and its partners have had on various pieces of conservation-related legislation and the protection, stewardship, and defense of natural areas in Illinois since the Commission was established in 1963 by the Illinois Natural Areas Preservation Act. In addition, data were included to compare protection of natural areas by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) and non-IDNR entities and the private sector. Within the context of the Commission’s proven record of accomplishment, an examination was made of a proposed reorganization of the Commission staff and the IDNR’s Division of Natural Heritage, which was presented by the IDNR at the Commission’s 228<sup>th</sup> meeting. This examination resulted in a Statement of Findings, Assessment, and Recommendation, including an alternative reorganizational chart.

**REPORT**

Dave Thomas, Commissioner  
Nature Preserves Commission

**ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED**

Provide a Recommendation

**Item 16: Review of Closed meeting minutes**

In accordance with the Open Meetings Act, Commissioners must review closed minutes at least twice a year to determine if they must still remain closed. The following meetings had closed minutes and need to be reviewed: August 2, 2005; May 2, 2006; May 6, 2008; May 5, 2009; May 7, 2013; and September 10, 2013.

**REPORT**

Tom Lerczak

Nature Preserves Commission

**ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED**

Determination if closed minutes remain closed

**Item 17: Public Comment Period (3 minutes per person)**

**Item 18: Other Business**

Items may be discussed, but no final action may occur for items not previously included on the agenda.

**Item 19: Adjournment**