



Chicago
Wilderness
Alliance

Café



GreenVision
Initiatives

Protecting Landscapes for Biodiversity Conservation

August 24, 2023



The Green Vision Initiatives are a centralized framework to guide, track and implement progress toward a common vision and an inclusive approach to thriving nature for people and wildlife. The executive order issued by President Biden to conserve 30% of land and water by 2030 (Conserving and Restoring America the Beautiful 30 by 30 Initiative) sparks renewed momentum.

In the largely urbanized areas of the four-state Chicago Wilderness Alliance region, the capacity to deliver on the 30 by 30 initiatives will come not just from traditional conservation lands and waters, but from activating every land type — agricultural, residential, corporate — to contribute meaningfully to landscape-scale conservation.

Our Green Vision Initiatives include seven key thematic areas: conserving and managing healthy landscapes and protecting water; regenerative agriculture; green infrastructure; increasing access to nature, and taking climate action. All initiatives are centralized using a mapping tool that empowers regional partners to visualize, share and track progress. Each theme is brought to life by teams that provide opportunities for the Alliance to engage, contribute and collaborate on our shared initiatives.

Key message

Chicago Wilderness Alliance is working to add protected lands and waters, which are essential to increasing biodiversity, improving quality of life and building climate resiliency across the four-state region. In the same spirit as the national Conserving and Restoring America the Beautiful 30 by 30 Initiative, increasing natural areas for landscape protection will provide the biodiversity needed to sustain healthy ecosystems that allow humans and wildlife to thrive.

Our Goal

Bolster quality of life and climate resiliency by adding 270,000 acres of protected lands and waters – including thousands of acres of identified unprotected critical habitat – by 2030, while maintaining the protected status of 578,000 acres that already exist across the Chicago Wilderness Alliance four-state region.



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We save land.



We save rivers.

Private Land Conservation

Brook McDonald
President/CEO



Why is it important?

Conserving open space lands plays a very important role in preserving our **quality of life**.

- Open space lands along rivers and streams protect **water quality and our drinking water**.
- Open space improves our **air quality**.
- Open space preserves **wildlife habitat**.
- Open space creates opportunities where **people can enjoy the outdoors and reap the health benefits found in nature**.
- We have a **responsibility to future generations**.



Conservation Land Trusts

- 501c3 charitable, not-for-profits focused primarily on land preservation and stewardship; permanence; FOREVER business
- More than 1,000 in US; about 32 in Illinois
- Most are local, some regional and statewide, national
- Supported by the community (donations, members, volunteers, etc.)
- Some missions include water/watersheds, cultural/historical, outdoor education and recreation, community education and engagement
- Partner with local public open space agencies





TCF Mission

501c3 since 1972

We improve the health of our communities by preserving and restoring natural areas and open space, protecting rivers and watersheds, and promoting stewardship of our environment.



-
- Sound Finances
 - Ethical Conduct
 - Responsible Governance
 - Lasting Stewardship
-





Prairie State Conservation Coalition

- Statewide Association of Conservation Land Trusts
- **Mission:** PSCC's mission is to unite and strengthen the land conservation community throughout the State of Illinois.
- Expanding membership to include other public and private land conservation agencies and organizations





Open Space Toolbox

Fee Simple
Land Donations
Bargain Sales
Conservation Easements
Illinois Nature Preserves/Land & Water Reserves





Fee Simple Acquisition

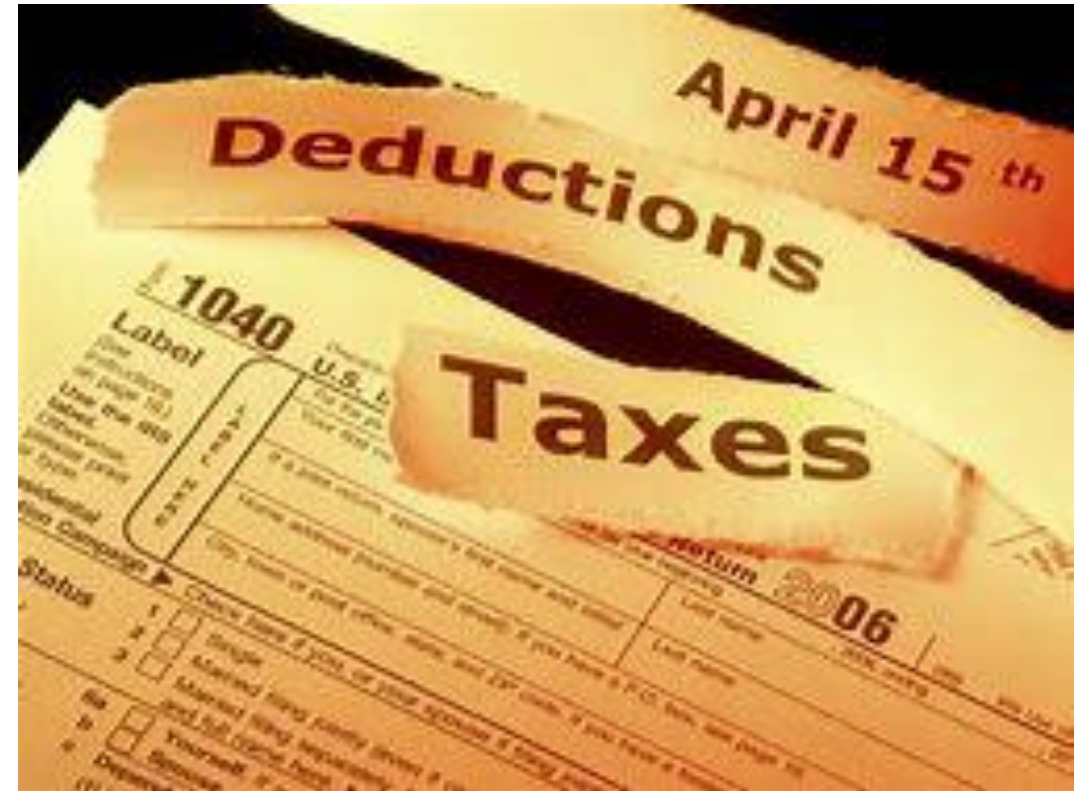
- Transfer of ownership at an agreed upon sum of money
- Includes options and rights of first refusals
- Can include life estates
- Public funding- referenda, special taxes, grants, local land cash ordinances, etc.
- Private funding- grants, private donations/donors





Land Donations

- Can result in substantial income tax deduction
- Can include life estates; often done through wills
- Designated or donated open space in new developments, especially conservation design or “cluster” developments





Bargain Sales

- Part sale, part donation
- Sell for less than fair market value, claim difference as a charitable deduction
- Value of charitable donation may buffer any capital gains taxes
- Seller could walk away with more money “in pocket”
- Makes the transaction affordable





Conservation Easements

- Legal agreement between a landowner and non-profit land conservation organization or public agency (holder/enforcer) that limits use of land to ensure conservation values are preserved in perpetuity
- Leaves land in private ownership, but preserves conservation/open space values (can also place on public lands)
- Remains part of title to the land FOREVER

Two Kinds:

- Donation- can result in income tax deduction, and reduce property and estate taxes
- Must meet certain criteria for tax benefits
- Purchase- aka “purchase of development rights”
- \$ Value= difference between land without easement and with easement



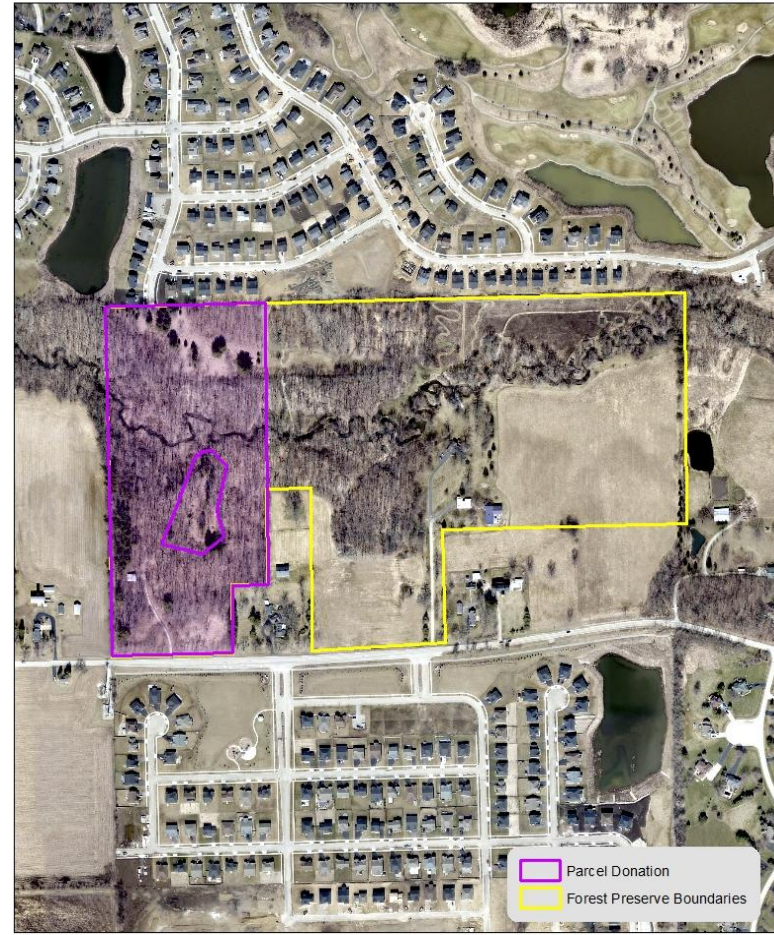
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McDonald Road, Elgin, IL
Stony Creek Forest Preserve



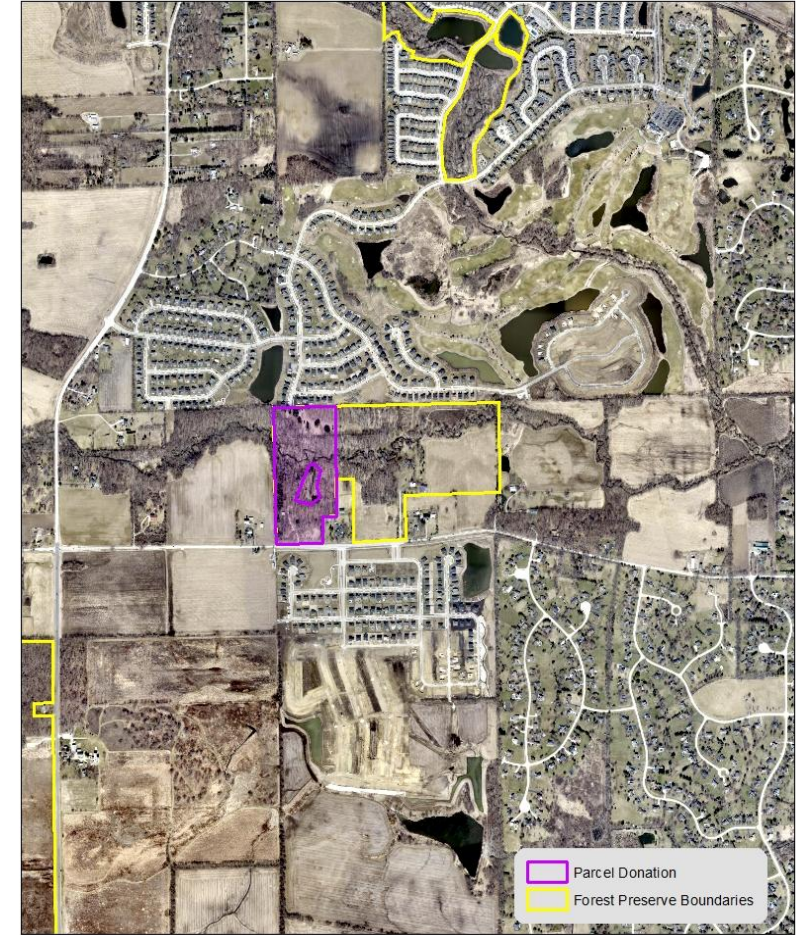
0 150 300 600 Feet Map Created August, 2023; 2022 Air Photo

McDonald Road, Elgin, IL
Stony Creek Forest Preserve



0 300 600 1,200 Feet Map Created August, 2023; 2022 Air Photo

McDonald Road, Elgin, IL
Stony Creek Forest Preserve



0 750 1,500 3,000 Feet Map Created August, 2023; 2022 Air Photo

Monterey Drive, Batavia, IL
Mill Creek Forest Preserve



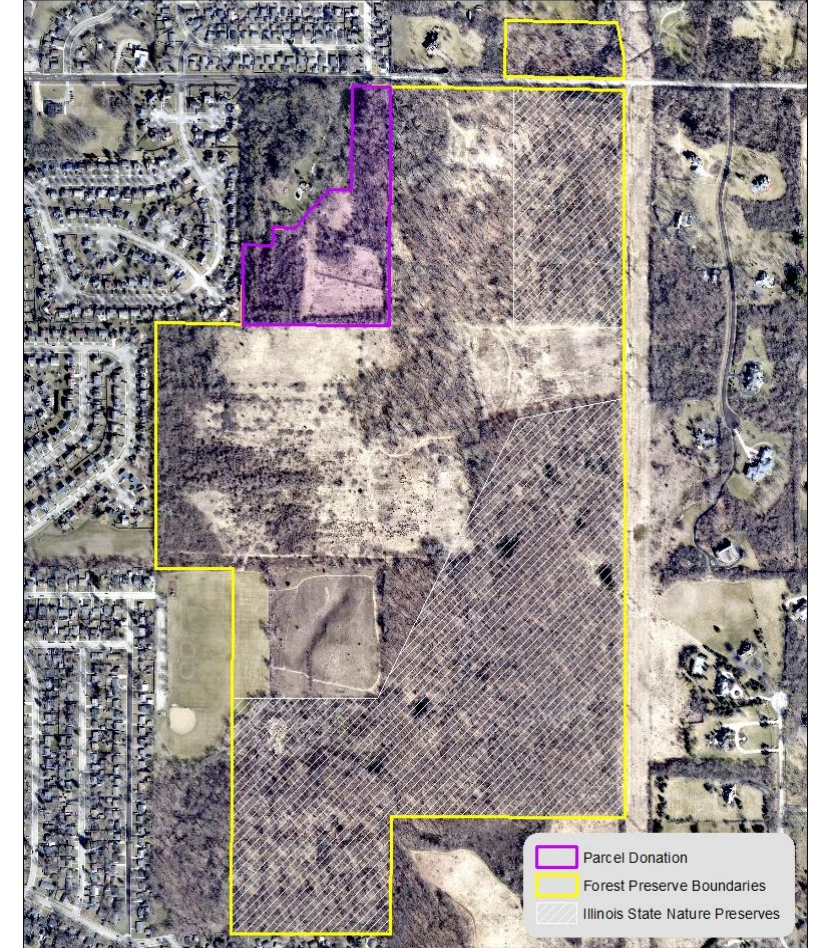
0 150 300 600 Feet Map Created August, 2023; 2022 Air Photo

Big Timber Drive, Elgin, IL
Burnidge Forest Preserve



0 300 600 1,200 Feet Map Created August, 2023; 2022 Air Photo

Helm Road, Barrington Hills, IL
Helm Woods Forest Preserve



0 300 600 1,200 Feet Map Created August, 2023; 2022 Air Photo





Friends of Illinois Nature Preserves

Amy Doll
Director
amy@friendsilnature.org
779/212-2785



60 Years of Protecting IL Natural Areas

1963 – Illinois Natural Areas Act Passed, creating the Nature Preserves System – the first in the nation!

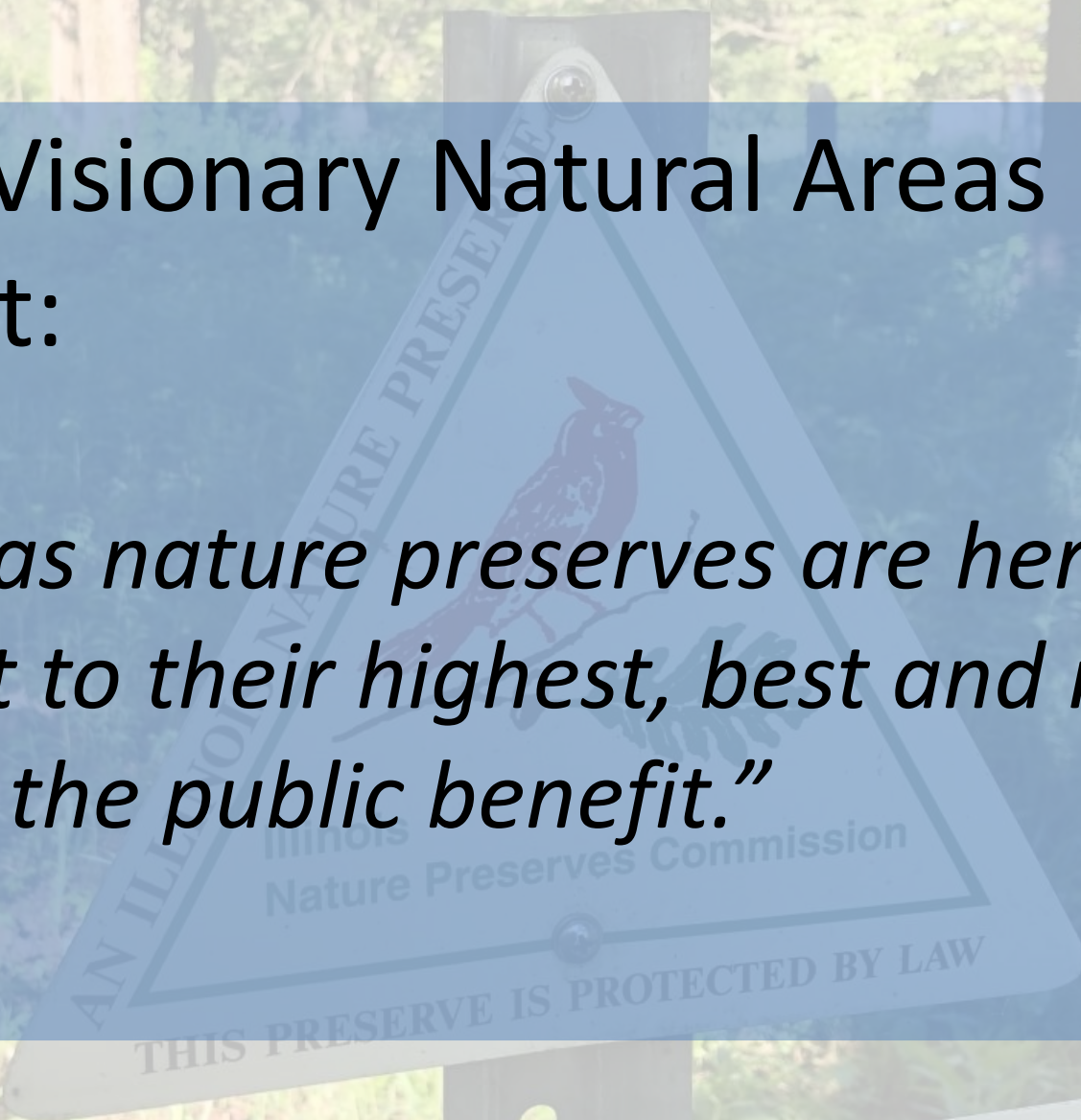
Between 1963 and 2023, 622 Nature Preserves and Land and Water Reserves are protected, totalling 121,492 acres



What are Illinois Nature Preserves?

Created by the Visionary Natural Areas Preservation Act:

“Areas dedicated as nature preserves are hereby declared to be put to their highest, best and most important use for the public benefit.”



What are Illinois Nature Preserves?

*Biodiversity conservation areas
permanently preserved by their owners
and permanently protected by state law*



How Does it Work?

- *Administered by the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission (INPC)*
- *INPC is part of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)*
- *Any public or private landowner may choose to dedicate their significant natural area, receiving tax benefits*
- *INPC approves the site's dedication and helps the landowner ensure its protection and management*



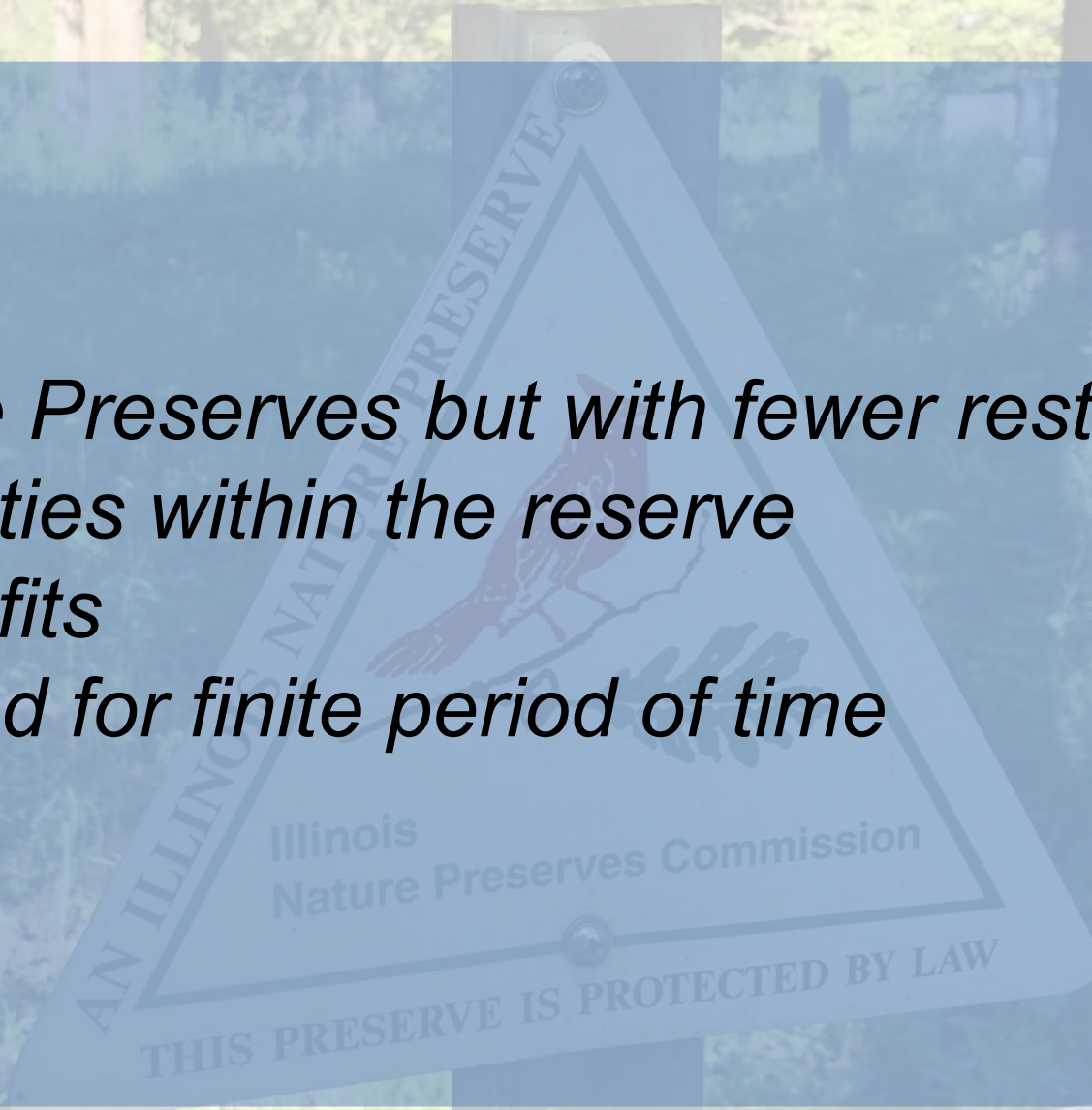
How Does it Work?

- *Not the same as Forest Preserves*
- *Landowner retains ownership*
- *Protection is permanent - creating an “enduring system”*
- *It’s “Dedication” not “Designation”*

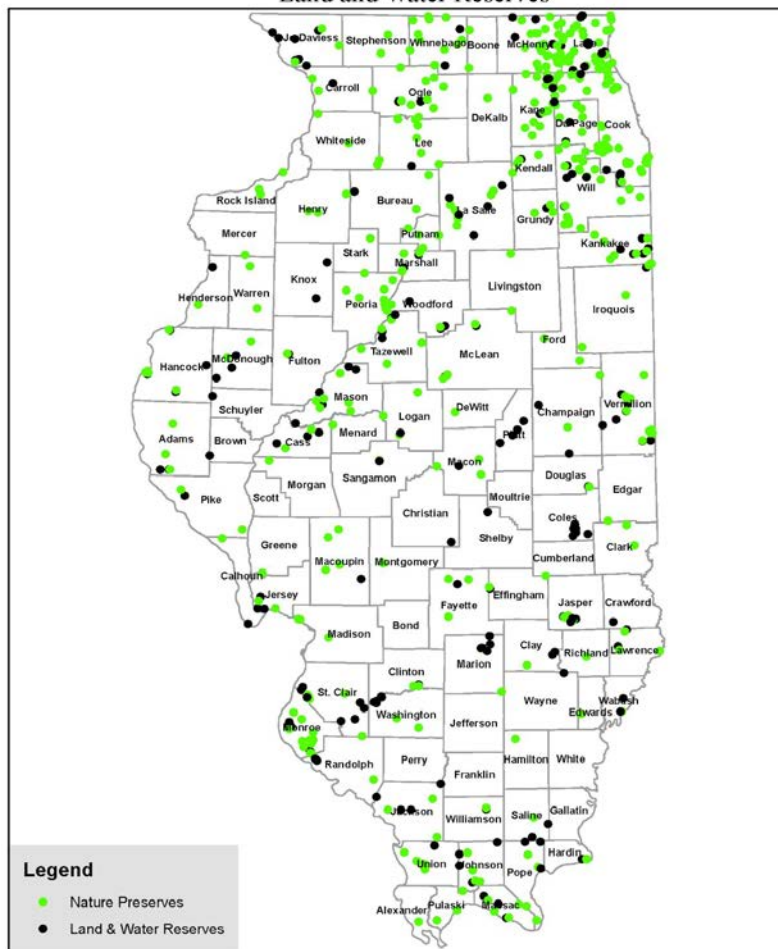


Land and Water Reserves: Nature Preserves “Lite”

- *Similar to Nature Preserves but with fewer restrictions on allowed activities within the reserve*
- *Limited tax benefits*
- *Can be registered for finite period of time*



Locations of Illinois Nature Preserves, & Land and Water Reserves



Illinois Nature Preserves Commission Natural Areas Preservation Specialists

Vacant

Area 1
Direct inquiries to John Nelson
(see Area 2 for contact information)

Angella Moorehouse

Area 4
1851 Main
Warsaw, IL 62379
(309)259-0231 cell
angella.moorehouse@illinois.gov

Byron Paulsen

Area 5
Forbes Biological Station
20003 CR 1770E
Havana, IL 62644
(815)535-2352 cell
byron.paulsen@illinois.gov

Debbie Scott Newman

Area 7
P.O. Box 356
Ava, IL 62907
(618)684-3840 office
(618)967-2831 cell
(618)687-9281 fax
debbie.newman@illinois.gov

INPC Main Office ★

One Natural Resources Way
Springfield, IL 62702
(217)785-8686
(217)785-2438 fax

Director: Vacant
Office Specialist: Stacy Burkett, stacy.burkett@illinois.gov
Protection Program Manager: Vacant
Defense Specialist: Valerie Njapa, valerie.njapa@illinois.gov
Stewardship Project Manager: Kelly Neal, kelly.neal@illinois.gov

May 2020



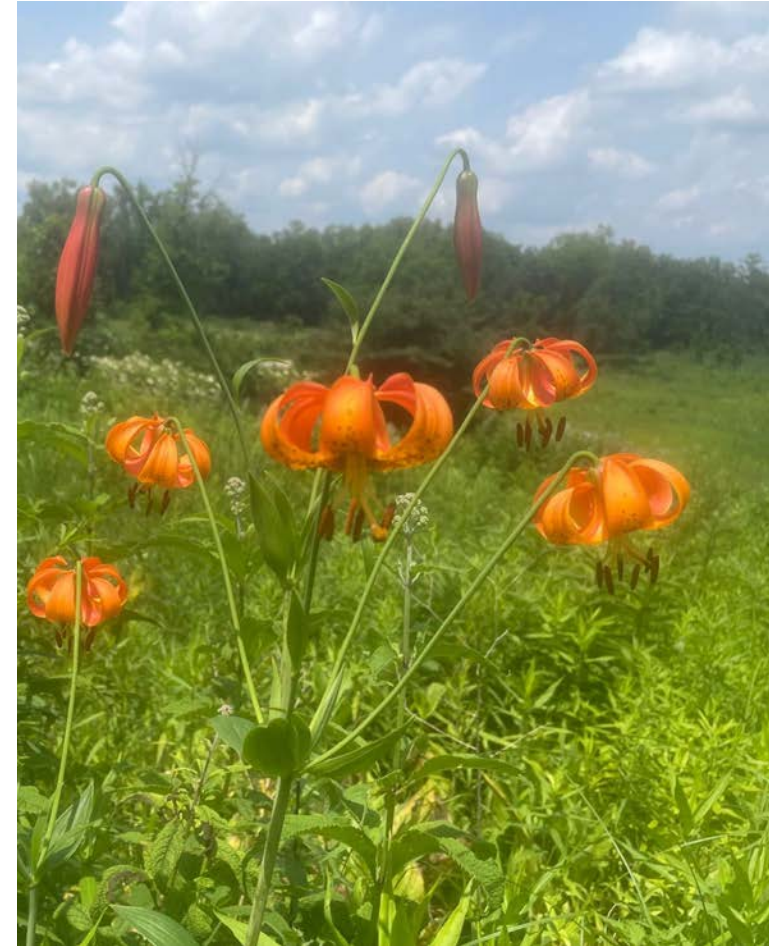


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Gladstone Fen



Gladstone Fen





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Openlands Lakeshore Preserve

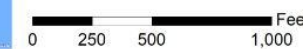


Legend

-  Fort Sheridan Forest Preserve
-  Openlands Lakeshore Preserve: 71.5 Acres

Courtesy: Copy Only.
Property boundaries indicated are provided for general location purposes.
Wetland and flood limits shown are approximate and should not be used to
determine setbacks for structure or as a basis for purchasing property.
2023 Aerial Photo Map Prepared 21 August 2023

Prepared using information from Nearmap Lake County Forest Preserve District
& Lake County Department of Information 1666 W Winchester Rd
and Technology GIS Mapping Division Libertyville, Illinois 60048
18 North County Street
Vaucluse, Illinois 60085-4357 647.905.3351
847.377.2375 www.lcpd.org







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