

ILLINOIS NATURE PRESERVES COMMISSION

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PROTECTION GUIDELINES

ILLINOIS NATURAL HERITAGE LANDMARK

A JOINT PROGRAM OF THE ILLINOIS NATURE PRESERVES COMMISSION
AND THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Purpose

The Illinois Natural Heritage Landmark program gives recognition to private landowners who preserve natural areas while retaining ownership. It gives the landowner a flexible, non-binding preservation option. It is a voluntary, nonregulatory program which recognizes that many natural areas survive because generations of people have protected and cherished them. The program's goal is to increase understanding of the value of natural areas and encourage their preservation by private landowners.

Eligibility

Areas in private ownership included in the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory are eligible for designation as Illinois Natural Heritage Landmarks.

The following types of areas qualify for recognition:

- * Natural communities that reflect as nearly as possible the natural conditions in Illinois at the time of European settlement in the early 1800s.
- * Areas which are habitat for endangered and threatened species of plants and animals.
- * Outstanding geological areas.
- * Unusual concentrations of animals and plants.
- * Streams and rivers having natural habitats for native aquatic life.

* Natural community restoration sites and endangered species reintroduction sites.

Designation Procedure

When the owners agree to designate a natural area as a Natural Heritage Landmark, an agreement document is drawn up containing an approximate legal description of the natural area, a map of the area, and the provisions agreed upon. These provisions are flexible, and the agreement can be terminated by either party on sixty days notice. After the owners sign the document, the Chairman of the Nature Preserves Commission and the Director of the Department of Natural Resources add their signatures to the document.

The owners may choose a special name for their Landmark or use the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory name. Each owner receives a certificate, signed by the Governor, a sign designating the land as a "Registered Illinois Natural Heritage Landmark," and an appropriate number of boundary signs.

If agreeable to the owners, local and regional newspapers and other publications are notified of the designation. The County Soil and Water Conservation District is also notified.

Public Access and Management

Designation of a Natural Heritage Landmark does not provide right of public access to the area. Any visitors must obtain permission of the landowner before entering the property. Representatives of the Department and the Commission may inspect the area on a periodic basis. The owner assumes no added liability as a result of the designation.

The policies and rules for management of nature preserves serve as guidelines for management of Natural Heritage Landmarks. The owners may request management advice and assistance at any time which will be provided by the Commission and the Department or other designated agencies. If desired, a written plan is prepared for each area outlining protection and management needs.

For Further Information Contact:

The Illinois Nature Preserves Commission, One Natural Resources Way, Springfield, IL 62702, 217/785-8686.