



[Print Application](#) | [Return to Main Menu](#)

Illinois DNR



2009 SWG Grant Application System

Project Title:

Hill Prairie and Bluff Habitat Restoration – Follow-up and untreated sites

Applicant Information	
Applicant (Grantee if awarded)	
Prefix	Ms.
First Name	Diane
Last Name	Tecic
Organization	Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Address1	4521 Alton Commerce Parkway
Address2	
City	Alton
State	Illinois
ZIP Code	62002
Telephone	618-462-1181 x 130
Fax	618-462-2424
Email	Diane.tecic@illinois.gov

Project Information	
Project Title:	Hill Prairie and Bluff Habitat Restoration – Follow-up and untreated sites

Project Description

Hill prairies along the Mississippi and Illinois river bluffs provide essential habitat to numerous species in greatest need of conservation (SGNC). The bluffs and adjacent woodlands provide corridors for species migration and habitat connectivity. This project will provide necessary follow-up habitat work and prescribed burning to expand and enhance public and privately owned hill prairies and their adjacent woodlands in need of management. This will be an addition to the current hill prairie grant (T-43-D-1).

Type of Project
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Implementation <input type="checkbox"/> Planning

Dollars Requested

Dollars Requested	Total Federal	Total Non-Federal	Total Cost of Project
1st Year Funding	75,000	50,000	125,000
2nd Year Funding	75,000	75,000	150,000
3rd Year Funding	50,000	75,000	125,000

Totals:

200,000

200,000

400,000

This proposal will amend the current SWG Project, T-43-P-1, and the amount designated in the budget above is the additional funding requested. This will be added to some funds that have not yet been spent. Funds requested in this project will be matched with personnel time and already programmed and approved NAAF funding. NO ADDITIONAL STATE CASH MATCH IS NEEDED. This amendment will be consistent with the original project's goals and objectives.

Need: (3000 characters)

Hill prairies are one of the most endangered habitats in Illinois. These habitats were far more extensive as recently as the early 20th century. Changes in land use, invasion by exotic species, and lack of fire have resulted in a dramatic decline in overall acreage and diversity within these prairies. The Illinois Natural History Survey has documented that Illinois hill prairies have decreased in size an average of 63% in the 50 year period from 1938 to 1988. This is a very conservative estimate of hill prairie loss as it does not include hill prairies that completely disappeared during this interval nor does it take into account that as hill prairies become encroached with invasive and exotic species, the rate of loss of hill prairie increases. As hill prairies decline in size, they are lost at a faster rate.

Hill prairies and their adjacent woodland habitats support many rare plant and animal species and provide corridors and migrations routes along the large river systems. Numerous SGNC (see below) and several additional rare and endemic species depend on hill prairies for their existence. As the acreage of these habitats decline, the future of these species is placed in jeopardy. In addition to outright habitat loss, these hill prairies are also becoming more fragmented. This limits the dispersal of hill prairie species and increases species extinction at individual sites.

Without this substantial concerted effort to increase management, Illinois will likely lose much of the remaining acreage of this rare habitat type and the rare species that depend upon it. Management at some of these sites could easily be considered triage by planning for work on the most critical cases that still have restoration potential.

Current work that is being done on hill prairies through the current SWG project and other programs is significant, but we are finding that some consistent follow-up work is a necessity at many sites. Certain invasive species such as smooth sumac have proven to be much more challenging to control than was initially thought. It is possible that areas that have been invaded for longer periods of time have more root reserve and are therefore more resistant to both fire and herbicide treatment. Other areas are not responding as well as expected when overstory is cleared and may need more attention and supplemental seeding. Additional work is needed to assure that initial management efforts at some sites will not be wasted. Still other sites have many more areas that need work and some have a complex of prairies that could be restored.

Additional funding for this project will allow us to do critical follow-up work on the 40 sites that have already been treated, and will provide more resources to expand the work at those sites and additional sites where we have just recently gotten approval for management work.

Objectives: (3000 characters)

This overall project will provide critical follow-up work in order to maintain and expand current hill prairie acreage and enhance habitat quality through active management and restoration on at least 50-60 target sites, increasing the size of these areas on average by 25%. Targeted sites will be chosen for their existing quality, location, restoration potential and significance of species present or likely at the site. The work will be accomplished as needed at each site and may include brush control, exotic species control, fireline establishment, timber stand improvement, and prescribed burning.

The specific objectives are as follows:

1. Increase number of landowners and sites participating in hill prairie management.
2. Increase the number of sub-sites (hill prairie units) being managed at the large macro-sites (e.g. Jim Edgar Panther Creek, Revis,)
3. Expand the size/extent of current hill prairies, on average by 25%.
4. Provide contractual assistance including exotic and invasive species control, prescribed burning preparation, burning, planting and seed collection.
5. Improve woodland habitat in the blufflands near and adjacent to hill prairies through exotic and invasive species control.
6. Increase prescribed burning focused on hill prairies and bluff habitats by providing IDNR staff and contractual assistance.
7. Increase awareness of bluff landowners and general public on the value, rarity, and importance of hill prairie and bluff habitats.
8. Increase volunteer and non-agency participation in management activities such as exotic and invasive species control and prescribed burning.
9. Continue monitoring all work sites to track results of project.

Approach: (3000 characters)

The approach will follow that of the original T-43-D-1

1. Assess all project sites included in T-43-D-1 (list attached) for participation, current status, and restoration need, and identify sites that will be targeted for this phase – either follow-up work or new starts.
2. For new starts on privately owned land, complete any new landowner contacts including getting landowner agreement, if needed.
3. On all new starts, develop site management plan and complete site assessment and GPS the pre-work boundary of hill prairies or target community. Develop work order designating specific work for contractor.
4. For follow-up work at current active sites, update management plan, if needed to include follow up work and revise contractor work order to include additional work.
5. Contractor and IDNR staff complete identified work at sites as needed. Typical work will include brush control, exotic species control, fireline development, prescribed fire preparation, and prescribed burning. This is the predominant activity of this project.
6. IDNR staff in cooperation with private groups and other government agencies (local,

state, federal) will initiate an awareness campaign through workshops, public open houses, or field trips designed to introduce people to the prairie. IDNR will produce or contract out development of informational material to go to various targeted audiences. This will have a dual role of presenting the problem of the loss of hill prairie and the developing a network to address the problem.

7. Complete post-project monitoring and assess the impact of the project on the target habitats.

Relationship to the Plan (3000 characters)

This project will expand and/or improve habitat for the following species of conservation concern:

Eastern Narrowmouth toad

Timber rattlesnake

Great Plains rat snake

Coachwhip

Flathead snake

American woodcock

red headed woodpecker

yellow billed cuckoo

Northern flicker

prairie warbler

field sparrow

yellow breasted chat

Striped scorpion

Whitney's underwing

Fitchiella robertsoni

Flexamia albida

Paraphlepsius texanus

Polyamia dilata

Scaphytopius vaccinium

Schinia gloriosa

In addition to specific species benefits, the project addresses the following parts of the IWAP (Section III: C): Grassland Habitat Goals 2 and 6; Forest Habitat Goals 1 and 2; Open Woodland Habitat Goals 2 and 3; and Primary Habitat Goal 1; and IWAP (Section III: E) Farmland/Prairies Campaign Actions 1b, 2b, 3a, f and 7; Forest Campaign Actions 1a, 2b and d, 4, and 7; Invasive Species Campaign Actions 3b and 4; Land and Water Stewardship campaign Actions 1b, 2a, 3, 4, and 6; and specific management guidelines for the natural divisions involved in the project (Section IV) (IDNR, 2005).

Anticipated Outcomes and Benefits:

(3000 characters)

1. Increase protection, enhancement and expansion of hill prairies, a rare and declining natural community, which support a number of species in greatest need of conservation and improve and enhance general bluffland habitat. Because the quality of these bluff

communities is degrading rapidly, we plan to expand the current habitat by 25% and improve the quality of existing habitat through stewardship activities. This will improve habitat conditions for SGNC previously listed. For example, many of the sites are known to support timber rattlesnakes, but in many places birthing rookeries and hibernacula are getting increasingly shaded, which makes the sites less suitable, because of lack of management. This project will directly benefit habitat for that species by clearing encroaching brush and keeping these areas more open. Several of the insect SGNC depend on specific host plants which require periodic fire to maintain open habitat and significant populations. This project will expand habitat of numerous hill prairie plant species that are hosts or nectaring sources for rare or habitat specific insect species. These are just two examples.

2. Increase awareness of landowners and other non-biologists of the importance of this type of habitat and the species it supports. By providing some publicity, educational information, and landowner recognition program, we hope to stimulate interest in these natural habitats and their management.

3. Through cooperation with landowners, we hope increased appreciation will lead to more management and protection of their land through voluntary permanent protection programs, therefore protecting this important habitat for numerous species in perpetuity.

4. Improved political, social and civil harmony throughout the blufflands and beyond leading to innovative cures for rampant societal ills and increased participation and cooperation in our democracy resulting in more harmonious political discourse focused on problem-solving and a utopian republic based on freedom, equality and peace.

Signature of Applicant:

Diana A. Jais

Date:2/3/10

Signature of department or unit head (if required):

Date:



[Print Application](#) | [Return to Main Menu](#)