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Illinois DNR

SWG Grant Application System

Applicant(Grantee if awarded)	
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PROJECT TITLE - Public Lands Initiative
Project Description
The need for restoration of high quality public land for wildlife habitat far exceeds available funding. IDNR personnel will implement management, including management and restoration of rare habitat types that contain unique assemblages of wildlife, habitat expansion, protection and stewardship, and management for state and federal endangered and threatened species, to improve wildlife habitat on selected sites across Illinois to meet goals of the Comprehensive Wildlife Management Plan.
Type of Project
Implementation

(Match Rates Implementation: 50% Federal : 50% Non-Federal 75% Federal : 25% Non-Federal)			
Dollars Requested	Total Federal	Total Non-Federal	Total Cost of Project
1st Year Funding	250000	250000	500000
2nd Year Funding	80000	80000	160000
3rd Year Funding	80000	80000	160000
Totals:	410000	410000	820000

Need:
The Illinois Critical Trends Assessment Project (1994) and the Department of Natural Resources (2001) concluded that the natural ecosystems of Illinois are rapidly declining as a result of fragmentation and continual stress. Most agricultural land is an intensive monoculture covering 77.5% of the total land area of the state. In contrast, native grassland has declined and less than 0.1% of the original tall grass prairie remains. Forested areas, while increasing, cover only 11% of the land area

and wetlands that once occupied 25% of Illinois now occupy just 3% of the state's land area. The Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI) identifies 363,284 acres as having significant natural communities that serve as habitat for a multitude of wildlife species, including endangered and threatened plants and animals. Much of this land is included in public ownership. The Illinois Nature Preserves Commission has dedicated 42,580 acres in 79 counties as Nature Preserves, and enrolled another 23,850 acres in 45 counties in the Land and Water Reserves Program, providing permanent easements for conservation purposes. Approximately 720,000 acres of the total state land area is in public ownership devoted to natural resource management practices. The need for restoration of these protected and/or public lands for wildlife habitat far exceeds available funding.

Objectives:

Funds approved through this grant will be used to expand the restoration and stewardship of high quality wildlife habitats on publically owned lands. This project will include species protection and recovery efforts for specific wildlife populations. Target species include endangered or threatened species in Illinois as well as species in greatest conservation need. The management and restoration of rare habitat types that contain unique assemblages of wildlife will also be targeted. Projects will include habitat expansion, protection and stewardship, management for state and federal endangered and threatened species, and invasive species management.

Approach:

DNR personnel and contractors will use Prescribed Fire, Invasive Woody Plant Control, Invasive Exotic Species Control, Erosion/sedimentation control, Boundary Protection/Fence Repair, Habitat Creation/Restoration: Planting, and Hydrology Restoration to increase and maintain high quality habitats on publically owned lands. All vegetation management will follow the Illinois Nature Preserve Commission's Vegetation Management Guidelines. Specific guidelines will be included in the full proposal

Relationship To Plan:

The Department of Natural Resources has also submitted and had approved their Wildlife Action Plan (<http://dnr.state.il.us/orc/wildliferesources/theplan/home.htm>.) This plan outlines 654 species in greatest conservation need, including, 433 invertebrates, 79 fish, 14 amphibians, 23 reptiles, 85 birds, and 20 mammals. The plan also identifies habitat areas that demonstrate the greatest conservation need and potential. It also establishes specific conservation goals for the enhancement and protection of these sites. The plan identifies tools to achieve specific and broad conservation goals for forest, opens woodland/savanna/barrens, grassland, shrubland, wetland, lakes, ponds and streams. The project will help to achieve the following goals outlined in the plan Forest • Implement improved forestry practices, including timber stand improvement, prescribed fire and invasive species control to enhance oak-dominance and maintain understory diversity on 1 million acres of forest. • Restore and manage all high-quality examples of all forest communities within all natural divisions within which they occur. Open Woodland/Savanna/Barrens • Manage small woodlots are managed as open woodlands/savannas as appropriate. • Restore and manage all open woodland, savanna and barren communities within all natural divisions within which they occur. Grassland • Manage and restore high-quality examples of all prairie communities within all natural divisions within which they occur. In addition, many projects are likely to be conducted in Conservation Opportunity Areas as outlined in the plan.

Anticipated Outcomes and Benefits:

Wildlife habitat in Illinois is fragmented into small tracts and subject to detrimental external pressures, such as non-compatible land use, pollution, invasive and exotic species, etc. These projects strive to improve this situation. The key benefit of these projects is the opportunity it affords the IDNR to expand efforts currently under way to create, preserve and enhance Illinois' wildlife habitat on public lands. During a previous 4 year State Wildlife Grant, woody and herbaceous exotic species were treated on 1951 acres, native woody vegetation was reduced on 56 acres, 1023 acres received prescribed fire, 76 acres were reforested, and 1014 acres of fescue or former row crops were converted to warm and cool season grasses. This grant has the expected benefit of increasing wildlife habitat establishment and restoration on as many as 10 sites.

Signature of Principal Investigator:

Date:

Signature of department or unit head (if required):

Date:



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