## Final Report Wildlife Preservation Fund Grant #04-046W Illinois Nature Preserves System Traveling Educational Displays Prepared by Michael R. Jeffords, June 2004

The Illinois Natural History Survey has successfully completed the development and construction of two portable exhibits on the Illinois Nature Preserve Commission. Each laminated exhibit, complete with an aluminum display frame and easels, details the work of the commission on the identification, protection, stewardship and defense of the Illinois Nature Preserves. The exhibits were designed by Michael Jeffords and Loren Kirkwood, INHS, with text from the commission. The exhibit includes a montage of habitat, organismic, and human-related activities associated with the commission's work. Attached is a mock-up of the 40"x60" display panel.

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= Less than 1% of the original Illinois landscape exists today. ==

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A NATURE PRESERVE is a next of land that communities rare plants animals, or other agoingant faitures. Extigated nature preserves have the strongest legal protection for land in the state and one protected forces. has been permanently protected by sene law due to the presence of high-quality

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completed in 1978 and updated annually, designates the states highest quality natural

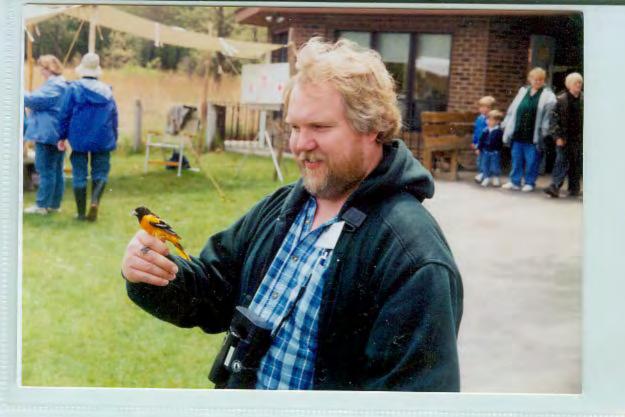
The Bline's Natural Areas Inventory,

extensively for cleaning research. Every year, In addition, preserved and reserved used scientists, volunteers, and students obtain

Stewardship activities maintain and resone the

psaching of raceplanteer animals are among the more common threats. Luckowners, sati-of conservation apericas or groups, and volunteers are the eyes, and cars that munition proceed area, and body for gipove alones. Surveillance of protected and offer alones, Surveillance of protected land offer alones penerial problems beline they become worse Notical areas are subject to numerous threats of destruction or degradation. Off-tool schools a expendition, dumping, find or removal, and a expensively. IMPC works viganously to head off potential theats and halt activities that me dame in evaries and resistend reserves.











### Illinois Nature Preserves Commission

#### Saving Illinois' Natural Treasures

Less than 1% of the original Illinois landscape exists today.

#### · Protection.

Created in 1963, the Illimois Nature Proserves Commission (INPC) assists private and public landowners in protecting high-quality natural areas and habitates of endangered and theatened species in perpetuity, through voluntary dedication or registration of such lands into the Illinois Nature Proserves System.

A NATURE PRESERVE is a most of land that has been permanently protected by state law due to the presence of high-quality communities, rare plants, animals, or other agoificant features. Dedicated namic preserves have the anongest legal protection for land in the state and are protected forever. The regimer of LAND AND WATER RESERVES is a voluntary protection program for areas supporting significant natural heritage researces. The register provides protection and management for lands that may not qualify as nature preserves and may allow for activities not permitted on nature preserves.

Today, INPC protects over 80,800 acres of private and public land in over 540 protected areas throughout the state. Nature proserves protect over 350 endangered and threatened plants and animals. In fact, more than 25% of all Illinois endangered or threatened species are in state dedicated nature preserves.

#### - Identification

The Illinois Natural Areas Inventory, completed in 1978 and updated annually, designates the state's highest quality natural areas and serves as a guide for the INPC when determining the eligibility of lands for INPC programs, Identified natural areas include high-quality communities such as forests, prairies, swannast, and wellunds as well as other significant features within each of Illinois natural divisions.

#### Stewardship

Stewardship activities maintain and restore the natural integrity and full complement of native plants and animals within our persected natural assas. Many natural areas are subject to overgrowth by non-native plants and invasive brush. Aggressive introduced plants often crowd out our native plants, which are important food and habitat for wildlife. The lack of rejuvenating fire allows brush to encroach in prairies and woodlands.

#### + Defense

Stewardship activities conducted by agency

staff, landowners, and volunteers include site

surveillance to watch for problems or threats.

control of exotic species, prescribed burning, and brush control. Volunteers, working with

the Volunteer Steward ship Network provide

valuable stewardship work on many protected

areas. Voluntoers work closely with owners or

managers of sites, and provide much-needed

management work under the site owner's

In addition, preserves and reserves are used

scientists, volunteers, and gudents obtain

permission for management activities, rare species monitoring, and research within

nature preserves and land and water reserves.

extensively for scientific research. Every year,

Natural areas are subject to numerous threats of destruction or degradation. Off-road vehicle use, varieblesm, dumping, timber removal, and peaching of rate plants or animals are among the more common threats. Landowners, scaff of conservation agencies or groups, and voluntoers are the eyes and east that monitor protected areas and look for signs of abuse. Surveillance of projected areas often detects potential problems before they become worse. INFC works vigorously to head off potential threats and both activities that are damaging to name procurves and registered reserves.