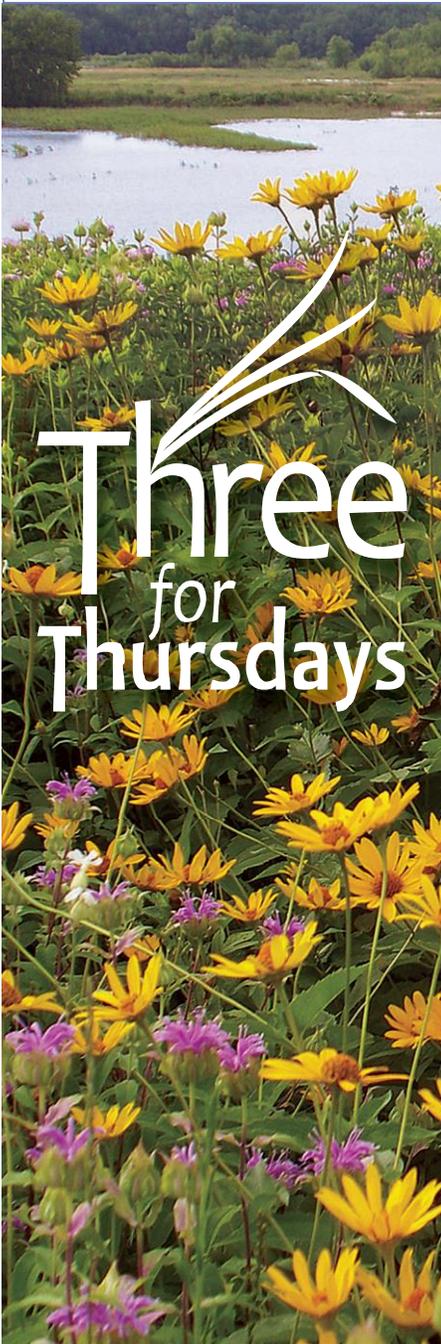


NATURAL LAND INSTITUTE

Conserving Land
in Northern Illinois



State Legislative Update: Proposed Sweep of Land Acquisition Funds

Amendment 1 of SB0274 was introduced yesterday in the Illinois Senate and will require the transfer of \$4,968,148 from the Natural Areas Acquisition Fund (NAAF) to General Revenue. Early estimates suggest this will not adversely impact Illinois Nature Preserve Commission operations as they currently exist, however, such a transfer would all but eliminate land acquisition from this fund. A similar transfer of \$37,112,624 is authorized from the Open Space Land Acquisition Development fund (OSLAD). You can take action to oppose these sweeps here:

http://action.ilenviro.org/p/dia/action3/common/public/?action_KEY=15842

Link to the proposed amendment:

<http://ilga.gov/legislation/fulltext.asp?DocName=09900SB0274sam001&GA=99&SessionId=88&DocTypeld=SB&LegID=84235&DocNum=274&GAID=13&Session>

Federal Legislative Update:

The new rule for the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program which includes both the Wetland Reserve Easement Program (WRE) and the Agricultural Land Easement (ALE) program was posted on the [Federal Register website](#) on February 26th. This gives State Conservationists a lot more decision-making authority.

What does this mean for us? The Land Trust Alliance (LTA) will have one or two conference calls in the next few weeks to try to answer questions and identify potential problems for Land Trusts in terms of how we use these programs. The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) also tells us that the fiscal year 2015 funding allocations for each state have been sent to the state conservationists, and that the actual dollars will start to flow as the new policy manual is released in the next few weeks. I will keep you updated.

Boone County Pipeline:

I drive past this every day on River Rd. in Belvidere and have been wondering if it was a pipeline but no-one seemed to know what it is... now it's confirmed. The construction started about a year ago. Dan Kane from Boone County said the County approved the expansion of pumping capacity quite a while ago. It did receive some media attention then, but not a lot. It was also written up yesterday in the Rockford Register Star. The reporter called me last week asking if NLI had a position on this. I said no, no position.

<http://www.wisconsin Gazette.com/wisconsin/xxlbreakwisconsin-pipeline-dwarfs-keystone-and-affects-every-waterway-in-the-state.html>

Have a good weekend! Kerry 03.05.15

