UNDERSTANDING THE CURRENT STATE OF STEWARDSHIP IN ILLINOIS AND CREATING TOOLS TO IMPROVE STEWARDSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

PSCC Annual Meeting
March 1st, 2019
BACKGROUND

Our Initial Hypothesis
The traditional “buy and flip” or “acquire, restore, transfer” models are struggling. We need additional models for long term management of high value ecosystems.

PHASE 2: ANSWERING THE QUESTIONS

1. Money and Staff but how much do we need? How much do we already have covered? What else would help?

2. Knowing we have a lot of opportunities, what can we do to take advantage of those?

3. If we were to use the working lands model, what does it look like? How do we get buy-in and support?
PHASE 2: ANSWERING THE QUESTIONS

- The Stewardship Study
  - Survey with 24 responses
  - 31 ~2 Hour Interview throughout the state
- Toolkit Creation Focused on Study Findings
  - Overviews
  - Examples
  - Resources
- Pilot Projects
  - NLI Working Lands Initiative
  - Stewardship Cooperative Case Study
# The Study Structure

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<th>Capacity</th>
<th>Partnerships</th>
<th>Funding and Financing</th>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>People and the Land</th>
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<td>Federal</td>
<td>Vision</td>
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<td>Views</td>
<td>Donors</td>
<td>Taxes</td>
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<td>Contributions</td>
<td>Endowment</td>
<td>Structures</td>
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<td>Contractors</td>
<td>Models</td>
<td>Investments</td>
<td>Elected Officials</td>
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<td>LTA</td>
<td>Benefits</td>
<td>Funding Model</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skills</td>
<td>Downsides</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Board</td>
<td></td>
<td>Working lands</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Current status</td>
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<td>Fee for service</td>
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<tr>
<td>Burns</td>
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<td>Mitigation</td>
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<td>Private lands</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Unrestricted</td>
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CAPACITY DEEP DIVE
## Landscape Overview

### Land Sub-Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Sub-Type</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Number of Organizations</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forest</td>
<td>14,449</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prairie</td>
<td>7,942</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savanna</td>
<td>3,265</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eurasian Grassland</td>
<td>575</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wetlands</td>
<td>8,904</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake, Ponds, and Streams</td>
<td>5,201</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Natural Habitat</td>
<td>807</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tillable</td>
<td>1,684</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pasture</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hayfield</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Agricultural Land</td>
<td>608</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parkland (e.g. mowed areas, ba)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trail Corridors</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Recreational Land</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Buildings and Structures</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>9</td>
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</table>
WHO DOES STEWARDSHIP?

capacity summary

- Number of land trusts with position
- Average hours per year

- Stewardship Director: 8
- Program Director: 8
- Stewardship Coordinator: 7
- Volunteers: 12
- Interim: 5
- Other Program Director: 3
- Contractors: 3
- Fundraising Director: 15
- Other: 6
- Board: 13
- Executive Director: 3
- Other Program Coordinator: 8

Total hours:
- 5,355 hr/yr
- 2,118 hr/yr
- 1,984 hr/yr
- 2,324 hr/yr
- 1,107 hr/yr
- 1,308 hr/yr
- 704 hr/yr
- 360 hr/yr
- 1,647 hr/yr
- 680 hr/yr
- 483 hr/yr
- 147 hr/yr

Institution Logos:
- Natural Land Institute
- Illinois Environmental Council
- Openlands
- Delta Institute
WHAT ROLE DOES EVERYONE PLAY?

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Priority Setting</th>
<th>Fundraising</th>
<th>Developing Management Plans</th>
<th>Implementing Stewardship Activities</th>
<th>Coordinating Contractors and Other Stewardship Staff</th>
<th>Coordinating Volunteers</th>
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</table>

- Board
- Contractors
- Executive Director
- Fundraising Director
- Interns
- Other
- Other Program Coordinator
- Other Program Director
- Other Stewardship Program Staff
- Stewardship Program Coordinator
- Stewardship Program Director
- Volunteers
With finite board capacity is this the most efficient use of resources?
IMPACT PER ACRE

Labor cost $57.3644*Total Land Managed

Labor Hours/year 2.50362hrs*Total Land Managed
Why does the labor breakout not change from small to medium?
VOLUNTEER TO STAFF RATIO

~ 1 volunteer hr per 1 hr of staff time
50% of all stewardship work done by volunteers

Strengths
- Generating Support
- Unskilled Labor Pool
- Educational Opportunities

Considerations
- Volunteer Management
- Training and Oversight
- Equipment Needs
SUPPORTING INCREASED STEWARDSHIP

• Capacity
  – Harnessing the power of volunteers effectively
    • Management
    • Setting up volunteer monitoring and local stewards programs
    • Leaders opportunities for volunteers
    • Creating a community of volunteers
  – Shared vs. Contracted Services

• Partnerships
  – Working with Investors, Developers, and Insurance Agents
  – Working with the public sector
  – Working with local community foundations
  – Stewardship Cooperatives
SUPPORTING INCREASED STEWARDSHIP

- Funding and Finances
  - Matrix of options
  - NASA, Ag Lending Program, and other state funding
  - 319 Funding
  - Working with private foundations
  - Working Land Tools
  - Preparing for Mitigation Funding
  - Options for Funding Programs

- Policy
  - IEC Engagement Strategies
  - NRCS Opportunities
  - INPC Tools
SUPPORTING INCREASED STEWARDSHIP

- People and the Land
  - Media, Marketing, and Promotion
  - Connecting our work to Health
  - Board Engagement around Stewardship
- Resource Lists
- Case Studies
What might we be missing?
WORKING LANDS PILOT

THE BIG EXPERIMENT

OR

How a conservation land trust can manage working lands, support stewardship and still work within its mission?
WORKING LANDS PILOT

IMPLICATIONS FOR:

- Regenerative Conservation Agriculture
- Climate Change
- Stewardship Funding
- Funding a Cooperative
- Diversifying Investment Portfolio
- Restoration and Reducing Fragmentation
- Working with New Partners, Public Perception
- Capacity and Knowledge Base

NATURAL LAND INSTITUTE
Conserving Land in Northern Illinois

IEC ILLINOIS ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL

openlands
conserving nature for life

delta institute

WORKING LANDS PILOT

Building the Case - Soil, Water, CO2 and a Leap of Faith

GOAL
Increase Soil Quality, Yields and Profit Margins with Less Reliance on Petro-chemicals

STRATEGY: Increase Biomass and Nutrient Cycling via Enhanced Microbial Activity.

Practices include
- Cover crops
- Microbial Inputs
- Conservation tillage
- Reduced -cides and synthetic fertilizers
- Natural inputs include complex carbons, humics, fulvics, sugars, & in-solution minerals.

NLI Working Lands Sub-Committee:
- Hosting Roundtables and Field Days for Learning
- Drafting a Set of Guiding Principles and a Policy
- Creating a Procedure for Conservation Leases and to Monitor Progress
WORKING LANDS PILOT

Implementing the Ideas:

Facing Uncertainty and Risk

Soils Consultant
Consultant to Create a Whole Farm Conservation Plan
Consultant to Assess Working Lands as an Investment Strategy
Next Steps

- Establishing Procedures
- Creating Conservation Leases with a Resource Management Systems Plan
- Our farmers are part of the team – creating a fair conservation lease to incentivize practices
- What to Measure and Gathering Baseline Data: soil OM, water quality, soil productivity, etc..
- Analyzing Capacity and Developing Long Term Budgets
- Working Lands as an investment strategy (PRI)
EXPLORING QUESTIONS AND ISSUES

- Public perception (survey?)
- Mission driven initiative to support programs: messaging, marketing and framing,
- Setting up a separate private 501c3 and ag. investment policy
- Resources for farm management
- Where do we stand on supporting local food and small producers
- What about grazing regimes and nesting birds
- Market opportunities for alternatives to commodity row crops
- Defining regenerative practices and measuring our success

*All Artwork by Lynda Wallis*
When thinking about this Working Lands Pilot:

What would you need to make this work for you?

Are you interested in participating in the next Phase of this project?
NEXT STEPS
GET INVOLVED!
QUESTIONS?

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