

A misty landscape with trees and birds in flight. The scene is hazy, with a line of trees in the background and a field of tall grass in the foreground. Several birds are flying across the middle ground, their silhouettes visible against the light mist. The overall atmosphere is serene and natural.

**Land Trusts Role in the New Era
Systemic Change, Policy, Activism**

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**VP of Policy & Community Engagement
Openlands**

Illinois Natural Areas Stewardship Act (*House Bill 3458*)



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Illinois Nature Preserves? *Nature Preserves are the Best & the Rarest (617 Sites on 108,000+ Acres in 94 Counties)*



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So What's the Problem?

Restored + Time – Care = Degraded

Time = Fragmentation, invasives, trespassers, etc.



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We Need to Change the Equation:
Restored + Time + Care = Beautiful
BUT... Care = \$\$\$

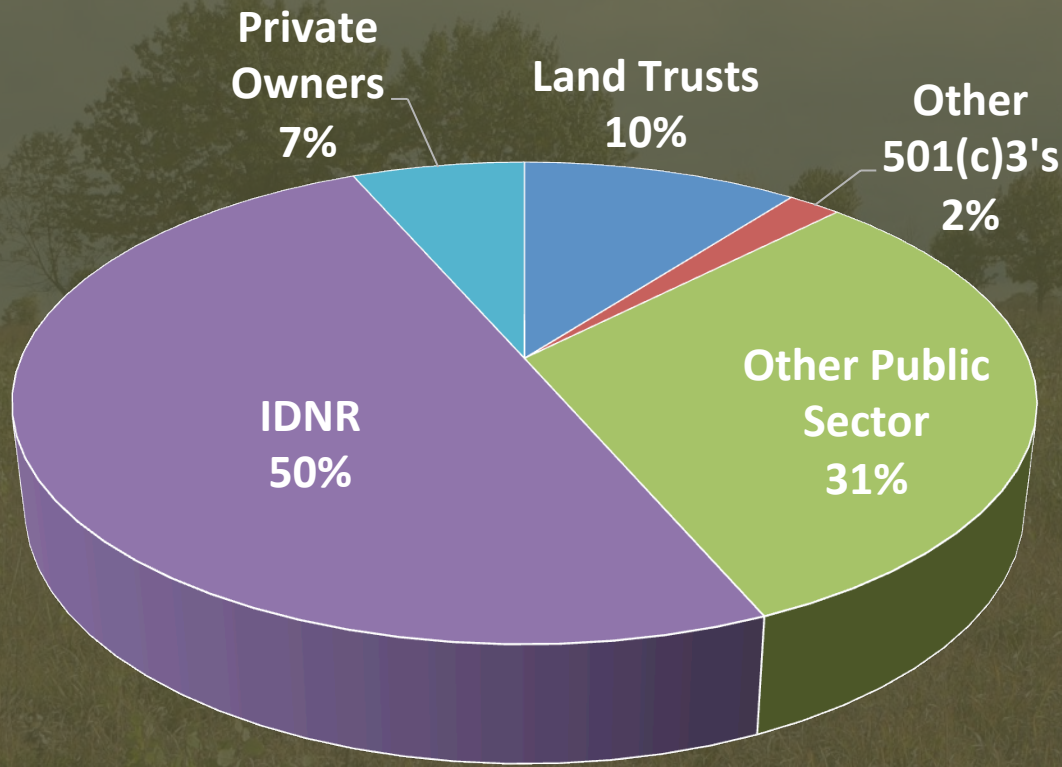


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So Where's the \$\$\$?

1. *Nonprofit organizations*
2. *Volunteers & Contractors (Pro-bono)*
3. *Public agencies*
 - ✓ *Army Corps of Engineers*
 - ~ *Local Governments*
 - *State Government*
 - *Natural Areas Acquisition Fund (NAAF) has \$15M+*
 - *Dedicated for conservation via Real Estate Transfer Tax*
 - *DNR unable to spend it & Susceptible to "Sweeps"*





Why the State Should Step Up:
IDNR owns 1/2 Nature Preserve Acres
Dedicated Funds -> Intended Purpose



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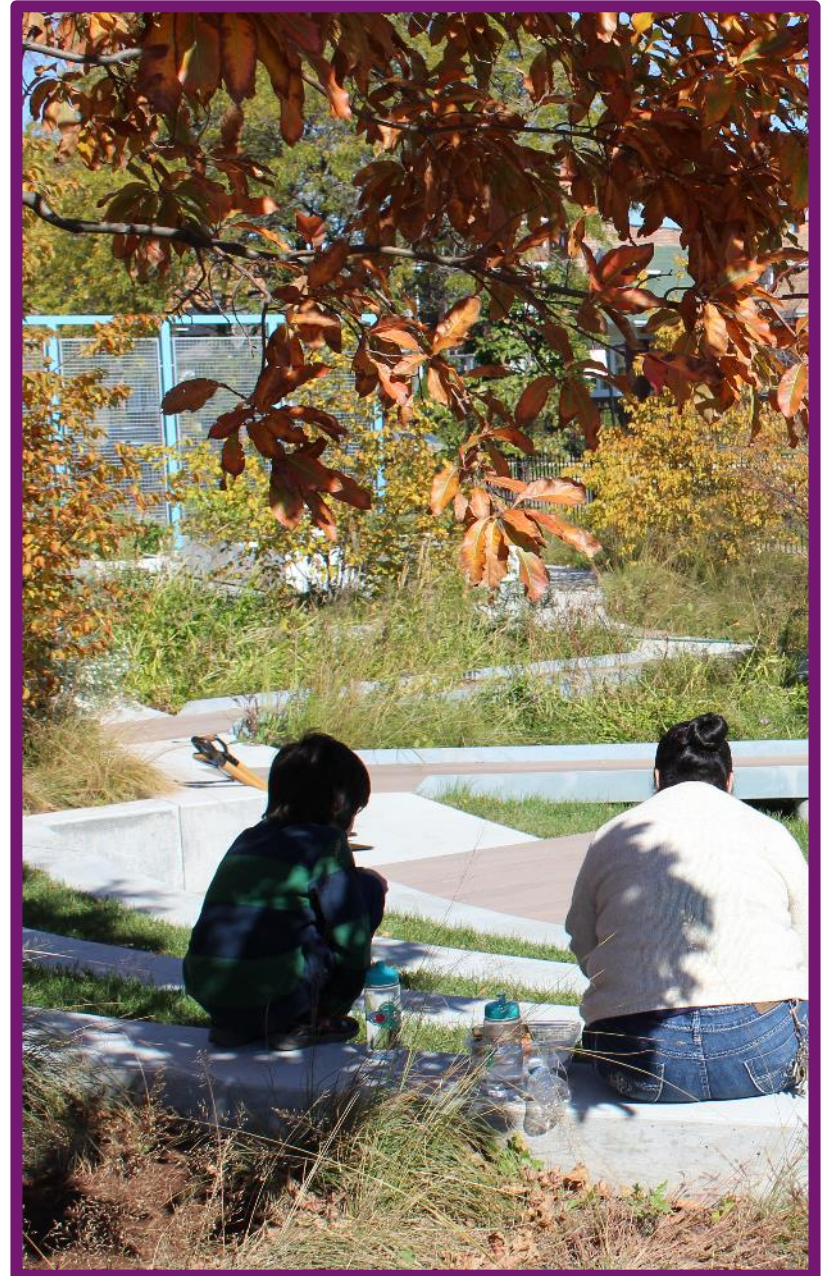
Barrington Area Conservation Trust	Grand Prairie Friends	Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation	Macon County Conservation Foundation	Peoria Audubon Society	St. Clair County Greenspace Foundation
Citizens for Conservation	Great Rivers Land Trust	Lake Bluff Open Lands Association	Natural Land Institute	Pheasants Forever	The Conservation Foundation
Clifftop NFP	Green Earth, Inc.	Lake Forest Open Lands Association	NeighborSpace	Prairie Land Conservancy	The Nature Conservancy
Conserve Lake County	Heartland Pathways	Land Conservancy of Lake County	Northwest Illinois Audubon Society	Prairie Lands Foundation	The Prairie Enthusiasts
Ducks Unlimited	Heartlands Conservancy	The Land Conservancy of McHenry County	Openlands	Prairie Preservation Society of Ogle County	The Sangamon Conservancy Trust
Friends of the Kankakee	Illinois Audubon Society	Land Conservancy of Will County	Original Kaskaskia Area Wilderness	Prairilands Preservation Foundation	Trust for Public Lands
Friends of the Sangamon Valley	Jane Addamsland Park Foundation	Land Conservation Foundation	ParkLands Foundation	River Bend Wildland Trust	

Help US Help YOU:
*41 different 501 (c)3 Land Trusts
 throughout Illinois*



DNR: Agreement Details decided in Rulemaking

- **Grants** : Grantees must be a 501(c)3 that protects &/or restores natural areas
- **Use of grants**: Funds only pre-approved actions in a DNR-approved Management Plan
- **Caps**: DNR may “cap” annual funding for the program
- **Distribution of grants**: DNR may set a “max” grant award &/or cap how much one grantee can get
- **DNR needs**: DNR may use NAAF to pay its own costs to run this program



What You Can Do:

- **Moving through the legislative process**
- **Sponsor is Charlie Meyer, Get Co-sponsors**
- **House Committee:**
 - **Witness slips, testimony, calling committee members**
- **When House votes (third reading) call your Representative**
- **Senate Committee**
 - **Witness slips, testimony, calling committee members**
- **When Senate votes (third reading) Call your Senator**
- **Governor**
- **Take your legislator to your sites or send pictures.**