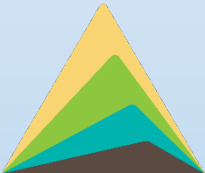


# Saving the Ancient Bell Bowl Prairie



Mississippi Audubon



**SUSTAIN** RK  
FD

**NATURAL  
LAND  
INSTITUTE**

Conserving Land  
in Northern Illinois



**SIERRA  
CLUB**  
FOUNDED 1892



Friends of Illinois Nature Preserves







# ECOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE



## Bulldozer Idled Temporarily . . .

George Fell studies spiderwort, part of natural prairie flora he is fighting to save in area near Greater Rockford Airport. In background is idle bulldozer. Excavation activities have been temporarily halted. (Morning Star photo)

## Prairie Land at Airport Is Given Brief Reprieve

Prairie land at Greater Rockford Airport was given a day or two reprieve from destruction Wednesday, but plans are underway to attempt to give it a permanent reprieve.

The City-County Planning Commission Wednesday night unanimously approved a resolution to preserve the Bell Amphitheater area, the picnic and recreation area and the natural prairie area at the airport.

The land is to be excavated for fill for a runway extension project.

Dean Clark, executive director of the planning commission, was authorized to submit the resolution today "to the Greater Rockford Airport Authority for immediate consideration and concurrence." Most of the airport board members are attending a conference in Philadelphia. The next scheduled airport board meeting is Tuesday, May 28.

**AWAITS ORDERS**  
Edmund Groncki, airport engineer, said he can stop excavation in the natural prairie area for a day or two and will await further instructions from the airport commissioners.

Excavation operations were stopped Wednesday morning when Mr. and Mrs. George Fell appeared at the site and pleaded for "another half a day" to push their efforts to save the prairie.

Fell said that he talked with Matthew Cicero, airport board member, and Mayor Benjamin T. Schleicher to try to save the land.

"Cicero with some reluctance said he would tell Groncki to work on another part as much as possible but not to hold up the project," Fell said.

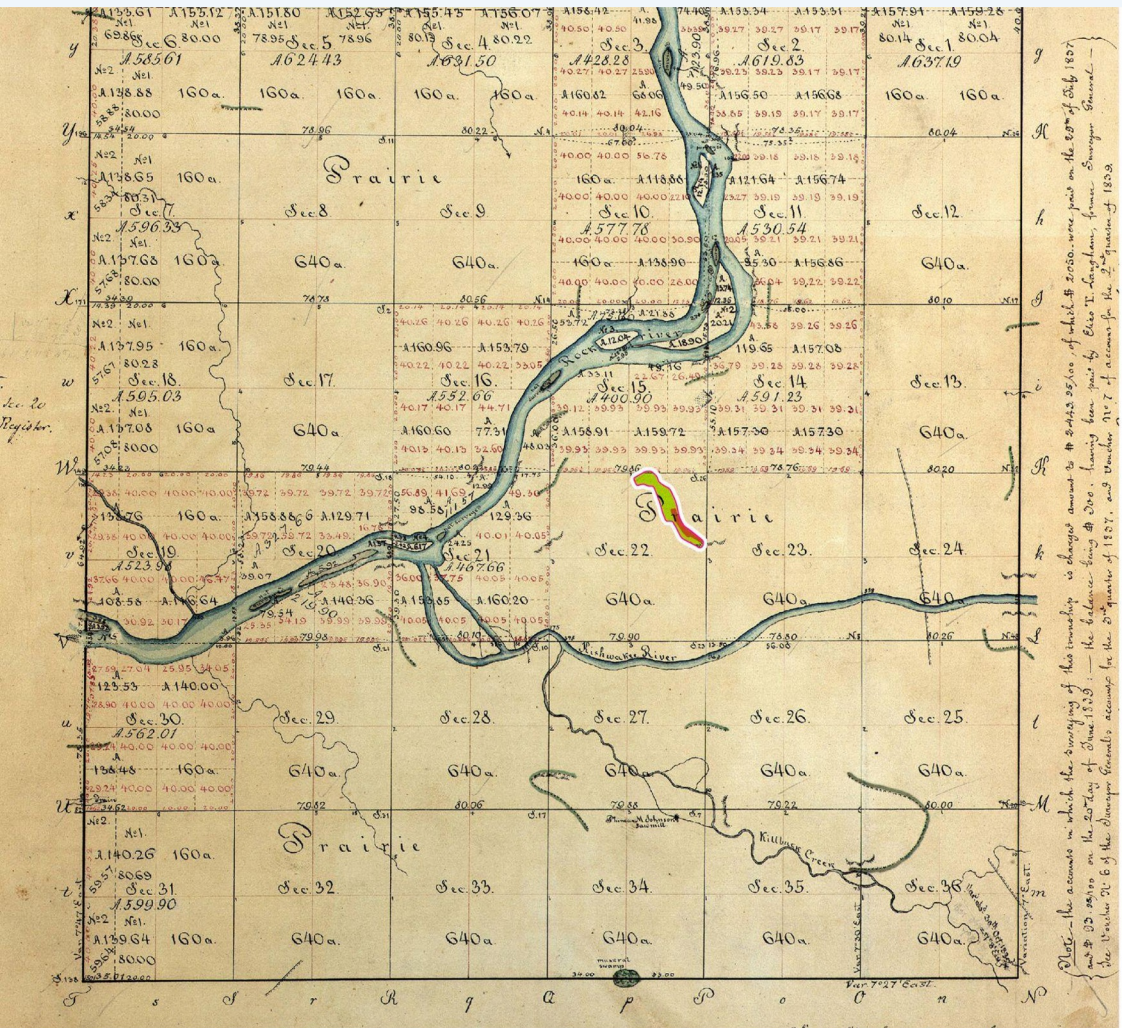
### DEPENDS ON WEATHER

Groncki said that a railroad crossing at the airport was completed Wednesday afternoon so that he can get trucks to another area and work there. But he said the site of the operation depends on the weather, as the dirt in the other area does not dry out after a rain as soon as the gravel area near the prairie.

Fell, who is chairman of the Citizen's Committee for Nature Preservation, said his reaction to the planning commission's recommendation would depend on how much of the prime prairie is saved.

"From our standpoint, they've already destroyed a lot of the prairie and I don't think they need to destroy any more," Fell said.

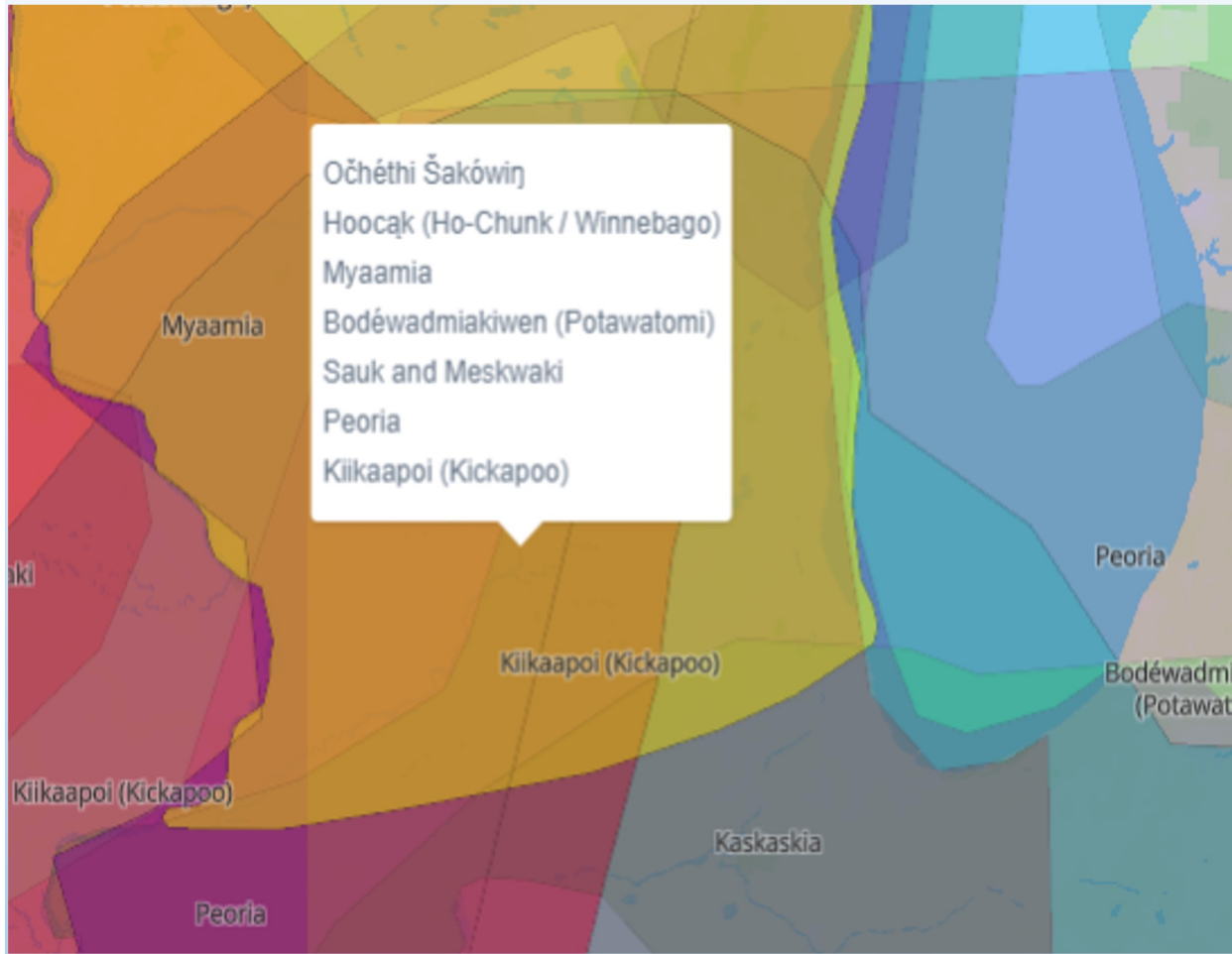




**PLAT SURVEY  
MAP  
APPROX 1810**

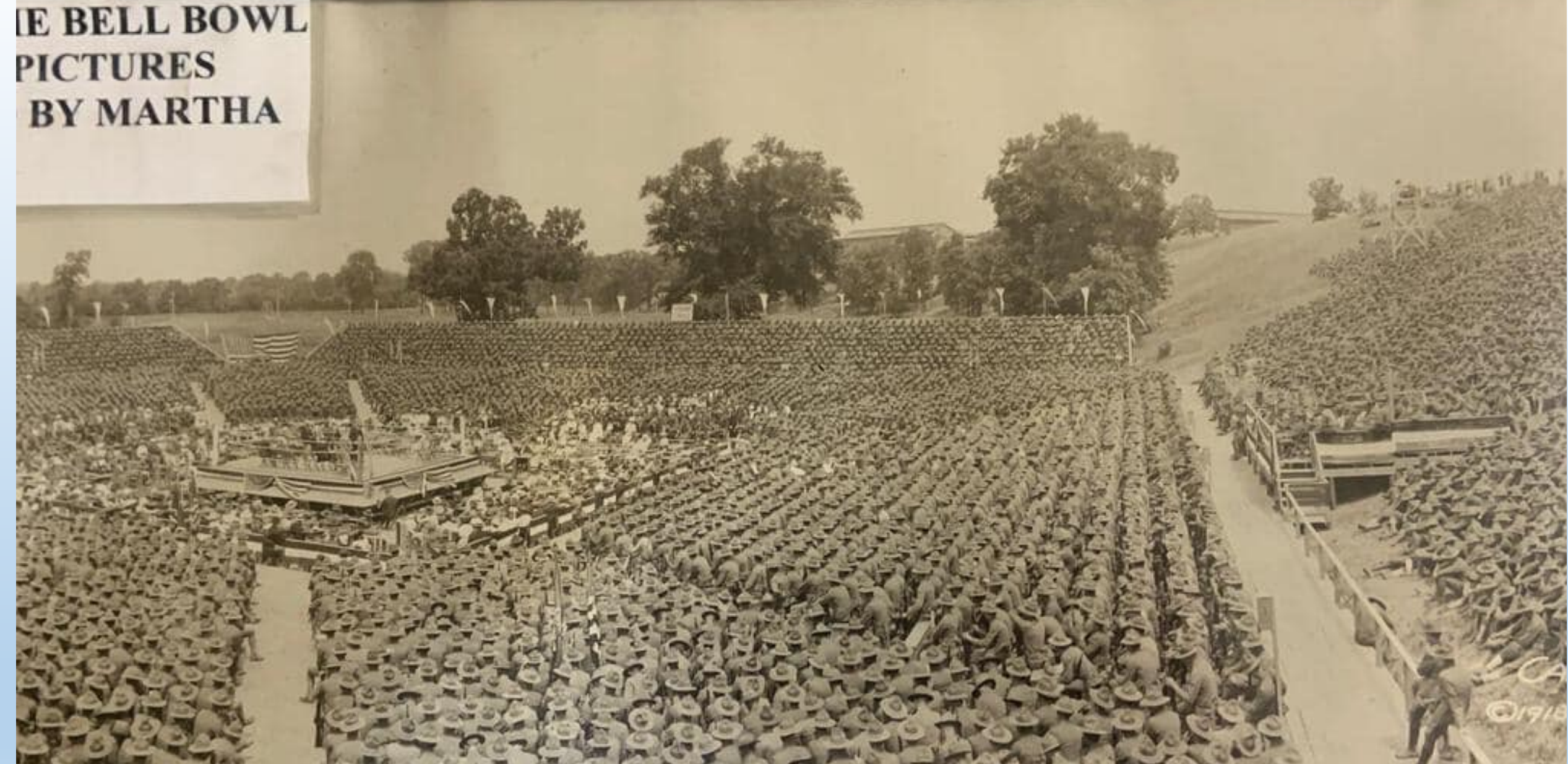
Bell Bowl  
Prairie

- High quality remnant prairie
- Medium quality remnant prairie







THE BELL BOWL  
PICTURES  
BY MARTHA





## Legend

-  Bell Bowl Prairie - Illinois Natural Areas Inventory site
-  Airport Expansion - Proposed Footprint









**164 plant species,  
endangered bee & plants,  
rare birds.**

Rusty Patched Bumble Bee  
Grasshopper sparrow,  
State threatened black billed  
cuckoo (2013)

Bobolink

Bell's vireo

Blue grosbeak

Regularly visited by state  
endangered loggerhead shrike  
(impaled mice)

Prairie False Dandelion (E)

Large flowered beardtongue (E)

Aromatic aster

Prickly pear cactus

Prairie gentian

**Soil relationships are intact, robust population of hemi-parasites  
chiefly the false toad Flax, helps knit the plant community together.  
They hold back species that might otherwise dominate.**





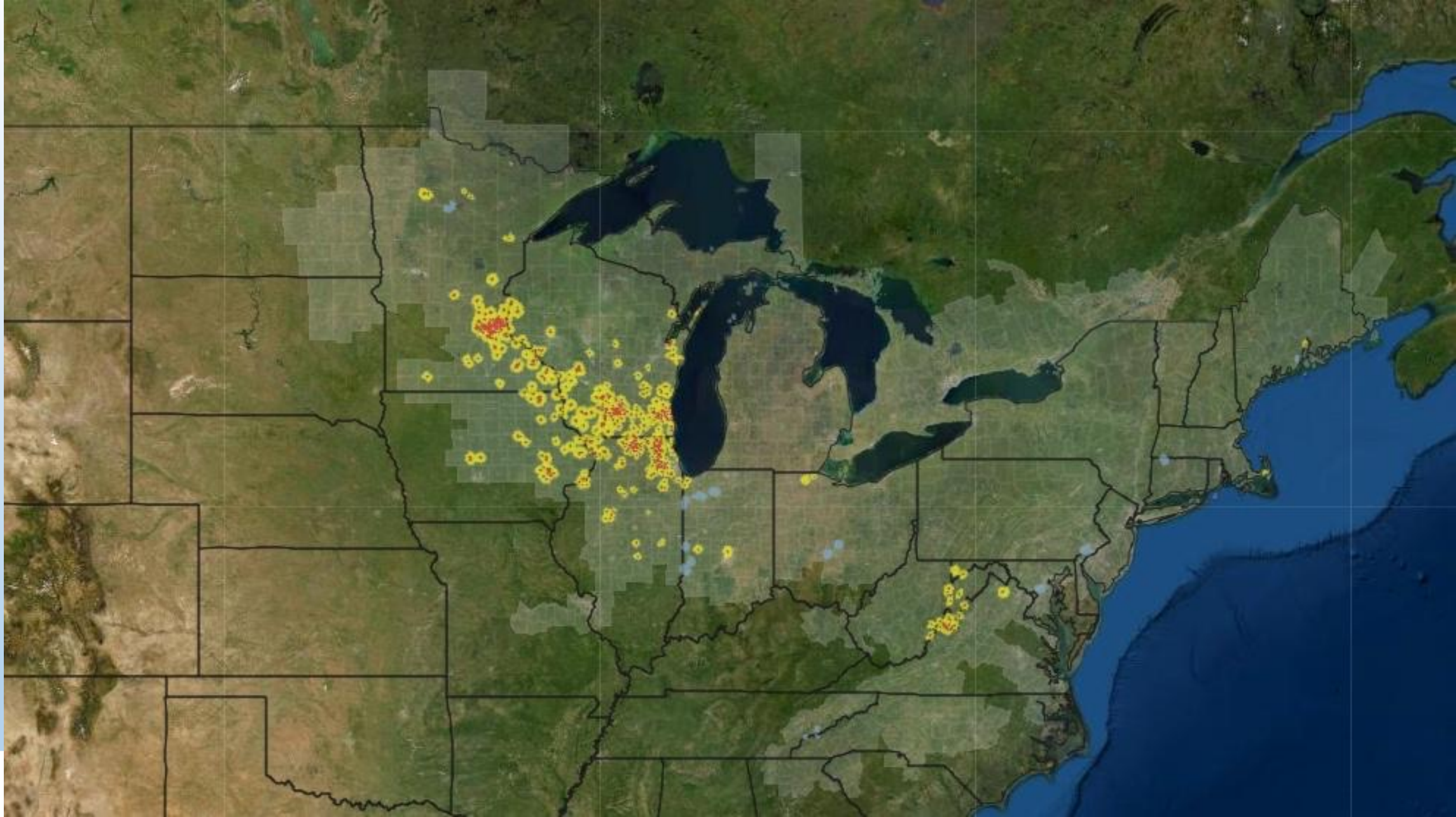




**Bee nectaring on lead plant**









The background of the slide is a light green color with a repeating pattern of botanical illustrations in a golden-brown hue. The illustrations include various flowers, leaves, and stems, such as a large daisy-like flower in the top left, a cluster of small flowers in the top right, and several different types of leaves and stems scattered throughout.

# SAVE BELL BOWL PRAIRIE

Public Meetings: since October 12<sup>th</sup>  
Coordinated by *Friends of the Nature Preserves*

[WWW.SAVEBELLBOWLRAIRIE.ORG](http://WWW.SAVEBELLBOWLRAIRIE.ORG)

FACEBOOK GROUP: SAVEBELLBOWLRAIRIE





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# TAKE ACTION

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**NATURAL  
LAND  
INSTITUTE**  
Conserving Land  
in Northern Illinois





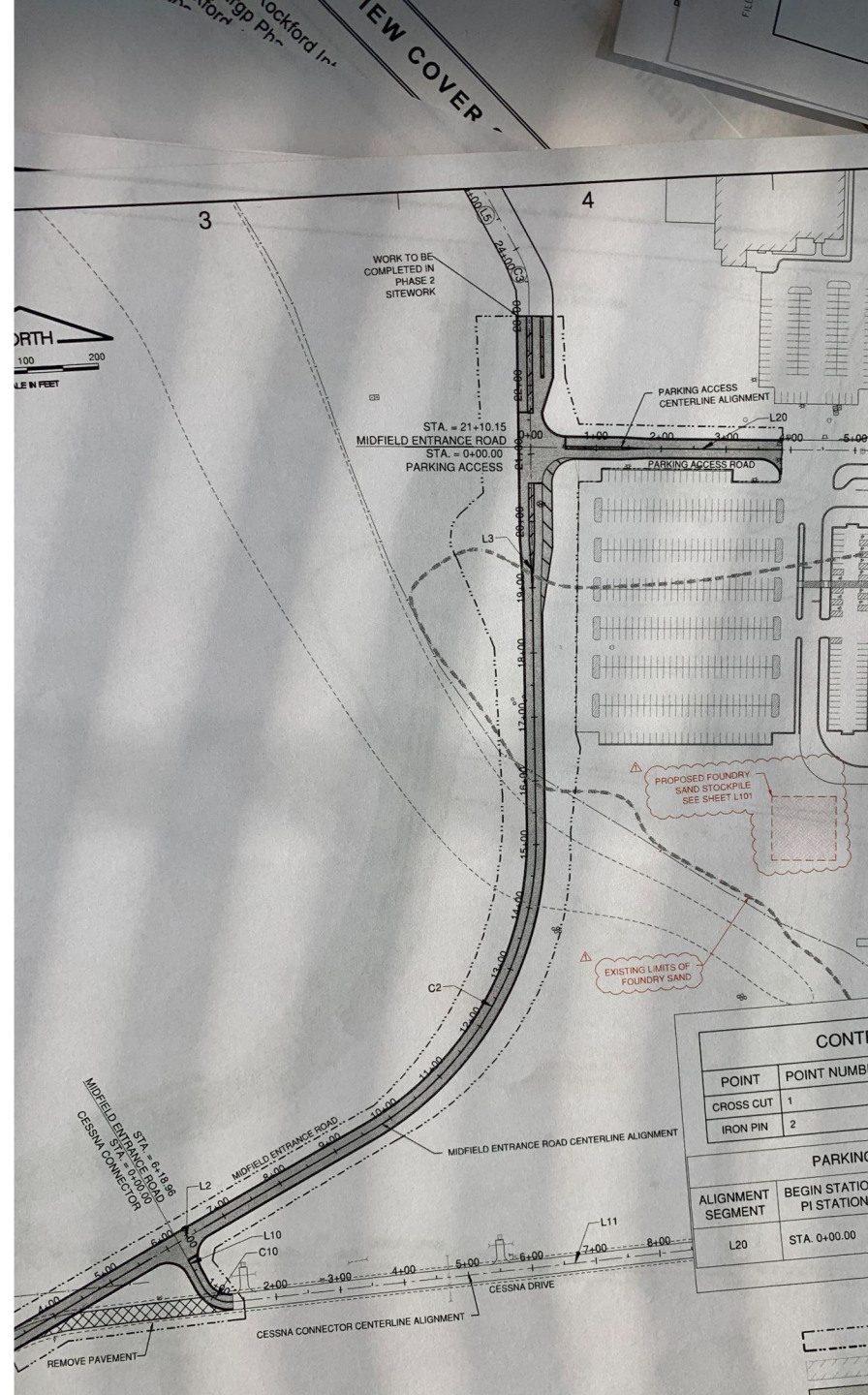


*C. Reissler*







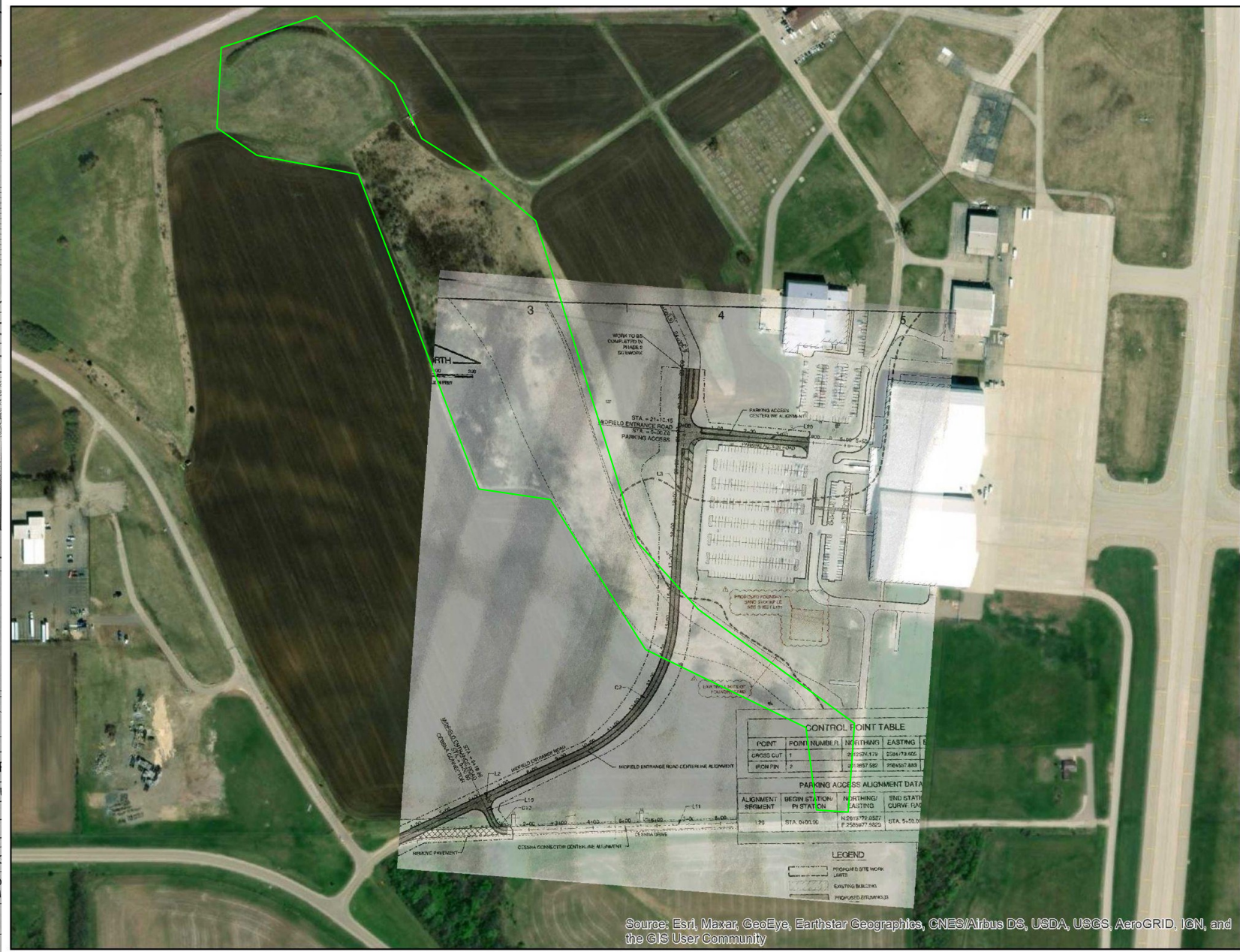


CONTROL POINT TABLE	
POINT	POINT NUMBER
CROSS CUT	1
IRON PIN	2

PARKING	
ALIGNMENT SEGMENT	BEGIN STATION / PI STATION
L20	STA 0+00.00

LEGEND	
	PROPOSED SITE WORK LIMITS
	EXISTING BUILDING
	PROPOSED BITUMINOUS



POINT	POINT NUMBER	NORTHING	EASTING
CROSS CUT	1	21029.474	258179.826
IRON PIN	2	21087.592	258527.888

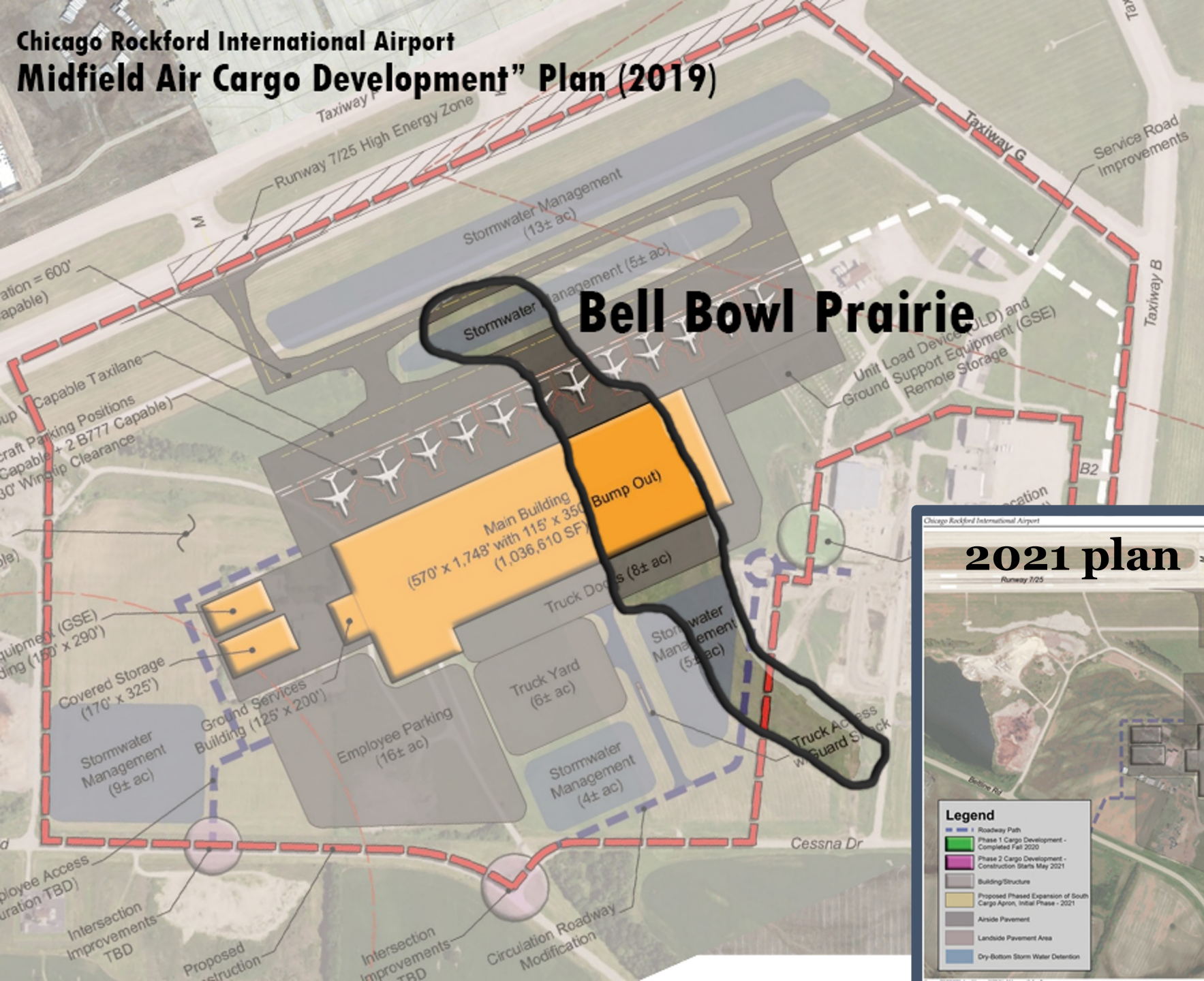
PARKING ACCESS ALIGNMENT DATA			
ALIGNMENT SEGMENT	BEGIN STATION / PI STATION	NORTHING / EASTING	END STATION / CURVE DATA
L20	STA 0+00.00	N 250° 17' 58.82" E 258527.888	STA 5+50.00

LEGEND	
	PROPOSED SITE WORK LIMITS
	EXISTING BUILDING
	PROPOSED BITUMINOUS

Source: Esri, Maxar, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community

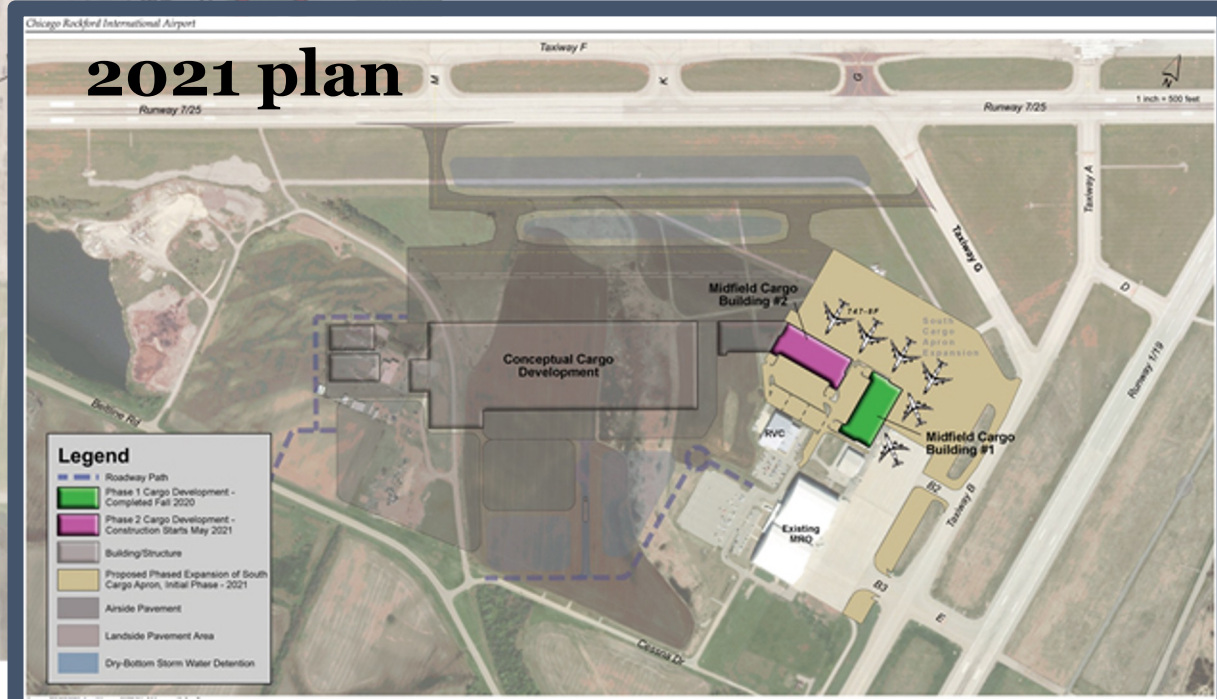


**Chicago Rockford International Airport  
Midfield Air Cargo Development” Plan (2019)**



< 2019 plan submitted for review

Subsequent construction (road, new buildings in northeast) do not match the original plan



**2021 plan**





# NEW ROAD FROM CESSNA DRIVE

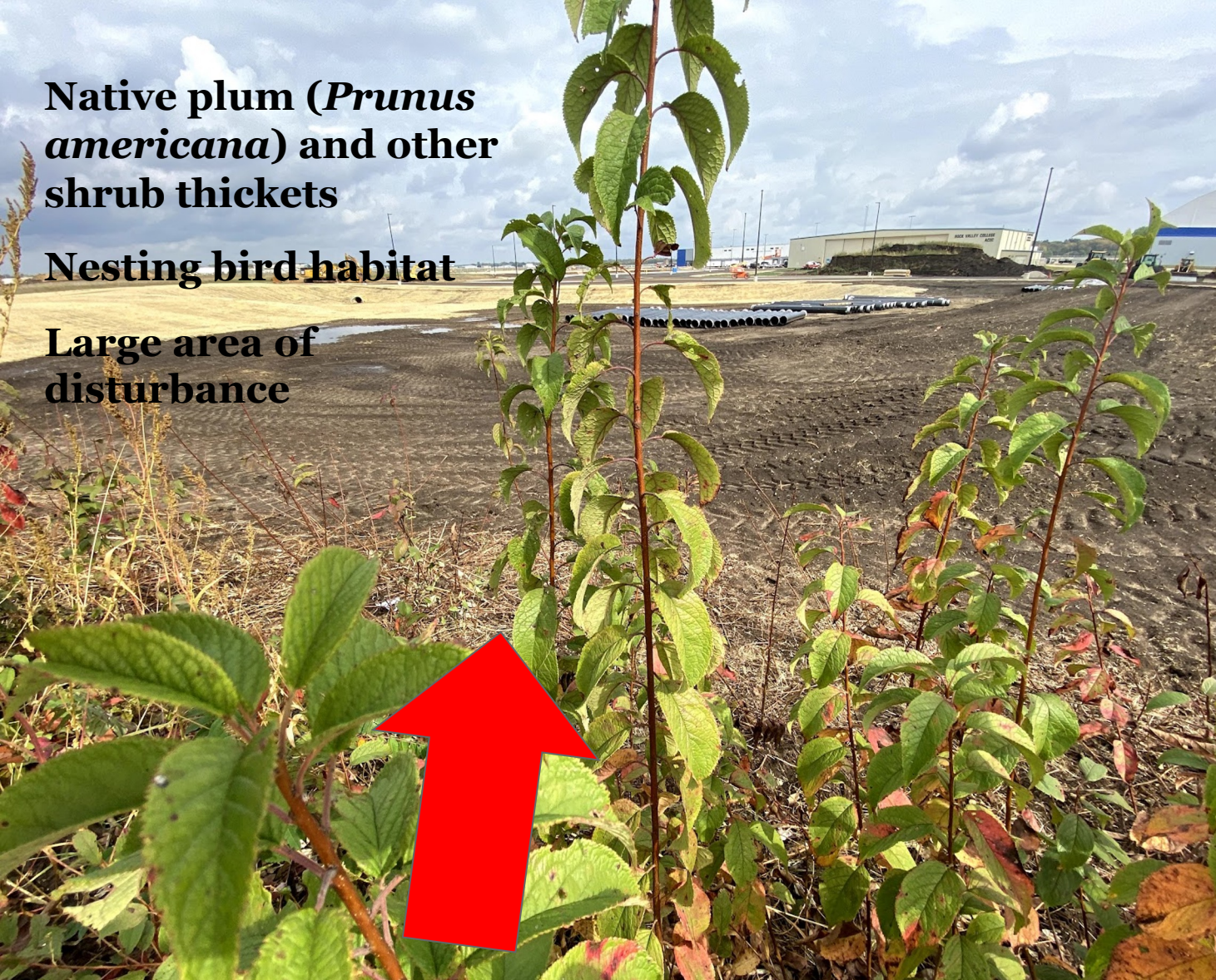




**Native plum (*Prunus americana*) and other shrub thickets**

**Nesting bird habitat**

**Large area of disturbance**









- Immediate - Halt Construction of a road through high quality area- NOW UNTIL JUNE, 2022 (or when USFWS consultation is complete)
- Short-Term - Redesign of Airport Expansion Plans (it's not airport or prairie - it is airport **and** prairie)
- Assist with finding additional funding
- Long-Term - Dedicated as a Nature Preserve - protected in perpetuity





# *21st Century Issues: Climate Change and Extinction*

- This fight is no longer local, it is no longer for just a little piece of remnant.
- We are fighting to Save Us
- Our outdated legal protections are not working



# AIRPORT *AND* PRAIRIE

- **Airport development means hundreds of new jobs**
- **Rockford airport is the fastest growing air cargo hub**
- **We want this success to continue - saving Bell Bowl Prairie does not mean that this economic development doesn't happen**



# DEVELOPMENT DOESN'T HAVE TO MEAN DESTRUCTION

We promote  
sustainable design  
practices





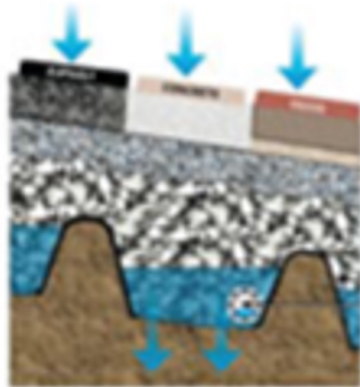
# ACRP

RESEARCH REPORT 178

AIRPORT  
COOPERATIVE  
RESEARCH  
PROGRAM

## Guidance for Usage of Permeable Pavement at Airports

Sponsored by  
the Federal  
Aviation  
Administration



The National Academies of  
SCIENCES - ENGINEERING - MEDICINE  
OF THE NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL ON  
SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING





key next **legal steps** as we see them now:

- Completed service of the amended Complaint on all Defendants (added IDOT).
- Once served, GRAA has 21 days to respond to the complaint, either with a Motion to Dismiss or an Answer. The US defendants have 60 days to respond in like manner.
- Prepare to serve discovery on all Defendants, seeking all documents related to the airport expansion plan and Bell Bowl Prairie.
- Be prepared to file another Motion for a TRO/PI if we have cause to believe GRAA is violating its agreement
- Continue demanding to work with GRAA regarding alternative plans.
- Once we have all the documents we needed from discovery, we would then schedule depositions of individuals involved in the expansion plan, etc.
- The court will issue a schedule at some point to assist the parties to accomplish everything necessary for trial, the date of which the Court will set at its discretion.



## **Fundraising** for legal costs, GoFundMe campaign

Sign on Support letter for Conservation Groups is in development

Exploring funding options for the airport re-design and construction

We have the bones of a **design consulting team** to assist the airport with alternatives. Our legal counsel will be approaching them to facilitate a/some meetings. To date, these have been denied even though our Governor supports this.

We are developing **long term strategies:**

- for making the IDNR consultation process more robust,
- some legislative initiatives for protecting INAI sites/last remaining prairies, with some incentives to private landowners to protect these special places so this doesn't keep happening. If BBP is saved, we want it to be permanently protected.



# Community Organizing







SAVE BELL BOWL PRAIRIE













Graphic and Prairie Watch Dog  
Coordinator Jessie Crow  
Mermel



# Bell Bowl Prairie Youtube Videos and other videos on Facebook

- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q\\_37eogdZwE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q_37eogdZwE) (Bob Dolgan)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zJl1njJyTo> (WTTW)
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mWEg\\_Si-zb4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mWEg_Si-zb4) (George Fell)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bLKsJKzmeqA>
  
- <https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1RdGhFZdlqpQSgmCX2SXvjSmh32JKd30H>



# What you can do... TAKE ACTION!

- Sign the Petition at [Thepetitionsite.com](https://thepetitionsite.com) over 90,000 signatures
- Sign the IEC Action Alerts on the website:  
<https://ilenviro.salsalabs.org/SaveBellBowlPrairie/index.html>
- Contribute to the GoFundMe campaign  
<https://www.gofundme.com/f/kt3ne-save-bell-bowl-prairie>

