

Illinois River Coordinating Council
Minutes of the Wednesday, January 21, 2004 Meeting
Pere Marquette State Lodge, Grafton

Call to Order: Lieutenant Governor Pat Quinn, Chair, called the meeting to order at 2:15 p.m. Harmony Dean, Office of the Lieutenant Governor, called the roll.

Roll Call:

Citizen Members

Richard Worthen, Michael Reuter (The Nature Conservancy), Daphne Mitchell, Laurene von Klan, Lee Bunting (Illinois Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts), Brad McMillan (Office of Congressman Ray LaHood), Nancy Erickson for Wendall Shauman (Illinois Farm Bureau).

State Agency Members

Diane Reinhart representing Director Jack Lavin (Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity), Mike Collin representing Director Joel Brunsvold (Illinois Department of Natural Resources), Steve Chard and Mike Beaty for Director Charles Hartke (Illinois Department of Agriculture), Michael Hine for Director Tim Martin (Illinois Department of Transportation).

Federal Agency Members

Roy J. Deda (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers), Lisa Scott representing William Graff (USDA Farm Service Agency), William Gradle (USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service), Robert Holmes (U.S. Geological Survey USGS), Ross Adams representing Dean Robert Easter (University of Illinois-College of Agriculture, Consumer & Environmental Science), Colonel Duane Gapinsky (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers), Captain Terrance Carter (U.S. Coast Guard), Doug Wilson (U.S. Department of Agriculture), Bill France for Tim Henry (US EPA-Region V), John Rogner (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service)

Approval of Minutes of the September 12, 2003 Meeting: A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mike Conlin, seconded by Mike Reuter and unanimously approved.

Lt. Gov. Quinn

Lt. Gov. Quinn opened his remarks by thanking everyone present. He said that this was the first time a meeting was held in southwest Illinois and that it's a great time to visit Madison and Jersey Counties because of eagle watching, which goes on from December 1 to March 1. He stated that Grafton is one of the great places in Illinois to see eagles. He mentioned how nature-based and family-based tourism is the fastest growing segment of tourism in the United States. He said Illinois needs

to emphasize this as part of its mission to develop the Illinois River and other rivers. He added that these are great recreational opportunities for the state. The Lt. Gov. mentioned the eagle resolution, which will make the 4th Saturday of January "Eagle Day" in Illinois. He stated that promoting eagle watching in Illinois is part of helping the Illinois River. He emphasized the importance of nature-based tourism in the Illinois River watershed.

Lt. Gov. Quinn proceeded to open up member comment period.

Comments by Council Members

Brad McMillan (Office of Congressman Ray LaHood)

Mr. McMillan thanked the Lt. Gov. He stated that he is anxious to see what is going to happen with WRDA. He said last year it passed the House of Representatives but not the Senate. He stated that he hopes it gets revitalized quickly this year because there are a number of key projects along the Illinois River, such as the Islands project in Peoria Lakes and at Pekin Lakes, projects Congressman LaHood really wants to see get going. Mr. McMillan stated that Congressman LaHood would keep pushing for it at the federal level.

Lt. Gov. Quinn

Lt. Gov. Quinn thanked Mr. McMillan and stated that the IRCC has to have an action agenda to get these various projects moving.

Mike Beaty-Illinois Department of Agriculture

Mr. Beaty stated that the Department of Agriculture and the Local Water Conservation Districts continue to partner to construct conservation practices to protect natural resources in the Illinois watershed. He added that in the Conservation 2000 program, IAD had 1,364 conservation projects, such as grass waterways and terraces, valued at \$2.3 million; these have been constructed with FY03 funds. In addition, IAD had 15 stream banks stabilization and restoration projects, such as bed way weirs and rock ripples, valued at \$383,000 and they were going through FY03.

Mr. Beaty stated that these projects reflect the commitment of the agriculture community to sound natural resource management in watersheds. He mentioned that IAD has been conducting groundwater sampling under Illinois' management of pesticides and groundwater. He stated that out of the 161 shallow monitoring wells in Illinois, 63 are located in the Illinois River watershed. Between August 2001 and September 2002, a total of 158 samples were taken, and only 7.9% had detectable levels of pesticides with none exceeding drinking water standards. In addition, 73 samples were collected between October 2002 and September 2003, and of those today only 4.1% had detectable levels of pesticides with none

exceeding drinking water standards. The remaining samples are currently being analyzed. He said that IDA continues to partner with Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers on Illinois River initiatives. He emphasized the importance of working together on sedimentation projects.

Lt. Gov. Quinn

The Lt. Gov. said that sedimentation is an important issue and that requiring cooperation among all agencies is needed.

Lee Bunting (Illinois Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts)

Mr. Bunting stated that they appreciate the funding they had received from the Illinois Department of Agriculture and the state legislature to get some projects going, to deal with natural resources, and to maintain CREP. He stated that more state dollars are needed for CREP to move on.

Bill Franz (Representing Tim Henry from U.S. Environmental Protection Agency)

Mr. Franz began by giving a small update on the watershed initiative from the U.S. EPA, which closed on January 15, 2003. He said the EPA would be reviewing 30 watershed projects in the next month and they would advise the headquarters on the recommendations. He also stated that, once there is a federal budget, the EPA would be able to fund those watershed projects. He said that by April 2004 there would be an announcement of 20 award winners out of the 30 watershed projects. He stated that he would be looking closely at those funds for the Illinois River watershed.

Lt. Gov. Quinn

The Lt. Governor stated that these are important federally funded projects. He then proceeded to introduce Mr. Deda from the U.S Army Corp of Engineers.

Roy J. Deda (U.S. Army Corp. of Engineers)

Mr. Deda gave an update on behalf of the Chicago office for Corp of Engineers on the aquatic nuisance species dispersal barrier. He stated the first permanent barrier will be finished by the end of February or early March. He stated that they are working in partnership with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources in the construction of both of the permanent barriers with the second permanent barrier to be completed in late summer of 2004.

Robert Holmes (United States Geological Survey- USGS)

Mr. Holmes stated that the National Waterfall Assessment Project is wrapping up at the Illinois River upper basin and a report will be out sometime between now and the next IRCC meeting. He said he would have some statistics on the lower Illinois River, which is the USGS quality assessment project that goes from Ottawa to the Grafton area. He said that one project the USGS is working on, in cooperation

with the Department of Agriculture, is the review of the method to reduce nutrient runoff of tile drains. Lastly, he stated that the USGS does the accounting for the stream flow for the Lake Michigan diversion and they recently moved their removable gauge to make room for the new electronic fish barrier.

Mike Conlin representing Director Joel Brunsvold (Illinois Department of Natural Resources)

Mr. Conlin stated that IDNR is very happy to be working with the Army Corp of Engineers on the second barrier project; it is under way as scheduled and the IDNR is very pleased with that. He stated that there hasn't been any movement by the Asian carp up the river beyond the point where IDNR found them in July 2002. They have been sampling with the Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, and the Chicago Metropolitan Water Reclamation District, every month. He stated that the Asian carp would have to move past two locks and dams, which are two significant physical barriers, before the invasive species would get into the deluxe port pool and possibly threaten the temporary barriers. Hopefully the carp will not advance further until the permanent barrier is installed above the present barrier.

Mr. Conlin stated that he was excited to see that the Forbes Company and Big River Fish Company were present to talk about opportunities for harvesting and marketing Asian carp. He mentioned that IDNR is pleased that Forbes is looking at Illinois for opportunities. He added that the harvest of Asian carp will benefit the native fish being displaced by the bio-mass of silver carp. He said that Asian carp are a big threat, and if we can turn this into something that is economically profitable for Illinois and help the river at the same time, that is something very positive.

Mr. Conlin stated that at the national level the bad news is that the National Aquatic Invasive Species Bill is still not moving along in Congress. He said this is a key piece of legislation for Illinois because the funding and authorization is needed to make Barrier One permanent. He added that money is needed for operation and maintenance of Barrier Two. The bill has many provisions, but specifically there will be a lot more money available to the states to implement their aquatic invasive species plans if the state plan is approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. He went on to say that Illinois has been approved for five years but the pot of money isn't growing, so the allocation of money to implement the Illinois plan every year continues to shrink and shrink.

Brad McMillan (Office of Congressman Ray LaHood)

Mr. McMillan gave an update on the Illinois River 2020 Initiative in the core portion, which comes out of the Water Resources Development Act of 2000 (Section 519) and distributed draft executive summaries. He stated that they are working towards two elements. One is a comprehensive plan stating the needs of the Illinois River Basin in terms of restoration needs, which is addressed by the executive summary. He added that this plan is the "big vision" that lays out what needs to be done. Additionally, once a particular plan is selected with the state, a specific dollar amount will be designated and the restoration level will be established. The program also needs an implementation framework for projects. He mentioned that no selection of a particular level of restoration has been made at this time, but it would be made in spring and they will have a complete draft in about April or May.

Mr. McMillan also mentioned two specific site projects. One project is Pekin Lake, where two management units are being reviewed. Another project, located at the northern portion, is moving a little bit more rapidly and is at the plans inspect stage. If all permits are approved, it is possible that there will be some construction this calendar year. Regarding the southern units, he stated those have lagged about 6 months behind Pekin Lake and that they are looking at Wabansi Creek tributary and to the Fox in a similar time frame, with potential construction during the next fiscal year. Regarding the Islands of the Peoria Lakes, he said they are past the feasibility phase and are now in plans inspect; so the process of getting a bid package is ready to be awarded. He said they would be looking again at potential construction the next fiscal year in 2005.

Lt. Gov. Quinn

Lt. Gov. Quinn replied by stating that it is very good to hear about this progress on these important issues.

Mike Reuter (The Nature Conservancy)

Mr. Reuter discussed sediment reduction and other environmental benefits for the Illinois River. He stated that he brought along some of the copies of the research update that The Nature Conservancy worked on with the Mackinaw River, the McLean County Water Conservation District, and the local water district office of NCRS to document the effectiveness of set management practices in that agricultural landscape. The research reveals how effective management practices are, if they are effective at all, at reducing sediment nitrates and other nutrients, and what their impact is on hydrological alteration. A number of these five-year analyses have been completed.

Mr. Reuter stated that Mr. Ted Eubanks has been contracted to develop some initial strategic steps to boost nature-based tourism in the Illinois River Valley. He added that they were pleased to receive a \$25,000 grant through the opportunity returns program awarded by the Governor. He thanked Lt. Governor Quinn for his support. He added that the grant was issued by the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Tourism, to the Peoria Area Convention and Visitors Bureau. Lastly, he said that Ted Eubanks will be making recommendations on nature-based tourism and that he looked forward to sharing those with everyone.

Gary Loss for Colonel Duane P. Gapinski (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers)

Mr. Loss made some updates on the Peoria Islands project. He said they are working on acquiring authorization. The upper Mississippi/Illinois River navigation study is moving along and they are going to work towards an April draft report with public meetings to follow. The environmental components of the study are substantial and will require a 50-year framework, which could cost as much as \$5 billion, with the navigation improvements of the locks and dams approaching up to \$2.3 billion. He added that the report will contain recommendations based on the study. In addition, he mentioned that the National Research Council is reviewing their work. There will be a meeting February 24, 2004, in St. Louis where they are going to meet with persons from Washington D.C. to review the recommendations.

Mr. Loss stated that the environmental management program has \$18 million available for 2004. He stated that some of the work is being done in the Illinois River, St. Paul, Rock Island, and St. Louis districts and they are waiting to see what happens in 2005. He stated that the upper Mississippi River plan is moving along. They hope to have a plan complete by December 2004. He added that they aren't getting the funding they had hoped for but it's progressing. Regarding the navigation system, they haven't approved RER for O'Brien and they need money to get that done in order to renovate the lock that is in desperate need of repairs. He added that they are finishing up the repairs of the walls above the lock port. Lastly, he mentioned that they are anxious to see what the president's budget holds for 2005.

Doug Wilson (U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development-State Director)

Mr. Wilson introduced himself and stated that USDA is available to help improve the health, safety and economic well being for people in rural Illinois and across the nation. He stated that there are seven agencies under the USDA and they are working in a wide array of programs. He said they are very concerned about the adequacy for economic development. He added that he greatly enjoys the working relationship with the Lt. Governor and that he looked forward to becoming more engaged in the rivers actions as well. WRDA is moving forward and there has been

discussion about the navigation study as well as other studies that are coming together.

Mr. Wilson stated that in the strategic working group they discussed how they want to benchmark and identify what has been accomplished and discussed in what areas benchmarks haven't fully developed. He stated that the economic development transportation component within the Integrated Management Plan has never been developed and that the strategic working group discussed various reasons why those weren't put together. He suggested that they need to figure out where they are today and how to move forward with that element. He added that they need to engage other groups and that they need to reach out to more people. He suggested that they should keep the integrated management plan relevant in the debate if they were going to move forward. He mentioned that the conservation, environment, and recreational components are very important. He added that everybody that utilizes the Illinois River for any business realizes that a healthy water system will be a benefit to business as well. He stated that it not only improves the environment but it also helps the commerce component. In the review process, they should look for ways to address the economic and transportation component within it. He added that the timing is right and it is very important for the well being of the council to address this issue.

Nancy Erickson Representing Dr. Wendall Shauman (Illinois Farm Bureau)

Ms. Erickson stated that arranging the IRCC meetings in various locations across Illinois gave IRCC members the opportunity to view what fine natural resources Illinois has. She stated that the Illinois Farm Bureau continues to support volunteer incentive-based programs with educational components. One of the programs they have supported is CREP, and she stated she was glad to see it on the agenda for discussion. She added that CREP has been a real positive program; a real win-win for landowners, farmers, and the environment.

Richard Worthen

Mr. Worthen stated that he is a citizen representative. He stated that he believes citizen representatives should remind people that water issues affect everyone. He stated that we should all be reminded that a healthy water system means healthy people. He added that when we have pollution, we have disease. Maintaining a healthy water system is our civic duty. He stated that we all have a responsibility to address the issue for the good of all people.

Lt. Governor Quinn

The Lt. Governor thanked Mr. Worthen, stating that he was very impressed by the way Madison County and all of the metro-east has worked with Missouri on many nature-based activities for families. He said that by encouraging nature-based

activities obesity can be battled in Illinois. He stressed the importance of developing nature-based activities along the Illinois River watershed.

Michael Hine-Representing Secretary Tim Martin (Illinois Department of Transportation)

Mr. Hine stated that he would like to make people aware that IDOT is working on a potential windfall with the USGS. He stated that the USGS proposed to provide aerial mapping of the entire state, which would normally cost them \$600,000, the USGS is putting in \$500,000 of that amount. He said if that happens, he will put out the potential data and people would be able to use it as a resource.

Daphne Mitchell

Ms. Mitchell stated that she is from Ottawa, IL. She said, as a citizen representative, she agreed with Mr. Worthen that their responsibility is to bring a message to the people and make citizens aware of what resources are available. She stated that it is their responsibility to protect the wonderful natural resources of Illinois, and that everyone should be very cognizant of what goes on in our rivers and streams. She added that her purpose is to get back to her community and tell them all the agencies and resources that are available and make the environmental, recreational, and economic aspects of the river work for them.

Lt. Governor Quinn

The Lt. Governor mentioned Starved Rock Bald Eagle days in January and the website www.saveoureagles.com. He said promoting eagles in Illinois is very important and that people need to be educated on the importance of the Illinois River.

William Kruidenier-University of Illinois-College of ACES (for Dean Robert Easter)

Mr. Kruidenier began by giving a brief update on the National Great Rivers Research and Educational Center. He stated that it is a partnership between the College of Agriculture Consumer and Environmental Sciences, Lewis & Clark Community College based out of Godfrey, the Illinois Natural History Survey, and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. The facility itself will be based on the Lewis & Clark Campus in Godfrey. Mount Price lock and dam would be the field station allowing river access both below and above the locks.

He added that since the last meeting the ACES reserve program has come into place and they have an active program focusing on rivers, river communities, and watersheds. He mentioned that there is going to be some exciting opportunities this summer. A second group of interns will be on site addressing some of the issues that are the focus of the council. ACES are offering an environmental education program this summer, which will be targeted towards teachers as well as students.

Mr. Kruidenier noted that Lewis & Clark College has become more aggressively involved and has carried the lead role in making the National Great Rivers Research and Educational Center a reality. He believes that in the long run the program will become a center of national attention as well as a significant international interest because of the importance of interrelationships between land and water. ACES believes the center will become a unique place to study those relationships. He concluded by saying that they look forward to continuing interaction with the IRCC.

Lt. Governor Quinn

The Lt. Governor stated that it is great that they have three great rivers coming together and they really need help to develop this with state and federal agencies as well. He then asked Mr. Kruidenier if Congressman Costello has been involved as well.

Mr. William Kruidenier

Mr. Kruidenier responded by saying that Congressman Costello has been the primary player and was instrumental in securing the initial funding for the program. He also added that the Congressman has pledged to secure federal funding for the construction of the field station at the dam. He mentioned the success of CREP and how last summer they had the 4th highest acreage enrolled in the U.S. He stated that it would be good for Illinois to get a lot more conservation on the land in the next 10-15 years.

Working Group Updates

Strategic Planning Management Working Group: presented by Karen Hobbs

Ms. Hobbs stated that they had a proposal they would like the IRCC to consider. The proposal basically asks the agencies to update the progress they have made toward the goals the IRCC proposed in the 1997 Integrative Management Plan (the plan that restores the river). She added that it had been a couple of years since the IRCC had been asked to give an update on the progress they have made. She said that, in order to move forward, they need an assessment of where they are now, what the problems are, and what changes need to be made in order to make the plan more effective. She said that all they are requesting is a simple update on the IRCC progress.

Lt. Governor Quinn

The Lt. Governor stated that the Strategic Planning Management proposal is a good idea and that the IRCC should vote on it. He then went on to explain the proposal, which is an update on the progress made every two years on the goals that were identified back in the Integrative Management Plan in 1997. He then added that he felt strongly about benchmarks. He invited other members to comment on it.

Brad McMillan

Mr. McMillan mentioned all of the efforts that have taken place in the Illinois River watershed. He stated a good idea would be to have a map tying all of these various efforts together to create a visual perspective of where projects are under way or have been completed, where the gaps are, and to show what ties those areas together. He added that this would need to be funded.

Lt. Governor Quinn

The Lt. Governor stated that this is a good goal for the year and added that his office should do something like that. He mentioned the Mud-to-Parks Project is going to begin in the spring. Mud is going to be dredged from the bottom of Peoria Lakes and put on barges that will travel to Chicago where the dredged sediment will be used to restore a slag field. He added that they had heard from John Marlin on how important this project is because they can use it as a model for other initiatives with river sediment. He said that every agency involved with the a river can do a census of what it is doing, and if there are gaps or areas where the Integrated Management Plan is not being followed, those areas need to be addressed in 2004.

Mr. Kruideneir

Mr. Kruideneir added that the National Great Rivers Program is creating a research and information database relating to watersheds, the rivers, their communities, and issues surrounding the interaction between these three. He said that this is a foundational piece that they can build on; take what you already know about these systems and add it to our current initiatives and incorporate it into a database.

Lt. Governor Quinn

The Lt. Governor mentioned that what the interns did last summer using computer mapping was great. He suggested that this year the interns should assist with the database project. He said that a motion from one of the members to set this sort of benchmarking initiative up and possibly provide a deadline for it for the next IRCC meeting.

Harmony Dean

Ms. Dean called roll and it was an unanimous "I" vote from all the members.

Lt. Governor Quinn

The Lt. Governor thanked the members for their support. He stated that the goal for the next meeting is to make some progress on this proposal and that it is something they have to do this year. He thanked the strategic work group and invited Jo Skoglund from the Community Action group to speak.

Community Action Group: presented by Jo Skoglund

Ms. Skoglund began by talking about "It's our River Day." She stated that it is a day to increase awareness for the river and they wish to kick this off this year. She stated they had come up with a mission statement. Their mission is to increase awareness and appreciation of the rivers in Illinois, through a series of events on education, recreation, and conservation, on the third Saturday of September. She stated that each third Saturday of September, a major river sweep takes place and it has been very successful. Twenty-two communities and 1200 volunteers have participated. The Community Action Group would like to make "It's our River Day" something more. They want to get people out that weekend to do recreation and education activities so they are able to come out to the river, learn about it, and appreciate it.

Ms. Skoglund stated they are going to try to come out with a five-year goal to know where this is going and then measure the results. This year the Community Action Group would like to start out with three to five pilot communities. She added that "River Sweep" communities would not count. They want communities to come forward with recreation and educational projects. The Community Action Group is asking the Lt. Governor's Office to develop a website in order to keep track of what communities are doing and find various river activities in Illinois. Communities will also financially benefit from this. She stated that she would like the council to help out in this because there is a wealth of resources that they can provide.

Lt. Governor Quinn

The Lt. Governor stated that he believes in websites and electronic democracy is a way to engage all kinds of people. He mentioned the successful military website his office set up and how it is the biggest website in state government. He stated that "It's our River Day" can be a success if the importance of rivers and clean water is emphasized. He stated that the Governor and he are big on community service for young students. He stated that it was not necessary to vote on this, it was just going to be made part of the agenda. This year it was important to concentrate and focus on making it a success.

Steve Kraft- Science Advisory Committee

Mr. Kraft made a recommendation that the IRCC bring in a team of nationally-recognized scholars; a team of biological, physical, and social scientists, and engineers, to do an independent review of the activities related to the Illinois River since the inception of the restoration activities. He stated that one of the things they see from the general accounting is that independent reviews are very effective tools to maintain cost effectiveness within projects and to enhance the creditability that the projects have among the general public. They have a recommendation that such a committee be empanelled during 2004. The SAC stands willing to work with the IRCC in terms of identifying scientists and engineers from the appropriate

disciplines. He stated that they envision a panel of five to seven people. The SAC will work with the Lt. Governor's office and other members of the council in terms of putting together materials and putting a schedule together. The next step would be the panel reporting back to the IRCC on ecological restoration activities. He stated that within the watersheds it would add immense creditability to the program and help them identify the most cost-effective use of the resources available.

Mr. Kraft stated that a subgroup of his committee had come out with a number of recommendations regarding polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs). He urged the Lt. Governor to take the lead in establishing a policy for the state dealing with these compounds. He mentioned that other states, like California, are already establishing policies to deal with PBDEs. He suggested that they look at the possibility of creating a task force, with meetings starting as early as March of this year, to address the issue in terms of Illinois and to develop a policy.

Mr. Kraft also mentioned that they are looking at some recent information from the University of Illinois referring to CREP and they will have a report coming out soon. He mentioned that the SAC would be reconstituted and he would like to know what the procedure to reconstitute the SAC is going to be.

Lt. Governor Quinn

The Lt. Governor stated that PBDEs were a hot ecological issue. He said it was an issue that should be dealt with by a task force to be appointed at the next meeting. He invited anyone interested in this issue to join the task force.

With respect to the independent review, he suggested that the members review the proposal and vote on it in the next IRCC meeting. Regarding the SAC, he stated that they need to know what current members wish to continue to participate and he would like suggestions from council members of any scientists who would like to serve on the SAC. He added that they want to open the door to anybody that knows of a scientist who may be interested. He suggested that in the next meeting they vote on a slate of new members for the SAC. He encouraged the existing incumbent members to continue their participation.

Debbie Bruce-Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Ms. Bruce began by giving an update on CREP. She stated they haven't had open enrollment in CREP for two years. During the state's Fiscal Year 2002, in November 2001, the state ran out of money for the enrollments. The cap on the federal acres was reached so the program closed. IDNR had a 9,000-acre waiting list at that point, which took the entire appropriations of state dollars for fiscal year 2003. This year they received \$4.8 million in capital bond money to try and reopen the program. In December 2002 they renegotiated an agreement with USDA for an extra 100,000 acres, so the federal acres will become available when

the state money becomes available. Last year \$3.4 million out of the 2003 CREP money didn't get appropriated to CREP. The money was obligated to private landowners who had signed up for state permanent easements, but they haven't received the funds.

Ms. Bruce stated that DNR needs to take all of the new dollars and make sure they honor all the private landowner contracts that are out there. She stated that if the new money comes back they will reconvene the CREP advisory committee, and DNR will consider the people who didn't make the waiting list for state conservation easements. She added that DNR has 11,000 acres waiting to get the federal side of CREP, and they would like to get the state side of the program. This would take about \$7.5 million. She stated that IDNR has requested \$9.5 million in capital bond money for state's Fiscal Year 2005. She added that they would like to ask IRCC for help in getting at least \$10 million in 2006/07.

Ms. Bruce mentioned Minnesota's bonding and CREP programs are a model for Illinois. She stated that they want to do a large wetland restoration, but IDNR has to go out and borrow the dollars. She mentioned that to do 11,000 acres have been on the list since 2001, they would have to borrow from \$50,000 to \$100,000. IDNR would do tree planting, conduct wetlands restorations, and pay the interest rates with this money. If the Minnesota model is followed, this would preclude landowners from having to wait and they would get a low-interest loan.

Lt. Gov. Quinn

The Lt. Governor stated that \$48 million is needed to do 100,000 acres by 2007. He said the money should be borrowed because this conservation reserve is very important to fighting the sediment in the river and is a key issue for Illinois. He suggested they propose to the Governor a way to borrow \$48 million.

He cited to the Minnesota bonding plan as a model and how a similar bill should be introduced in Illinois. He added that it wouldn't impact Fiscal Year 2005, but borrowing the money now and paying it back over a period of years, at the very same time that the river is being restored, is the kind of plan he has in mind. He stated that sedimentation has to be stopped and CREP is the way to do it. He added that he hopes the council understands that this is a key part of protecting the Illinois River from having more silt and sedimentation. He said that this project needs to be done this year. He suggested that the IRCC go to the Illinois Finance Authority for borrowing.

Mr. Chan from True World Foods

Mr. Chan began by wishing everyone a happy Chinese New Year. He stated that both True World Foods and Big River Fish Company are joining forces together to tackle the Asian carp problem. He mentioned that Big River Fish Company is one

of the best facilities on the Illinois River and has good capacity for handling large volumes of fish in a temperature-controlled environment. He stated that True World Foods is a nationwide processing facility with more than 20 operations in North America. True World Foods is the first company in Illinois to commercially market the Asian carp. True World Foods has a combination of working and scientific knowledge about this species.

Mr. Chan stated that Big River Fish Company and True World Foods put a proposal together to get rid of the Asian carp while at the same time creating an economic opportunity for Illinois. He stated that they propose taking 5 million pounds of Asian carp per year, and then market them for human consumption. In their proposal they are asking that Illinois fund their pilot project. True World Foods would take 5 million pounds of fish per year, and Illinois would fund 24 cents-per-pound. That comes out to \$1.2 million a year for a period of three years. He stated that this is not a subsidy for the fish. Instead, it is more of an economic incentive. The money will be given to the fishermen. He stated that this is fiscally prudent for Illinois. They will conduct a final analysis to see if it makes economic sense to commercially harvest the Asian carp and, most importantly, to see if the commercial harvest reduces the numbers of Asian carp.

Dan Druen & Jim Sneed-The Forbes Company

Mr. Druen began by stating that Forbes is an international company dedicated to the production of pathogen-free food and pharmaceutical grade products on the international market for human and animal consumption. He proceeded to explain the "Illinois Protein Extraction Facility Mission," which aims to build a successful protein extraction facility by harvesting the noxious Asian carp from the state's rivers and processing them into quality products for consumption. The goals of the facility are to restore the Illinois River, to revive the commercial and recreational fishing industry, to reduce the risk of Asian carp affecting the multi-million dollar Great Lakes Fishing and Tourism industries, to stabilize the Asian carp problem, to provide stable employment opportunities for veterans and citizens of Illinois, to build a successful long-term facility in the State of Illinois, and to facilitate the opening of United Veteran Beacon House in Illinois.

Mr. Sneed then gave a summary of the operations of a facility. He mentioned that Forbes would give veterans preference for employment. He stated that the United Veteran Beacon House (UVBH) program provides transitional housing and a reintegration program for homeless veterans across the nation. He added that the total projected cost of the Illinois Protein Extraction Facility Mission is \$5.5 million. They concluded by stating that the primary benefits would be employment for over 200 people, and within 2 years over 300 people, recovery of the native fish in the Illinois River, and capital investment in Illinois.

Lt. Gov. Quinn

The Lt. Governor stated that the IRCC should think about Mr. Chan's presentation and the Forbes presentation, while keeping in mind that the IRCC mission is to protect the Illinois River. He stated that the Asian carp was a major concern and a threat to the Illinois River and Lake Michigan. He added that, in addition to the Asian carp barriers, a commercial response should also be developed as a solution to this problem. He stated that the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the Illinois Department Commerce and Economic Opportunity are key players in this issue. He reminded the council that the Great Lakes fishing industry is a \$4.5 billion industry and the Asian carp presents a great threat to that industry. He asked the council members to reflect on this point.

Mr. Mike Conlin

Mr. Conlin stated the IRCC needs time to think about the commercial approach to the Asian carp. He added that IDNR has been working very hard on the Asian carp issue for the last 2 years and they've been looking for opportunities to market the fish. IDNR is exploring the economic benefits of Mr. Chan's and Forbes Company's plans.

Public Comments

Mr. Ron Einhaus, Marseilles, IL

Mr. Einhaus stated that he represented concerned citizens from the city of Marseilles, IL. He said that he was present to alert the IRCC on a possible additional problem for the Illinois River. He stated that the City of Marseilles has a pre-annexation agreement with a developer to put in a 340-acre ATV (all terrain vehicle) park, which will be constructed half-mile from the Illinois River. The land where the park is going to be constructed is prime land and many people will be affected by its construction.

He stated that people move there for peace and quiet and this will cause disturbance. In spring of 2003 they got 1584 petition signatures in 10 days against the building of this park. Residents sent 8,000 letters to their representatives stating they didn't want this park built. He stated that it is up to the City of Marseilles to allow this park to be built, but for the benefit of the community it shouldn't be constructed.

He added that this construction could create problems for the community and for the Illinois watershed. He wanted the IRCC to be aware of this problem and write the City of Marseilles a letter to stop the construction.

Other Business

Thursday, February 5, 2004- Peoria Watershed Conference

Adjournment

The Lt. Governor adjourned the meeting at 5:30 p.m.