

**Illinois River Coordinating Council  
Minutes of the Monday, June 9, 2003 Meeting  
Starved Rock Lodge and Conference Center – Utica, Illinois**

**Call to Order:** Lieutenant Governor Pat Quinn, Chair, called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. Ms. Harmony Dean, Office of the Lieutenant Governor, called the roll.

**Roll Call:**

**Citizen Members**

Bud Davis, Dr. Wendell Shauman, Mary Alice Erickson, Claudia Emken, David Pfeifer, Margaret Frisbie for Laurene von Klan.

**State Agency Members**

Terry Weldin-Frisch for Acting Director Jack Lavin (Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity), Mike Conlin for Acting Director Joel Brunsvold (Illinois Department of Natural Resources), Bruce Yurdin for Director Renee Cipriano (Illinois Environmental Protection Agency), Michael Hines for Acting Director Tim Martin (Illinois Department of Transportation), Warren Goetsch for Director Charles Hartke (Illinois Department of Agriculture).

**Ex-Officio Members**

Ross Adams, Gary Loss for Colonel William Bayles and Philip Bernstein, Tim Henry, Richard Hayes for Robert Holmes, Lt. Commander David Fish for Captain Raymond Seebald, Doug Wilson, John Hubbert for William Gradle, William Graff.

**Members Absent**

Lee Bunting, Dean Robert Easter, John Rogner

**Approval of Minutes of the March 27, 2003 Meeting:**

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Shauman, seconded by Hines and unanimously approved.

**Lt. Governor Quinn**

The Lieutenant Governor opened his remarks by thanking everyone at the meeting for their commitment to the cause, and said he felt everyone should view working on the Illinois River and its tributaries as a group effort. He said that while we took some great steps during the past legislative session, we have not completed the journey. He felt the "Clean Water Trust Fund" would not be controversial or interfere with other bond issues, so he expressed hope that by the end of 2003, and going into 2004, the resources would be available in the upcoming fiscal year to begin significant water projects in Illinois. The Lt. Governor encouraged everyone to develop new ideas during the next few months and to bring them to his or the IRCC's attention.

The Lt. Governor stated Illinois must move forward with tools such as water pollution permit fees because Illinois is lagging behind neighboring states in such policies. He stated that the law is a way for Illinois to send economic signals to companies that pollute Illinois water, and that water pollution is something that he wants to reduce and eliminate wherever possible.

Another piece of legislation Lt. Governor Quinn noted was the "Isolated Wetlands Bill," which had been approved by the Illinois House but is pending before the Senate. He wanted to salute Rep. Karen May from Lake County who sponsored the bill. The goal of the bill is to protect wetlands that are not regulated by federal law, such as isolated wetlands, and make them the responsibility of state and local governments. These wetlands are of very poor water quality and contribute to the erosion of the rivers among other problems. He warned that the Illinois Senate could be a difficult place for the bill, but the victory in the House was bipartisan, and he hoped for the same outcome in the Senate.

Lt. Governor Quinn encouraged the audience to contact their state senators to advocate for passage of the bill in the November session.

Lt. Governor Quinn stated he wants to ensure that CREP is moving forward and Illinois is maintaining its leadership in the CREP program. He discussed how he had been exposed to new ideas on invasive species and hoped to pass laws to help remove these species from the river.

On Memorial Day, the Office of the Lieutenant Governor hosted the American Eagle Foundation and an eagle named Challenger at a Chicago Cubs game, where the eagle soared over the fans at Wrigley Field and landed on the pitchers mound. Veterans and military families were the primary focus of this event, but the promotion and protection of eagles was also emphasized. He believes in protecting habitats not only for the eagles but also for Illinois citizens to observe and take pride in them, so habitat preservation is something he wants to explore.

Lt. Governor Quinn then asked each of the agency heads to provide a status update on their agency and their agency's legislative matters.

**Michael Hines, Illinois Department of Transportation (Representing Director Tim Martin)**

The main legislative issue that IDOT was interested in was House Bill 422, which passed in the House. They are waiting to see what happens in the Senate.

**Terry Weldin-Frisch, Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (Representing Director Jack Lavin)**

DCEO was not monitoring any specific legislation this past session. Weldin-Frisch did, however, have some issues that he received from other people he wanted to mention. First was SB 2182, the Ballast Water Act, which applies to non-indigenous species problem in Lake Michigan. From his perspective, how oceangoing and non-oceangoing vessels are defined in this legislation could have a major impact on DCEO's business along the Illinois River.

The next issue, although federal, is critical for commerce in Illinois. It pertains to the update of locks and dams from 600 ft to 1200 ft. These updates are done to accommodate how barges are moved today. In Illinois, our competitive advantage is the quality and availability of technology allowing us to reduce the cost of moving products down the river. He hopes the Illinois Congressional delegation remains aware of this issue and continues to work for Illinois in the global economy.

**Mike Conlin, Department of Natural Resources (Representing Director Joel Brunsvold)**

Conlin said that in the short term, the most important issue for DNR is to maintain the funding of programs such as CREP and Illinois Rivers 2020. Although these programs should be broader in scope, they are the two major programs that exist, and in the short term, their funding must be ensured. They could be modified and updated as needed, but funding is most critical. If these two programs are lost, he felt the Illinois River basin would be seriously harmed. He felt that it is necessary to emphasize to Congress how important CREP and Illinois Rivers 2020 are to Illinois.

Conlin stated the federal issues working group was going to meet again soon so they could develop an effective plan. The IRCC needs to act quickly to keep the necessary resources. Illinois Rivers 2020 does not have the proper amount of money, and it needs to be authorized beyond the current authorization of September 2004, hopefully for another 10 years.

**John Hubbert, United States Department of Agriculture (Representing William Gradle)**

Hubbert said in the 2003 budget, the soil and water conservation districts or the local partners put many of the projects on the ground though the incentive-based voluntary programs of landowners did not receive significant funding. They were able to garner about \$8.3 million that will be going out to the 98 soil and water conservation districts. About half of the \$8.3 million will be used in the Illinois River Watershed. Also, \$5.7 million had become available for the soil and water conservation districts' operations. Overall, he said, USDA was satisfied with their funding this year.

## **Bruce Yurdin, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (Representing Director Renee Cipriano)**

The bills Yurdin planned to report on had already been discussed in great detail previously in the meeting. The first was HB 422, the isolated wetlands bill. The second was SB 1903 to establish the “clean water bonds.” IEPA is waiting for it to be signed by the Governor.

Yurdin described the fees in SB 1903. The fees can be divided into two components of the water program: first, the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), a federally–required permit program administered by Illinois EPA. This program exists in 46 other states, and it is conducted using funds provided by USEPA. Between 20 to 30 NPDES programs are run by using permit fees.

SB 1903 is prescriptive in the types and/or amounts of those fees for each industry, or the flow of discharge by a particular industry and municipality. There is a fee structure established for separate programs under section 401 of the Clean Water Act. This ties into the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ permitting program and those fees are going to be established on a sliding scale ranging between a one-time fee of \$350 to \$10,000 per project. Municipal governments are not exempt and are subject to the same fees as other forms of industry.

The agency has been operating on General Revenue Funds for almost 30 years. The approach of putting fees on a point of discharge is to adhere to the idea of “the polluter pays.” Through this, the agency is aware of where their funds are coming from and the polluter is more conscious of their responsibilities.

## **Working Group Presentations**

### **Dr. Bob Williams – Speaking on behalf of the Community Action Working Group**

Williams stated the Community Action group came up with several issues:

- Continuing education and outreach is needed to get information out to the general public and to the people interested in particular issues.
- The IRCC requires a vehicle to communicate to the public.
- The challenge of urban sprawl and how exactly to address this problem. He cited Plum Island as an example of riverbank-threatening land acquisition from private developers, which he felt was a potential problem.
- Reaching out to the public by way of special events is important because the Illinois River belongs to all citizens. The group felt that special events are one way to promote economic development in smaller towns, and for them to reclaim a portion of the river.
- The need to focus on water quality including sediment, alternative hydrology and illegal dumping of materials. Habitat fragmentation is also a sub-issue within water quality. Habitat fragmentation occurs when animals along the Illinois River lose habitat due to digression of the effects of the river. Going further with water quality sub-issues, he cited alien invader issues. Dam removal is a significant sub-issue, particularly smaller dams along the “feeder streams.” Flooding is another important component of the overall water quality issue.

Williams concluded his remarks by stating that funding is a major issue and it is important for groups to pool their resources.

### **Margaret Frisbie (Friends of the Chicago River) – Community Action Working Group**

Frisbie spoke on behalf of the projects that the Community Action Working Group developed during the morning. The group developed 13 issues, and presented them in no particular order.

First, Frisbie introduced the idea of making information more accessible for people attempting to get to the river and also for those working on the Illinois River. The group felt that this is best

achieved by having diverse forms of communication: list-serve access, calendars of events, volunteer information and an “800” number for people to call from anywhere in the watershed for information. Hopefully, this information would all be available through a website.

Frisbie moved on to projects of habitat acquisition, community outreach and wetlands. While the members of the Community Action group needed more information about the process of acquiring lands, they believed the wetlands project would expect private citizens or corporations to donate land that would be protected under wetlands preservation.

The next project discussed was local watershed support, which emphasizes community involvement through raising money and other resources, and promoting awareness for each local watershed. The group then stressed the need to create education opportunities because it could be used to inform children and teachers in the community of the problems their watershed faces. Another somewhat related project is a newsletter targeting business owners with information on how they can become involved.

Frisbie introduced three proposed physical projects along the Illinois River. The need for comprehensive river trails as part of an overall attempt to generate interest and tourism along the rivers. Promotion and participation in Illinois River Sweep, an annual clean-up program throughout the watershed, and finally, increased riverfront development that would impact the economic viability of the Illinois River.

Related to the physical projects, the group felt that improving tourism is vital to the preservation and promotion of the Illinois River Watershed. She concluded by advocating a system of incentives for river quality and planning an Illinois River canoe race.

### **Claudia Emken (The Nature Conservancy) – Speaking on Behalf of the Federal Issues Working Group**

The Federal Issues Working Group discussed several issues, and due to the diversity of organizations represented, there were varied agendas. There are specific mark-ups and actions by Congress expected before the end of the summer and the next IRCC meeting.

In the working group, Emken said, they discussed several federal level programs that could help bring more money to the Illinois River and the Council needs to ensure that the money the Illinois River is already receiving is maintained. Other than CREP and Illinois Rivers 2020, programs such as EQIP, WRP, a number of programs at USEPA such as their new watershed initiative program, and the federal program of National Aquatic Invasive Species Act, are up for reauthorization, and there will be more mark-ups included in this bill.

Changes need to be made in Section 5-19, the implementer of Illinois Rivers 2020. The program expires in 2004 and needs to be extended so funding continues. The group also discussed the need for increased monitoring along the river and within the watershed. Monitoring is not meant to be random, but instead a program needs to be designed so that information gathered can help sediment projects define what their priorities are, and determine whether the programs are actually working.

One idea offered at the working group meeting was the possibility of conducting tours of the River for Illinois’ Congressional delegation and their staff. Tours would be conducted so the President’s Office of Management and Budget, and the Council on Environmental Quality, as well as key staffers, could come to the Illinois River and further understand why Illinois requires more resources.

The working group, Emken said, discussed how the IRCC and the four working groups are the vehicles through which the “stakeholders” are kept informed and in decision-making positions. Regardless of individual interests in the River, the Council is the place where varying interests are

brought so that different agencies can work together. The agencies involved with the Council need to continue to share information about their work with the Illinois River. The information needs to be integrated into existing programs, such as Illinois Rivers 2020 and CREP.

### **Jack Huggins (The Nature Conservancy) – Speaking on Behalf of the State Issues Working Group**

Huggins began by stating that each member of the working group had explained their individual issues. The issues he specified were: point source and non-point source water pollution, sediment control, wetlands protection and natural hydrology restoration. They discussed data collection, and Huggins noted there are representatives from Illinois Geological Survey and Illinois Water Survey in the working group. These representatives stated that there have been cutbacks in resources going toward data collection and surveying. Continuous funding is extremely important for all scientific data collection projects, otherwise the data integrity will be lost.

Other issues Huggins highlighted concerned an island in the Illinois River (Plum Island), and the Friends of Plum Island's concern over the ownership and development of Plum Island. An Illinois Paddling Council representative discussed the fact that Illinois lacks adequate recreational capabilities and the Illinois River is an excellent place to expand recreational opportunities, which would also improve public awareness of the river. An Illinois Farm Bureau representative reminded the group that the Illinois River is used for commerce.

Huggins concluded discussing the C-2000 Ecosystem Partnership. The partnership works to make it possible to preserve the natural resources of Illinois through ecosystem-based management, and through protection and enhancement strategies matched to each ecosystem's scale. The Partnership's funding has recently been reduced, resulting in the 39 partnerships in Illinois being basically volunteer-driven.

Becky Hoag, from the Fox River Ecosystem Partnership, discussed the lack of funding for staff support in the Conservation 2000 program run by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. She stated that existing statewide ecosystem partnerships have been formed through the IDNR C2000 program, and that they are lacking the funding which enables them to secure staff support to strengthen their efforts in the areas of education, water quality, integrated management planning, and funding of ecological projects.

### **Michael Reuter (The Nature Conservancy) – Speaking on behalf of the Strategic Planning and Management Work Group**

Reuter stated that the group feels that the general approach to the integrated management plan is good, and that much of what needs to happen on the Illinois River is articulated in the plan. However, the group felt that a list of specific projects and accountability are lacking in the plan. They felt that the first step to be taken is to prioritize the projects that would later be specified. He stated coordination of funding is a critical role of the Council, which should work to encourage increased private funding, maintain the current state funding, and increase the influence on the congressional delegation.

Reuter discussed the Illinois River Decision Support System as one method of getting information out to the public and appropriate agencies. The Integrated Management Plan has been difficult to access, and he believed that the Illinois River Decision Support website should have the plan so that the public could access it more readily. Other problems include: altered water flows, floodwater damage and invasive species.

Next, Reuter stated that pilot projects could influence policies concerning the Illinois River. Ecologically, Reuter said, we could improve urban and rural storm water management plans, environmental restoration programs and sediment removal. Reuter stated the working group also discussed water level dry-downs to restore the natural summer dry-downs within the basin.

Economically, Reuter stated the working group wants to expand projects with positive commercial impacts.

Reuter explained that the state needs to continue to invest in floodplain restoration and that several organizations are already doing this. The restorations do not need to be full scale, and should include biomass production behind levees. Hopefully, biomass will develop into a larger scale hydrological issue. Noting that sediment is a major problem in Illinois, Reuter said the group thought it would be wisest to focus on the headwaters of the Illinois River and ensure that there are proper farming practices. Furthermore, to ensure that proper farming practices are conducted, incentives should be in place, and there should be a strategic location quality to these incentives. Reuter felt that wetlands should be emplaced so that biomass production, storm-water management, and wildlife habitat interests intertwine, and thus are more efficient.

## **Special Presentations**

### **Gary Loss, United States Army Corps of Engineers**

Loss began by stating that he hoped resolution 519 would pass. The Environmental Management Program (EMP) programs reported at the last meeting are in the President's budget for \$33 million, including projects on the upper Mississippi and Illinois Rivers.

The Army Corps is working with the Nature Conservancy on their wetlands initiative. Also, the Peoria riverfront is a major authorization and they are working with the state on a design agreement for that project.

### **Rob Sulski (Illinois Environmental Protection Agency) – Chicago Area Waterway System Use Attainability Analysis**

Sulski opened his remarks by introducing the Chicago Area Waterway System Use Attainability Analysis (CAWS UAA), a multi-year study conducted by IEPA. The purpose of this study is to summarize the present use of CAWS and evaluate changes in the use that happened since the early 1970s when the last UAA study took place.

Sulski described the early history of the Chicago area, emphasizing the origins and occurrences of how the Chicago River was used as the original sewer system until 1860. He discussed cleanliness efforts of the past 100 years, starting in 1900. The main channel of Chicago Sanitary & Ship Canal and the Cal-Sag Channel started construction in 1900, and were completed in 1922. In the late 1930s, the Calumet, Stickney and North Side water treatment plants were completed. The U.S. Clean Water Act amendments were passed in 1972. The sewer system and treatment plants were upgraded in the in 1980s.

The last 30 years have shown dramatic improvements. In 1985, the 1 billion gallon mainstream Tunnel and Reservoir Plan (TARP) began operating. In 1988, Friends of the Chicago River was incorporated. In 1992, the first River Rescue Day was held. The City of Chicago published the Chicago River Development Corridor Plan in 1999. The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) of Greater Chicago and Chicago National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits were reissued with significant Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) language. Finally, in 2003 the CAWS UAA began.

Sulski said Chicago waterways support various uses, serving diverse and competing needs. The Clean Water Act requires every state to designate uses for each body of water. Once the state has designated uses, water quality standards are designed to protect those uses that must be adopted and enforced. Illinois has three water designations water: drinking water and food processing, general use water and secondary contact.

Sulski explained the TARP project is critical for Chicago area water pollution control and flood prevention. The construction of the reservoirs will be completed in the next 12 years, but most of the needed improvements have been made.

Sulski cited their website ([www.chicagoareaswaterways.org](http://www.chicagoareaswaterways.org)), presented a UAA project schedule and summarized actions that had been taken by IEPA at the time of the IRCC meeting, such as public meetings, meetings to discuss health advisory postings, meetings to discuss data acquisition and the first Stakeholder Advisory Committee meeting.

### **Dave Thomas (Illinois Department of Natural Resources) – Invasive Species Presentation & Proposal**

Dr. Thomas stated that invasive species are a pressing issue for Illinois. By his estimates, invasive species pose a \$137 billion negative impact on the U.S. economy. He said the zebra mussel alone is costing Illinois millions of dollars. Invasive species affect all areas of the state, urban, suburban and rural, and all rivers that run through the state. The Illinois River is in a special locale, however, due to its connection to Lake Michigan. Invasive species move between Lake Michigan and the rivers within Illinois, including the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers. This past May, the City of Chicago convened a meeting about invasive species with attendees from a variety of domestic and international locations. At this meeting, they evaluated how the connection between the Great Lakes and the Illinois River could be cut so that invasive species could not move as freely between them.

A few years ago, Thomas stated, an electric barrier was placed near Romeoville. This barrier was originally designed to prevent the round goby from leaving Lake Michigan and entering the Illinois River. By the time the barrier was completed, a variety of invasive carp that were rapidly moving up the river from the south were of greater concern.

This past April, Illinois State University and the Illinois State Academy of Science hosted a symposium on invasive species. A strong recommendation that came out of the meeting was the need to raise awareness to a higher level politically. They had been asked to approach Lt. Governor Quinn to see if he would be willing to take on the issue. Thomas felt that now is the time to do this and the Council should include representatives from a variety of interests within the state. He felt there is a two-year window during which this taskforce could meet and return with recommendations on legislation, policy, research, education and acquiring needed funding.

Thomas discussed invasive species on the national level. There is a national invasive species plan and National Invasive Species Council, which works with several states to create a comprehensive plan to prevent the infiltration and spread of invasive species. Right now, Illinois is reacting as individual problem species come into the state. Illinois has launched a major effort to prevent the spread of the Asian longhorn beetle that has been successful in working with a variety of agencies. The Illinois Dept. of Natural Resources is now looking at the Emerald Ash Borer that could decimate many of the state's ash trees. The ash borer is currently in southern Michigan and could cross into Illinois at any time. Other problems discussed were monkey pox and West Nile Virus, and Thomas felt that it was essential for Illinois to have a comprehensive plan for addressing these issues, rather than reacting every time a new species enters the state.

Thomas hoped the IRCC considers the issue of invasive species and supports his recommendation to take these issues to a higher level in state government. He felt Lt. Gov. Quinn is an appropriate person to lead this effort since it relates to other efforts on the Illinois River.

### **Lt. Governor Quinn**

Lt. Gov. Quinn felt the IRCC could assume a leadership role on battling invasive species.

A motion was made by Emken to urge Governor Blagojevich to authorize the Office of the Lieutenant Governor and the IRCC to take the lead in combating invasive species. Seconded by Hines. Lt. Gov. Quinn asked for discussion on the motion.

### **Andrew Swan, fisherman from the Starved Rock area**

Mr. Swan felt there could be an international market for the processed product from the Asian carp.

Lt. Gov. Quinn called for a vote on the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**John Marlin, Illinois Waste Management and Resource Center (WMRC), Speaking on behalf of the Science Advisory Council (SAC), Representing Dr. Nani Bhowmik**

Dr. Marlin stated he was representing Dr. Nani Bhowmik, and that Dr. Bhowmik apologized for not attending the meeting. The SAC had met with Lt. Gov. Quinn's staff to establish the future direction of the SAC.

Upon the request of Lt. Gov. Quinn, Marlin described the Peoria Lakes Project for the Council. Last fall, he and his team removed 900 tons of sediment from the bottom of Peoria Lake, put it on a barge and brought it to Chicago. The IEPA allowed them to place the sediment at the Paxton 1 landfill at Lake Calumet, which was a highly contaminated area. The IEPA put three feet of impermeable clay over the contaminated soils and 900 tons of sediment over this layer.

The sediment was removed from the barge using conventional equipment and hauled about one mile by commercial truck. The sediment set over winter. It was laid out so that it was one foot deep in most areas, but two and one-half feet in some. During the winter the sediment froze and thawed and went from being a claylike mud to currently having soil structure. They planted five different kinds of commercial grass and prairie plants that are growing well.

The success of this experiment bodes well for another project on a grander scale. This would renovate some Chicago brownfields using a similar process. Waterways run along many Chicago-area brownfields, making shipment of sediment relatively inexpensive. It is cost-effective compared to trucking in soil from an outside location. The new project will be at the former US Steel site, which the Chicago Park District is converting into a lakefront park.

Dr. Marlin addressed a question about the impact upon mussels in the area of the project, by stating that the preexisting shells would stay with the sediment. While evaluating the soil, Marlin discovered a layer of dead fingernail clams about one and one-half inches thick from about 1955, as well as other shells that were found. After a number of years, these shells have lost their viability. The shells also raise the PH levels in the soil, trapping in metals, making them not bio-available, which is beneficial for the organic life in the area. To address the question of a local fisherman, the sediment would be dredged from an area checked ahead of time for clam and mussel beds so potential harvesting would not be disrupted.

**Debbie Bruce, Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) Update**

Bruce began by stating that in the state budget for FY '04, CREP received an appropriation for \$4.8 million in capital dollars for conservation easements. CREP also received approximately \$500,000 in general revenue funds to help continue monitoring and to cover some of the administrative costs associated with monitoring. She thanked everyone who supported receiving the appropriations and said she was excited that the program was going to continue.

In December 2003, CREP received 100,000 acres from USDA for the program on the federal side and this land is to be allocated over a 5-year period. The program had been extended to December 31, 2007, and was to be opened up each year in August, so 20,000 acres could be available if there are state appropriations. Before the end of June, the CREP advisory committee is going to meet to discuss how to implement the program. Then the state executive director of the Farm Service Agency, and the directors of the Department of Natural Resources and Department of Agriculture will decide how many acres will become available. Following this decision, the actual sign-up for acres will take place.

One asset and problem with CREP is the popularity of the program. Bruce said most people had forgotten that in 2001 CREP ran out of acres on the federal side. USDA gave CREP 32,000 acres in August 2001, and those acres were depleted by October 2001. With the federal acreage that had been used, \$9 million in state appropriations had been spent, and were left with a state waiting



list of 118 people with only 9,000 acres left. The waiting list was taken care of by FY '02 state appropriations. An additional \$4.8 million will provide approximately 7,000 acres worth of easements.

### **Public Comment Period**

#### **Chief Joseph “Standing Bear” Schranz, The Midwest Save Our Ancestors Remains & Resources Indigenous Network Group (SOARRING) Foundation**

Schranz began by explaining that The SOARRING Foundation protects Native American burial sites and sacred sites from potential desecration. He was pleased to see, and was impressed by, the devotion of Lt. Gov. Quinn and the IRCC to protecting the water of Earth. Schranz is concerned with protecting the burial grounds on Plum Island, as well as the eagles that roost there during the winter. He hopes Plum Island will become an important part of Lt. Gov. Quinn’s agenda.

#### **Don Goerne, Friends of Plum Island**

Goerne advocated for the protection of Plum Island from development. He made the case that the area is an important wintering site for bald eagles, and while he supports economic development, he said it should occur responsibly. He felt respect for the natural environment was essential. The group’s website is [www.friendsofplumisland.org](http://www.friendsofplumisland.org).

#### **Terry Ingram, The Eagle Nature Foundation**

Ingram said when he first became aware of the issues surrounding Plum Island, he felt it was within DNR’s capacity to remedy the situation by purchasing Plum Island. When his group had been involved in past battles such as Rice Lake, they went to court. They prevented the strip mining of Rice Lake and he hopes they would not have to go to court to save Plum Island. Ingram urged state agencies, such as DNR and officials like Lt. Governor Quinn, to become involved in protecting Plum Island. He hoped DNR understands how unique Plum Island truly is and they need to further evaluate how important the island is to the Illinois River.

#### **Chris Slattery, Trust for the Public Land**

Slattery expressed concern that the ability of DNR to purchase Plum Island was inhibited by the Openlands Program, which is one of the few programs that provides funds to purchase land. The pressures on the program and funding cuts bringing available funds from \$40 million to \$5 million had made DNR’s ability to purchase Plum Island almost impossible. She hopes DNR’s budget will be increased so the purchasing of Plum Island is an option.

### **Other Business:**

Upcoming events:

**Friday, September 12, 2003** – IRCC Quarterly Meeting, Holiday Inn at Wolf Point (350 N. Orleans St., Chicago); working groups begin at 10:00am and the IRCC quarterly meeting convenes at 1:30pm.

**Saturday, September 20** – Illinois River Sweep organized by Friends of the Illinois River.

**Saturday, September 27, 2003** – 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Chicago River Summit – Holiday Inn at Wolf Point (350 N. Orleans St., Chicago)

**Tuesday, October 7, 2003** – IRCC Quarterly Meeting, Holiday Inn City Centre (Peoria) in conjunction with the 2003 Governor’s Conference on the Management of the Illinois River System, October 7-9, 2003. ([www.heartlandwaterresources.org](http://www.heartlandwaterresources.org)) Reception begins at 5:00pm and the IRCC meeting convenes at 6:30pm.

### **Adjournment:**

Shauman moved to adjourn the meeting. Davis seconded the motion, which passed unanimously at 4:15 p.m.