



The Illinois Prairie Path Newsletter

September 2016

Michigan Lily still found in Elmhurst Great Western Prairie



In July, volunteers were deep in the prairie removing sumac trees (an invasive species) when a volunteer shouted, "look what I found!" It was a Michigan Lily. Prairie preservation is saving original species such as the Michigan Lily. The flower has been seen before, but it is not abundant. Continued prairie management is keeping them there. More information is available at: www.illinoiswildflowers.info/prairie/plantx/mich_lilyx.htm

October

Elmhurst ^{Great} Western Prairie Work Day
Saturday, October 15, 9 a.m. to Noon
www.epd.org/Elmhurst-great-western-prairie

Elmhurst Bicycle Club: IPP Cleanup
Saturday, October 22, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.
Meet: Villa Park Depot (Villa Ave. and IPP)
www.elmhurstbicycling.org

Sierra Club River Prairie Group
IPP Work Day in Glen Ellyn
Saturday, October 22 - 9 a.m. to Noon
Meet: 485 N. Montclair St. - east end pkg lot
www.sierraclub.org/illinois/river-prairie

November

Illinois Prairie Path - ANNUAL MEETING
Sunday, November 6 - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.
Wheaton Memorial Park Leisure Center

Elmhurst Great Western Prairie Work Day
Saturday, November 19, 9 a.m. to Noon
www.epd.org/Elmhurst-great-western-prairie

For up-to-date listings and locations of all Path events visit www.ipp.org/events.

Be sure to "Like" the Illinois Prairie Path on Facebook.

Everyone is Welcome to Attend the Path's Annual Meeting



Sunday, November 6 at 2 p.m.
Annual Meeting of the Illinois Prairie Path
Wheaton Memorial Park Leisure Center
208 West Union Avenue
Year in Review – Board of Directors
Music – Roger Kotecki
Refreshments following the meeting

The Annual Meeting Tradition was started by the Path's Founders. The purpose of the Annual Meeting is to review its fiscal year (ending July 30) with the general public and Path Members during a VERY brief business meeting. There will be an explanation of the Annual Financial Report. Also, current members of the Board of Directors will be introduced and a vote will be taken to approve their new terms of office. We hope to see you there!

North Central DuPage Regional Trail plans announced

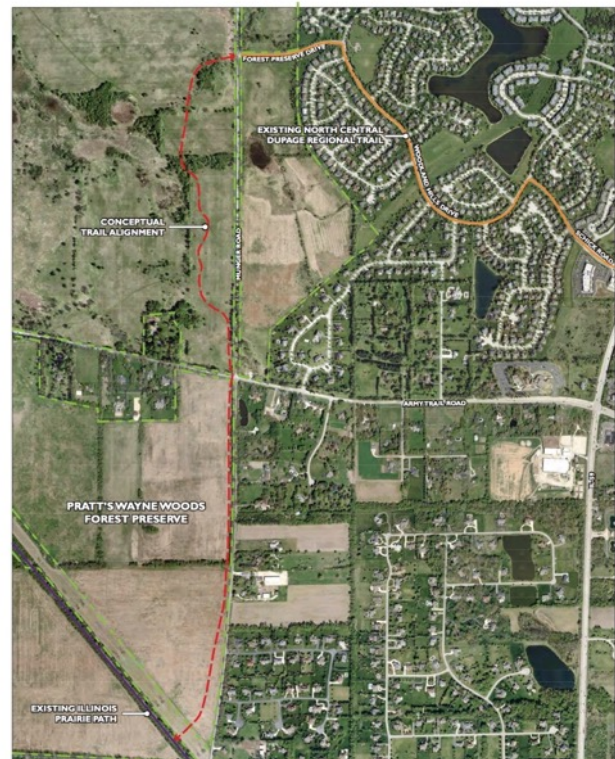
(From the website of the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County)

The North Central DuPage Regional Trail is a 35-mile long regional bicycle trail spanning the northern part of the county which, when complete, will connect the Elgin Branch of the Illinois Prairie Path on the west to the Forest Preserve District of Cook County and Schaumburg Bikeway System on the east.

The Forest Preserve District has been working cooperatively with DuPage County, local municipalities and park districts to implement this trail for decades.

The entire trail is complete except for the final remaining segment that will connect existing trails in Bartlett, west of IL 59, through Pratt's Wayne Woods Forest Preserve in Wayne to the Illinois Prairie Path – Elgin Branch. This segment is estimated to cost \$3,100,000 for engineering and construction.

The Forest Preserve District recently received \$1,500,000 in Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds for the construction of this final remaining segment and is currently working on Phase I engineering for the project. Next steps toward implementation include applying for additional grant funds to cover the funding shortfall, completing the necessary engineering studies and public outreach. To meet the terms of the STP grant, the trail must be under construction by 2021.



North Central DuPage Regional Trail
Pratt's Wayne Woods
December 2015
0 400 800 Feet
N
Legend
Forest Preserve Boundary

Advocacy Alert!

Recently, the Illinois Prairie Path Board of Directors sent two letters requesting the County of DuPage to take action on two items that could affect the current and future functioning of the Path:

1. **The Trail Coordinator position**, once held by Dan Thomas, and before him, Deborah Fagan, **needs to be filled as soon as possible**. Trail Coordinators have been the 'go to' people on trail issues for residents, communities, and the County Board. Their work also brought in millions in grants that were used to improve the trail system, demonstrating the value of the position to the County government and county taxpayers.

2. **The Illinois Prairie Path Board, trail organizations and trail users throughout the region need to be involved in the re-routing of the Path through the Aurora Branch - between Diehl and Eola Road**. An article in the *Naperville Sun* newspaper reported "**Open meetings with the public might not be required.**" The Path Board trusts that the county will:


- **Hold open meetings** so that all interested parties may better understand the proposed changes and offer their important ideas and suggestions **in the early stages of this project**.
- **Involve and work cooperatively with regional trail user organizations**, especially the **Illinois Prairie Path** members and board of directors in all stages of this process - to create the **safest, most environmentally sound and cost-effective improvements possible**.

To voice your opinion on these issues, contact Chairman Dan Cronin at chairman@dupageco.org.



"Footpaths are defended with spirit by their users."

May Theilgaard Watts



The Illinois Prairie Path

July 12, 2016

Dan Cronin, Chairman of the DuPage County Board
 Christopher C. Snyder, P.E., Division of Transportation
 John Loper, Transportation Planning Coordinator
 Jack T. Kneuepfer Building
 421 N. County Farm Road
 Wheaton, IL 60187

Dear Chairman Cronin, Christopher Snyder and John Loper,


The purpose of this letter is to celebrate and honor the **excellent trail systems** within DuPage County, and to advocate for the continued coordination of trail safety, maintenance, enhancements, and expansions through a full-time Principal Planner/Trails Coordinator position within DuPage County's Division of Transportation.

The Illinois Prairie Path non-for-profit corporation (IPPC) has been grateful for the leadership DuPage County has shown in developing our gem. The Path, now in its 53rd year, continues to be a nationally recognized trail system.

Our 2013 Trail Use Survey revealed that:


- The Path supports the **health and wellness** practices of residents of all ages, with multi-use recreational paths. An average of 122,016 residents use the Path every year.
- The Path supports the **economy** of the region. People buy homes near the Path. They purchase walking, biking and equestrian equipment to use on the Path. They enjoy local food and beverage establishments. They pay taxes knowing a portion will benefit our amazing regional trail system.
- The Path engages citizens with an ever-present connection with the natural **environment** on a daily basis, and hundreds of volunteers and businesses participate in annual cleanups and prairie work days.

Therefore, the IPPC strongly encourages DuPage County to hire without delay, the Trail Coordinator position due to the resignation of Dan Thomas. Mr. Thomas and his predecessor Deborah Fagan did an outstanding job being the 'go to' person on trails issues for residents, communities, and the County Board. Their work also brought in millions in grants that were used to improve the trail system, demonstrating the value of the position to the County government and county taxpayers. **Our Board of Directors would like to be assured that the Trail Coordinator/Transit Planner position will be filled soon.**

Sincerely,


Erik Spande, President, Illinois Prairie Path Board of Directors
 Erik.Spande@comcast.net / Cell: 630-871-6640

Susan Degnan, Vice President	Erik Andersen	Paul Mooring
Rob Speri, Treasurer	Susan Kaley	Ken McClurg
Mary Jo Malach, Secretary	William P. Kovacs	Sam Pyme
John Marconnet	Heather Mahler	Susan Terwedow



The Illinois Prairie Path

August 16, 2016

Dan Cronin, Chairman of the DuPage County Board
 Donald Puchalski, District 1, DuPage County Board
 Christopher C. Snyder, P.E., Division of Transportation
 John Loper, Transportation Planning Coordinator
 Jack T. Kneuepfer Building
 421 N. County Farm Road
 Wheaton, IL 60187


Chairman Cronin, Donald Puchalski, Christopher Snyder and John Loper,

Our Board of Directors learned from an article published in the *Naperville Sun* that you are planning to reroute the Path along the Aurora Branch, southeast of Diehl and Eola Roads. To quote: "The project will involve behind-the-scenes meetings with property owners, utilities, IDOT and other agencies. A memo from the consultant stated that because there was no expected adverse impact to nearby property and no significant change to the roadway, **open meetings with the public might not be required.**"

We trust the County will:

- **Hold open meetings** so that all interested parties may better understand the proposed changes and offer their important ideas and suggestions **in the early stages of this project**.
- **Involve and work cooperatively with regional trail user organizations**, especially the **Illinois Prairie Path** members and board of directors in all stages of this process - to create the **safest, most environmentally sound and cost-effective improvements possible**.

We are concerned that abandoning a segment of the former railroad right-of-way and relocating it to an alternate road right-of-way will set a bad precedent for future development. What will be the disposition of the former right-of-way? Will the county retain it? Will it revert to the adjacent property owners? Will they pay for this additional land?

We look forward to hearing from you and becoming part of this process.
 Sincerely,


Erik Spande, President, Illinois Prairie Path Board of Directors
 Erik.Spande@comcast.net / Cell: 630-871-6640

Susan Degnan, Vice President	Bill Kovacs	Ken McClurg
Rob Speri, Treasurer	Heather Mahler	Dennis Terdy
Mary Jo Malach, Secretary	John Marconnet	Susan Terwedow
Erik Andersen		
Jeff Friedman		
Susan Kaley		

New SAFETY challenges for Path walkers, runners, bikers, equestrians

On August 12, two representatives from the DuPage County Sheriff's Office - Corporal **Mike Urso**, Neighborhood Liaison Officer, Patrol Division and **John Luxem**, Volunteer Bike Patrol Supervisor - attended the Illinois Prairie Path Board Meeting.

Urso and Luxem, along with other trained volunteers, use bikes, ATVs or 4-wheelers to patrol segments of the Path in DuPage County.

They are asking YOU to put SAFETY as YOUR number one priority whenever you are on the Path.


"Everyone on the Path should be with a safety buddy," advised Corporal Urso. "Many segments of the Path are in remote, less-traveled areas. If an accident happens, your friend can call for help. If you run into trouble, there is strength in numbers. Your eyes and your ears can alert you to safety problems in front of or behind you."

For your safety, and the safety of others, please be alert when you are enjoying the Path.

DuPage County Trails - Personal Safety Tips

There are many miles of nature trails in DuPage County. While you're enjoying the great outdoors, please don't forget these simple tips to keep you and those around you safe:

- ✓ Always be aware of your surroundings.
- ✓ Know where you are on the path in case you need assistance.
- ✓ Make sure someone knows where you are going and when you are expected back.
- ✓ Call 911 if you see something suspicious or feel threatened.
- ✓ Try not to walk, job or ride your bike alone. There is safety in numbers.
- ✓ If you own a cell phone, be sure the batteries are charged and carry it with you.
- ✓ If you wear headphones, keep the volume low enough so you can hear what is going on around you.



DuPage County Sheriff's Office
Sheriff John E. Zaruba
501 N. County Farm Road
Wheaton, IL 60187

Emergency: 911 (Telephone & Cellular)
Non-Emergency: (630) 407-2400

www.dupagesheriff.org
www.facebook.com/dupagesheriff

Photos from the Wheelmen Event in Downtown Wheaton - July 8

Photos courtesy of Ken McClurg. For more information visit thewheelmen.org.

