

**Label: "kankakee comments - Jan 2017  
(part 1)"**

**Created by:r3planning@fws.gov**

Total Starred Messages in label:34 (34 conversations)  
Created: 05-08-2017 at 23:37 PM

# Conversation Contents

## Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area

**"Ross-Shannon, Bruce" <brs@mjwpc.com>**

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**From:** "Ross-Shannon, Bruce" <brs@mjwpc.com>  
**Sent:** Wed Jan 25 2017 09:01:51 GMT-0700 (MST)  
**To:** "r3planning@fws.gov" <r3planning@fws.gov>  
**Subject:** Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area

Good morning, I am writing in response to the request for public comment on the pending conservation planning documents for the Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area. I am familiar with the area and the natural resource and natural areas are of great importance nationally, not just here in the Midwest. These areas are deserving of great protection and careful consideration in any plans for future use of the entire region.

I agree with and support the objectives and priorities delineated in the Conservation Opportunities Map and feel strongly that the USFWS should move ahead to finalize and implement a Land Protection Plan for the Refuge on the basis being proposed.

I have done a lot of legal work over the years on conservation easements from private individuals to not-for-profit land trusts and local conservation organizations and to governmental bodies, such as the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. I find that granting of such conservation easements is an economical and effective way to preserve important natural resource and build large regional conservation areas (and smaller areas too) without necessity of complete public ownership or access. This approach has little disturbance on existing communities and, in my experience, stabilizes communities. I consider your proposal to be excellent and urge you to move ahead to finalize the proposed Land Protection Plan.

### **Bruce Ross-Shannon**

McGreevy Williams, P.C.  
6735 Vistagreen Way  
Rockford, IL 61107  
815.639.3700  
815.639.9400 (fax)  
[brs@mjwpc.com](mailto:brs@mjwpc.com)

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# Conversation Contents

## Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area

**Elizabeth Plonka <eplonka1@yahoo.com>**

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**From:** Elizabeth Plonka <eplonka1@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tue Jan 24 2017 20:24:01 GMT-0700 (MST)  
**To:** <r3planning@fws.gov>  
**Subject:** Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area

Dear Ms. Holler, I'm writing in response to your call for comments to voice my support for the Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area. The Momence Wetlands, black oak sand savannas in Pembroke, and Iroquois County Conservation Area are significant natural assets in the region, and I support whatever means USFWS deems necessary to protect them and to promote connecting natural landscapes. I prefer land acquisition so that these areas are in public ownership and available for public access, but can also support working with private landowners who promote conservation of these resources. These lands are far more valuable preserved for their unique ecosystems than as farmlands. The National Wildlife Refuge could also be an economic boon for the surrounding communities. Proper preservation and care-taking of these sites will draw many interested people to the area. Birders, wildlife enthusiasts, naturalists, botanists, and anyone who enjoys natural beauty and the out-of-doors will visit multiple times a season as these complex ecosystems have much to offer. While in the area they will need restaurants, hotels, services, and even guides and interpreters. These amenities can be provided by the local communities who will reap economic benefits from protecting the land instead of degrading it. Thanks for the opportunity to comment. Sincerely, Elizabeth Plonka Chicago, IL

# Conversation Contents

Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge & Conservation Area

**Barbara McDonough <barb.mcdonough@att.net>**

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**From:** Barbara McDonough <barb.mcdonough@att.net>  
**Sent:** Tue Jan 24 2017 18:48:28 GMT-0700 (MST)  
**To:** "r3planning@fws.gov" <r3planning@fws.gov>  
**Subject:** Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge & Conservation Area

Dear Ms. Holler,

I support the USF&WS plan for proceeding with the Refuge. Helping farmers turn some of their marginal, flooded land back to viable wildlife habitat is an excellent idea. It's a win-win outcome that makes good sense all the way around, provided the owners are willing to make the change.

Sincerely,  
Barbara L. McDonough  
18442 Gottschalk Avenue  
Homewood, Illinois 60430

# Conversation Contents

Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge

**Okaw Grove <[okaw.grove@gmail.com](mailto:okaw.grove@gmail.com)>**

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**From:** Okaw Grove <[okaw.grove@gmail.com](mailto:okaw.grove@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Tue Jan 24 2017 10:20:57 GMT-0700 (MST)  
**To:** <[r3planning@fws.gov](mailto:r3planning@fws.gov)>  
**Subject:** Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge

To: [r3planning@fws.gov](mailto:r3planning@fws.gov)

Subject Line: Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge & Conservation Area

Dear Ms. Holler,

This e-mail is in response to your request for public comment on the conservation planning documents USFWS has developed for the Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge & Conservation Area.

I am writing to support the FWS approach for growing the Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area.

The Refuge units delineated on your Conservation Opportunities map include natural resources of regional and global significance, and also identify highly restorable acreage to create buffer for important natural areas and corridors for wildlife. Your focus on the broader landscape is critical for preserving natural areas, rare plants and animals, and providing recreational opportunities in this highly urban and agricultural landscape. I agree with your conservation priorities, and particularly like how USFWS will acquire conservation easements from private (and willing) landowners in addition to traditional land acquisition. I applaud and endorse the FWS' concept of working with the local community to mesh the goals and impacts of the Refuge with the those of the local people.

I support your agency's approach to growing the Kankakee Refuge.

Sincerely,

Bob Szafoni  
Sadorus, IL

[Okaw.grove@gmail.com](mailto:Okaw.grove@gmail.com)

# Conversation Contents

Kankakee NWR&CA

**DJ Brooklyn <djbrooklyn@comcast.net>**

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**From:** DJ Brooklyn <djbrooklyn@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Mon Jan 23 2017 18:55:08 GMT-0700 (MST)  
**To:** <r3planning@fws.gov>  
**Subject:** Kankakee NWR&CA

*Dear U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,*

*Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Conservation Opportunities Map for the Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area.*

*I support the establishment and expansion of the Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area through the purchase of land from willing sellers because publicly-owned natural areas allow all people to enjoy nature and engage in outdoor recreation.*

*Furthermore:*

## ***Restoration and Habitat Potential***

- The Conservation Opportunities map highlights great opportunities to enhance and connect important cores and corridors of wildlife habitat in the Momence Wetlands, which includes globally significant black oak sand savannas, regionally significant bottomland hardwood forests, and other landscapes that harbor threatened and endangered species.*
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service prioritizes conservation of essential habitat for waterfowl and other migratory birds whose populations are in steep decline. The footprint of the Refuge is also on the migration pathway for the federally endangered whooping crane.*
- I agree with prioritizing new natural connections between the Iroquois State Wildlife Area and the Willow Slough State Fish and Wildlife Area in Indiana. We would also like to see a corridor to connect the Momence and Kankakee conservation areas.*
- The Kankakee River is a National Water Trail and a protected Land and Water Conservation Area, and naturally connects high quality landscapes in the Refuge. I see great value in preserving land along the river as a wildlife migration corridor, and working with area partners to enhance the quality of the waterway.*

## ***Recreation and Healthy Living***

- I support the additional recreational opportunities for people to watch wildlife, paddle, fish, hunt and hike.*
- I feel the construction of a welcome center with restrooms and a place to refill water bottles would encourage trips to the Refuge.*

## ***Landowner Connections and Community Engagement***

- I agree that it is critical to integrate conservation lands into the existing fabric of our human communities, working lands and local economies.*
- I recognize the firm commitment to exclusively work with interested land owners at the*

*level they want to participate. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service should highlight on the Conservation Opportunities Map that participation is strictly voluntary.*

### ***Economic Importance of Open Space***

- I recommend continuing to clarify that the mapped conservation priorities will work in harmony with existing agricultural operations and other land uses planned for economic development, so that residents value the Refuge as assets to local communities and our region.*
- I suggest reaching out to communities with metrics on how the Refuge will be a strong economic driver, and discuss the ecosystems services value of open space as a financial benefit for the local area.*

### ***Resiliency and Stormwater Management***

- For landowners that decide to participate, I see great potential for restoring flood-prone farmland and marginal agricultural land to wildlife habitat.*

*Sincerely, Gregory Ott*

"With the sun on my shoulder and the wind in my back  
I will never grow older, at least not in my mind  
I feel so wonderful, wonderful, wonderful the way I feel  
I feel so wonderful, wonderful, wonderful the way I feel" - 'Wonderful (The Way I Feel)' by My Morning Jacket

# Conversation Contents

## Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge & Conservation Area

**Seth Marcus** <sethwmarcus@gmail.com>

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**From:** Seth Marcus <sethwmarcus@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Mon Jan 23 2017 18:32:16 GMT-0700 (MST)  
**To:** <r3planning@fws.gov>  
**Subject:** Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge & Conservation Area

Dear Ms. Holler,

I am writing as a public comment on the conservation planning documents USFWS has developed for the Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge & Conservation Area.

The Refuge units on the proposed Conservation Opportunities map include natural resources of regional and global significance, and also identifies restorable acreage to create buffer for important natural areas and corridors for wildlife. For example, the map highlights great opportunities to enhance and connect important corridors of wildlife habitat in the Momence Wetlands, which includes significant bottomland hardwood forests, and also globally significant black oak savannas in the Oak Savanna-Kankakee County Unit. The Kankakee River is a National Water Trail and a protected Land and Water Conservation Area, and naturally connects high quality landscapes in the Refuge. There is great value in preserving land along the river as a wildlife migration corridor.

Your focus on the broader landscape like this is critical for preserving natural areas and for people that like to visit them. I agree with your conservation priorities, and particularly like how USFWS will acquire conservation easements from private (and willing) landowners in addition to traditional land acquisition.

I support your agency's approach to growing the Kankakee Refuge.

Sincerely,

Seth Marcus  
104 Coldren Drive  
Prospect Heights, IL 60070

# Conversation Contents

Kankakee NWR&CA

**Don McFall <mcfalls@casscomm.com>**

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**From:** Don McFall <mcfalls@casscomm.com>  
**Sent:** Mon Jan 23 2017 16:59:52 GMT-0700 (MST)  
**To:** <r3planning@fws.gov>  
**Subject:** Kankakee NWR&CA

Folks, This is to express my strong support for the Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area in northern Illinois and more specifically my support for the draft conservation opportunities map that you show on your website. I have hiked in the Momence Wetlands and at Iroquois County Conservation Area and definitely feel that these are outstanding wetlands, wildlife areas and natural areas that should be protected for the long term and made more accessible to people. I think acquiring some farmland south of Iroquois County Conservation Area and restoring it to natural habitat is a very good idea. This would provide much-needed habitat and help the existing state land be more viable as a wildlife refuge into the future. Many people in Illinois and the Midwest don't have the money or vacation time to travel long distances to see the Grand Canyon or Yellowstone or the Everglades. This includes many of my family and friends. We need more public natural areas and open space, especially in northern Illinois, that people can get to, use, learn from and enjoy. The Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area, including its three units, is a very special place that can be protected, restored and made accessible to the many people that enjoy being outdoors and the many others that might consider exploring the outdoors if it's not too far from where they live. Thank you for taking my comments. Don McFall 117 Cypress Dr., Williamsville, IL 62693

# Conversation Contents

## Comments on Kankakee NWR&CA

**Eleanor Guldemann <e.guldemann@gmail.com>**

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**From:** Eleanor Guldemann <e.guldemann@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Mon Jan 23 2017 16:18:52 GMT-0700 (MST)  
**To:** <r3planning@fws.gov>  
**Subject:** Comments on Kankakee NWR&CA

To the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Division of Natural Resources and Conservation Planning: I grew up beside the Kankakee River and fully support the land protection plan for the Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area. The area included in the refuge incorporates significant habitat, and the plans to prioritize conservation of forested bottomlands and other key wetland habitat along the river will preserve and reestablish an important ecological resource for wildlife, as well as creating a unique park experience for visitors. I currently live within the boundaries of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area in California. It's a patchwork of federal, state, and local open space that has become the largest urban national park in the world, but which began as a handful of state parks that activists and parks agencies worked to connect and expand. I know that it is 100 percent possible to build a successful, thriving park that protects key wildlife, offers recreational opportunities, and helps drive the local economy, because we have done exactly that here, working with willing sellers to add acreage and constantly working to connect and restore habitat. My family and I are excited to see the direction the Kankakee National Refuge is moving in. This project will improve water quality, provide critical habitat for threatened and endangered species, and offer important recreational opportunities for area residents and visitors. It also protects and enhances the beautiful and rich natural environment that I remember from my childhood, but which is becoming increasingly rare. The proposed model for the Kankakee that connects existing and new state and federal lands to create and protect a more extensive conservation area can and will work and it is an incredible conservation opportunity. thank you for the opportunity to comment. Best regards, Eleanor Tice Guldemann 6768 Wildlife Road Malibu CA 90265 310-457-2758 e.guldemann@gmail.com

# Conversation Contents

Kankakee NWR

**Allison Precht <amprecht@comcast.net>**

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**From:** Allison Precht <amprecht@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Sun Jan 22 2017 21:28:36 GMT-0700 (MST)  
**To:** <r3planning@fws.gov>  
**Subject:** Kankakee NWR

Subject Line: Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge & Conservation Area Dear Ms. Holler, This e-mail is in response to your request for public comment on the conservation planning documents USFWS has developed for the Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge & Conservation Area. The Refuge units delineated on your Conservation Opportunities map include natural resources of regional and global significance, and also identifies restorable acreage to create buffer for important natural areas and corridors for wildlife. Your focus on the broader landscape like this is critical for preserving natural areas and for people that like to visit them. I agree with your conservation priorities, and particularly like how USFWS will acquire conservation easements from private (and willing) landowners in addition to traditional land acquisition. I support your agency's approach to growing the Kankakee Refuge. Sincerely, Allison Precht 4897 N Ashland Avenue #2W Chicago IL 60640 Sent from my iPhone

# Conversation Contents

Kankakee NWR

**Sara Hage <hagegirl@yahoo.com>**

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**From:** Sara Hage <hagegirl@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Sun Jan 22 2017 21:23:04 GMT-0700 (MST)  
**To:** <r3planning@fws.gov>  
**Subject:** Kankakee NWR

Re: Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge & Conservation Area Dear Ms. Holler, This e-mail is in response to your request for public comment on the conservation planning documents USFWS has developed for the Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge & Conservation Area. The Refuge units delineated on your Conservation Opportunities map include natural resources of regional and global significance, and also identifies restorable acreage to create buffer for important natural areas and corridors for wildlife. Your focus on the broader landscape like this is critical for preserving natural areas and for people that like to visit them. I agree with your conservation priorities, and particularly like how USFWS will acquire conservation easements from private (and willing) landowners in addition to traditional land acquisition. I support your agency's approach to growing the Kankakee Refuge. Sincerely, Sara Hage 4897 N Ashland Avenue #2W Chicago IL 60640

# Conversation Contents

Kankakee NWR&CA

**"Donnie R. Dann" <donniebird@me.com>**

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**From:** "Donnie R. Dann" <donniebird@me.com>  
**Sent:** Sun Jan 22 2017 19:16:30 GMT-0700 (MST)  
**To:** <r3planning@fws.gov>  
**Subject:** Kankakee NWR&CA

Sirs,

On behalf of the Bird Conservation Network, I write relative to the Draft Conservation Opportunities Map for the Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area, and specifically as it affects our native birds and the unique set of habitats contained within the delineated area.

As you're aware, since 2009 F&WS has published an annual State of the Birds report. It sadly describes how for decades the decline in many species of our native birds has been rapid and continuous. This is particularly true for many species found only in scattered numbers from most of Northern Illinois but have decent populations in this new Refuge. This includes northern bobwhite (an 83% decline), red-headed woodpecker (67% decline), blue grosbeak, orchard oriole, Bell's vireo, yellow-breasted chat, and lark sparrow. Additional habitat in the bottomland forest constituted within the Momence Wetlands contains more species of concern: pileated woodpecker, brown creeper, yellow-throated vireo, American redstart, and veery.

The wetlands at the The Oak Savanna-Iroquois Unit and Iroquois County State Wildlife Area provide habitat for least bittern, king and Virginia rails, and these areas also include northern bobwhite, red-headed woodpecker, sedge wren, and Henslow's sparrow. Another suite of birds in significant decline are grassland species, and this habitat is wisely included in the Refuge area.

The Refuge includes current Important Bird Areas established by the National Audubon Society, and other sections, although not currently designated meet the criteria for IBA's.

Lastly, bear in mind that these and other bird species provide valuable services to all of us, like insect control, pollination, and seed dispersal. In addition birding is a 41 billion dollar industry, and many hundreds of birders visit the areas of the Refuge on a regular basis, spending money in local restaurants, gas stations, stores, motels, etc. All of this is to say nothing of those who travel to the area for other wildlife, and the pristine natural setting that the Region comprises.

BCN strongly commends the Service for this draft and looks forward to the needed benefits that we'll all derive from its implementation.

Donnie Dann  
Past President and Advocacy Chair  
Bird Conservation Network [www.bcnbirds.org](http://www.bcnbirds.org)  
[donniebird@me.com](mailto:donniebird@me.com)

*BCN promotes public awareness, knowledge, appreciation and enjoyment of birds, and other wildlife and wildlife habitat, and both proposes and supports public and private programs designed to protect, restore, and enhance the natural environment, and conserve/increase native bird populations.*

*BCN seeks to inform the members of our coalition, public and private agencies and landowners in our region, and the general public, about specific threats to birds, and other wildlife and wildlife habitat – and to recommend appropriate action against these threats.*

*BCN actively coordinates the accumulation and maintenance of long-term monitoring records and other information on Illinois birds and their habitats, to be used as an aid to their perpetuation, and as an indicator of environmental quality.*

*BCN is a regional coalition of about 21 organizations (bird clubs, Audubon chapters, ornithological societies and conservation organizations) sharing an interest in the conservation of birds. The groups' members aggregate to more than 35,000 people living primarily in the Chicago area, but also throughout Illinois, northeastern Indiana, and southern Wisconsin.*



# Conversation Contents

Grand Kankakee Marsh

**Amy Jarvis <k3rivers@hotmail.com>**

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**From:** Amy Jarvis <k3rivers@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sun Jan 22 2017 18:46:26 GMT-0700 (MST)  
**To:** "r3planning@fws.gov" <r3planning@fws.gov> Grand  
**Subject:** Kankakee Marsh



Planning, FW3 <r3planning@fws.gov>

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## Grand Kankakee Marsh

1 message

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**Amy Jarvis** <k3rivers@hotmail.com>  
To: "r3planning@fws.gov" <r3planning@fws.gov>

Sun, Jan 22, 2017 at 7:46 PM

I support the Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge.

Respectfully, Amy Ciaccio Jarvis

# Conversation Contents

## Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge & Conservation Area

**Kathy Quinlan <quinlan.dr.k@gmail.com>**

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**From:** Kathy Quinlan <quinlan.dr.k@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sun Jan 22 2017 18:44:14 GMT-0700 (MST)  
**To:** <r3planning@fws.gov>  
**Subject:** Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge & Conservation Area

Dear Ms. Holler,

This e-mail is in response to your request for public comment on the conservation planning documents USFWS has developed for the Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge & Conservation Area.

The Refuge units delineated on your Conservation Opportunities map include natural resources of regional and global significance, and also identifies restorable acreage to create buffer for important natural areas and corridors for wildlife. Your focus on the broader landscape like this is critical for preserving natural areas and for people that like to visit them. I agree with your conservation priorities, and particularly like how USFWS will acquire conservation easements from private (and willing) landowners in addition to traditional land acquisition.

I support your agency's approach to growing the Kankakee Refuge.

Sincerely,  
Katharina Quinlan  
5100 N Marine Dr 16L  
Chicago IL 60640

# Conversation Contents

## Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge & Conservation Area

**Greg Gehrig <ghgehrig@yahoo.com>**

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**From:** Greg Gehrig <ghgehrig@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Sun Jan 22 2017 17:59:38 GMT-0700 (MST)  
**To:** "r3planning@fws.gov" <r3planning@fws.gov>  
**Subject:** Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge & Conservation Area

Dear Ms. Holler,

This e-mail is in response to your request for public comment on the conservation planning documents USFWS has developed for the Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge & Conservation Area.

The Refuge units delineated on your Conservation Opportunities map include natural resources of regional and global significance, and also identifies restorable acreage to create buffer for important natural areas and corridors for wildlife. Your focus on the broader landscape like this is critical for preserving natural areas and for people that like to visit them. I agree with your conservation priorities, and particularly like how USFWS will acquire conservation easements from private (and willing) landowners in addition to traditional land acquisition.

I support your agency's approach to growing the Kankakee Refuge.

Please feel free to contact me to discuss this issue further.

Sincerely,  
Gregory H. Gehrig  
Registered Voter  
1924 N. Sawyer Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60647  
312-363-8650

# Conversation Contents

In support of Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge & Conservation Area

**Alice Brandon <alicebran1972@gmail.com>**

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**From:** Alice Brandon <alicebran1972@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sun Jan 22 2017 17:04:56 GMT-0700 (MST)  
**To:** <r3planning@fws.gov>  
**Subject:** In support of Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge & Conservation Area

Dear Ms. Holler,

I'm writing to you in support of the conservation planning documents the USFWS has developed for the Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge & Conservation Area.

The Conservation Opportunities map includes natural resources of regional and global significance, and also identifies areas to restore that will act as critical buffer for important natural areas and corridors for wildlife. Your focus on the broader landscape like this is essential for preserving natural areas and for people that like to visit them such as myself. As one of the State's dead last in terms of open space and public natural areas, we need this refuge to protect our State's unique and precious wildlife. I highly support your conservation priorities, and particularly like how USFWS will acquire conservation easements from private (and willing) landowners in addition to traditional land acquisition. Way to go!

I support your agency's approach to growing the Kankakee Refuge and thank you for your work on this endeavor.

Sincerely,  
Alice Brandon  
1924 N. Sawyer Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60640

# Conversation Contents

## Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge & Conservation Area

**Teri Brusnighan <cubs\_win1@yahoo.com>**

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**From:** Teri Brusnighan <cubs\_win1@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Sun Jan 22 2017 12:49:10 GMT-0700 (MST)  
**To:** "r3planning@fws.gov" <r3planning@fws.gov>  
**Subject:** Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge & Conservation Area

January 22, 2017

Dear Ms. Holler,

This e-mail is in response to your request for public comment on the conservation planning documents USFWS has developed for the Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge & Conservation Area.

Having grown up in western Kankakee County, I am encouraged to know that these conservation efforts are progressing in the Kankakee River basin. Additionally, as a lifelong hunter and fisherman, I can enthusiastically support the goals and objectives USFWS has outlined for this project, particularly the use of restorable acreage to create buffer for natural areas and corridors for wildlife. I also applaud USFWS for their stated conservation priorities, especially with regard to how they will acquire conservation easements from private (and willing) landowners in addition to traditional land acquisition.

Please count me as one who supports the development of the Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge.

Sincerely,

Duane Brusnighan  
6260 Fulton Road  
New Berlin, IL 62670

# Conversation Contents

Kankakee NWR&CA

**David Holman <davidmholman@gmail.com>**

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**From:** David Holman <davidmholman@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sun Jan 22 2017 09:28:16 GMT-0700 (MST)  
**To:** <r3planning@fws.gov>  
**Subject:** Kankakee NWR&CA

Good Morning Ms. Holler,

I recently saw that USFWS is seeking comment on the Service's plans at/for the Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area.

The plans presented, though obviously preliminary, seem quite reasonable. The objectives for the Mokence Wetlands Planning Unit and the Oak Savanna – Iroquois County Planning Unit in particular have piqued my interest. The plan in the former to focus on improving the management and/or acquiring existing natural areas within the Kankakee River's floodzone and possibly to expand that work to areas presently in agriculture is logical both ecologically and economically. I heartily approve of any strategy that can simultaneously improve an area's natural function while also providing local landowners, if they so choose, with the opportunity to sell land to the USFWS, an ancillary benefit of which being that as a taxpayer I would no longer be asked to subsidize recurring disaster recovery efforts on private properties following flood events.

The objectives outlined in the latter unit are of interest and have my support for a different reason. I'm familiar with both the Illinois DNR's Iroquois State Wildlife Area as well as the Indiana DNR's larger Willow Slough State Fish and Wildlife Area. Eventually connecting the two makes intuitive sense, doubly so given the acquisition work performed by the local nonprofit organization discussed in media articles about the NWR&CA's creation. Expanding the restorable area south of the Illinois site also makes sense to me given the sparsely populated nature of the region (something I would *not* believe in were the Service not so committed to never using the power of eminent domain, a position for which I commend you and which ensures my full support for your work). I very much look forward to reviewing the Land Protection Plans (as your website discussing the Reserve calls them) upon their completion, and hope that such plans display the same thoughtfulness that clearly went into developing the Conservation Opportunities Map that inspired this letter.

Sincerely,  
David Holman  
1220 Kristin Drive  
Libertyville, IL 60048  
(847) 404-8936



# Conversation Contents

Supportng Comments about Kankakee NWR&CA

**Kristopher Meyer <Kay-Mey@hotmail.com>**

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**From:** Kristopher Meyer <Kay-Mey@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Mon Jan 09 2017 08:34:56 GMT-0700 (MST)  
**To:** "r3planning@fws.gov" <r3planning@fws.gov>  
**Subject:** Supportng Comments about Kankakee NWR&CA



# Conversation Contents

## Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area Planning

**Stefanie Fitzsimons <stefaniefitzsimons@yahoo.com>**

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**From:** Stefanie Fitzsimons <stefaniefitzsimons@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Sat Jan 21 2017 18:51:55 GMT-0700 (MST)  
**To:** "r3planning@fws.gov" <r3planning@fws.gov>  
**Subject:** Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area Planning

Dear Ms. Holler,

This e-mail is in response to your request for public comment on the conservation planning documents USFWS has developed for the Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge & Conservation Area.

I am in support of your agencies approach to create and conserve the Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge. As a biologist that cut her teeth in this part of Illinois I am very aware of the vast diversity of natural resources in the area. These resources are not only vital to Illinois wildlife but also to globally migrating wildlife. You will also be creating buffer zones for fragile natural areas with the identified restorable areas noted on the map. This will also create continuous corridors for wildlife. Refuges such as this are not only healthy for wildlife but also for humans who wish to enjoy the majesty that our natural resources have to hold.

I agree with your conservation priorities and your plan to work with private landowners on the boundaries of the refuge.

I support your agency's approach to growing the Kankakee Refuge.

Sincerely,  
Stefanie Fitzsimons  
1902 Beach Rd  
McHenry, IL 60050

# Conversation Contents

## Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge & Conservation Area

**j mc <jmclibrarian@yahoo.com>**

---

**From:** j mc <jmclibrarian@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Sat Jan 21 2017 17:49:39 GMT-0700 (MST)  
**To:** "r3planning@fws.gov" <r3planning@fws.gov>  
**Subject:** Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge & Conservation Area

Dear Ms. Holler,

This e-mail is in response to your request for public comment on the conservation planning documents USFWS has developed for the Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge & Conservation Area.

As a former Nature Conservancy volunteer and Sierra Club staff member (Mackinac Chapter) I have a lengthy history of conservation work and an awareness of the planning and relationship building that goes into it. I am pleased with what you have proposed and that you plan to seek easements from landowners as an additional method of increasing the Refuge area.

In addition to restoration for wildlife and plant life, the Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area will also benefit us - humans. Many families find they experience the greatest peace, and the most available education opportunities, when they protect and explore nature. I am glad that you are creating a plan that will serve all species.

The Refuge units delineated on your Conservation Opportunities map include natural resources of regional and global significance, and also identifies restorable acreage to create buffer for important natural areas and corridors for wildlife. Your focus on the broader landscape like this is critical for preserving natural areas and for people that like to visit them. I agree with your conservation priorities, and particularly like how USFWS will acquire conservation easements from private (and willing) landowners in addition to traditional land acquisition.

I support your agency's approach to growing the Kankakee Refuge.

Sincerely,  
Joyce Hagen-McIntosh  
44 7th Ave., La Grange, IL 60525

"Sentiment without action is the ruin of the soul"  
~Edward Abbey

# Conversation Contents

Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge & Conservation Area

**Dean Brusnighan <dbrusnighan@gmail.com>**

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**From:** Dean Brusnighan <dbrusnighan@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sat Jan 21 2017 15:19:20 GMT-0700 (MST)  
**To:** <r3planning@fws.gov>  
**Subject:** Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge & Conservation Area

Good afternoon Ms. Holler,

I grew up in the Kankakee area, and I'm a lifelong supporter of conservation of natural resources. So, I'm pleased to hear about the conservation planning documents that have been developed by USFWS for the Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge & Conservation Area.

The Refuge units delineated on your Conservation Opportunities map include natural resources of regional and global significance, and also identifies restorable acreage to create buffer for important natural areas and corridors for wildlife. Your focus on the broader landscape like this is critical for preserving natural areas and for people that like to visit them. I agree with your conservation priorities, and particularly like how USFWS will acquire conservation easements from private (and willing) landowners in addition to traditional land acquisition.

I support your agency's approach to growing the Kankakee Refuge. I sincerely hope the plans will be carried out successfully.

Best regards,

Dean Brusnighan  
3556 Canterbury Drive  
Lafayette, IN 47909

# Conversation Contents

## Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge & Conservation Area

**"diana.krug" <diana.krug@comcast.net>**

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**From:** "diana.krug" <diana.krug@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Sat Jan 21 2017 11:52:59 GMT-0700 (MST)  
**To:** <r3planning@fws.gov>  
**Subject:** Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge & Conservation Area

Dear Ms. Holler,

This e-mail is in response to your request for public comment on the conservation planning documents USFWS has developed for the Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge & Conservation Area.

The Refuge units delineated on your Conservation Opportunities map include natural resources of regional and global significance, and also identifies restorable acreage to create buffer for important natural areas and corridors for wildlife. Your focus on the broader landscape like this is critical for preserving natural areas and for people that like to visit them. I agree with your conservation priorities, and particularly like how USFWS will acquire conservation easements from private (and willing) landowners in addition to traditional land acquisition.

I support your agency's approach to growing the Kankakee Refuge.

Sincerely,  
Diana Krug  
195 Willow Blvd  
Willow Springs IL 60480



# Conversation Contents

Kankakee NWR&CA

**Evan Barker <evanbarker@gmail.com>**

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**From:** Evan Barker <evanbarker@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sat Jan 21 2017 11:08:56 GMT-0700 (MST)  
**To:** <r3planning@fws.gov>  
**Subject:** Kankakee NWR&CA

Please keep these areas protected, we have so little land left. So much of Illinois is farms and suburbs.

What will they say about us in 400 years? That our destruction was so complete that they have no concept of what presettlement vegetation was like?



# Conversation Contents

Kankakee NWR&CA

**Michael Bingaman <bingaman@gmail.com>**

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**From:** Michael Bingaman <bingaman@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sat Jan 21 2017 09:35:21 GMT-0700 (MST)  
**To:** <r3planning@fws.gov>  
**Subject:** Kankakee NWR&CA

I strongly support the creation of a wildlife refuge and conservation area in the Kankakee basin. I live in Chicago and having access to natural areas is a key to our future as a region. Our position on the Mississippi flyway makes us an essential stopover for migrating species and I've already seen huge improvements in biodiversity in other habitat restoration projects that are in progress here. This work will benefit all people and living things. Thanks for your time and I look forward to continuing to support this project.  
Michael Bingaman

# Conversation Contents

Kankakee national wildlife refuge

**Dan Kirk <dankirk21@yahoo.com>**

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**From:** Dan Kirk <dankirk21@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Sat Jan 21 2017 06:54:51 GMT-0700 (MST)  
**To:** <r3planning@fws.gov>  
**Subject:** Kankakee national wildlife refuge

Dear Ms. Holler, I'm writing to voice my support for the Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area. The Momence Wetlands, black oak sand savannas in Pembroke township and Iroquois County Conservation Area are significant natural assets in the region, and I support whatever the means USFWS deems necessary to protect them and to promote connecting natural landscapes. I prefer land acquisition so that these areas are in public ownership and available for public access, but I can also support working with private landowners that promote conservation of these unique resources. And farm land is overrated; we already have a whole state full of it. What Illinois really needs is large blocks of wildlife habitat. Thanks for the opportunity to comment. Dan Kirk Ottawa, IL Sent from my iPhone



# Conversation Contents

Kankakee Refuge

**pat jasper <stepmommiedearest@yahoo.com>**

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**From:** pat jasper <stepmommiedearest@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Fri Jan 20 2017 17:18:13 GMT-0700 (MST)  
**To:** "r3planning@fws.gov" <r3planning@fws.gov>  
**Subject:** Kankakee Refuge

Dear Ms. Holler,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the planning of the Kankakee Refuge and Conservation Area. I support your tiered approach to conservation in the footprint of the Refuge. The Conservation Opportunities map highlights great opportunities to protect, enhance, and connect important cores and corridors of wildlife habitat in the Momence Wetlands, the black oak savannas in Pembroke, and acreage around Iroquois County State Wildlife Area.

As a grandmother of 5, I think conservation of our natural heritage should be a priority for current and future generations. I applaud your efforts.

Sincerely,

Pat Jasper  
533 N. Lavergne  
Northlake, IL 60164

# Conversation Contents

Kankakee NWR&CA

**Debra Maier <dmaier203@gmail.com>**

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**From:** Debra Maier <dmaier203@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Fri Jan 20 2017 10:16:50 GMT-0700 (MST)  
**To:** <r3planning@fws.gov>  
**Subject:** Kankakee NWR&CA

As a property owner on the Kankakee River (east of Momence) and a strong advocate of conservation, I am thrilled that our property, which has been in the family for over 85 years, is in the midst of the Kankakee NWR & CA project.

With this said, I am very much interested in learning how to support habitat restoration on my land and learn of other ways to be supportive of your conservation efforts.

Please provide information on how to begin this endeavor to support those efforts.

Our property (address provided below) is not a year-round residence; if there is a need to contact me via mail, please send email requesting address.

I look forward to your response.

Debra Maier  
2512 G North River Isle Road  
Momence, IL



# Conversation Contents

## Grand Kankakee Marsh

**Gary Hicks <gary.hicks@valpo.edu>**

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**From:** Gary Hicks <gary.hicks@valpo.edu>  
**Sent:** Fri Jan 20 2017 09:59:25 GMT-0700 (MST)  
**To:** <r3planning@fws.gov>  
**Subject:** Grand Kankakee Marsh

Planners of the Grand Kankakee Marsh Wildlife Refuge: Thank you for your attentiveness to the process for creating a national wildlife refuge along the Kankakee River in Illinois. The Kankakee riverine corridor in the nineteenth century was one of the great wildlife areas of North America. As you know, the draining of its marsh in Indiana early in the twentieth century all but eliminated this wonderful natural asset. The marsh, though long gone, has not been forgotten; indeed it has been mourned by generations of conservationists. The proposed NWR would in part reestablish what was once there downstream, at least in spirit. It would certainly become something of an economic boon and attraction for an area of Illinois not currently known for tourism. It could become a small enhancement of the flyway for untold numbers of waterfowl, especially if the floodplain again becomes a functional natural area. This is a great idea and an exciting project. Let us do it well! Garland F. Hicks Jr. 702 Washington Street Valparaiso, Indiana 46383

# Conversation Contents

Grand Kankakee Marsh

**Doug Allman <dna1975@embarqmail.com>**

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**From:** Doug Allman <dna1975@embarqmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thu Jan 19 2017 18:29:41 GMT-0700 (MST)  
**To:** <r3planning@fws.gov>  
**Subject:** Grand Kankakee Marsh

Re: Kankakee NWR&CA

On behalf of the Indiana Deer Hunters Association and the Indiana Sportsmen's Roundtable we support the creation of the Kankakee NWR&CA. If it is but a fraction of what the Grand Kankakee Marsh once was it will be a great thing for the State and those who appreciate Wildlife and Conservation.

Kindest Regards,

**Doug Allman**  
**16124 E 126th St.**  
**Fishers, IN 46037**

**317-485-7103**

# Conversation Contents

Kankakee Is Meant To Be

<mccluckles@yahoo.com>

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**From:** <mccluckles@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Thu Jan 19 2017 16:44:18 GMT-0700 (MST)  
**To:** "r3planning@fws.gov" <r3planning@fws.gov>  
**Subject:** Kankakee Is Meant To Be

Woodpeckers' heads are red  
Wings of dabbling ducks are blue

The folks of Momence ain't got no sense  
They think all the rumors are true

They say you'll condemn their school and homes  
Forsake their children's future to benefit biomes!

And flood the whole town through eminent domain  
All for your love of the sandhill crane!

But don't let those turkeys get you down  
Save those natural areas of world-renown

Your approach to the refuge is sound and measured  
For the good of all, whether hominoid or feathered

This land is their land, but it's also mine too  
Ignore those fools, and continue doing the work you do

# Conversation Contents

Kankakee Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area - Grand Kankakee Marsh

**Kenneth Svitko <kjsvitko@icloud.com>**

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**From:** Kenneth Svitko <kjsvitko@icloud.com>  
**Sent:** Thu Jan 19 2017 08:44:49 GMT-0700 (MST)  
**To:** <r3planning@fws.gov>  
**Subject:** Kankakee Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area - Grand Kankakee Marsh

US Fish and Wildlife Service, I am pleased to see that the US Fish and Wildlife Service is moving ahead with protections and planning on the Grand Kankakee Marsh project area. This area was once one of the premier hunting and fishing areas in the US before it was drained and dredged. Willing sellers and people interested in conservation support this project and the economic benefits it can bring to the area. Tourism related hunting and fishing can help diversify the areas economy. There are so little public lands in the area that can be enjoyed by locals and tourists. Please add my name to the long list of supporters for this project. Ken Svitko 373 S 600 W Hebron, IN 46341



# Conversation Contents

Kankakee NWR

**McConkey Thumser <thumser@sbcglobal.net>**

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**From:** McConkey Thumser <thumser@sbcglobal.net>  
**Sent:** Tue Jan 17 2017 09:52:56 GMT-0700 (MST)  
**To:** "r3planning@fws.gov" <r3planning@fws.gov>  
**Subject:** Kankakee NWR

This e-mail is in response to your request for public comment on the Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area. As an avid bird lover and supporter of the National Wildlife Refuge system, I'm happy to see this refuge finally get off the ground. The rare resources and wildlife habitat identified as priorities in your plan are assets to the midwest and the nation, worthy of preservation for future generations. As a regular visitor to Wisconsin refuges, I can attest to the importance of natural lands in public ownership where visitors can enjoy nature. And, as a regular visitor to the Chicago area, I look forward to visiting the Kankakee Refuge soon.

Diann Thumser  
Madison, WI

# Conversation Contents

## Grand Kankakee Marsh

**Jim Sweeney <jp55biod@att.net>**

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**From:** Jim Sweeney <jp55biod@att.net>  
**Sent:** Sun Jan 15 2017 11:36:16 GMT-0700 (MST)  
**To:** <r3planning@fws.gov>  
**Subject:** Grand Kankakee Marsh

I support the Kankakee National Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area and believe the protection of our natural resources benefits not only the environment but the quality of life for our community.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) created the Refuge to protect some of the incredibly rare plants and animals in the Kankakee River Basin. The initial 66 acres alone contain 11 state threatened or endangered species.

- The service will not use eminent domain and will deal with willing sellers only.
- Support the protection of the Momence Wetlands area to protect the rare plants and animals found there.
- Restoration of floodplain wetlands will improve water quality and lessen flooding.
- Only 3% of the state of Illinois is publicly owned, ranking it 44<sup>th</sup> out of 50 states in the amount of public land available for conservation and recreation.
- The more restoration there is along the river upstream, the better it will be for the river downstream.
- According to the US Census Bureau, residents and visitors to Illinois spend \$3 billion annually on wildlife-related recreation.

I also support a large joint public and private efforts to protect as much of the Pembroke and Beaverville Township prairies and savannas.

Kankakee and Iroquois County residents will benefit from having more public land for recreational activities - hunting, fishing, birding, photography and environmental education, as well as from ecotourism when people visit the Refuge. A refuge in rural southern Illinois has attracted 25,000 tourists a year, with our Refuge situated near highly populated areas, many more visitors are likely.

The Kankakee River State Park perfectly demonstrates the draw of the area. People traveling to bike or photograph nature are potential customers for the many greenhouses, organic and roadside farm stands throughout Kankakee and Iroquois County. More visitors might support the development of more farm-to-table eateries that could offer locally-produced food.

Thank you,

Jim Sweeney  
1773 Selo Dr  
Scherville, IN 46375  
219-322-7239



# Conversation Contents

Kankakee NWR&CA

**maria g <mariag1212@yahoo.com>**

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**From:** maria g <mariag1212@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Sat Jan 14 2017 15:51:58 GMT-0700 (MST)  
**To:** "r3planning@fws.gov" <r3planning@fws.gov>  
**Subject:** Kankakee NWR&CA

As a big supporter of the National Wildlife Refuge system, I'm excited to see progress with the Kankakee Refuge. Motence Wetlands and Pembroke Savannas need to be saved for future generations, and I agree wholeheartedly with the approach that USFWS is taking within the Refuge footprint. I especially appreciate that FWS is focusing on the best habitats and working only with willing sellers and landowners interested in conservation programs. Modern-day conservation is achieved not only by land acquisition, but also by establishing public-private partnerships, while integrating the local communities that have been stewards of the resources. Keep up the good work!

Thanks for the opportunity to comment, and I look forward to seeing the final protection plan.

Sincerely,

Maria Gamino  
Westchester, IL



# Conversation Contents

Supportng Comments about Kankakee NWR&CA

**Kristopher Meyer <Kay-Mey@hotmail.com>**

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**From:** Kristopher Meyer <Kay-Mey@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Mon Jan 09 2017 08:34:56 GMT-0700 (MST)  
**To:** "r3planning@fws.gov" <r3planning@fws.gov>  
**Subject:** Supportng Comments about Kankakee NWR&CA



Planning, FW3 <r3planning@fws.gov>

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## Supportng Comments about Kankakee NWR&CA

1 message

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**Kristopher Meyer** <Kay-Mey@hotmail.com>  
To: "r3planning@fws.gov" <r3planning@fws.gov>

Mon, Jan 9, 2017 at 9:34 AM

To whom it may concern at USFWS,

Born and raised here in Momence exploring and enjoying the rural landscape like places at like Aroma Land and Water Reserve, Waldron Arboretum, Gar Creek Trail and Prairie Restoration, Mskoda Land & Water Reserve, Hooper Branch Savanna, Sweet Fern Savanna, Davis Creek, Indian Caves, Kankakee River State Park: Rock Creek, along with kayaking up and down the Kankakee River from Aroma Park to the State Line.

Then in 2011-2016 I moved to SO Illinois: Carterville then Anna, and had Crab Orchard & Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge, Shawnee National Forest, and the Tunnel Hill Bike Trail right in my back yard to explore and enjoy.

So when I read in the Momence Progress Reporter about the news for the creation of Kankakee NWR&CA I became very thrilled for the local ecosystem. Never thought that the government would consider this area and its natural beauty for such a long term project. If all possible for the future these aspects would be nice to see incorporated for the area: an area gated off and locked for hunting for those who have disabilities, handicaps, and other life altering injuries that does not allow them to get out and hunt on their own, signs for a canoe trail much like in the lower Cache to encourage people to try paddling, a floating boardwalk much like the one at Todd Fink-Heron Pond Trail, and would love to see some cypress and musclewood trees planted for future viewing.

**Thanks for all of the work you all have done,**

**Kristopher**