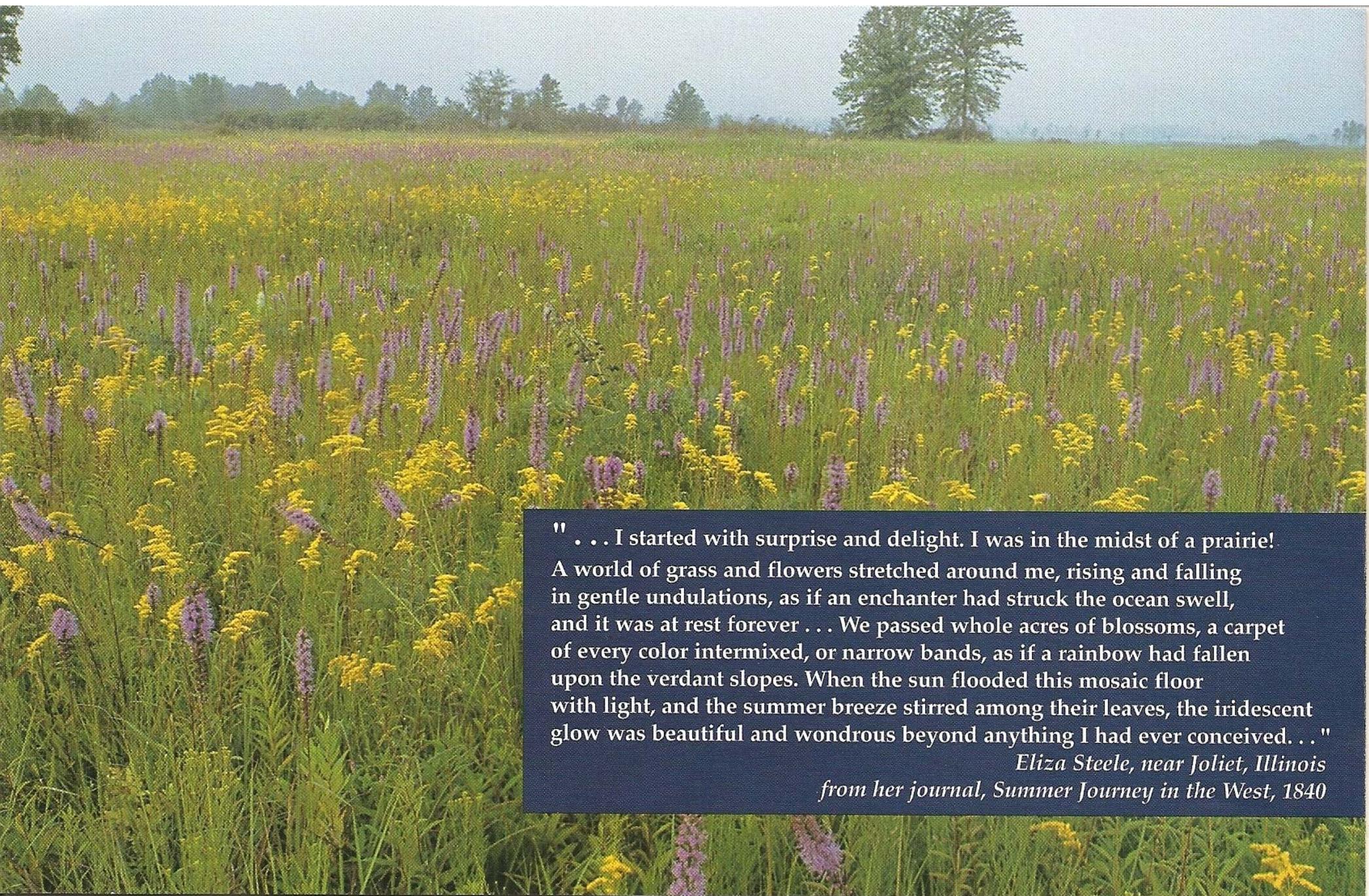


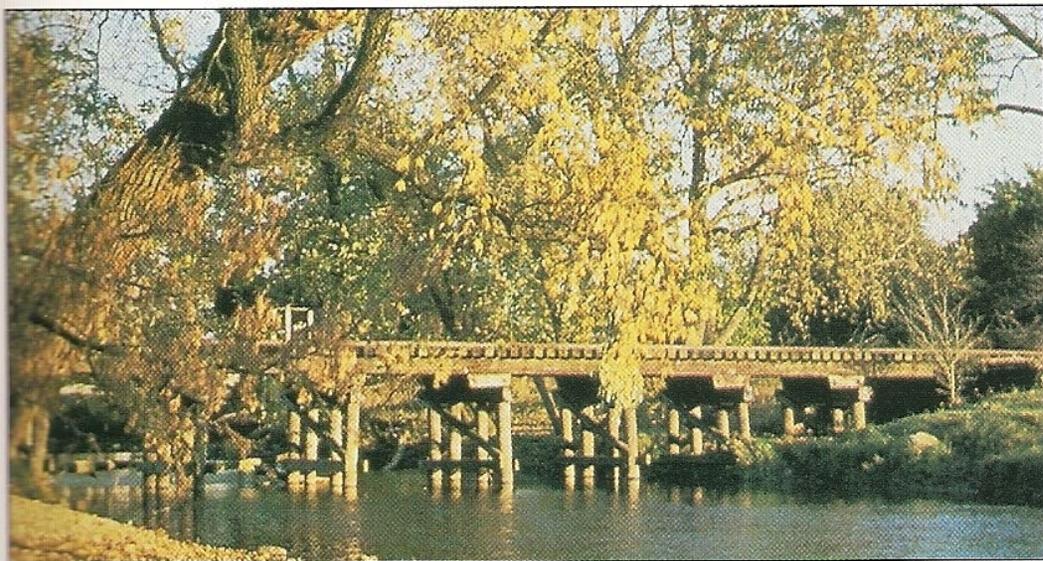
Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie





" . . . I started with surprise and delight. I was in the midst of a prairie! A world of grass and flowers stretched around me, rising and falling in gentle undulations, as if an enchanter had struck the ocean swell, and it was at rest forever . . . We passed whole acres of blossoms, a carpet of every color intermixed, or narrow bands, as if a rainbow had fallen upon the verdant slopes. When the sun flooded this mosaic floor with light, and the summer breeze stirred among their leaves, the iridescent glow was beautiful and wondrous beyond anything I had ever conceived. . . "

*Eliza Steele, near Joliet, Illinois
from her journal, Summer Journey in the West, 1840*



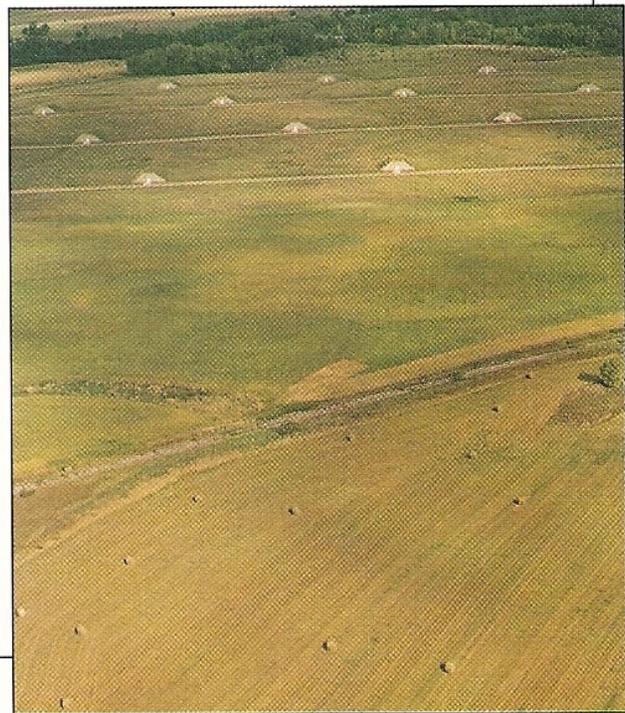
Past and future

The Joliet Arsenal was a 23,500-acre site where ammunition was once produced for the United States Army. Today 19,000 acres of the former arsenal are the largest piece of protected open space in northeastern Illinois and the first national tallgrass prairie in the United States. Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie was established by law on February 10, 1996, and the land transfer from the Army to the USDA Forest Service began in 1997. Located 40 miles southwest of Chicago, the site is within easy reach of more than 8 million people.

Larger than life

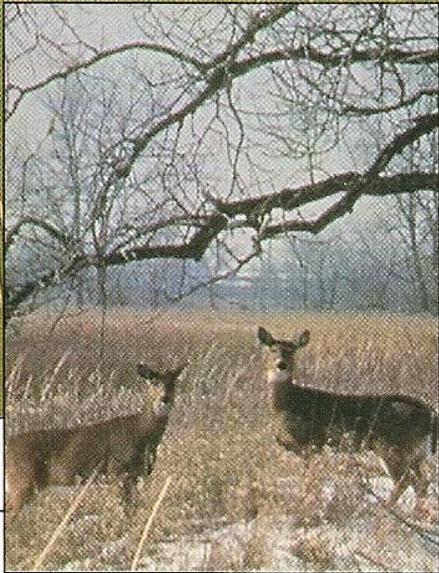
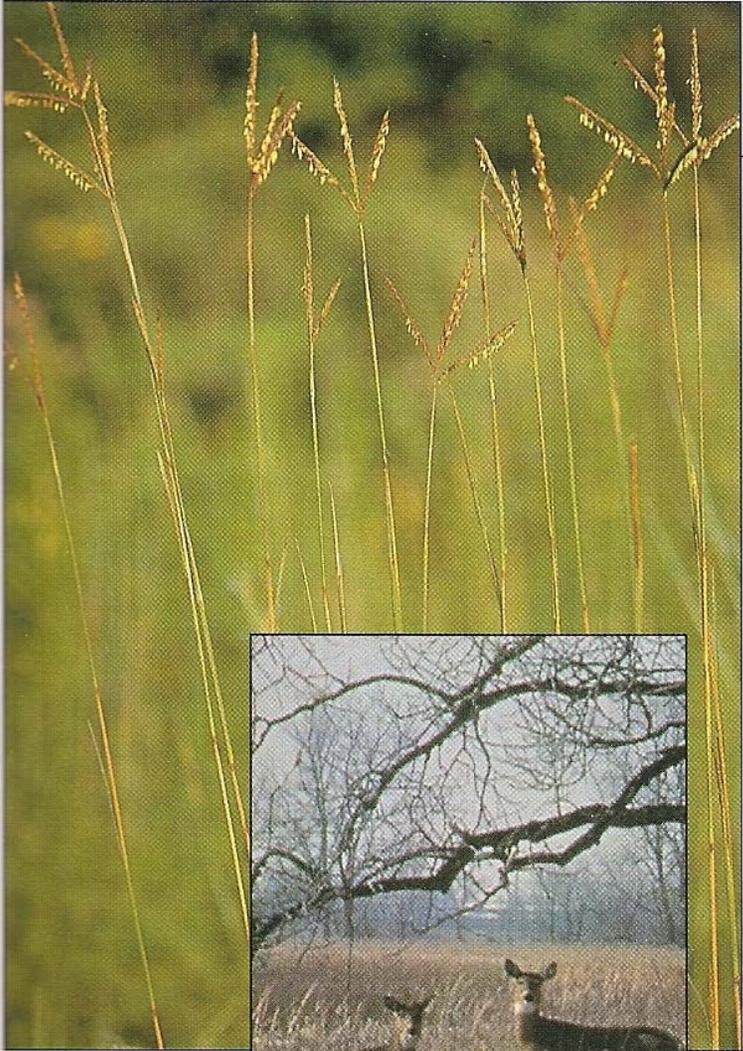
At 19,000 acres, Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie is huge in itself. It is also adjacent to the 4,200-acre Des Plaines

Conservation Area and close to 22 other natural areas - creating a macrosite of nearly 40,000 acres. Here is a rare opportunity to establish and manage prairie lands on an unprecedented scale.



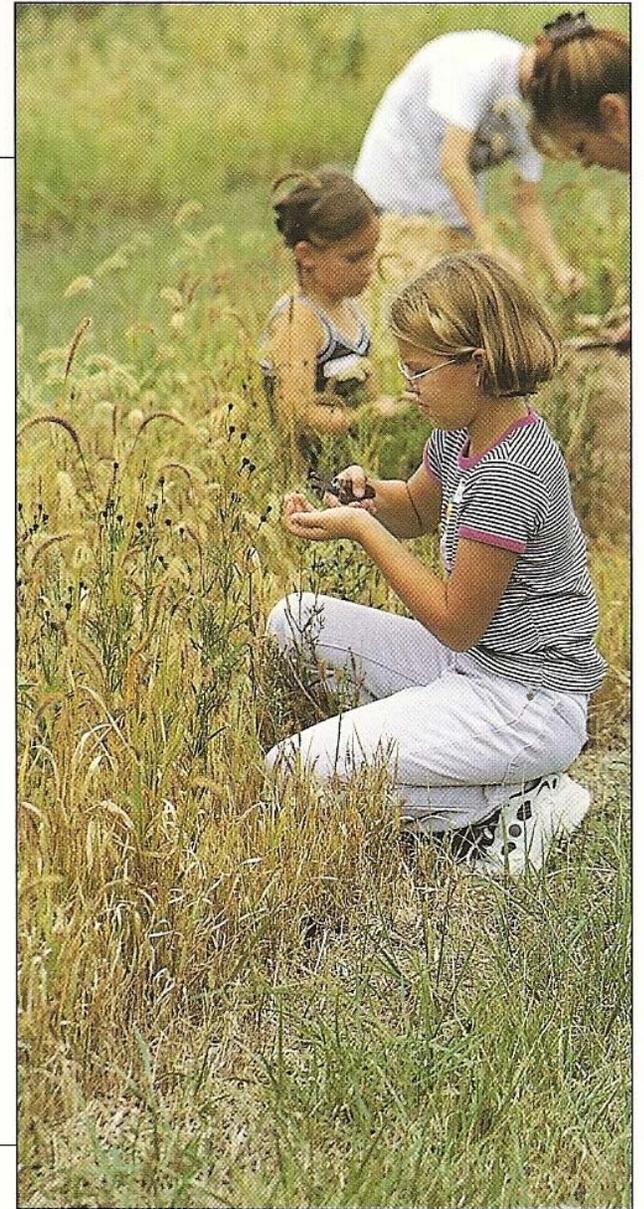
TERRY EVANS

Prairie Grasses



Restoration and preservation

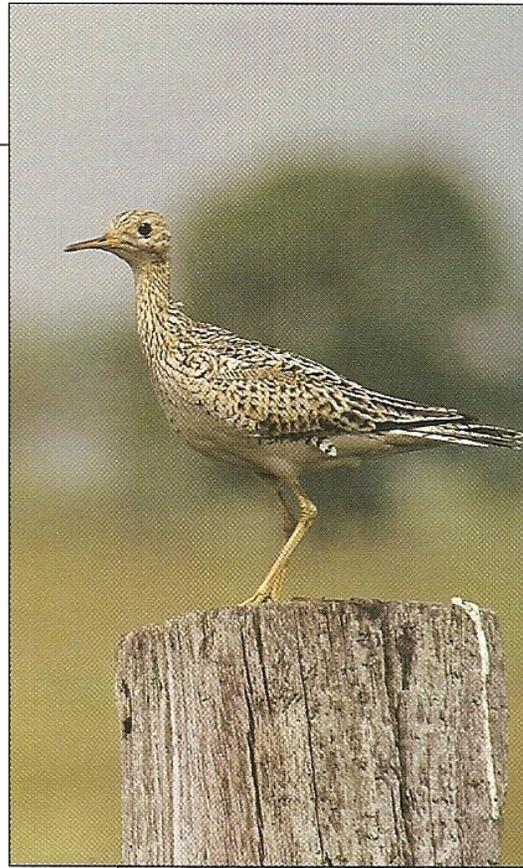
The Illinois Land Conservation Act of 1995 established Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie for four purposes. Primary among them is the conservation and enhancement of the native wildlife and plants on the site. "Midewin" is the Potawatomi word for healing. Thousands of acres of the former arsenal will require healing to return to the healthy prairies for which Illinois was famed. Volunteers are assisting in the propagation and planting of prairie plants that prairie animals require for survival. But it will be a long process - 20 years or more.



Upland Sandpiper

G rassland birds

Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie is already a refuge for grassland bird species whose numbers are severely declining across the Midwest due to loss of habitat. Midewin's sheer size provides the opportunity to foster a variety of habitat, from rare dolomite prairie to riparian corridors to tallgrass prairie, which are required by many endangered and threatened species of plants and animals. Sustaining the prairie means sustaining the future of many species.



L and use planning

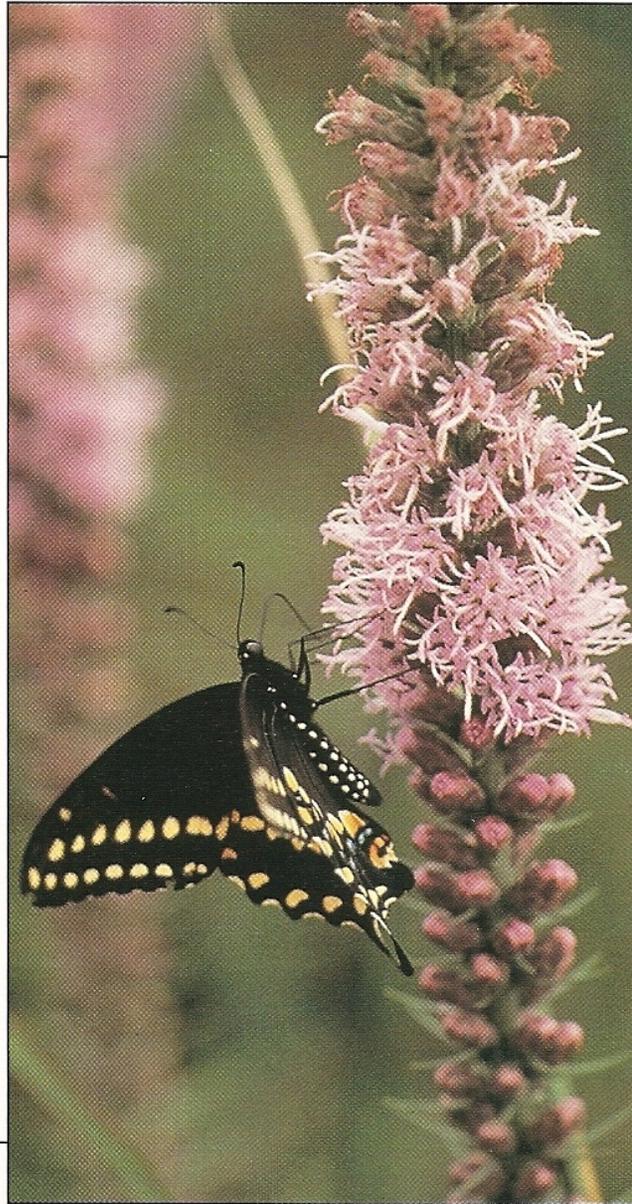
The public is invited to participate in the planning process. The land use plan to guide the development of Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie will incorporate its four purposes - conservation and enhancement of native wildlife and plants, education and research, continuation of agricultural uses where appropriate, and recreation. The opportunity to use bison to manage grassland habitat is one possibility to be considered in the plan.



Black Swallowtail on Blazing Star

O outdoor recreation

The availability of recreational activities at Midewin will increase gradually, pending the completion of cleanup from its arsenal days and the finalization of the comprehensive land use plan. Hiking, biking, camping, hunting, and environmental education - all within the nation's third largest metropolitan area - are among the spectrum of opportunities anticipated. Trail development is one of the most exciting possibilities, supported by many miles of old roads and railroad beds.



R return of prairie plants

Central to the restoration of prairie at Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie is the establishment of a complex mix of native plants. Seed nurseries have been planted, nurtured, and harvested by volunteers. These nurseries are producing seeds of a multitude of plant species vital to a healthy prairie ecosystem that includes not only plants but wildlife and people.

Common Egret



W orking together - yesterday, today and tomorrow

The creation of Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie is the result of a consensus reached by the 23 members of the Joliet Arsenal Citizens Planning Commission in 1994 as it envisioned future uses of the arsenal lands. Midewin's closest neighbors were also carved from the former arsenal - the Deer Run and Island City Industrial Parks, Prairie View County Landfill, and the Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery.

Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie is administered by the USDA Forest Service in cooperation with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and with the support of hundreds of volunteers and partner agencies, businesses and organizations. Public support and involvement were integral to the creation of Midewin and are vital to its future - the restoration of the prairie experienced and recorded in 1840 by traveler Eliza Steele.

**MIDWIN NATIONAL
TALLGRASS PRAIRIE**

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Wilmington, IL 60481

815/423-6370

fax 815/423-6376

Website: www.fs.fed.us/mntp

KEY:

 ECOSYSTEM-BASED MANAGEMENT (9,800 acres)

 OUTDOOR RECREATION (5,665 acres)

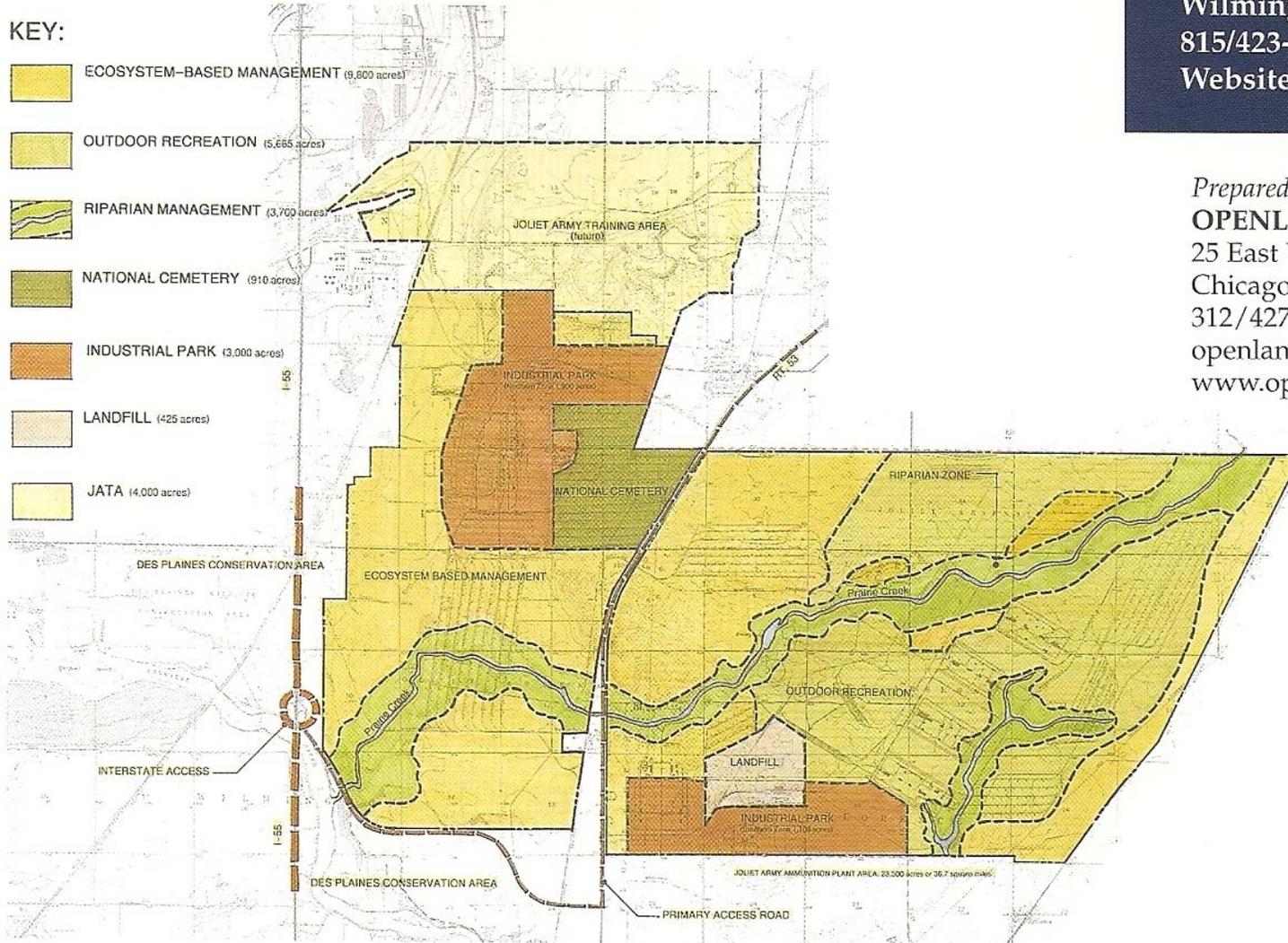
 RIPARIAN MANAGEMENT (3,700 acres)

 NATIONAL CEMETERY (910 acres)

 INDUSTRIAL PARK (3,000 acres)

 LANDFILL (425 acres)

 JATA (4,000 acres)



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**Illinois Department
of Natural Resources**

**Joliet Arsenal Land Use
CONCEPT PLAN 1995**

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