

**Inventory of Roadside Prairies  
Illinois Department of Transportation  
District 4**

**Illinois Natural History Survey  
Center for Biodiversity  
Technical Report (4) 2004**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) has been interested in mapping roadside prairie since 1992. A formal request was made in 1998 by Rich Nowack to map prairie while traveling to other IDOT project areas, and as time allowed. IDOT's justification for this project was to preserve prairie habitat, and limit accidental mowing and herbicide spraying of native prairie remnants. In 2000, IDOT made this project a priority. In the 2001 field season, a more detailed and systematic approach was taken to survey prairies in Illinois. This report and final GIS map is the result of the information gathered during the 2003 field season in IDOT District 4.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

A significant amount of remaining prairie in Illinois is located in joint rights-of-way of railroads and roads. This is due to the protection from cultivation and other disturbances. Using the Geographic Information System (GIS), a map of IDOT District 4 was generated for field use. This map has all areas marked where a road and railroad were within 400 ft of each other. Using this map, these areas were systematically checked for native prairie and savanna remnants. For the majority of the remnants, a limited survey was warranted. This consisted of stopping at regular intervals to generate species lists and gather data needed to characterize each site. If a remnant was higher quality, more time was spent surveying the remnant; however, the large scale of this project made detailed surveys of each remnant impractical.

During 2001, IDOT District 5 was surveyed throughout the growing season (Handel 2002). Early surveys resulted in better recording of spring and early summer flora. The disadvantage of early sampling was that it was slower, and identification of warm-season grasses and forbs was more difficult. Warm-season grasses at this time often needed a close examination to identify species and abundance. Late surveys, especially September to October, allow for quick identification of remnants because the native grasses are the most visible at this time. The drawback of late surveys, is that spring and summer flora are overlooked because they have gone dormant or they are obscured by the taller fall

vegetation. A similar roadside survey conducted in Minnesota was conducted in late summer and fall (Bolin et al. 1988). To cover more area in 2003, surveying was done in two phases, April to July and then again in August to October. The first phase was to eliminate from further consideration areas of roadsides that were destroyed or were very low quality. This saved valuable time during the peak summer and fall survey period when attention was focused on surveying extant remnants.

The following data were recorded on each remnant. The evaluator(s), date, and county were recorded for each site. GPS readings for starting and ending points were taken at the majority sites. At a few small sites only a central point was taken. The location was relative to reference points such as local roads. A quality rating of 1, 2, or 3 was assigned to the remnants, with number 1 being the highest quality and 3 being the poorest quality. Some remnants included two or more quality classes. For example, there could be one small high-quality section (1) within a larger degraded remnant (3). I was very lenient with the class 3 (lowest quality) prairies, because it is my opinion with active management these prairies could vastly improve. Active management, such as controlled burning, probably has not occurred on these remnants for a long period. Vast improvement of similar degraded prairie habitat has been demonstrated after active management was implemented (Handel 2000). In other highway prairie studies after active management was implemented, prairie improved and some rare species were maintained or slightly increased in abundance (Bolin et al. 1988). The type of plant community or communities that were present was noted, for example dry-mesic prairie. Width, distance to edge of pavement, and length of each remnant were recorded. Evidence of management or signs indicating management of prairie vegetation were noted. The status of the railroad and presence of prairie habitat on the side away from the highway also were recorded. Threats to each remnant were recorded. This included exotics, woody invasion, or man-made disturbances such as mowing, cultivation, or spraying. Finally, a species list was generated for each remnant. Species were excluded if they occurred just in the roadside ditch or in the railroad ballast. Exotics were only counted if they were found in the remnant. Relative abundance was recorded for each

species observed on a 1 to 5 scale. Botanical nomenclature follows Mohlenbrock (1986).  
Community classification follows White (1978).

## **TERMS USED IN SITE DESCRIPTIONS**

### **Relative Abundance Values (RAV):**

1. Rare
2. Occasional
3. Common
4. Abundant
5. Dominant

## **Quality Classes**

1. This class was reserved for highest quality prairie remnants. These sites have a low abundance of exotic species. Forb diversity and density is high. In class 1, conservative prairie species are present. These sites roughly parallel a rating of Illinois Natural Area Inventory (INAI) grade A or B (White 1978). A more detailed survey, including quantitative data, would be needed to determine if they truly qualify for INAI status.
2. These remnants still have a matrix of native forbs and grasses remaining. The prairie is somewhat degraded, however there is still some resemblance of a prairie community. Class 2 remnants are characterized by presence of the major warm-season grasses and disturbance-tolerant forbs. In some cases conservative species occur in low abundance. Class 2 prairie would roughly parallel an INAI rating of grade C.
3. Highly degraded prairie was ranked as Class 3. In class 3 remnants, prairie species were present but the community was highly disturbed. Exotic species usually dominate portions of the remnant. There can be some conservative species present, but the majority of the species are common prairie grasses and a few disturbance-tolerant forbs. Class 3 has also been reserved for areas that are solid stands of prairie grasses. This would be roughly parallel an INAI rating of grade D.

## **PRAIRIE COMMUNITIES IN ILLINOIS**

Because of their rarity, species diversity, and vulnerability to habitat degradation, prairie communities are of special concern in Illinois. Prairie was the dominant community type in the state before 1820 (Iverson et al. 1989). After the invention of the steel plow, areas of prairie were quickly converted to agricultural crops. Of the estimated 22,000,000 acres of prairie that occurred in the state, only 2,352 acres of high-quality prairie remained by 1976, about 1/100th of 1% (White 1978). The amount of prairie in District 4 in 1820 was approximately 2,146,200 acres. In 1976, the total acreage of high quality prairie (A or B) remaining in District 4 was 201.6 acres or 0.009% (White 1978). There are no specific

data on the amount of grade C - D prairie remaining in IDOT District 4. It is known that there has been a significant decline in prairie throughout the state since the Natural Areas Inventory was completed in 1976. Encroachment by woody vegetation, conversion to agricultural crops in railroad rights-of-way, and lack of management all have contributed to the decline of prairie communities statewide. The remaining grade C or D quality prairie remnants are an extremely important biological and economic resource. They may not be as floristically diverse as grade A or B remnants, but they serve important functions in the Illinois landscape:

1. They provide cover and dispersal corridors for prairie flora and fauna.
2. With the decrease in prairie habitat and the increased need for habitat reconstruction and restoration, remnants provide an invaluable source of seed of local ecotypes.
3. They provide refugia for species that have been eliminated from the nearby landscape and they sometimes link areas of higher quality prairies, allowing for the dispersal of species and genetic exchange from one remnant to another.
4. Because they are often linear in shape, they may cross several soil types and moisture gradients, creating a community of high floristic and faunistic diversity throughout a given landscape.
5. Practical benefits to highway departments include the potential for a reduction in the cost of roadside maintenance, and increased erosion control when native vegetation communities are present (USDT 1975a).
6. Native prairie remnants that are managed correctly can also reduce the presence of exotic and noxious weeds along highway corridors.
7. Prairie remnants provide habitat for game species. Millions of dollars are spent each year on creating habitat for species such Ring-necked Pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*) and Northern Bobwhite (*Colinus virginianus*). Often this artificial habitat consists of one or two prairie grass species. These plantings may provide emergency cover from

harsh winter weather, but they are inferior to the native remnants that provide not only cover, but also high concentrations of food from plant seeds and insects that exist in these natural remnants.

8. In areas of the state where habitat has disappeared because of development or intensive agriculture these remnants are often the only natural communities of any type that remain on a regional scale.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **General Information and Quality**

Prairies are marked in **yellow** and numbered (1 to 11) on the map. This number corresponds to a data sheet in the report. Information describing prairie remnants is summarized in Tables 1 - 3. Six additional sites were mapped but data were not collected. These six sites were mowed several times during the growing season. These areas are mapped on the District 4 Prairie Remnant Map in red with a letter **M**. Prairie was seen at some of these sites in past years during other survey work. In late fall, the characteristic golden color of the native grasses was evident at these sites even though they were mowed. Several trips were made to get data on these areas. Unfortunately, the mowing never allowed for a proper survey. If the roadside mowing was limited to three feet past the roadside ditch and at intersections exist, this prairie survey would have been more complete. Local municipalities and farmers appeared to be mowing some of these remnants.

According to the GIS mapping, there were approximately 312 miles of joint roadway and railroad rights-of-way in District 4. Eleven prairie and savanna remnants were located in these joint rights-of-ways in District 4 during the 2003-growing season, totaling 19.65 miles or (6.3%). Four of 11 (36%) of the prairie remnants had significant prairie vegetation present on the far side of the tracks. The majority of the prairie remnants, 7 of 11 (64%), were class 3 (lowest quality prairie). Three of 11 (27%) were in class 2 (medium quality) category. Only 1 of 11 (9%) prairie remnants was considered class 1 (highest quality) category. Dry-mesic prairie was the community most frequently encountered. Wet-mesic prairie was extremely rare with only 1 of 11 (9%) located in

District 4. This trend occurs statewide, and is probably due to the intense effort to drain areas adjacent to roads and tiling throughout Illinois. Only 1 of 11 (9%) of the remnants surveyed had signs protecting prairie or there was indication of management.



**Table 1.** General information on prairie remnants in joint Illinois Department of Transportation and railroad rights-of-way in District 4 including: quality, communities, evidence of management or signage, and railroad activity. The percentage in the quality class and natural communities may exceed 100%, because some sites had more than one quality class or natural community present.

<b>Quality</b>	<b># Sites (out of 11)</b>	<b>% of sites</b>
Class 3	7	64%
Class 2	3	27%
Class 1	1	9%
<b>Natural Communities</b>		
Dry-mesic prairie	10	91%
Mesic prairie	1	9%
Wet-mesic prairie	1	9%
Dry-mesic savanna	1	9%
<b>Signage or evidence of management (Burning)</b>		
No	10	91%
Yes	1	9%
<b>Railroad Activity</b>		
Active	6	55%
Abandoned	5	45%
<b>Presence of prairie on RR R-O-W opposite tracks</b>		
Yes	9	82%
No	2	18%

## Threats to Remnants

Roadside rights-of-way are affected by a multitude of human disturbances: mowing, salt, car emissions, ditch maintenance, herbicide application from both the roadside and railways, and the installation of communication and utility lines. These disturbances keep the structure and composition of these remnants in a constant state of fluctuation. The remnants that were found during this survey all show some form of disturbance. Exotic species threatened all the prairie remnants in District 4 effecting 11 of 11 (100%) remnants (Table 2). Woody invasion from both exotics and native species was a threat in 4 of 11 remnants (36%). Three of 11 prairies (27%) were partially mowed; this does not include the six additional remnants that could not be surveyed because of continuous mowing. Digging of plants might be a greater problem than indicated in this report, because evidence of digging easily could be overlooked during the assessment.

**Table 2.** Type of threat and frequency among prairie remnants in IDOT District 4.

Threats	# Sites (out of 11)	% of sites
Exotics	11	100%
Woody invasion	4	36%
Mowing	3	27%

### Exotics

If exotics were limited to the railroad ballast or roadside ditch they were not considered a threat. Generally, if an exotic species occurred in the remnant and had an abundance rating of 3 or above it was considered a threat. The cool season grass *Bromus inermis* (smooth brome grass) was the most common exotic encountered occurring in 9 of 11 (82%) of the prairie remnants (Table 3). Meadow fescue and smooth brome grass are often planted when seeding roadsides. They can also invade from adjoining pastures and hayfields.

**Table 3.** List of exotics that were a threat to prairie remnants in IDOT District 4.

<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Common Name</b>	<b># Sites (out of 11)</b>	<b>% of Occurrence</b>
<i>Bromus inermis</i>	smooth brome grass	9	82%
<i>Phalaris arundinacea</i>	reed canary grass	5	45%
<i>Festuca pratensis</i>	meadow fescue	3	27%
<i>Pastinaca sativa</i>	wild parsnip	3	27%
<i>Melilotus</i> spp.	sweet clovers	3	37%
<i>Saponaria officinalis</i>	bouncing bet	3	37%
<i>Dipsacus laciniatus</i>	cut-leaved teasel	2	18%
<i>Elaeagnus umbellata</i>	autumn olive	2	18%
<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	Canada thistle	1	9%
<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>	black locust	1	9%

## **Literature Cited**

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**Site:** District 4

**N#** 1

**Date:** 9/09/03

**Evaluator(s):** William C. Handel

**Location:** 1800 N at the junction of 110<sup>th</sup> Street and 180<sup>th</sup> Avenue, West of the town of Cameron

**County:** Warren

**GPS Data: Starting UTM** 15T 0704402- 4529367

**Quality Class:** 3

**Natural Community Type(s):** Dry-mesic prairie

(Quality Classes: 1=Grades A or B, 2 = C, 3=D)

**Threats:** exotics

**Scientific Name**

*Bromus inermis*

*Melilotus* spp.

**Common Name**

smooth brome grass

sweet clovers

**Prairie Width:** 15 m

**Signs or Evidence of Management:** No

**Dist. from Pavement:** 1 m

**Railroad Activity:** Active

**Prairie Length:** 0.1 miles

**Prairie present on opposite side of track:** No

**Significant or Exceptional Features:** None

**Comments:** None

**Plant List for Site N#1**

**Scientific Name**

*Andropogon gerardii*

*Asclepias syriaca*

*Bromus inermis*

*Conyza canadensis*

*Euphorbia corollata*

*Helianthus rigidus*

*Melilotus* spp.

*Panicum virgatum*

*Ratibida pinnata*

*Silphium integrifolium*

**Common Name**

big bluestem

common milkweed

smooth brome grass

horseweed

flowering spurge

prairie sunflower

sweet clovers

prairie switch grass

drooping coneflower

rosinweed

**RAV**

2

2

5

3

2

3

3

2

3

3

**Site:** District 4

**N#** 2

**Date:** 9/10/03

**Evaluator(s):** William C. Handel

**Location:** Knox County Highway 40 on the opposite side of US 34 to the Galesburg city limits

**County:** Knox

**GPS Data: Starting UTM** 15T 0725518 - 4540982

**GPS Data Ending UTM** 15T 0727927 - 4544403

**Quality Class:** 3

**Natural Community Type(s):** Dry-mesic prairie

(Quality Classes: 1=Grades A or B, 2 = C, 3=D)

**Threats:** exotics

**Scientific Name**

**Common Name**

*Bromus inermis*

smooth brome grass

*Cirsium arvense*

Canada thistle

*Dipsacus laciniatus*

cut-leaved teasel

*Pastinaca sativa*

wild parsnip

*Phalaris arundinacea*

reed canary grass

*Saponaria officinalis*

bouncing bet

**Prairie Width:** 20-40 m

**Signs or Evidence of Management:** No

**Dist. from Pavement:** 5 m

**Railroad Activity:** Active

**Prairie Length:** 4 miles

**Prairie present on opposite side of track:** Yes

**Significant or Exceptional Features:** None

**Comments:** None

**Plant List for Site N#2**

**Scientific Name**

**Common Name**

**RAV**

*Andropogon gerardii*

big bluestem

4

*Artemisia ludoviciana*

Louisiana sagebrush

1

*Asclepias syriaca*

common milkweed

2

*Aster ericoides*

heath aster

5

*Aster laevis*

smooth aster

2

*Aster novae-angliae*

New England aster

2

*Aster pilosus*

hairy aster

3

*Aster praealtus*

willow-leaved aster

3

*Bromus inermis*

smooth brome grass

3

*Cirsium arvense*

Canada thistle

3

*Dipsacus laciniatus*

cut-leaved teasel

3

*Eupatorium altissimum*

tall boneset

2

*Helianthus rigidus*

prairie sunflower

3

*Pastinaca sativa*

wild parsnip

3

*Phalaris arundinacea*

reed canary grass

3

*Ratibida pinnata*

drooping coneflower

4

*Saponaria officinalis*

bouncing bet

3

*Silphium perfoliatum*

cup plant

2

*Solidago canadensis*

Canada goldenrod

4

*Solidago rigida*

rigid goldenrod

3

*Sorghastrum nutans*

Indian grass

2

*Spartina pectinata*

prairie cord grass

4

*Verbena hastata*

blue vervain

2

<i>Vernonia missurica</i>	Missouri ironweed	1
<i>Veronicastrum virginicum</i>	Culver's root	2

**Site:** District 4

**N#** 3

**Date:** 9/03/03

**Evaluator(s):** William C. Handel

**Location:** US 34 Galesburg to Wataga

**County:** Knox

**GPS Data: Starting UTM** 15T 0728249 - 4544684

**GPS Data Ending UTM** 15T 0723530 - 4538119

**Quality Class:** 2

**Natural Community Type(s):** Dry-mesic prairie

(Quality Classes: 1=Grades A or B, 2 = C, 3=D)

**Threats:** exotics

**Scientific Name**

**Common Name**

*Dipsacus laciniatus*

cut-leaved teasel

*Pastinaca sativa*

wild parsnip

*Elaeagnus umbellata*

autumn olive

*Phalaris arundinacea*

reed canary grass

*Festuca pratensis*

meadow fescue

**Prairie Width:** 18 m

**Signs or Evidence of Management:** No

**Dist. from Pavement:** 2 m

**Railroad Activity:** Active

**Prairie Length:** 2.7 miles

**Prairie present on opposite side of track:** Yes

**Significant or Exceptional Features:** None

**Comments:** None

**Plant List for Site N#3**

**Scientific Name**

**Common Name**

**RAV**

*Ambrosia trifida*

giant ragweed

2

*Andropogon gerardii*

big bluestem

4

*Asclepias sullivantii*

prairie milkweed

2

*Asclepias syriaca*

common milkweed

2

*Aster ericoides*

heath aster

3

*Aster laevis*

smooth aster

2

*Aster novae-angliae*

New England aster

2

*Aster pilosus*

hairy aster

1

*Brickellia eupatorioides*

false boneset

2

*Cirsium discolor*

field thistle

2

*Desmodium canadense*

showy tick trefoil

2

*Dipsacus laciniatus*

cut-leaved teasel

3

*Echinacea pallida*

pale purple coneflower

1

*Elaeagnus umbellata*

autumn olive

3

*Eupatorium altissimum*

tall boneset

2

*Euphorbia corollata*

flowering spurge

3

*Euthamia graminifolia*

grassleaf goldenrod

1

*Festuca pratensis*

meadow fescue

3

*Helianthus grosseserratus*

tall sunflower

1

*Helianthus rigidus*

prairie sunflower

4

*Lactuca canadensis*

Canada lettuce

2

*Lespedeza capitata*

bush clover

2

*Monarda fistulosa*

wild bergamot

1

*Oenothera biennis*

evening primrose

2

*Pastinaca sativa*

wild parsnip

3



<i>Phalaris arundinacea</i>	reed canary grass	3
<i>Ratibida pinnata</i>	drooping coneflower	2
<i>Rosa carolina</i>	pasture rose	2
<i>Silphium integrifolium</i>	rosinweed	2
<i>Silphium laciniatum</i>	compass plant	2
<i>Solidago canadensis</i>	Canada goldenrod	3
<i>Solidago rigida</i>	rigid goldenrod	5
<i>Sorghastrum nutans</i>	Indian grass	4
<b>Plant List for Site N#3</b>		
<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Common Name</b>	<b>RAV</b>
<i>Spartina pectinata</i>	prairie cord grass	2
<i>Sporobolus asper</i>	drop seed	2
<i>Vernonia missurica</i>	Missouri ironweed	3

**Site:** District 4

**N#** 4

**Date:** 9/08/03

**Evaluator(s):** William C. Handel

**Location:** From 1240 E to 2650 N to Altona

**County:** Knox

**GPS Data: Starting UTM** 15T 0734950 - 4552273

**GPS Data Ending UTM** 15T 0737574 - 4554606

**Quality Class:** 3

**Natural Community Type(s):** Dry-mesic prairie

(Quality Classes: 1=Grades A or B, 2 = C, 3=D)

**Threats:** exotics, mowing

**Scientific Name**

*Bromus inermis*  
*Phalaris arundinacea*  
*Saponaria officinalis*

**Common Name**

smooth brome grass  
reed canary grass  
bouncing bet

**Prairie Width:** 15 m

**Signs or Evidence of Management:** No

**Dist. from Pavement:** 2 m

**Railroad Activity:** Active

**Prairie Length:** 2.2 miles

**Prairie present on opposite side of track:** Yes

**Significant or Exceptional Features:** None

**Comments:** Highly degraded, the area near Walnut Creek is mostly exotics.

**Plant List for Site N#4**

**Scientific Name**

*Andropogon gerardii*  
*Asclepias syriaca*  
*Aster ericoides*  
*Brickellia eupatorioides*  
*Bromus inermis*  
*Cirsium discolor*  
*Conyza canadensis*  
*Eupatorium altissimum*  
*Euphorbia corollata*  
*Heliopsis helianthoides*  
*Lactuca canadensis*  
*Phalaris arundinacea*  
*Ratibida pinnata*  
*Rosa carolina*  
*Saponaria officinalis*  
*Silphium laciniatum*  
*Solidago rigida*  
*Spartina pectinata*  
*Sporobolus asper*  
*Tridens flavus*

**Common Name**

big bluestem  
common milkweed  
heath aster  
false boneset  
smooth brome grass  
field thistle  
horseweed  
tall boneset  
flowering spurge  
false sunflower  
Canada lettuce  
reed canary grass  
drooping coneflower  
pasture rose  
bouncing bet  
compass plant  
rigid goldenrod  
prairie cord grass  
drop seed  
false red top

**RAV**

3  
2  
2  
2  
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2  
4  
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2  
2  
3  
2  
2  
3  
3  
3  
3  
3  
2

**Site:** District 4

**N#** 5

**Date:** 9/29/03

**Evaluator(s):** William C. Handel

**Location:** Prairie vegetation starts 0.2 mile from Knox Station Road

**County:** Knox

**GPS Data: Starting UTM** 15T 0730970 - 4535080

**GPS Data Ending UTM** 15T 0727054 - 4535771

**Quality Class:** 1-3      **Natural Community Type(s):** Dry-mesic, mesic, and wet prairie  
(Quality Classes: 1=Grades A or B, 2 = C, 3=D)

**Threats:** exotics, woody invasion, mowing for hay

**Scientific Name**

**Common Name**

*Bromus inermis*

smooth brome grass

*Phalaris arundinacea*

reed canary grass

*Saponaria officinalis*

bouncing bet

**Prairie Width:** 40-80 m

**Signs or Evidence of Management:** Yes  
(Knox College Prairie Management)

**Dist. from Pavement:** 1 m

**Railroad Activity:** Active

**Prairie Length:** 2.4 miles

**Prairie present on opposite side of track:** No

**Significant or Exceptional Features:** Some areas have high quality prairie remaining.

**Comments:** Part of the remnant was mowed for hay and had hay bales stored along the road in the prairie vegetation.

**Plant List for Site N#5**

**Scientific Name**

**Common Name**

**RAV**

*Andropogon gerardii*

big bluestem

5

*Antennaria plantaginifolia*

everlasting

1

*Apocynum cannabinum*

dogbane

1

*Asclepias syriaca*

common milkweed

1

*Aster ericoides*

heath aster

3

*Aster novae-angliae*

New England aster

2

*Bromus inermis*

smooth brome grass

3

*Cassia fasciculata*

partridge pea

2

*Ceanothus americanus*

New Jersey tea

2

*Cirsium discolor*

field thistle

1

*Coreopsis tripteris*

tall coreopsis

1

*Dalea purpurea*

purple prairie clover

1

*Desmodium canadense*

showy tick trefoil

2

*Desmodium illinoense*

Illinois tick trefoil

2

*Equisetum laevigatum*

smooth scouring rush

2

*Eupatorium altissimum*

tall boneset

2

*Euphorbia corollata*

flowering spurge

2

*Euthamia graminifolia*

grassleaf goldenrod

2

*Gaura biennis*

gaura

1

*Helianthus grosseserratus*

tall sunflower

2

*Helianthus strumosus*

pale-leaved sunflower

3

*Lechea tenuifolia*

narrow-leaved pinweed

1

*Lespedeza capitata*

bush clover

2

*Monarda fistulosa*

wild bergamot

1

<i>Muhlenbergia mexicana</i>	leafy satin grass	1
<i>Pastinaca sativa</i>	wild parsnip	3
<i>Populus tremuloides</i>	quaking aspen	2
<i>Potentilla arguta</i>	prairie cinquefoil	2
<i>Prunus serotina</i>	wild black cherry	2
<i>Pycnanthemum virginianum</i>	mountain mint	1
<i>Quercus imbricaria</i>	shingle oak	2

**Plant List for Site N#5 cont.**

<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Common Name</b>	<b>RAV</b>
<i>Quercus velutina</i>	black oak	2
<i>Ratibida pinnata</i>	drooping coneflower	1
<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>	black locust	3
<i>Rosa carolina</i>	pasture rose	1
<i>Rubus allegheniensis</i>	common blackberry	3
<i>Salix humilis</i>	prairie willow	3
<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>	little bluestem	3
<i>Silphium perfoliatum</i>	cup plant	2
<i>Solidago canadensis</i>	Canada goldenrod	2
<i>Solidago missouriensis</i>	Missouri goldenrod	2
<i>Solidago nemoralis</i>	dyersweed goldenrod	3
<i>Sorghastrum nutans</i>	Indian grass	2
<i>Sporobolus asper</i>	drop seed	4
<i>Vernonia missurica</i>	Missouri ironweed	2
<i>Veronicastrum virginicum</i>	Culver's root	2

**Site:** District 4

**N#** 6

**Date:** 9/11/03

**Evaluator(s):** William C. Handel

**Location:** Lang Road in the town of Colmar

**County:** McDonough

**GPS Data: Starting UTM** 15T 0679161 - 4468261

**GPS Data Ending UTM** 15T 0679466 - 4468759

**Quality Class:** 2

**Natural Community Type(s):** Dry-mesic prairie

(Quality Classes: 1=Grades A or B, 2 = C, 3=D)

**Threats:** exotics

**Scientific Name**

*Bromus inermis*

*Festuca pratensis*

**Common Name**

smooth brome grass

meadow fescue

**Prairie Width:** 22 m

**Signs or Evidence of Management:** No

**Dist. from Pavement:** 1 m

**Railroad Activity:** Active

**Prairie Length:** 0.3 miles

**Prairie present on opposite side of track:** No

**Significant or Exceptional Features:** None

**Comments:** Prairie occurs on both sides of road.

**Plant List for Site N#6**

**Scientific Name**

**Common Name**

**RAV**

*Andropogon gerardii*

big bluestem

4

*Asclepias syriaca*

common milkweed

2

*Bromus inermis*

smooth brome grass

3

*Cassia fasciculata*

partridge pea

2

*Cirsium discolor*

field thistle

2

*Desmodium canadense*

showy tick trefoil

2

*Elymus canadensis*

Canada wild rye

2

*Eupatorium altissimum*

tall boneset

3

*Euphorbia corollata*

flowering spurge

2

*Festuca pratensis*

meadow fescue

3

*Helianthus mollis*

hairy sunflower

2

*Lespedeza capitata*

bush clover

3

*Liatis aspera*

rough blazingstar

2

*Prunus americana*

American plum

2

*Pycnanthemum pilosum*

hairy mountain mint

2

*Ratibida pinnata*

drooping coneflower

3

*Rhus glabra*

smooth sumac

2

*Sambucus canadensis*

elderberry

2

*Silphium perfoliatum*

cup plant

2

*Solidago canadensis*

Canada goldenrod

3

*Solidago missouriensis*

Missouri goldenrod

4

*Solidago rigida*

rigid goldenrod

2

*Sorghastrum nutans*

Indian grass

3

*Sporobolus asper*

drop seed

2

*Veronicastrum virginicum*

Culver's root

2

**Site:** District 4

**N#** 7

**Date:** 9/11/03

**Evaluator(s):** William C. Handel

**Location:** 2150 E from 1050 N to Adair

**County:** McDonough

**GPS Data: Starting UTM** 15T 0712395 - 4478454

**Quality Class:** 3

**Natural Community Type(s):** Dry-mesic prairie

(Quality Classes: 1=Grades A or B, 2 = C, 3=D)

**Threats:** exotics

**Scientific Name**

**Common Name**

*Bromus inermis*

smooth brome grass

*Festuca pratensis*

meadow fescue

**Prairie Width:** 18 m

**Signs or Evidence of Management:** No

**Dist. from Pavement:** 2 m

**Railroad Activity:** Active

**Prairie Length:** 0.5 miles

**Prairie present on opposite side of track:** No

**Significant or Exceptional Features:** None

**Comments:** None

**Plant List for Site N#7**

**Scientific Name**

**Common Name**

**RAV**

*Asclepias syriaca*

common milkweed

2

*Bromus inermis*

smooth brome grass

3

*Cassia fasciculata*

partridge pea

2

*Cornus racemosa*

gray dogwood

2

*Elymus virginicus*

wild rye

2

*Euphorbia corollata*

flowering spurge

2

*Festuca pratensis*

meadow fescue

3

*Gaura biennis*

gaura

2

*Helianthus grosseserratus*

tall sunflower

1

*Helianthus rigidus*

prairie sunflower

2

*Heliopsis helianthoides*

false sunflower

2

*Monarda fistulosa*

wild bergamot

2

*Ratibida pinnata*

drooping coneflower

4

*Rudbeckia subtomentosa*

fragrant coneflower

2

*Silphium terebinthinaceum*

prairie dock

1

*Solidago canadensis*

Canada goldenrod

5

*Spartina pectinata*

prairie cord grass

3

*Tridens flavus*

false red top

2

**Site:** District 4

**N#** 8

**Date:** 9/25/03

**Evaluator(s):** William C. Handel

**Location:** Coal Cut Road

**County:** Fulton

**GPS Data: Starting UTM** 15T 0722886 - 4484916

**Quality Class:** 2

**Natural Community Type(s):** Dry-mesic savanna

(Quality Classes: 1=Grades A or B, 2 = C, 3=D)

**Threats:** exotics, woody invasion

**Scientific Name**

*Melilotus* spp.

**Common Name**

sweet clovers

**Prairie Width:** 12 m

**Signs or Evidence of Management:** No

**Dist. from Pavement:** 1 m

**Railroad Activity:** Abandoned

**Prairie Length:** 0.1 miles

**Prairie present on opposite side of track:** Yes

**Significant or Exceptional Features:** None

**Comments:** Two state listed species occur at this site *Liatris scariosa nieuwlandii* (blazing-star) and *Trifolium reflexum* (buffalo clover).

**Plant List for Site N#8**

<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Common Name</b>	<b>RAV</b>
<i>Aster ericoides</i>	heath aster	2
<i>Aster novae-angliae</i>	New England aster	2
<i>Aster pilosus</i>	hairy aster	2
<i>Aster</i> sp.	aster	2
<i>Asclepias purpurascens</i>	purple milkweed	1
<i>Celtis occidentalis</i>	hackberry	2
<i>Coreopsis tripteris</i>	tall coreopsis	2
<i>Cornus racemosa</i>	gray dogwood	2
<i>Corylus americana</i>	hazelnut	3
<i>Elymus hystrix</i>	bottlebrush grass	2
<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	broad-leaved purple coneflower	2
<i>Trifolium reflexum</i>	buffalo clover	2
<i>Eupatorium altissimum</i>	tall boneset	3
<i>Gaura biennis</i>	gaura	2
<i>Liatris scariosa nieuwlandii</i>	blazing-star	2
<i>Melilotus</i> spp.	sweet clovers	3
<i>Prunus serotina</i>	wild black cherry	2
<i>Quercus alba</i>	white oak	3
<i>Quercus imbricaria</i>	shingle oak	3
<i>Ratibida pinnata</i>	drooping coneflower	4
<i>Solidago canadensis</i>	Canada goldenrod	2
<i>Solidago nemoralis</i>	dyersweed goldenrod	2
<i>Solidago rigida</i>	rigid goldenrod	3
<i>Solidago ulmifolia</i>	elm-leaved goldenrod	2
<i>Sorghastrum nutans</i>	Indian grass	3
<i>Spartina pectinata</i>	prairie cord grass	2
<i>Tripsacum dactyloides</i>	gama grass	2





**Site:** District 4

**N#** 9

**Date:** 9/25/03

**Evaluator(s):** William C. Handel

**Location:** Highway 2380 from 1950 E to Cuba

**County:** Fulton

**GPS Data: Starting UTM** 15T 0747529 - 4491371

**GPS Data Ending UTM** 15T 0738697 - 4487044

**Quality Class:** 3

**Natural Community Type(s):** Dry-mesic prairie

(Quality Classes: 1=Grades A or B, 2 = C, 3=D)

**Threats:** exotics, woody invasion, mowing

**Scientific Name**

**Common Name**

*Bromus inermis*

smooth brome grass

*Elaeagnus umbellata*

autumn olive

*Phalaris arundinacea*

reed canary grass

*Robinia pseudoacacia*

black locust

**Prairie Width:** 15 m

**Signs or Evidence of Management:** No

**Dist. from Pavement:** 3 m

**Railroad Activity:** Active

**Prairie Length:** 6.15 miles

**Prairie present on opposite side of track:** Yes

**Significant or Exceptional Features:** None

**Comments:** Last half mile was mowed for hay.

**Plant List for Site N#9**

**Scientific Name**

**Common Name**

**RAV**

*Andropogon gerardii*

big bluestem

5

*Aster ericoides*

heath aster

1

*Aster novae-angliae*

New England aster

2

*Aster pilosus*

hairy aster

5

*Bromus inermis*

smooth brome grass

3

*Cornus racemosa*

gray dogwood

2

*Daucus carota*

Queen-anne's-lace

1

*Elaeagnus umbellata*

autumn olive

3

*Eragrostis spectabilis*

purple love grass

4

*Euphorbia corollata*

flowering spurge

3

*Helianthus grosseserratus*

tall sunflower

5

*Phalaris arundinacea*

reed canary grass

3

*Rhus glabra*

smooth sumac

5

*Robinia pseudoacacia*

black locust

3

*Silphium laciniatum*

compass plant

3

*Silphium terebinthinaceum*

prairie dock

4

*Solidago nemoralis*

dyersweed goldenrod

2

*Sorghastrum nutans*

Indian grass

5

*Spartina pectinata*

prairie cord grass

3

*Sporobolus asper*

drop seed

2

**Site:** District 4

**N#** 10

**Date:** 9/25/03

**Evaluator(s):** William C. Handel

**Location:** Sullivan Road O55E Road

**County:** Fulton

**GPS Data: Starting UTM** 15T 0717661 - 4457593

**GPS Data Ending UTM** 15T 0717636 - 4458908

**Quality Class:** 3

**Natural Community Type(s):** Dry-mesic prairie

(Quality Classes: 1=Grades A or B, 2 = C, 3=D)

**Threats:** exotics, woody invasion

**Scientific Name**

**Common Name**

*Bromus inermis*

smooth brome grass

*Melilotus* spp.

sweet clovers

**Prairie Width:** 25 m

**Signs or Evidence of Management:** No

**Dist. from Pavement:** 2 m

**Railroad Activity:** Active

**Prairie Length:** 0.8 miles

**Prairie present on opposite side of track:** Yes

**Significant or Exceptional Features:** None

**Comments:** None

**Plant List for Site N#10**

**Scientific Name**

**Common Name**

**RAV**

*Asclepias syriaca*

common milkweed

2

*Aster* sp.

aster

3

*Bromus inermis*

smooth brome grass

2

*Coreopsis tripteris*

tall coreopsis

2

*Cornus racemosa*

gray dogwood

3

*Desmodium paniculatum*

panicked tick trefoil

2

*Eupatorium altissimum*

tall boneset

3

*Helianthus rigidus*

prairie sunflower

4

*Melilotus* spp.

sweet clovers

3

*Rhus glabra*

smooth sumac

2

*Sassafras albidum*

red sassafras

2

*Solidago canadensis*

Canada goldenrod

5

*Verbesina helianthoides*

yellow crownbeard

3

**Site:** District 4

**N#** 11

**Date:** 9/26/03

**Evaluator(s):** William C. Handel

**Location:** Old Peoria Road

**County:** Tazwell

**GPS Data: Starting UTM** 16T 0307758 - 4490050

**GPS Data Ending UTM** 16T 0308736 - 4490021

**Quality Class:** 3

**Natural Community Type(s):** Dry-mesic prairie

(Quality Classes: 1=Grades A or B, 2 = C, 3=D)

**Threats:** exotics, woody invasion

**Scientific Name**

*Bromus inermis*

*Pastinaca sativa*

**Common Name**

smooth brome grass

wild parsnip

**Prairie Width:** 25 m

**Signs or Evidence of Management:** No

**Dist. from Pavement:** 2 m

**Railroad Activity:** Abandoned

**Prairie Length:** 0.4 miles

**Prairie present on opposite side of track:** No

**Significant or Exceptional Features:** None

**Comments:** None

### Plant List for Site N#11

**Scientific Name**

*Andropogon gerardii*

*Aster novae-angliae*

*Aster praealtus*

*Aster shortii*

*Bromus inermis*

*Helianthus grosseserratus*

*Monarda fistulosa*

*Pastinaca sativa*

*Ratibida pinnata*

*Rhus glabra*

*Rubus occidentalis*

*Silphium terebinthinaceum*

*Solidago canadensis*

*Tridens flavus*

**Common Name**

big bluestem

New England aster

willow-leaved aster

Short's aster

smooth brome grass

tall sunflower

wild bergamot

wild parsnip

drooping coneflower

smooth sumac

black raspberry

prairie dock

Canada goldenrod

false red top

**RAV**

4

2

2

2

3

2

3

3

2

3

3

3

4

2

### Mowed Prairie

#### 1. Peoria County

IL -116 between west of Bellevue

This area had some prairie left next to the tracks where the mower could not reach.

#### 2. Fulton County

This remnant starts at the corner of Gilchrist Road and 2100 E Road

Some prairie vegetation occurs long this road but was mown during the summer.

#### 3. Fulton and McDonough Counties

US 136 west of Table Grove to Adair

This area looks like it has potential if mowing ceased. Several years ago there was numerous species of prairie plants along this stretch of US 136.

**4. Tazewell County**

This remnant is along Schuttler Road

A large population of *Napaea dioica* (glade mallow) occurs along this road for over a mile. This plant was considered for listing several years ago and is very uncommon in this part of the state. This might be the farthest south population of this species in the state (pers. comm. John Taft).

**5. Tazewell County**

This remnant occurs on IL 122.

This area has some conservative forbs in the spring, however it was mowed by the fall survey.

**6. Tazewell County**

This remnant is south of Minier

This area has some forbs unfortunately was mowed just before the fall survey.