

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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### Ten Years of Biodiversity Conservation

The tenth anniversary of the local Elkhorn Creek Biodiversity Preserve will be celebrated at the Northwest Illinois Audubon Society's public meeting in Freeport on Tuesday, March 3. Located just ten miles south of Freeport, the preserve contains a unique mix of native prairie remnants, wetland communities and black and bur oak forested areas.

The public program will describe the ten year conservation effort that has been conducted at the Preserve since its acquisition by the local Audubon Chapter and the Ogle County Prairie Preservation Society in the spring of 1999. The program will open with a slide presentation illustrating the Preserve's biodiversity and the ten year cycle of prescribed burns, elimination of invasive species and a range of other land restoration and management practices.

Society members who have 'adopted' portions of the preserve will discuss the activities they have guided and what led to their connection with this unique piece of land. Slides will illustrate the changes that have been brought about by this deliberate and persistent volunteer conservation effort.

Located over a small series of geologic faults, the 43 acre Elkhorn Creek Biodiversity Preserve features outcroppings of both St. Peter sandstone and Ordovician-age dolomite. Though small in size, the Preserve is unusually diverse in landscape, flora and fauna.

Wetland communities include sedge meadows, seeps, a small stream and Elkhorn Creek. Several sandy-loam hillside areas contain native prairie remnants fringed by black and bur oak forested areas. 177 different plant species have been found at the Preserve along with more than 100 different species of birds, 28 different insects and 24 different other animals species.

To learn more about this unique place and how you could visit it and get involved, please attend the public celebration of its ten year conservation anniversary. The program will run from 7:00 to 8:30 pm at St John's Church of Christ at 1010 S. Park Blvd. There is no charge for this event sponsored by the Northwest Illinois Audubon Society.

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