**Section 4010.150 Eligible Lands and Waters**

a) Eligibility of lands and waters for registration is determined by the Commission. Only land supporting natural heritage resources or archaeological resources of statewide significance shall be considered for eligibility. Developed, cultivated, or landscaped land does not qualify unless it has been committed to a program of restoration management designed to return the land to a condition supporting significant natural heritage resources.

b) Lands and waters eligible for registration include the following:

1) lands and waters included on the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory, specifically:

Category I areas – high quality remnants of the original natural communities of Illinois

Category II areas – habitats of State listed endangered species of animals or plants

Category III areas – relic species habitat

Category IV areas – outstanding representatives of Illinois' geologic diversity

Category V areas – restorations of the original natural communities of Illinois or relocated populations of endangered or threatened species of animals or plants

Category VI areas – lands or waters supporting unusual concentrations of wildlife and other unique natural areas

Category VII areas – outstanding streams, rivers, and lakes;

2) habitats of State listed threatened species of animals or plants;

3) forests at least 100 acres in size that support breeding populations of area sensitive forest wildlife species;

4) grasslands at least 80 acres in size that support breeding populations of area sensitive grassland wildlife species;

5) wetlands at least 50 acres in size or an area that includes several wetlands totalling 50 acres in size;

6) degraded but restorable prairies at least 20 acres in size (or equivalent to Grade "C" under the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory grading criteria);

7) segments of degraded but restorable railroad prairie at least 1 mile in length (or equivalent to Grade "C" under Illinois Natural Areas Inventory grading criteria);

8) areas supporting unusual concentrations of wildlife such as nesting colonies; hibernating colonies; and migration stopover, feeding, and rest sites;

9) restorations of natural communities of plants and animals that existed in Illinois at the time of settlement by immigrants from Europe for which no high quality examples are known to be extant within the region;

10) areas supporting significant archaeological resources; and

11) other areas determined by the Commission and Department to be appropriate to register as land and water reserves.

c) Public entities are encouraged to dedicate as Illinois Nature Preserves lands and waters that are classified as Category I areas - high quality remnants of the original natural communities of Illinois. Registration of Category I areas is allowed only upon unanimous approval of the members present at a meeting of the Commission.