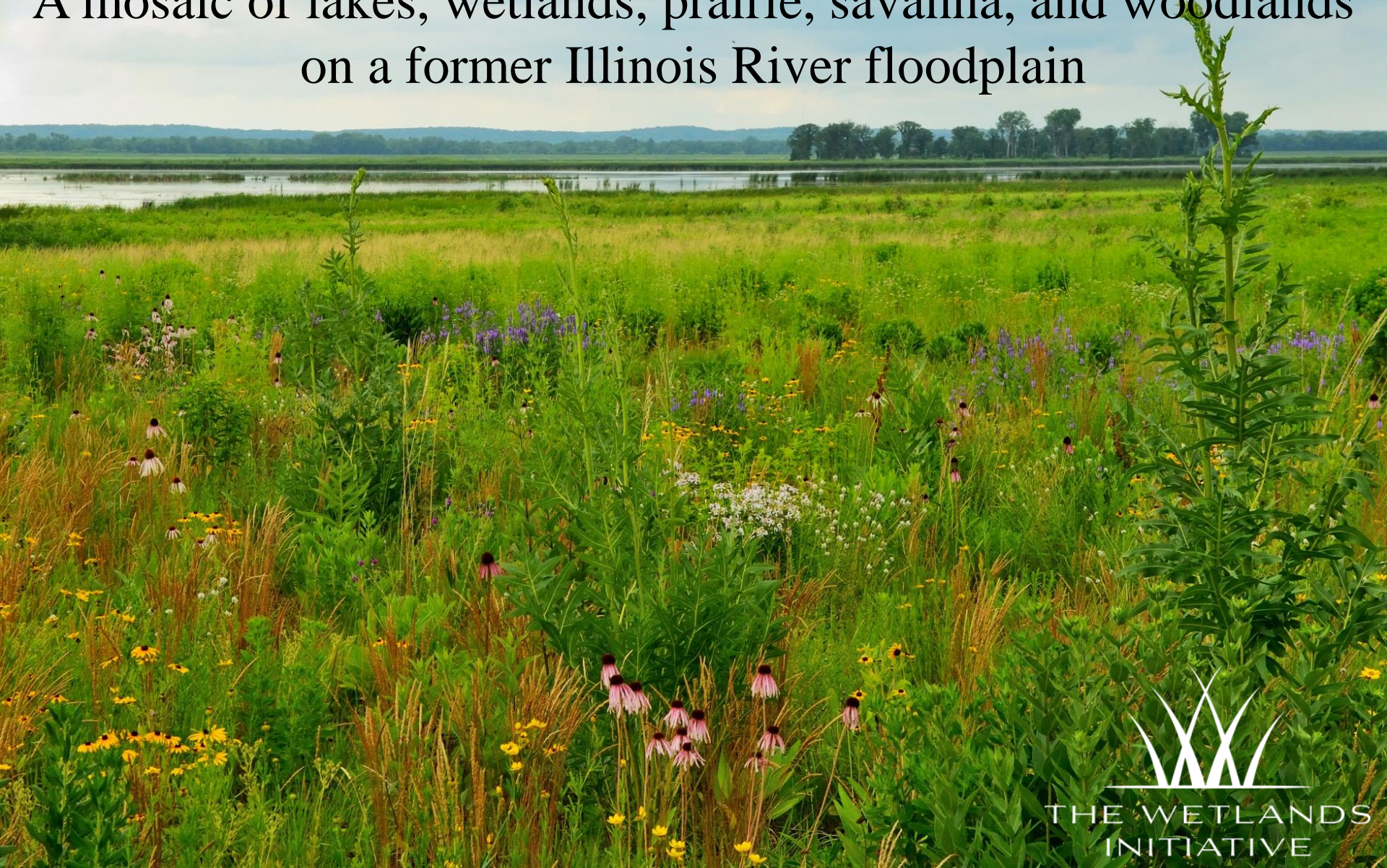
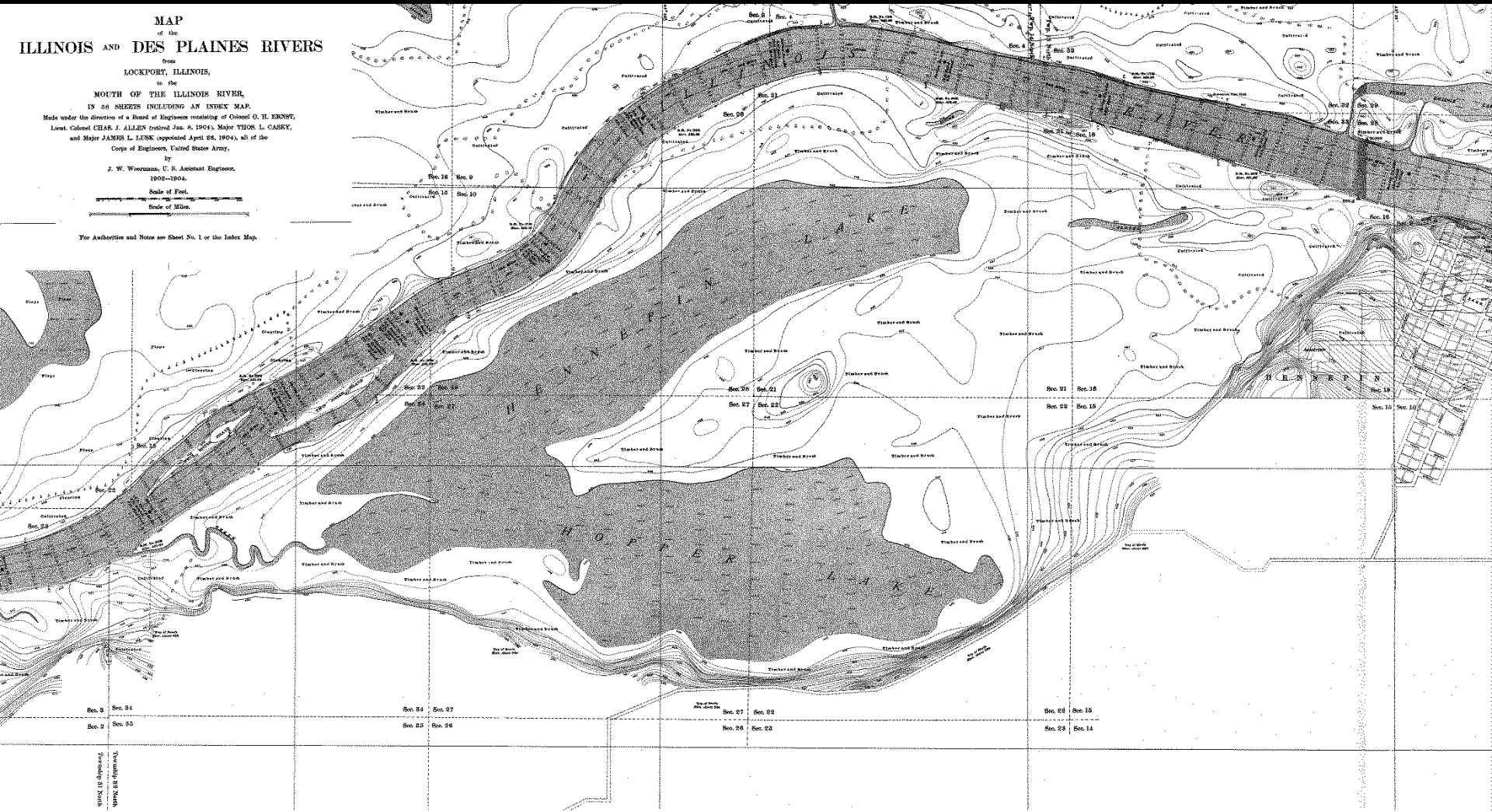


GROWTH AND CHANGE AT THE DIXON WATERFOWL REFUGE

A mosaic of lakes, wetlands, prairie, savanna, and woodlands
on a former Illinois River floodplain



1892 Woerman maps of the Illinois River Valley



Hennepin Drainage and Levee District as of 1996



The Dixon Waterfowl Refuge at Hennepin & Hopper Lakes: by 2006, a landscape transformed



THE WETLANDS
INITIATIVE

The restoration of Hennepin & Hopper Lakes: what we set out to do

- Demonstrate that large-scale wetland restoration is possible even in places that have been heavily altered for a long time.
- Restore high levels of biological diversity.
- Develop a landscape mosaic of habitats: a whole that's greater than the sum of its parts.
- Create a place that draws people, a community asset.



On February 2, 2012,
this refuge was designated as a

RAMSAR SITE

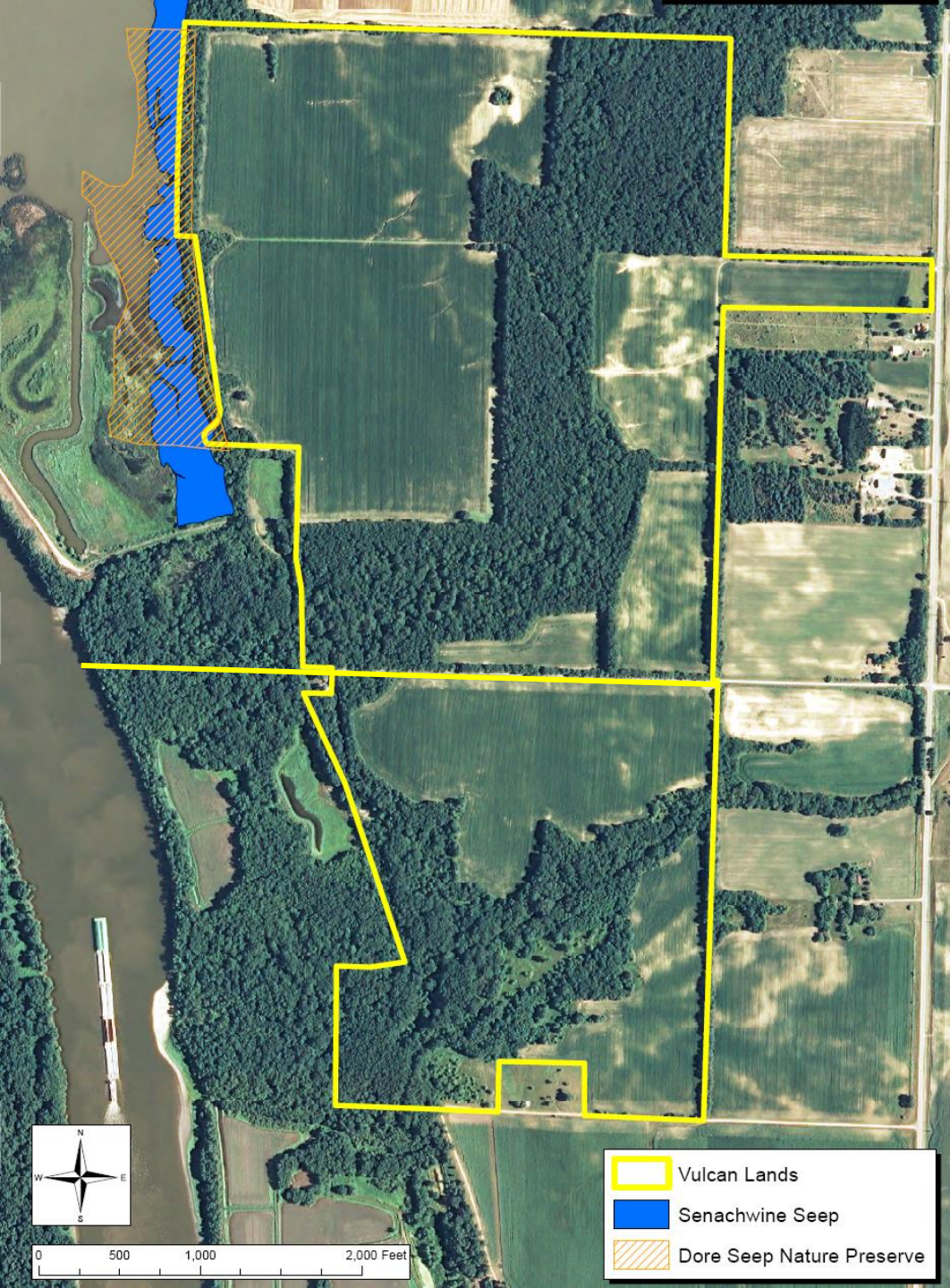
in recognition of its status as a

WETLAND OF INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE

under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, an
international treaty signed in 1971 in Ramsar, Iran, to
promote worldwide wetland conservation.

www.ramsar.org





2014/15 land deals:

424 acres purchased

288 acres to be restored:

- prairie, wet and dry
- savanna
- oak woodlands
- riparian woodlands

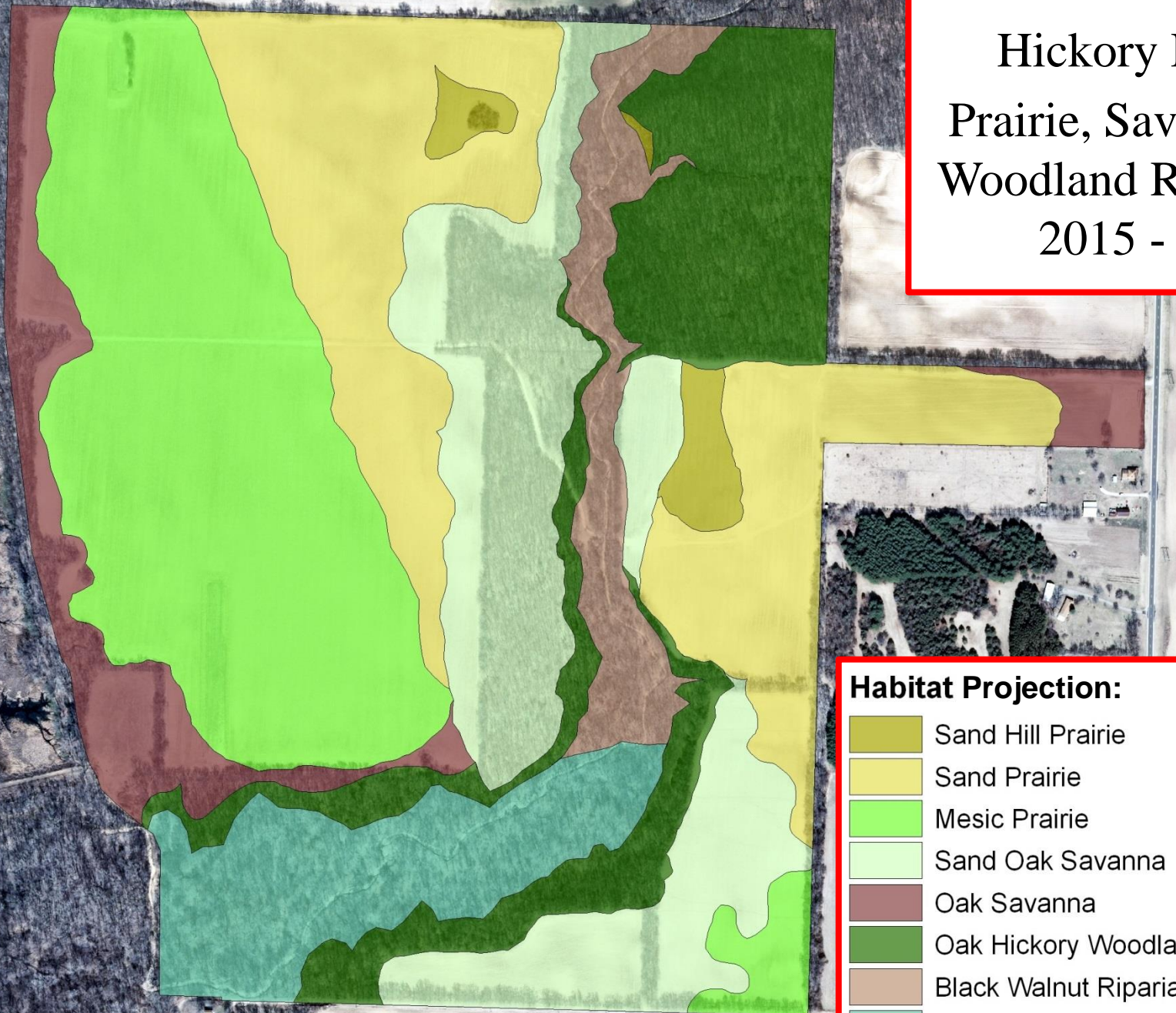
*136 acres sold as buffer
under a permanent
conservation easement*







Hickory Hollow Prairie, Savanna, and Woodland Restoration 2015 - 2018



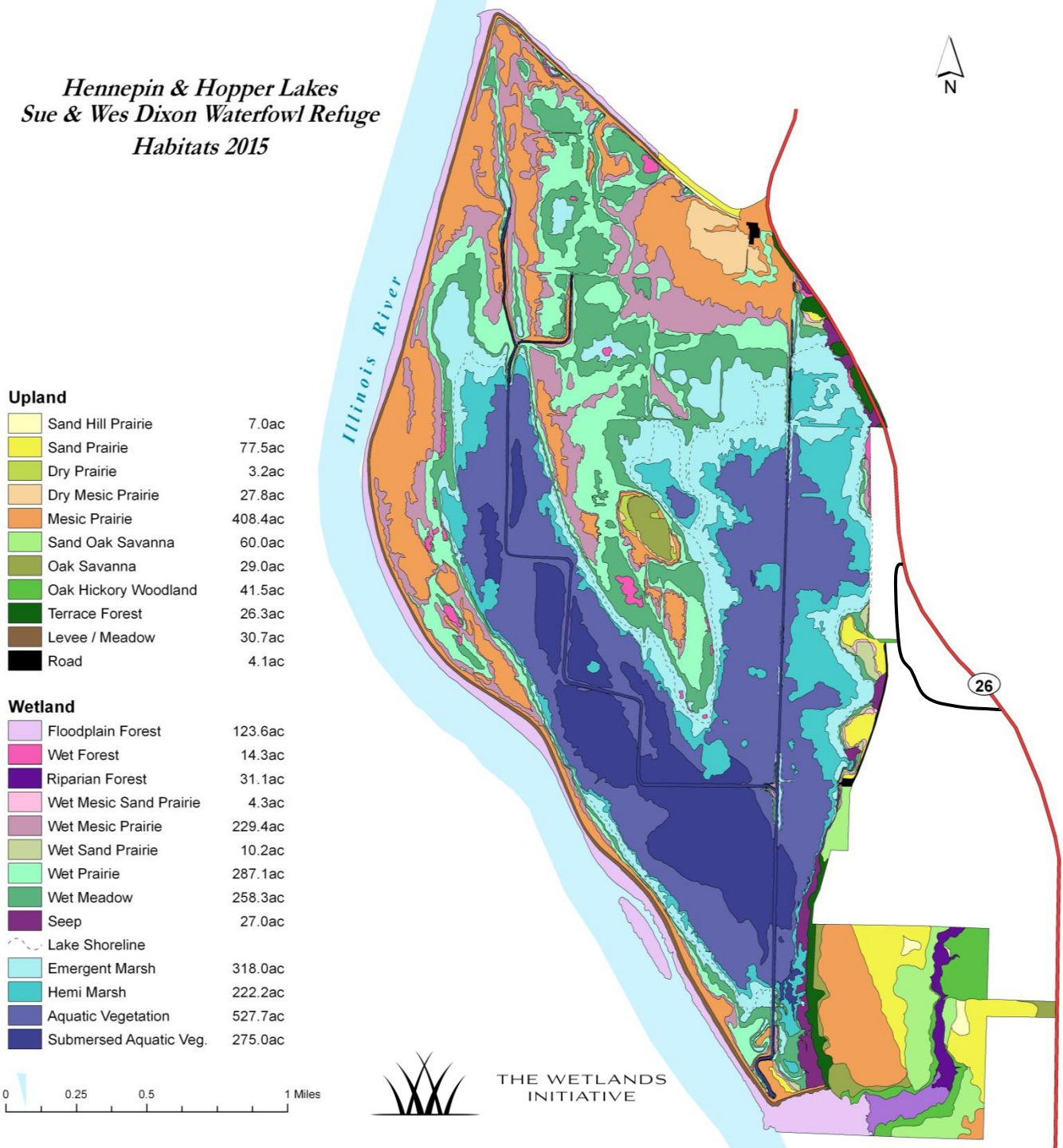
Habitat Projection:

	Sand Hill Prairie	(5.2 ac)
	Sand Prairie	(58.9 ac)
	Mesic Prairie	(74.6 ac)
	Sand Oak Savanna	(51.7 ac)
	Oak Savanna	(21.8 ac)
	Oak Hickory Woodland	(41.1 ac)
	Black Walnut Riparian Forest	(14.6 ac)
	Sycamore Floodplain Forest	(24.1 ac)

*Hennepin & Hopper Lakes
Sue & Wes Dixon Waterfowl Refuge
Habitats 2015*

**Dixon Refuge
as of 2015**

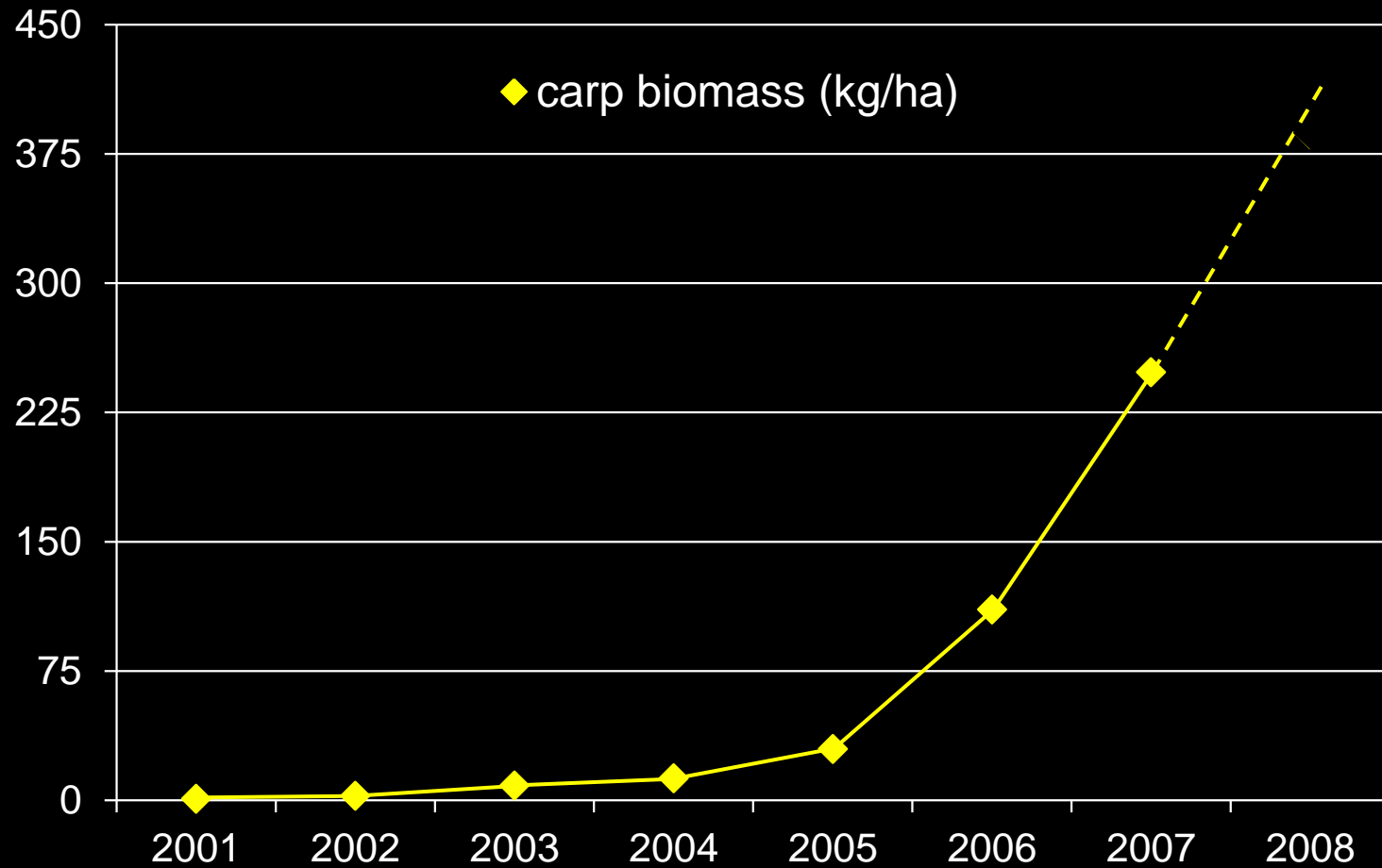
Now totals
3,038 acres



THE WETLANDS
INITIATIVE

Carp Population Biomass

2001 - 2007 ¹



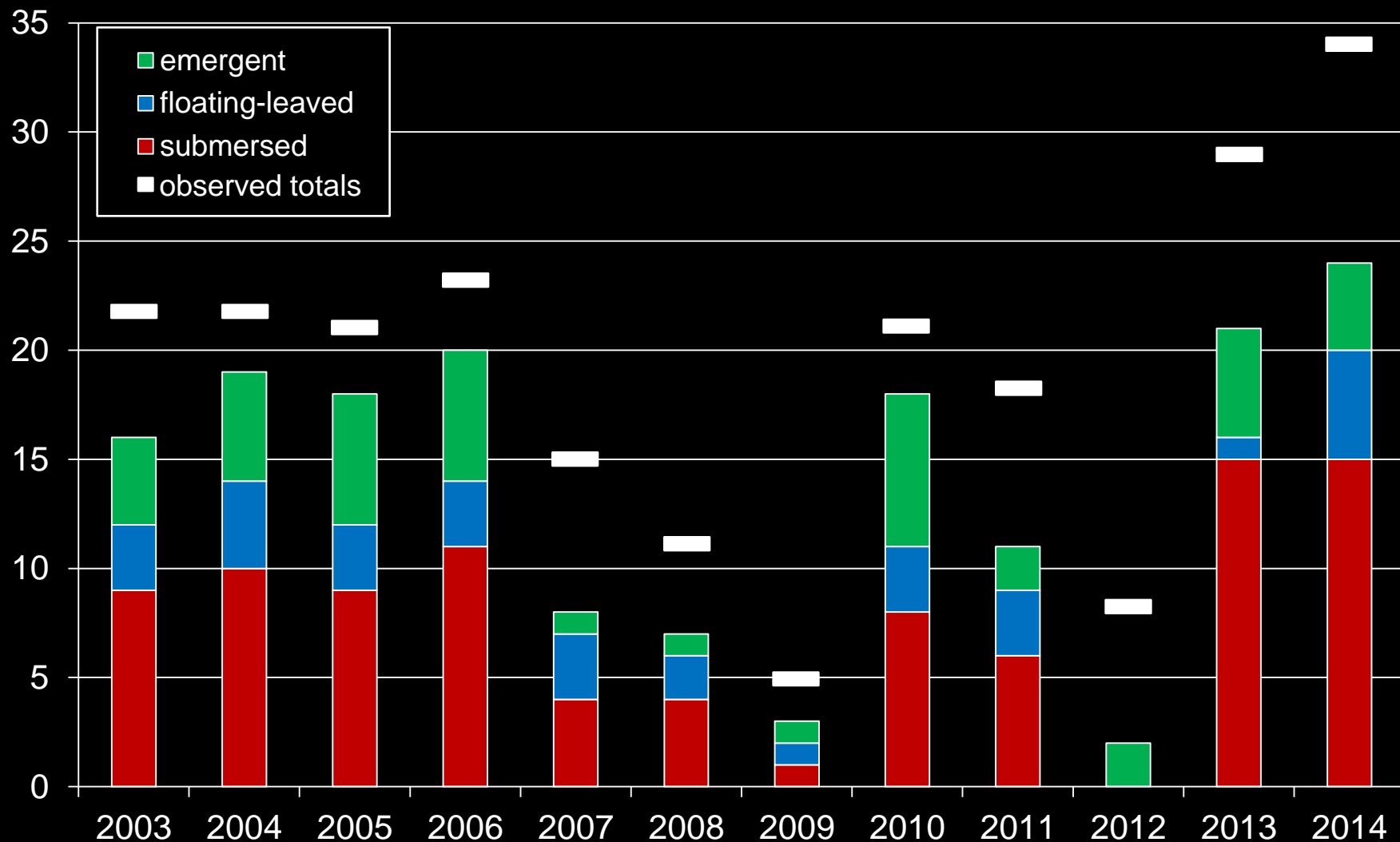






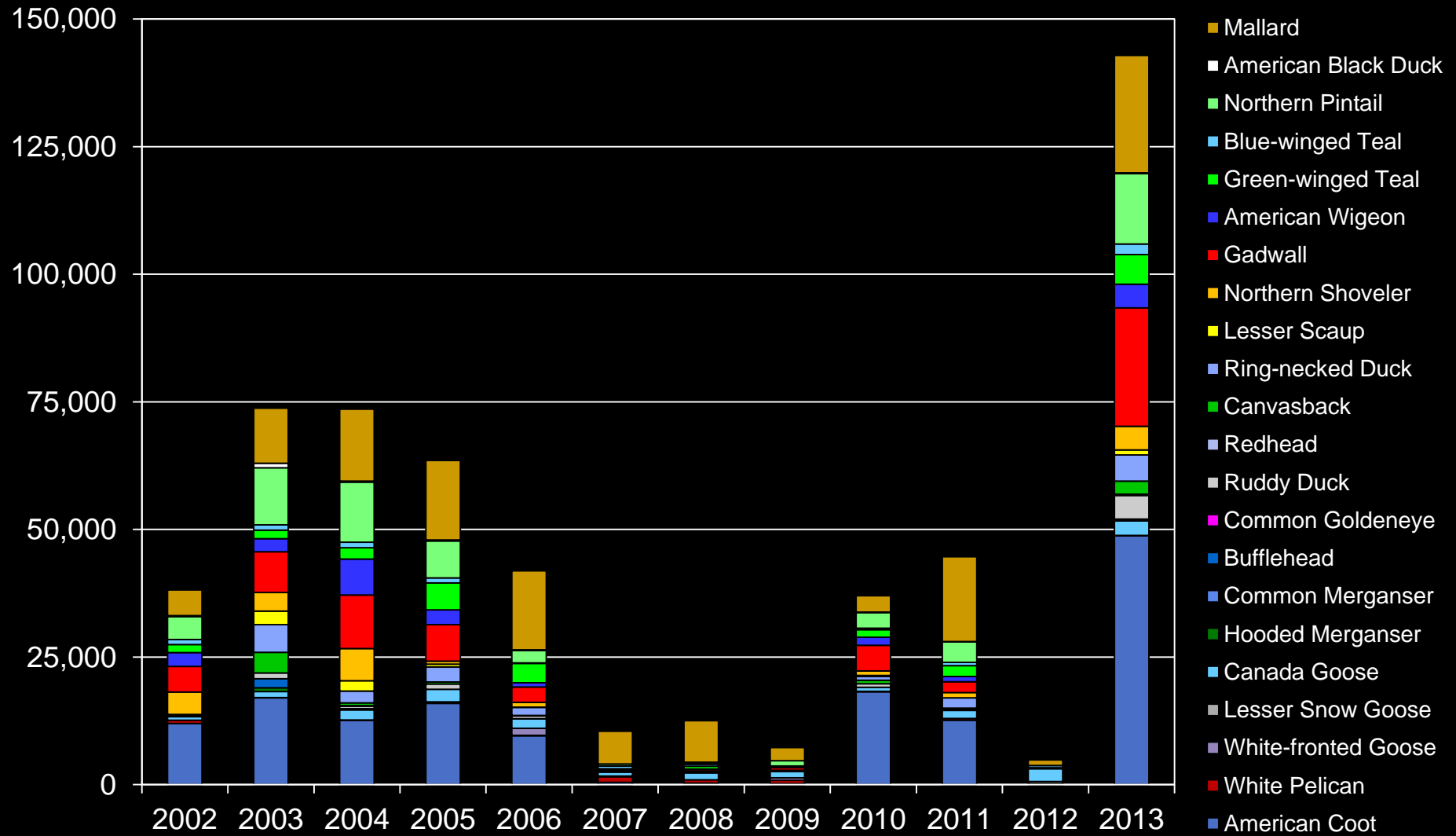
Hennepin & Hopper Lakes Plant Species Richness

100 1m² quadrat surveys each September



Hennepin & Hopper Lakes Migratory Waterfowl Species

Annual Peak Abundance 2002 - 2013¹



¹ INHS Annual Fall Waterfowl Aerial Survey

Hennepin Lake Fish Species today

brown bullhead
starhead topminnow
pumpkinseed sunfish
red-spotted sunfish
grass pickerel
bowfin
alligator gar
spotted gar
short-nosed gar
iron-color shiners
black bullhead

largemouth bass
northern pike
musky
bluegill
black & white crappy
channel catfish
walleye



Public access, stage 1

- The site is open free every day of the year.
- Boat launch with parking lot for canoes and kayaks and rowboats (no engines allowed).
- In 2004 the viewing tower was added.
- More recently two boardwalks were built which allow visitors to walk through some wetlands, including the rare seep.

Public access, stage 2

- The new land acquisition will include a new entrance on Route 26 and some new trails and a bluff-top overlook, starting in 2016.
- JUST FINISHED (officially open spring 2016) is our longest trail yet: the Marquis Oak Ridge Trail. It's also our first bicycle path.
- Public fishing re-opened September 2015.

Opening in spring
2016:
The first way to
get out into the
middle without a
watercraft.



What's next?

- The Refuge is reaching some new milestones as a community asset.
- The timing is right to examine in a more structured way what the site could/should be.
- That shouldn't be just TWI's question, it should involve a wider circle of communities.
- This winter we will launch a community-based master planning process facilitated by the Lakota Group.

