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Rights of Way as Habitat Working Group

ComEd's Prairie Program

January 19, 2016

Agenda

1. ComEd and
2. Prairie Program
   - Maintenance
   - Prescribed Burning
3. Challenges and opportunities
4. Partnerships

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Who We Are

✓ Exelon Utilities = ComEd, PECO, BGE

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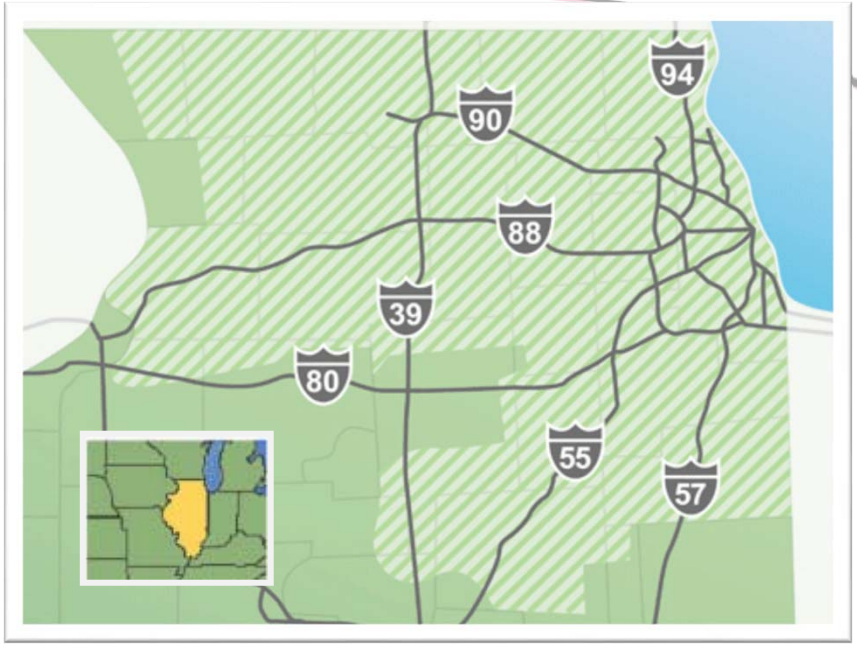
Service Territory

- ✓ **11,000 square miles** in northern Illinois
- ✓ More than **400 municipalities**
- ✓ **25 counties**
- ✓ **70%** of Illinois population
- ✓ **6,000 employees**, including linemen, cable splicers, substation mechanics, customer service representatives, fleet mechanics, material handlers, meter techs, meter readers, engineers, dispatchers, front line first responders, work planners and more



3.8 Million Customers

North Region: South boundary – City of Evanston; North boundary – Wisconsin border; West boundary – Route 59; East boundary – Lake Michigan.

West Region: East boundary – Route 59; West boundary – Iowa border; South boundary – I 80; North boundary – Wisconsin border.

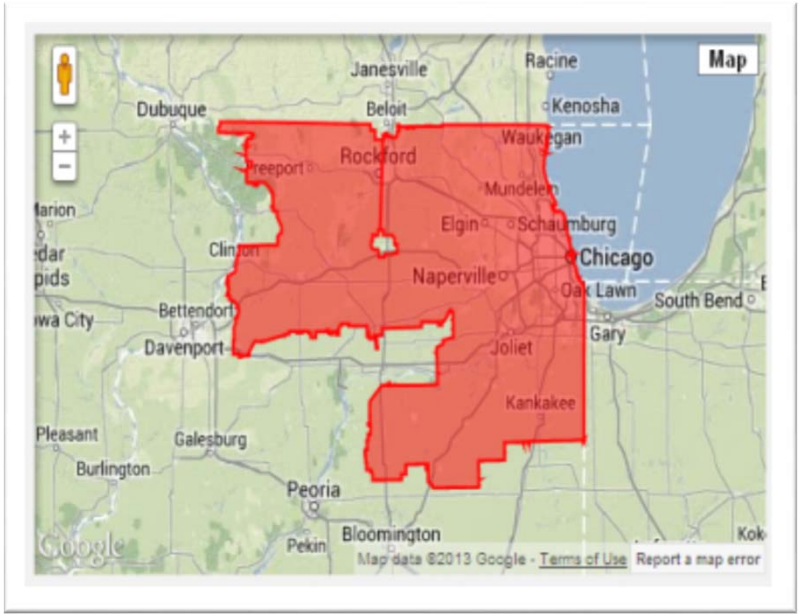
South Region: North boundary – City of Chicago; East boundary – Lake Michigan; West boundary – Iowa border; South boundary – Kankakee/Streator

* To support competition, ComEd sold its coal-fired generating stations in 2000 and sold its nuclear generating stations to Exelon Nuclear in 2003.

These divestitures separated the business of generating and selling power from the business of transmitting and distributing it.

Service Territory

- ✓ One of the largest landowners in IL
  - Between ~30,000 – 90,000 acres of land under ComEd management
  - Over 3000 miles of transmission rights of way
- ✓ ~74,000 total circuit miles
- ✓ Over 531,000 distribution transformers
- ✓ Over 1.3 million distribution poles
- ✓ Over 32,000 manholes
- ✓ Over 65,000 distribution circuit miles
- ✓ Over 5,700 transmission circuit miles
- ✓ Over 1,000 substations



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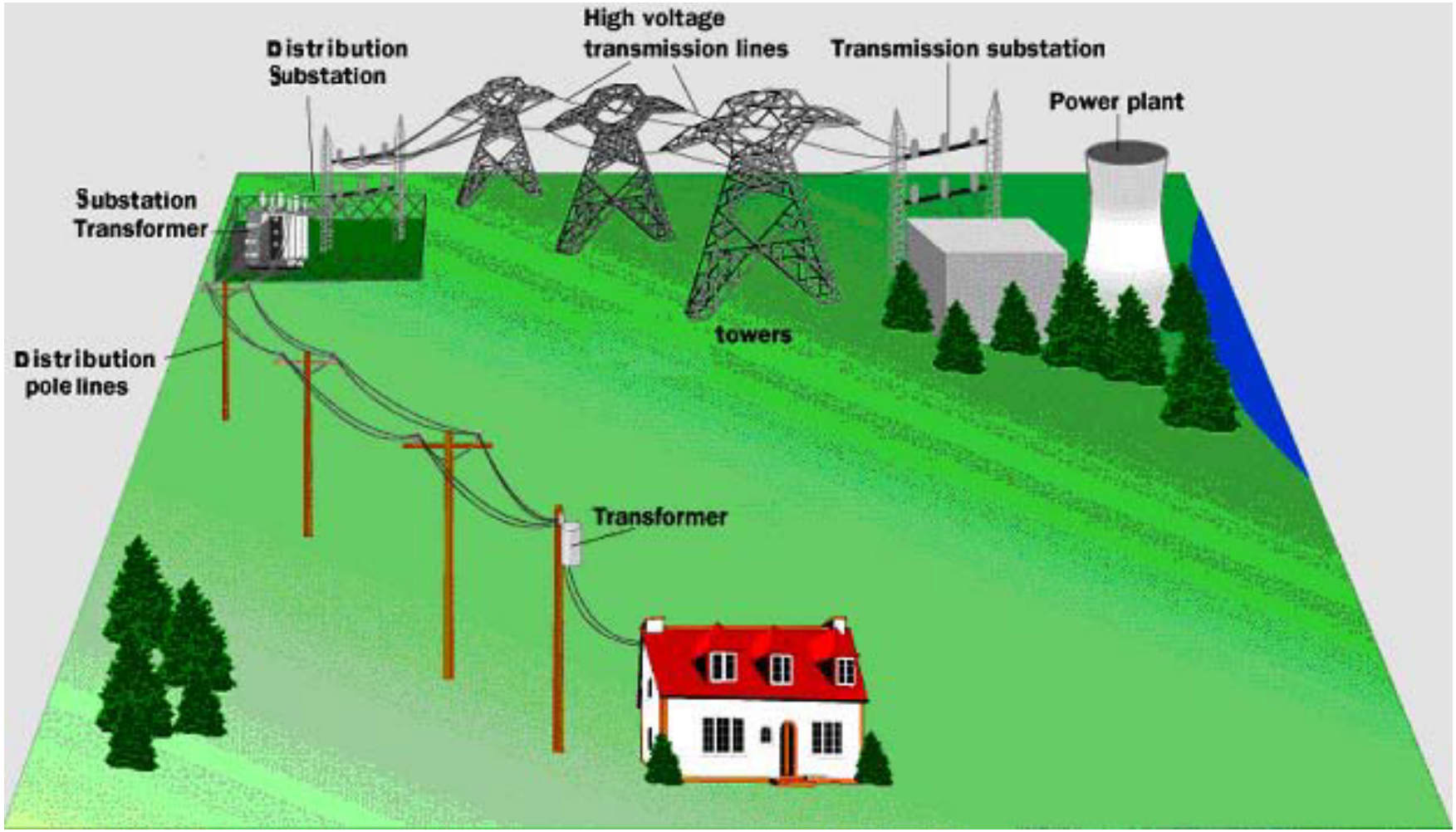
ComEd – Transmission & Distribution

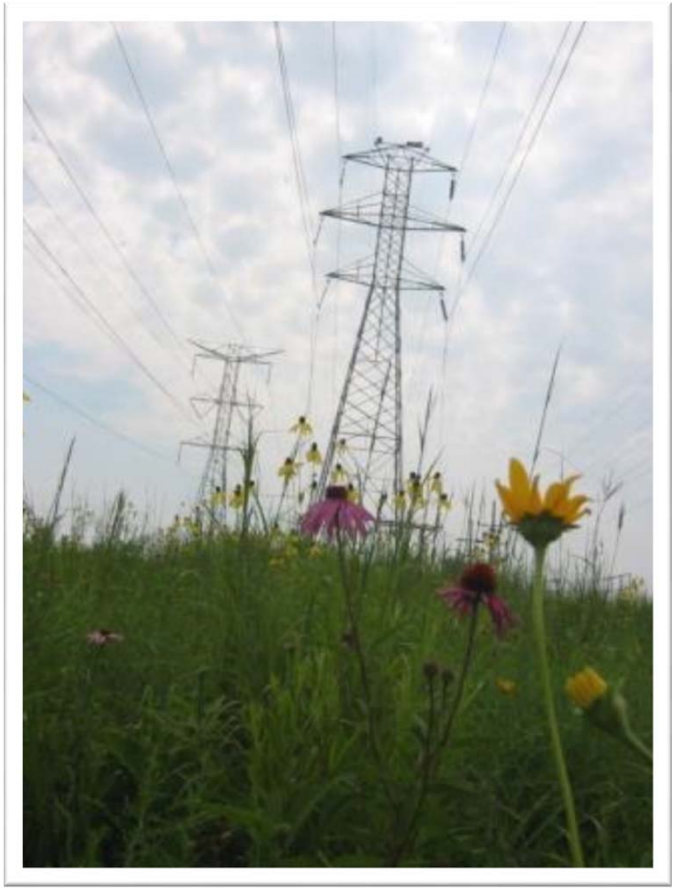


Vegetation Management of Transmission ROW

- ✓ Over 2500 acres currently mowed annually
- ✓ Over 10,000 acres woody tree/brush
  - Maintained on a five year cycle
  - Inspected annually
- ✓ ROW containing woody trees and bushes is maintained on a five year cycle, but inspected annually
- ✓ Program promoting native prairie plants during maintenance cycle to encourage sustainable vegetation on ROW

Biodiversity Program

ComEd's Prairie Program



- ✓ Goal is to preserve existing prairie and restore prairie
- ✓ Active since 1994
- ✓ Work so far completed on 300+ acres
- ✓ Current status (2015)
  - >25 active sites
  - Various sizes, quality, and stages of restoration
  - ~275 acres actively managed
- ✓ ComEd Prairie Standard
- ✓ Partnerships

Biodiversity Program

ComEd's Prairie Program

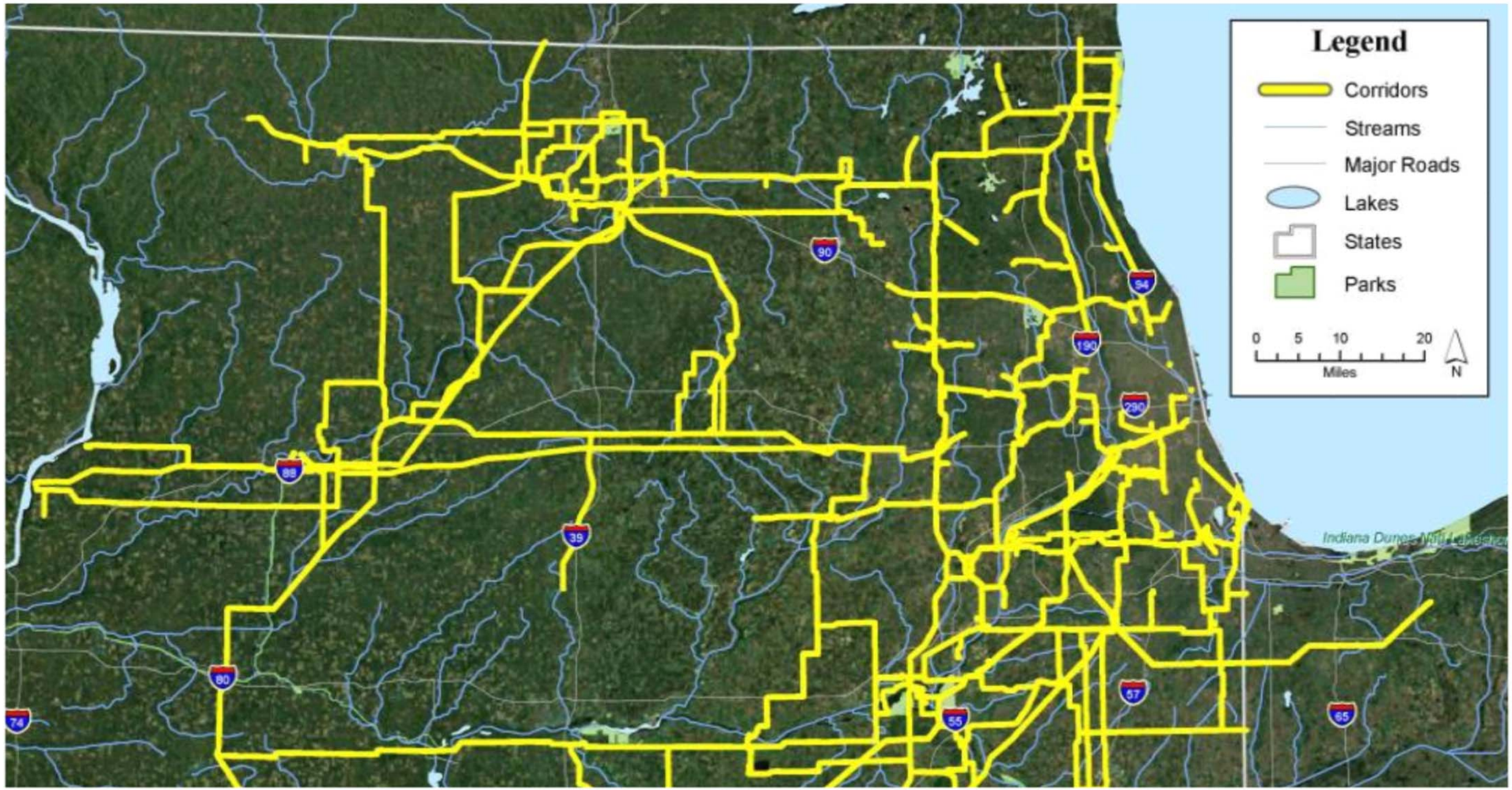
ComEd maintains hundreds of acres of prairie on over 25 sites. Why?

- ✓ External Benefits
  - Less than .01% prairies remain in Illinois
  - Improves wildlife habitat
  - Increases carbon sequestration
  - Prevents storm water runoff
  - Slows erosion
  - Increases biodiversity of region

- ✓ ComEd Benefits
  - Alternative right-of-way management
  - Helps with NERC/FERC compliance
  - Improves corporate reputation
  - Improves relationships with external stakeholders
  - Reduce long term maintenance costs

Biodiversity at ComEd

- ✓ Biodiversity is being lost due to fragmentation of habitats. We connect miles and miles of open lands together which provides a bridge for species to move from one area to another



Typical ComEd Prairie Maintenance

- ✓ Adaptive Management
- ✓ Assess each site and review potential new sites
- ✓ Annual Review
- ✓ Plan for following year
- ✓ Maintenance includes:
  - Seeding
  - Invasive species control
  - Mowing
  - Brush removal
  - Prescribed burning

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Prescribed Burning as a Management Tool

Why Burn?

Manage native plant communities:

- ✓ Reduce thatch
- ✓ Increase productivity / flowering of some native species
- ✓ Seed germination
- ✓ Recycle nutrients
- ✓ Reduce woody and invasive species
- ✓ Soil health (e.g. infiltration)
- ✓ Plant community structure
- ✓ Reduce maintenance costs
- ✓ Site preparation (e.g. seeding)

Burning as an Option

Burning can be done safety and effectively on utility corridors!

- ✓ Burn planning
- ✓ Internal planning and approvals
- ✓ Permitting and outreach
- ✓ Communication
- ✓ Execution by trained personnel
- ✓ Focus on safety

Corridor Challenges

- ✓ Urban and suburban settings
- ✓ Smoke management
- ✓ Potential for many impacted parties on linear corridors
- ✓ Right-of-way infrastructure and utilities
- ✓ Public and utility understanding
- ✓ Site conditions
- ✓ Restrictive prescription parameters
- ✓ Patience – be realistic with burn schedule and frequency

Example ComEd Timeline for Spring Burn

- ✓ Late fall – prioritize burn units and budget
- ✓ January – initial contact of utilities, DOTs, municipalities, government agencies, adjacent landowners / businesses; identify smoke sensitive receptors
- ✓ January– complete a draft burn plan; apply for state and local permits (90-120 days); initiate internal review and approval process (90+ days)
- ✓ February – site preparation and post notifications
- ✓ Early March – utility locate request and meet with utilities
- ✓ Early March – incorporate permit and approval requirements in burn plan; finalize burn plan
- ✓ Late March – final site and safety review; final notifications; conduct burn

ComEd Burn Process

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Controlled Prairie Burn (CBAR) Approval Process

ComEd Process
EN-CE-P923
Rev. 3

Effective:	12/12/2014
Supersedes:	N/A
Review Type:	3 Year
Core Function:	Environmental Strategy & Compliance

Table of Contents

1. Purpose

To provide guidelines for the process in which a Controlled Burn Approval Request is administered between ComEd Environmental and applicable ComEd organizations to determine whether a controlled prairie burn may be conducted on Company-owned land (prairies).

As part of the maintenance plan for certain prairies, a controlled burn is designed to eliminate any woody or non-native vegetation from the prairie and improve the overall land quality. This process specifies:

- The coordination with applicable ComEd departments and external entities
- The requirements and pertinent information needed to obtain burn approval and responsibly conduct the prairie burn

Challenges of Prairie Program

- ✓ Installation variance
- ✓ Site suitability / edge
- ✓ Prairie maintenance issues – burning
- ✓ Resident complaints
- ✓ Trespassing
- ✓ Weed ordinances
- ✓ Dollars to sustain and expand program
- ✓ Access to lines for maintenance

Opportunities for Prairie Program

- ✓ Expand partnerships both internally and externally
- ✓ Expand habitat connections in urban / suburban areas
- ✓ Pollinator and other wildlife habitat
- ✓ Community involvement
- ✓ Research
- ✓ Communication and positive PR

Partnerships & Memberships

- ✓ U.S. EPA Climate Leaders Program
- ✓ U.S. EPA WasteWise program
- ✓ Edison Electric Institute (EEI)
- ✓ EEI – Avian Power Line Interaction Committee
- ✓ Founding and active member of Chicago Wilderness Corporate Council
- ✓ Wildlife Habitat Council
- ✓ Openlands – Green Region Program
- ✓ Forest Preserve District of Cook, Will, and DuPage
- ✓ Friends of the Forest Preserves
- ✓ Morton Arboretum
- ✓ The Nature Conservancy
- ✓ Willowbrook Wildlife Center
- ✓ Illinois Raptor Center

Awards and Certifications

- ✓ Received IL Governor's Sustainability Award in 2013 and Honorable Mention in 2014
- ✓ Wildlife Habitat Council certifications for eight prairie sites
- ✓ National Wildlife Federation certifications
- ✓ U.S. EPA Climate Leadership award in 2012
- ✓ U.S. EPA and Chicago Wilderness Native Landscaping award in 2012
- ✓ U.S. EPA Organizational and Team Leadership Award for SF6 in 2012 and 2014

Questions