

2013 Kankakee River Sandhill Crane Paddle Event Partners:

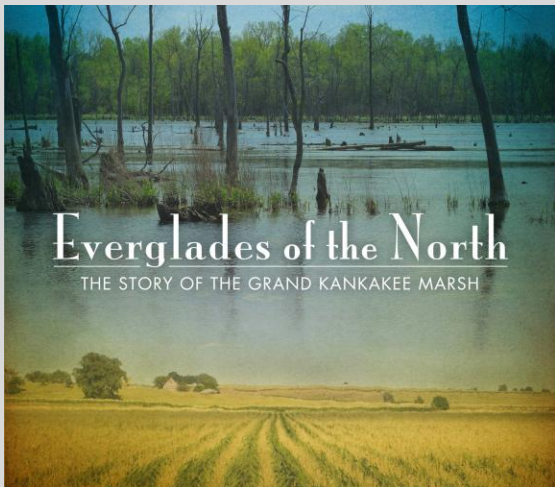
The LaPorte County Parks Department, Porter County Parks Department, Kankakee River Basin Commission, LaPorte County Drainage Board, Porter County Chapter of the Izaak Walton League, Friends of the Kankakee, Shirley Heinze Land Trust, NICHES Land Trust, LaCrosse School Corporation, Christopher B. Burke Engineering, and Coulter Produce



After the paddle... join us at the Jasper-Pulaski Fish & Wildlife Area to see flocks of sandhill cranes kite into Goose Pasture from all directions.

2013 Kankakee River Sandhill Crane Paddle Event Sponsors:

The Producers and Sponsors of:

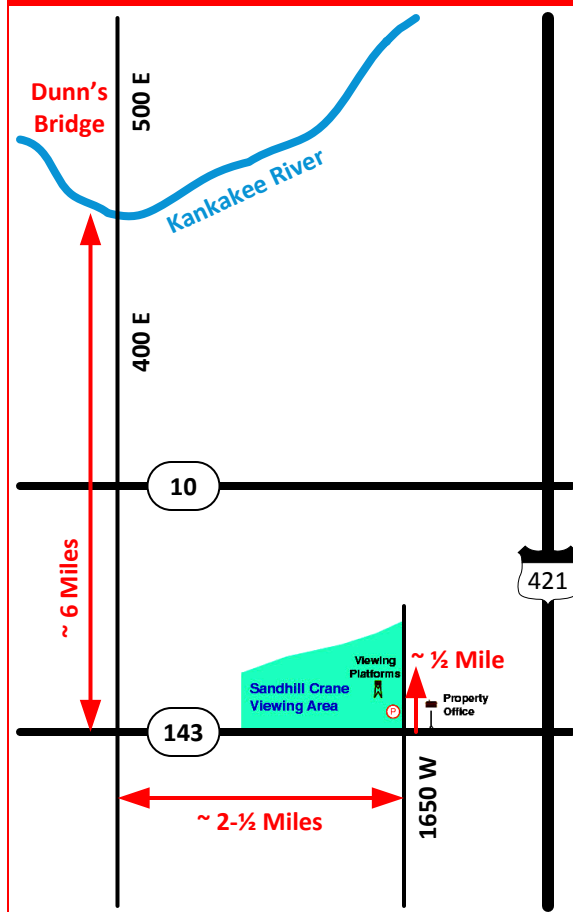


For more information about Everglades of the North, go to: www.kankakeemarsh.com

To get your copy of the DVD, please contact Lakeshore Public Television at 877-987-5656



Directions to Jasper-Pulaski Fish & Wildlife Area from Dunn's Bridge:



Welcome!!

NWIPA's last signature paddling event of 2013:

Kankakee River Sandhill Crane Paddle

Sunday, Oct. 20th
 Registration: starts 10:30 a.m.
 Place: English Lake Boat Launch on Kankakee River
 (See inside panel for more info!)



Enjoying the beauty of the Kankakee River from English Lake to Dunn's Bridge and the flight of Sandhill Cranes at the Jasper-Pulaski Fish & Wildlife Area
Sunday, October 20, 2013

Event Details

**Sunday October 20th, 2013
 10:30 am (CST) to Dusk**

Paddlers with own equipment: Meet at Yellow River Public Access Site at English Lake to drop off boat and register; then drive to Dunn's Bridge to park and catch the shuttle back to English Lake.

Renters: Chicago River Canoe and Kayak will provide rental canoes and kayaks for those who reserve them ahead of time. The number of rental canoes & kayaks are limited. Contact Ryan Chew at (312)823-3384 or ryanwc@sbcglobal.net

Schedule (all times shown are CST):

- 10:30 Registration begins
- 11:00 Shuttles begin from Dunn's Bridge back to the English Lake launch site
- 12:30 Last shuttle leaves Dunn's Bridge
- 1:15 First launch from English Lake
- 2:00 Last launch from English Lake
- 4:15 Land at Dunn's Bridge & picnic
- 5:00 Arrive at Jasper-Pulaski Fish & Wildlife
- 6:00 Sunset

Lunch & Dinner:

Paddlers should bring their own lunches. Heavy appetizers from Sahara Restaurant will be provided at the end of the paddle compliments of Christopher B. Burke Engineering.

Free T-Shirts to the first 125 paddlers to register, courtesy of the producers of the Everglades of the North documentary.

Cost: Free! Please **rsvp** on-line: <http://www.nwipa.org/krsc2013.html#rsvp> by 10/19 so we can more accurately plan the shuttle requirements. We have a maximum number of participants who can participate in this event due to parking constraints at Dunn's Bridge. 120 paddlers is our maximum capacity for the trip.

For more information contact:

Gayle MacBride via e-mail at gaallyn@gmail.com or by phone at (219) 793-6967; or, Dan Plath - dplath@nwipa.org (219) 871-9559

The Grand Kankakee Marsh

By: Jim Sweeney

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The Grand Kankakee Marsh was a vast flat plain made up of a thick layer of sand laid down over a large section of Indiana and Illinois during the Kankakee Torrent some 17,000 years ago. The marsh was about 100 miles in length and averaged about 8 miles in width. Early on, prevailing winds blew the sand around and created hundreds of dune ridges and islands. Some were so small that they were indistinguishable in years with high water. Others were substantial in acreage and in height.

It was quickly vegetated with all the plants found both in the forests of the eastern U.S. and Midwest prairies. Islands were populated with forest hardwood trees and meadows with various grasses & sedges, determined by local hydrology. A hardwood swamp, miles wide in some places, bordered the river channel from English Lake into Illinois. Numerous low spots became permanent lakes. Beaver Lake in Newton County was the largest natural lake in Indiana and English Lake, once open water, was turned it into a large, impenetrable bog after millennia of accumulating dead vegetation.

The Kankakee River in Indiana was just the lowest and wettest land of the marsh; its outlet. The river meandered widely and continuously from its source in Saint Joseph County, through 2000 bends, To Momence, Illinois where the geology changes and the river is then confined to a limestone channel. The size of the Marsh has been debated forever. If the definition of marsh means visible water, it was probably half a million acres. Include the adjacent wet prairies and meadows that were sometimes inundated but more often just wet at their roots, it was likely closer to a million acres.

The Grand Marsh was 800 square miles of waterfowl and wildlife paradise and the most intimidating and unforgiving wilderness facing native peoples and early settlers. But, because every kind of natural resource was available here, people learned to live in the marsh.

CONSERVATION EFFORTS

"Progress" caught up with the Grand Marsh by 1923. All 25 square miles of Beaver Lake and almost all of the marsh lands were drained. The river was dredged and straightened reducing it from 250 miles to 90. The fish and wildlife that did not die right away eventually just left.

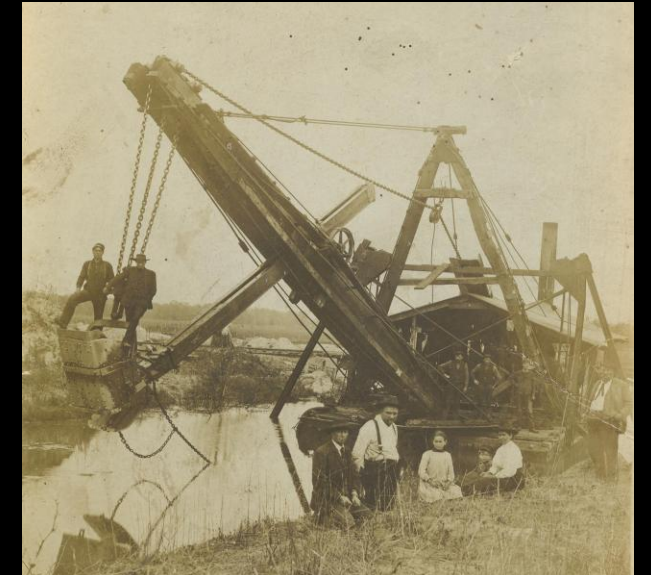
There was opposition to the destruction of the Grand Marsh but not enough. Early conservationists knew what had been lost and some began to assess options of bringing part of it back.

The Izaak Walton League of America passed a resolution in 1933 calling for a federal migratory bird refuge in the old Kankakee marsh lands. In 1994, the Indiana Grand Kankakee Marsh Restoration Project was launched. Over 30 government agencies, local organizations businesses and individuals pursued funding under the federal North American Wetland Conservation Act (NAWCA).

The initial grant application for \$1.5 million had 16 diverse partners that brought \$2.4 million of matching funds for the goal of linking a network of 26,500 acres protected acres of wetlands for wildlife.

Currently, the project is in the 4th Phase of a projected 5-Phase effort, and has acquired nearly 9,900 acres, restored more than 6,800 acres, and enhanced nearly 4,000 acres of wetland and associated upland. A total of \$4.5 million in NAWCA funds has been matched with more than \$15 million in non-federal partner funds through Phase 4 for acquisition.

In 1997, the US Fish and Wildlife Service proposed a 30,000 acre national wildlife refuge in the Kankakee Basin but planning was suspended in 2000 due to other government priorities. Looking forward, with the recent creation of the new Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge straddling the Illinois/Wisconsin border, NWI supporters hope planning on the Kankakee Refuge will resume again.



PHOTOS PROVIDED BY: PATRICIA WISNIEWSKI, PRODUCER OF EVERGLADES OF THE NORTH