

GREENWAY RESOURCES

Chapter 3

Greenway resources include the natural and man made features that affect or may affect greenways at some point in time, and thus provide the basis for developing plans and establishing priorities for greenways. Natural features include terrain and drainage characteristics with corresponding flood plains and wetlands, as well as vegetation and wildlife habitat—all of which are important considerations for greenway planning. Man made features include urbanization and the associated opportunities and constraints for greenways. Other man made features include protected open space, existing and planned trails, and road and railroad rights of way which offer potential for use as greenways or trails. The region's geographic location and its relationship to surrounding regions is also a potential resource when viewed in the context of a state-wide system of greenways. (See Figure 1.) Each of these natural and man made features is addressed on the following pages with reference to its application for use in formulating greenway plans and priorities in McLean County.

NATURAL FEATURES

The County occupies 1,184 square miles in the glacial till plain section of the State of Illinois. Geographically, it is the largest county within the state and is comparable in area to the State of Rhode Island. The glacial terrain is for the most part nearly level to gently sloping with localized areas of steeper slopes occurring along moraines and stream valleys.

Streams and Flood Plains

Drainage is primarily to the west and southwest, with the exception of the extreme southeastern part of the County which drains to the south and east. Major streams include

(Photograph)

Exhibit 3-A. Upper Mackinaw River.

the Upper Mackinaw River (Exhibit 3-A) and its tributaries in the northern part of the County; the Sugar Creek, which flows through Bloomington and Normal; the Kickapoo Creek and its tributaries, which flow through southeastern McLean County; and Timber Creek, which flows through southwestern McLean County. These and other streams and flood plains are identified on Figure 2.

The Mackinaw River is a scenic and ecological treasure that should be preserved. It has been identified by the Nature Conservancy as having twenty-three percent of the "A-rated" stream miles in Illinois, according to a rating system called the Biological Stream Classification. This means that, among all stream miles in Illinois, some are still in very good shape in terms of water quality and biological diversity, and that nearly a quarter of all those A-rated miles occur within the Mackinaw River system alone. Although somewhat less than half of the Mackinaw's total miles lie within McLean County, most of these upper reaches of the river are rated good to excellent in terms of water quality. (The Nature Conservancy of Illinois: *News & Views from the Mackinaw River Project*, Volume II - Issue 5, Summer 1996)

The flood plains of these and other streams of the County are not well suited for intensive development but have great value as wetlands and linear open space. Generalized locations of the County's principal flood plains are delineated on Figure 2.

Tree Cover

Another natural feature within the County that has importance as a greenway resource is tree cover. Although the acreage of land in tree cover is low in relation to the

amount of cultivated land, fairly significant stands of trees remain. For the most part, major tree cover is confined to stream valleys and moraines. The Upper Mackinaw River Valley and Moraine View State Park are prime examples. Funk's Grove contains the largest contiguous stand of trees, but numerous smaller stands are found in many areas. (See Figure 2.)

Wildlife Habitat

Although of great economic importance to the County, the predominance of cultivated land has all but eliminated the natural prairie vegetation and much of the wildlife that once flourished here. In addition, nine other species are classified as endangered or threatened by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. (See Table 3.1.)

Greenways offer a means to restore and preserve some of the vegetation and wildlife for the benefit of future generations. The Mackinaw River, Funks Grove, Danvers Geological Area and the Wesson Cemetery have been identified by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources as Illinois Natural Area Inventory Sites. (See Figure 2.) These and other natural areas provide important habitat for endangered species as well as other wildlife and should be preserved.

URBAN GROWTH

Growth brings with it both challenges and opportunities for greenway planning and development. Growth may provide opportunities for greenway development through greater economic stability and increased construction activity. These factors, when combined with the proper enforcement of local subdivision ordinances, can be positive influences on the development of greenways

[Figure 2-
Greenway Resources]

Table 3.1
ENDANGERED AND THREATENED SPECIES
McLean County, Illinois

Common Name	State Status	Habitat	Habitat Details
Slippershell Mussel	Endangered	Aquatic	Small to medium sized streams
Short-Eared Owl	Endangered	Wetland, prairie, savanna prairies, meadows, marshes, savanna and dunes	
Long-Eared Owl	Endangered	Forest	Coniferous or coniferous/deciduous forests
Upland Sandpiper	Endangered	Prairie	Prairies, pastureland and hayfields
Loggerhead Shrike	Threatened	Prairie, savanna	Open, agricultural areas interspersed with grassland habitat
Pied-Billed Grebe	Threatened	Wetland, aquatic	Fairly large, well vegetated lakes, ponds, sluggish streams, and marshes
Rainbow Mussel	Endangered	Aquatic	Creeks and small to medium sized rivers
False Hellbore	Threatened	Forest	Mesic upland, ravine forests

Source: Illinois Department of Natural Resources, [Illinois Natural Heritage Database](#).

and trails. The Bloomington-Normal urban area has both high growth and local subdivision ordinances which provide for the dedication of land or cash in lieu of land for park and recreational purposes, including greenways and trails.

The challenge to provide quality land use relationships with abundant open space and recreational areas is apparent. Population growth and its corresponding land use patterns can have a major influence on the need for and development of greenways. The distribution of population and related economic and social activities also affect the amount of open space available for preservation or development and the amount of land needed for open space and recreational purposes. The following paragraphs summarize local trends in the economy, population

and land use development, as well as the impact these factors have on greenways.

Economic Growth

McLean County is fortunate to have a strong and diversified local economy. Employment opportunities, combined with excellent educational systems and many other amenities, contribute to a high quality of life that makes McLean County an attractive place to live and work. McLean County has consistently recorded one of the lowest unemployment rates within the State of Illinois for the past several years. The Bloomington-Normal metro area is home to State Farm Insurance Companies, Country Companies Insurance, Illinois Farm Bureau, and Growmark. Industry in McLean County is represented by Mitsubishi Motors

Manufacturing of America, Eureka, General Electric, Bridgestone-Firestone OTR, Beer Nuts and Nestle Beich. Agriculture also plays an important part in the economic success of McLean County, as does higher education. McLean County is home to Illinois State University, Illinois Wesleyan University and Heartland Community College. These institutions provide many jobs to McLean County residents and create significant economic benefits for the local economy.

The growth of these industries has contributed significantly to the long term growth and development of the region and will undoubtedly continue to do so in the years ahead. In the rural area, agricultural activities dominate the landscape and have an important impact on the County's economy. (See Exhibit 3-B.) McLean County contains an abundance of some of the world's most productive agricultural soils. As a result, agricultural and related industries are an important sector of the local economy.

Population Growth

The County's growth, particularly in the metro area, emphasizes the need for measures to preserve open space. Since 1970, no other county outside the Chicago

(Photograph)

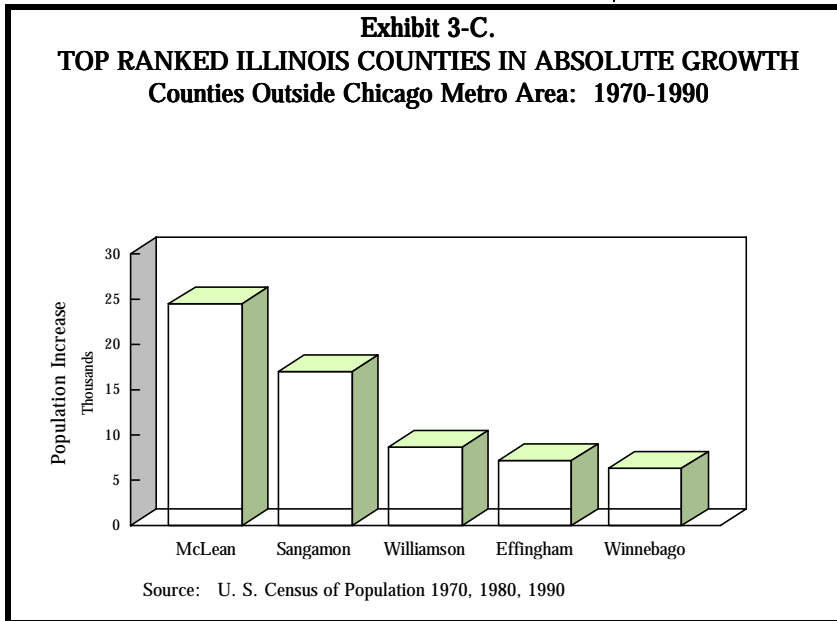
Exhibit 3-B. Cropland in McLean County.

metro area experienced more absolute growth than did McLean County. (See Exhibit 3-C)

The large majority of the County's population is concentrated in the Bloomington-Normal urban area. Although the County contains twenty-one municipalities, approximately 92,000 of its nearly 130,000 residents in 1990 lived in Bloomington or Normal. (See Exhibit 3-D.)

Between 1970 and 1990, the County's rural population remained stable, actually losing a small number of its residents. The trend for major urban growth and slight to moderate rural growth is expected to continue through the year 2020 as illustrated on Exhibit 3-D, although

smaller communities and rural areas within an easy commute of the metro area are expected to experience at least moderate growth. Therefore, special attention needs to be given to preserving open space in and



around the Bloomington-Normal metro area in advance of expected growth and development, as well as preserving natural features and corridors throughout the County.

Land Use Development

Consistent with population forecasts, the principal areas of development activity are expected to remain on the fringe of the Bloomington-Normal metro area with some spill over development expected to occur in satellite communities in the western two thirds of the County. (See Figure 2.) Residential uses, primarily low to medium density, are expected to comprise the major portions of developing areas, particularly in most satellite communities. In the metro area, significant residential development is expected to occur in virtually all directions with a major concentration planned for the Southwest Bloomington area.

As illustrated in Figure 2, significant nonresidential development is also expected in urban fringe areas. Four centers of major commercial/industrial growth are occurring and are expected to expand during the

planning period. These include: (1) the State Farm office complex in southeast Bloomington; (2) the enterprise zone and adjacent areas on the west side of Bloomington-Normal, including the Mitsubishi automobile assembly plant, supporting industries, a factory outlet mall, the new McLean County Fairgrounds site and other existing commercial and industrial development; (3)

the area of north Normal surrounding the I-55 - I-39 Interchange; and (4) the area adjacent to the Central Illinois Regional Airport. Some commercial and industrial development is also likely around selected highway interchanges in rural areas where services can be provided. (See Figure 2.) Existing plans for the area also identify potential park and school sites to serve developing areas on the urban fringe. (See Figure 2.)

In recognition of the demands of urban growth for open space and recreational facilities, greenways and recreational planning have become an integral part of the local planning effort. Greenways planning was incorporated in the Town of Normal Comprehensive Plan and in the Interim Development Plan for Southwest Bloomington, both of which are considered in the development of this regional greenways plan. Greenways will also be addressed in the City of Bloomington Comprehensive Plan now in progress.

It is anticipated that there will continue to be a demand for subdivisions within small communities and in rural areas

near the metro area. However, special efforts are made to limit rural growth to areas that have or will be provided with satisfactory roads and infrastructure, and to discourage urban development on prime farmland and environmentally sensitive areas. These efforts should be supplemented through proper subdivision and zoning regulations. Development contiguous to the metro area is strongly encouraged, and a review and monitoring system has been established to encourage such development patterns. It is expected that close-in rural communities will continue to develop while others will remain stable or decline in population. Growth areas are identified on Figure 2.

PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

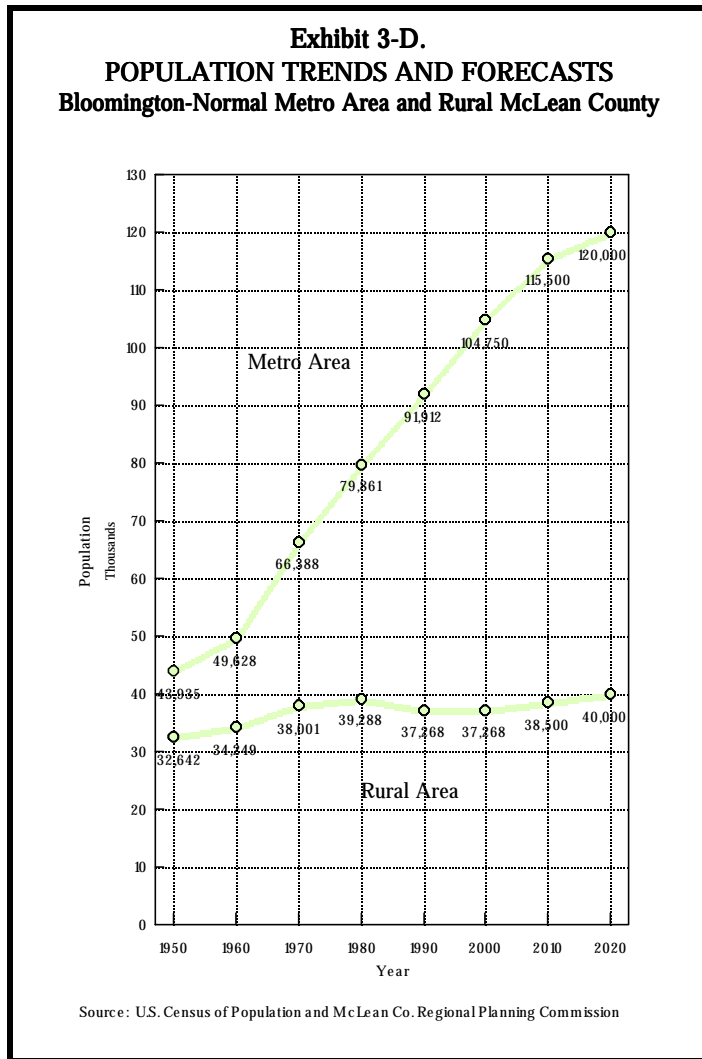
Public open space is land owned by public entities and accessible to the general public. The majority of public open space sites in McLean County is municipal parkland located within municipal boundaries. However, there are a number of public open space sites outside municipalities that are owned and maintained by the City of Bloomington, McLean County and the State of Illinois Department of Natural Resources. (See Figure 2.)

Bloomington-Normal Metro Area

The City of Bloomington and the Town of Normal offer residents a variety of facilities for public open space. Both communities offer many neighborhood and community parks. Neighborhood parks generally have a service area radius of from 1/4 to 1/2

mile. Community parks are usually larger and designed to serve the entire community with recreational facilities often not found in neighborhood parks.

There are thirty-eight park and recreation sites located within the City of Bloomington. The City offers many standard recreation facilities such as playground equipment, athletic fields, hard surface athletic areas and natural areas. The City also offers two golf courses, with a third currently under construction; two swimming pools; lakes; a zoo; a community garden; and facilities for planned recreation and leisure programs. In addition, segments of the Constitution Trail



(Photograph)

Exhibit 3-E. COMLARA Park.

intersect the City and provide another recreational resource. The City of Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department has also experimented with the planting of prairie grasses, wildflowers and other native vegetation within some City parks.

The Town of Normal contains twenty-three parks and recreation sites. The Town operates one municipal golf course while another within the Town is operated by Illinois State University. There is a swimming pool located at one park and an aquatic complex is under construction at another. Two main branches of the Constitution Trail cross the Town, with a northward extension under construction.

Rural McLean County

Outside the Bloomington-Normal urban area, public open space is under the ownership of rural municipalities, McLean County government, the City of

Bloomington, and the State of Illinois.

The smaller communities in McLean County are responsible for providing parks and recreation facilities for their residents. Most of these sites are relatively small and do not contain as large a variety of facilities as are available in larger communities such as Bloomington and Normal. However, in recent years many communities have made great strides in

improving the size and scope of their parks and recreation facilities.

The County of McLean operates two parks. The first is Evergreen Lake and COMLARA Park, located along a tributary of the Mackinaw River, north of the Bloomington-Normal metro area and a few miles west of I-39. (See Figure 2.) Evergreen Lake and COMLARA Park offer a variety of recreational opportunities, including camping, picnicking and boating. (See Exhibit 3-E.) The County also operates West Park which is located north of the City of LeRoy. This facility is situated near Moraine View State Park and Dawson Lake. West Park offers picnicking opportunities.

In addition to various urban area parks, the City of Bloomington owns and operates Lake Bloomington and surrounding parkland. Lake Bloomington is on a tributary of the Mackinaw River in the north central part of the County. (See Figure 2.)

Lake Bloomington is the source of the public water supply for the City of Bloomington.

In the southeast part of the County, a few miles to the northeast of the City of LeRoy, is Lake Dawson and Moraine View State Park. (See Figure 2.) A variety of excellent recreational opportunities are available here. These include picnicking, camping, fishing, boating, swimming, hiking, horseback riding, winter sports and hunting. Owned and operated by the State of Illinois Department of Natural Resources, this site is an important recreational resource for McLean County. (See Exhibit 3-F.)

SEMI-PUBLIC OR PRIVATE OPEN SPACE

Semi-public or private open space and recreation areas include facilities such as golf courses and parks that are generally not owned by government entities. These types of facilities may have restrictions on usage or

require that payment be rendered for their use.

Golf courses represent one example of a semi-public or private open space and recreation area. Golf courses can provide habitat for some types of wildlife, especially when this purpose is considered in the design. Bloomington-Normal is home to many public and private golf courses, with many more located throughout McLean County. (See Figure 2.)

Corporate recreation areas represent another example. State Farm Insurance Companies operate a park for its employees and families at a location in south Bloomington. This facility has expanded in recent years and offers a variety of recreational activities. In addition, General Electric Corporation operates a corporate park near its production facility on the east side of Bloomington. Like State Farm Park, G.E. Park offers a variety of activities for its employees.

Semi-public and private conservation or recreation areas have been growing in number in McLean County in recent years. Funk's Grove is a unique natural area located northeast of the Village of McLean. (See Figure 2.) Funk's Grove is a rare wetland and timber area that is in virgin or near virgin condition. The property is split into separate tracts,

(Photograph)

Exhibit 3-F. Moraine View State Park.

which are owned by private trust, the University of Illinois, and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. This property provides wildlife habitat and is an important resource to McLean County.

The Parklands Foundation is a nonprofit organization that acquires land for conservation purposes. Parklands owns many properties within McLean County and preserves those properties in their natural states. These properties are included in the semi-public and private open space identified on Figure 2.

Another private recreation area is the Rhodes Woods site located south of Bloomington. Owned by State Farm Insurance Companies, this site is part of the original Blooming Grove. This heavily wooded site is not open to the public but is a wonderful natural area very close to the metro area. (See Figure 2.)

TRAILS

The Bloomington-Normal metro area is home to an excellent multipurpose trail system, the Constitution Trail. Plans are in progress for expanding the Constitution Trail within the metro area and also extending the Trail into other areas of the County.

(Photograph)

Exhibit 3-G. Constitution Trail.

Following is a discussion of the existing trail and the exist trail proposals in the region.

Existing Trail

The Constitution Trail is a 9.2 mile-long multipurpose trail that traverses the Bloomington-Normal metro area. Considered a linear park, the trail is extremely popular with residents of the Twin Cities. The trail's asphalt pavement provides an excellent surface for cycling, jogging, rollerblading and walking. (See Exhibit 3-G.)

There are currently four segments of the trail. (See Figure 2.) The north-south segment follows the former right of way of the Illinois Central Gulf (ICG) railroad from Normal City Hall to Washington Street in Bloomington. The east-west segment intersects the north-south segment just south of the Normal City Hall Annex and extends eastward along Vernon Avenue and G.E. Road until its ending at Airport Road. The

Liberty Branch of the trail extends from the intersection of Hershey Road and Lincoln Street in Bloomington, eastward to Streid Drive. The last segment of the trail is located on the property of State Farm Insurance Companies' southeast Bloomington campus. This segment of the trail parallels Arcadia Drive between Lincoln Street and Ireland Grove Road. From Ireland Grove Road, the trail extends south to Hamilton Road, then westward along Hamilton Road to its ending at Commerce Parkway.

Existing Trail Proposals

There are many extensions to the Constitution Trail system proposed within Bloomington-Normal. (See Figure 2.) One segment that is currently under construction is the extension of the trail from Normal City Hall northward along the ICG railroad right of way to Kerrick Road (1850N). A Bloomington segment is scheduled for construction in 1997 along G.E. Road eastward to Towanda-Barnes Road. Another segment scheduled for construction in the near future is along the CONRAIL right of way from West Washington Street in Bloomington to Bunn Street in southern Bloomington.

Additional trail proposals are also identified in the 1994 *Comprehensive Plan for the Development of the Community for McLean County*, prepared by the McLean County Regional Planning Commission. The plan identifies potential trails that would connect the Constitution Trail system with potential park and school sites in the urban area and with smaller communities and regional recreation sites throughout the County. (See Figure 2.) These would be separated trails established on road and railroad rights of way whenever possible. When this is not possible, the existing

pavement would have to be utilized to implement these proposals.

RAILROADS

Railroad rights of way can have important implications for greenway planning. As rail service is discontinued, the rights of way can be preserved and developed for greenways and trails as was done in the case of the Constitution Trail. Under certain circumstances, trails can also be developed in conjunction with active rail lines as well. However, in most cases railroad rights of way containing active rail service should not be considered for trail development while the railroad is active. But active rail lines may be considered for long range trail development with the expectation that rail operations may cease at some future point. At least certain active rail lines should therefore be monitored so that appropriate actions can be taken if and when abandonment becomes eminent. Active, semi-active and abandoned railroads in McLean County are identified on Figure 2.

Active

Four major active railroad lines serve McLean County. Each of these is described below.

The Southern Pacific railroad has an active line that links Bloomington-Normal with Chicago and St. Louis. This line provides freight service and Amtrak passenger service. Other communities along this line within McLean County include McLean, Shirley, Towanda, Lexington and Chenoa. This is a major line and it is very unlikely that it will become inactive within the foreseeable future.

A second active railroad line is the Norfolk and Western railroad. This line

traverses Bloomington-Normal and serves the Mitsubishi Motors Manufacturing of America automobile production facility in Normal. Other communities near this line include Carlock, Holder, Padua, Ellsworth, and Arrowsmith enroute to Ford County to the east. Because this line serves the automobile assembly plant, it is likely to remain active.

An active east-west line crosses the County through Gridley and Chenoa in the north. This line makes connections to El Paso, Eureka, Washington and East Peoria to the west. It also connects several small communities to the east toward Watseka. At this time there is no reason to suspect a suspension of service on this line.

Another major active line serves the Village of Bellflower in the extreme southeastern part of the County. This line makes connections to Gibson City and Kankakee to the northeast and Farmer City, Clinton and Springfield to the southeast. No major reduction in service is anticipated at this time on this line.

Semi-Active

Semi-active railroad lines are those that have had service reduced or eliminated. Three semi-active lines have been identified in McLean County and are described below.

There is a limited amount of service on a line that runs from Heyworth to Clinton. This right of way could provide important access to the Clinton Lake State Recreational Area and Weldon Springs State Park. It also continues eastward as an active line to Champaign. Service on this line should be monitored closely.

There is also limited service on a line that begins in the Village of Colfax and runs northeastwardly to the Village of Anchor and beyond. This particular line serves nearby

grain elevators. Activity on this line should be monitored, although it is some distance from population centers.

Service has been limited and discontinued use is a strong possibility on a line extending southeastwardly from Bloomington through the Village of Downs, the City of LeRoy and onward through Champaign-Urbana and beyond. (See Exhibit 3-H.) At last report service had ceased on this line in McLean County. This right of way could provide an important greenway linkage with points throughout the southeastern parts of the County, including municipalities and Moraine View State Park, as well as with other counties and regions to the southeast. Therefore, this line should be monitored closely and interested agencies should be prepared to act if and when it becomes available.

Abandoned

Long abandoned railroad rights of way also extend outward from the City of Bloomington in several directions. One extends southwest along the Sugar Creek flood plain. Another extends northwest through the Village of Danvers. There is also an abandoned right of way extending northeast through the Villages of Merna, Cooksville and Colfax. Another extends southward to Heyworth and another northward through Hudson. Most of these abandoned railroad rights of way contain major segments that have reverted to private use and offer only very limited potential for use as publicly accessible greenways. However, some may offer potential as wildlife habitat and species corridors.

ROADWAYS

In some cases, street and highway rights of way can provide important linkages for trails to connect greenways and other trails. Although separated trails are the most desirable for most users, economic considerations and space limitations are often major obstacles to the development of separated trails within existing roadways. However, this is not always the case and should be given due consideration when appropriate.

The planning for future roadways should consider providing safe connections between other trails and greenways whenever needed and possible. In a high growth area such as Bloomington-Normal, roadways can provide an important source of new trail development when considered in conjunction with the development of new roads. (See Exhibit 3-I.) Proposed major roadway improvements that offer the prospect of developing additional parallel trails are identified on Figure 2. In addition, there is potential for trails and greenways to be developed along the historic Route 66 right of way south of Bloomington and north of Normal. (See Figure 2.)

The Interstate 55, 74, and 39 corridors also offer potential as greenways. Although trails are generally not permitted within interstate rights of way, this policy should be

reconsidered in certain situations where no other viable connections exist between activity centers or regions.

INTERREGIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

The proximity of McLean County to a number of small to medium size metro areas could offer some potential for interregional connections of greenways by way of flood plains, highway or railroad rights of way, or other greenways identified in adjacent regions.

Springfield and Joliet

As noted earlier in this chapter, right of way along Route 66 and Interstates 39, 55 and 74 in McLean County may offer some potential as greenway connections in the future. The leading possibility appears to be creating a greenway along Route 66 southward to Springfield and northward to the

(Photograph)

Exhibit 3-H. Norfolk & Southern Railroad Right of Way.

Joliet area. (See Exhibit 3-J.) A connection near Joliet could then be made to the Illinois and Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor near Joliet. Route 66 is a historic highway connecting Chicago with Los Angeles. It could be enhanced through the joint preservation as a greenway as a means to further benefit the residents of Illinois and to promote tourism opportunities.

(Photograph)

Exhibit 3-I. Hamilton Road and Trail in South Bloomington.

Peoria

The Mackinaw River seems to be the leading greenway resource for connecting McLean County with points west as it flows to the Illinois River south of Peoria. While the preservation of this greenway should be actively pursued, the Mackinaw River does not appear to offer potential for trail development due to opposition from private landowners along the River.

The potential for connecting trails between McLean County and the Peoria region appear to be very limited. Only Interstate 74 and two active railroads have been identified as continuous corridors between the two urban areas. A great deal of research will be needed to determine if feasible trail connections exist.

Decatur

Potential trail and greenway connections to the Decatur urban area are also very limited. One semi-active/abandoned rail line and U.S. Route 51 were the only corridors identified. As in the case of McLean County to Peoria, a considerable amount of further study would be required to determine the feasibility of connections with Decatur.

Champaign-Urbana

An important opportunity for a greenway and trail connection between Bloomington and Champaign and perhaps points beyond could be on the horizon. As noted earlier, service has been reduced or eliminated on the line connecting these two urban areas and the sale of the right of way to a public entity could become a possibility. This corridor could provide an important linkage between two urban areas that both

contain major universities. The corridor could also provide an important link in the statewide trail system. Therefore, this situation should be closely monitored.

Statewide Greenway Planning

Metro area greenway plans are currently underway in Peoria and Springfield. The Peoria plan will cover a three county area but currently does not consider specific greenway connections to McLean County. The Springfield plan encompasses the City of Springfield and Sangamon County. Like Peoria, there are no specific plans as of yet to seek greenway connections with other metro areas.

Metro area greenway plans are also underway in the Rockford and Quad Cities areas. Greenway plans are also expected to be developed for the Kankakee and Champaign-Urbana metro areas in the near future.

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources published the *Illinois State Trails Plan* in 1995. The plan is designed to guide the development of a statewide trail system for Illinois. The *Illinois State Trails Plan* is expected to be updated as the various metro area greenway plans are completed.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has identified the natural and man made features that represent existing or potential greenway resources in McLean County, Illinois. This information provides the framework for preparing greenway plans and identifying priorities for the development or preservation of greenways in the County. The chapter has addressed the County's natural features with emphasis on streams, floodplains, tree cover and wildlife habitat, including an identification of endangered species. It has also addressed man made features including urban growth and land use development, protected open space, trails, roadways, and railroad rights of way—both active and those in varying stages of abandonment. Also addressed was the geographic location of McLean County in relation to other regions of the state and the possibility of interregional connections of greenways.

(Photograph)

Exhibit 3-J. U.S. Route 66 in Northwestern McLean County.

From this analysis a number of conclusions can be drawn for consideration in the selection and prioritization of planned greenways in the County. First of all, McLean County has a number of important natural and scenic resources as well as numerous other resources that should be preserved and integrated into a regional system of greenways. Major features include the Mackinaw River system, Moraine View State Park, Funks Grove, Comlara Park and Lake Bloomington. Secondly, the Constitution Trail provides an excellent basis for the development of a regional system of greenways and trails that could serve not only the metro area, but could also be extended to connect important features throughout the County and quite possibly with other regions of the State. Thirdly, a major opportunity could soon exist for the acquisition and greenway development of a railroad right of way that would connect the Bloomington-Normal metro area with Champaign-Urbana and points east. This greenway would serve LeRoy, Downs and rural McLean County, and could provide an important link in a statewide system of greenways.

A number of other plans were identified that present alternatives for consideration in developing the regional greenways plan for McLean County. Several comprehensive plans prepared by McLean County Regional Planning Commission in recent years identify existing and proposed trails to serve various parts of the metro area and the County. In addition, a number of regional greenway plans are underway or planned for neighboring metro areas. Input from the above noted studies is given consideration in the development of the McLean County Regional Greenways Plan.