



## MITIGATION PROJECT

# INDIAN BOUNDARY PRAIRIES

The Illinois Tollway contributed nearly \$1 million to help fund the preservation, restoration and enhancement of approximately 45 acres of wetland and high quality grassland areas within the Indian Boundary Prairies through an intergovernmental agreement with Northeastern Illinois University and The Nature Conservancy.

The group of sites are located in the southwest suburb of Markham in close proximity to the Tri-State Tollway (I-294)/I-57 Interchange Project.

Work began in 2012 and was completed in 2017.

### PROJECT SUMMARY

The Tollway funded the wetland enhancement and restoration activities conducted on five prairie preserves owned by Northeastern Illinois University and the Nature Conservancy.

This wetland mitigation project enhanced habitats for rare plant and insect species, including the federally threatened prairie white-fringed orchid and the state-endangered rattlesnake master moth and regal fritillary butterfly.

Work included the reversal of parcel segmentation and removal of fill from former wetland areas and invasive vegetation to restore the native wetland vegetation.

### PURPOSE

With more butterflies and more plant diversity than almost any other prairie in the state, Indian Boundary Prairies is a globally important natural asset to the region and has been named a National Natural Landmark by the U.S. Department of the Interior.

By restoring the topography of the area, removing invasive plants, and introducing prescribed fire to the pre-settlement seed bed, high-quality vegetation can again flourish, and native prairie will be restored.

This mitigation project was coordinated with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, the Illinois Nature Preserve Commission and the City of Markham.

The work provided the required mitigation for construction impacts associated with the I-294/I-57 Interchange Project.

