

Prairie Land Conservancy

In December 2021, Apex Clean Energy awarded a \$78,000 conservation grant on behalf of Ford County Wind to Prairie Land Conservancy (PLC) in support of the Wigwam Hollow Bird Sanctuary Grassland Expansion and Forest Restoration project.

About Wigwam Hollow Bird Sanctuary

A 198-acre woodland and grassland preserve located in Macomb, Illinois, Wigwam Hollow is a key centerpiece of protected forested woodland along the La Moine River and the largest private sector-owned protected parcel in McDonough County. The PLC manages Wigwam Hollow with a special focus on grassland game birds, migratory birds, and bats.

The grant will help the PLC achieve the key objectives of its restoration project. The project will restore and enhance 180 acres of woodland and grassland habitats in Wigwam Hollow, which PLC plans to eventually open for public use. Specific enhancement and restoration activities will include:



- supporting game bird species like the bobwhite quail and ring-neck pheasant, as well as other species in greatest conservation need (as identified in the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan)
- restoring 120 acres of woodland through mechanical, chemical, and organic removal of invasion plant species
- restoring four acres of tallgrass prairie
- enhancing 65 acres of woodland by planting native tree saplings
- restoring 15 acres of oak-hickory woodland habitat within the Wigwam Hollow Creek
- creating an open forested habitat canopy to benefit migratory birds, sensitive passerine species, and endangered Indian bats

PLC was able to use Apex's grant to leverage an additional \$85,000 in matching funds. To measure the project's impact on diversity of species, post-restoration surveys will be conducted by the Western Prairie Audubon Society, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

About the Apex Conservation Grant Program

As a company with a core value of sustainability, Apex Clean Energy endeavors to not only minimize our projects' impacts, but also promote an ecological balance. Through the Apex Conservation Grant Program, each renewable energy project commercialized by Apex will contribute a sum of money, proportional to the size of the project, to support local or regional wildlife conservation, reforestation and flora restoration, protection of sensitive habitats such as grassland or wetlands, and other environmental conservation initiatives in or near project communities.