



File Code: 1900/1910-6

Date: June 26, 2008

Dear Friends and Partners of Midewin:

The U.S. Forest Service at the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie (Midewin) seeks your comments on a proposed project to construct a new hunting blind for persons with disabilities. In response to frequent request for this type of blind, we desire to provide a higher quality hunting experience and more successful hunting opportunities for hunters with disabilities.

Existing Condition

Currently there are three accessible hunting blinds located at Midewin; two of which are on the east side and one on the west side of state highway 53. The shortest access distance to any of these blinds is 1/2 mile from the nearest parking lot. Midewin has 128 designated hunting posts at specific locations on the west side, providing access to 64 hunters per day based on alternate even/odd hunting days. The east side allows for 76 recommended hunters per day divided up between seven zones. The location of the proposed accessible hunting blind could eliminate one hunting post (#145), which we determined would not be significant.

Proposed Action

To provide easy access to people with disabilities, an accessible hunting blind would be constructed approximately 600 feet from Parking Lot # 1 on River Road. Construction of the blind would include improving approximately 450 feet of the existing two-track path and constructing approximately 100 feet of new trail according to accessibility guidelines. The new trail would include an 8 to 12 foot bridge extending over a low area seasonally containing water. The actual blind would be 8'x6' in dimension, with a construction area of approximately 12'x12'. [Photos and a map are attached to this letter.](#)

Following a review by the interdisciplinary team, it was determined that construction of this blind at the specified location would not greatly impact the environment. Implementation would not disturb any threatened, endangered, or sensitive plant or animal species, archeological sites or alter any hydrologic processes; therefore no significant impacts are likely. This proposal may be documented in a categorical exclusion and decision memo.



We are very interested in your thoughts on this project. We would appreciate your comments by July 27, 2008. For additional information please contact Mike Thom via telephone at (815) 423-6370, email at mthom@fs.fed.us, or in person at 30239 South State Route 53, Wilmington, Illinois. Thank you for your continued interest in project at Midewin.

Sincerely,



LOGAN LEE,
Prairie Supervisor

Proposed Accessible Hunting Blind



Currently, Midewin has three accessible hunting blinds open to the public. Two of which are enclosed (shown above) and one does not include the roof. The proposed blind will be enclosed with the roof.



The proposed location, shown here, is thick with honeysuckle. The honeysuckle will be removed during construction.



The two-track road, shown in the upper-left, will be improved to meet accessibility specifications. We will use a surface of limestone screenings on the trail (shown in the upper-right)

Proposed Accessible Hunting Blind Location Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie



Legend

-  Parking Lots
-  Proposed Accessible Hunting Blind
-  Midewin Boundary



1,000 500 0 1,000 Feet