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The PRAIRIE PROMOTER

VOL 23, NO. 2 Summer 2010

Grassroots Conservation at Work

New Chapter Works to Reclaim Kutz Prairie

By Deanna Pomije

For Many Rivers' first project, we found a diamond in the rough: Kutz Prairie, located along the beautiful Minnesota River bluff top just outside Mankato, Minn. The owner of this incredible 20-acre prairie remnant believes buffalo used the land in pioneer days. The area would have provided a lookout for the buffalo that may have used the massive boulders as buffalo rubs. The areas immediately surrounding these boulders indicate a surprisingly wet micro-ecosystem. We have observed standing water and wetland plants.

The land has not been touched since the 1960's. Due to shallow soils and large scattered boulders the area has never been plowed and agricultural use has been sporadic, at best. Grazing was attempted, as witnessed by the holes drilled into the bedrock for fence posts, but with limited success. Haying also proved difficult due to the scattered rocks and boulders. It is no wonder that the land has been left idle for the past 50 years.

Given this idleness, the tree and brush growth has not been extensively bold. Sure, the area needs some major tree and brush clearing, but there are spotty openings and the woody growth is much less than expected. Much of the brush can be cut with a brush mower and even the largest trees are only four inches in diameter. We plan to clear brush this year and follow up with a burn next spring. It is inconceivable to think of the prairie treasures this will release. We have had incredible turnouts for our scheduled workdays and hope this trend continues. It is an amazing adventure.

We have started inventorying the prairie plants just prior to our workdays on the site and continue to find new

and amazing plants. To name a few, we have found hoary puccoon, alumroot, showy orchis, prairie cinquefoil and pussy toes. We have seen incredible patches of rattlesnake master. Also on the site are all the prairie grasses one would expect, such as indian grass, prairie drop-seed, big bluestem and blue-eyed grass.



Kutz Prairie work party gathered around a buffalo wallow stone on May 5. Photo by Randy Schindle.

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The Prairie Promoter is a quarterly publication of The Prairie Enthusiasts. No part of this periodical may be reproduced without permission. We welcome submissions of articles, announcements, artwork and photographs that are relevant to prairie and savanna ecosystems. Mail or email submissions to local chapter editorial volunteers or to The Prairie Promoter editor. Copy any text into the body of the email. Send photos (jpeg or bmp) as attachments. Letters and articles may be edited for length or style. Computer disks, art, and photographs will be returned. Deadlines for submission of material are February 26 (Spring issue); May 21 (Summer issue); August 21 (Fall issue); and November 20 (Winter issue).

If you would prefer to receive electronic notification of the newsletter please email Victoria at TPE@theprairieenthusiasts.org.

Accreditation

By Jack Kussmaul

The Prairie Enthusiasts has started working towards becoming an accredited land trust. The Land Trust Alliance, a nationwide umbrella group that supports land trusts throughout the United States, began accrediting land trusts a few years ago. To qualify for accreditation a land trust must demonstrate the highest standards of ethics, governance, financial responsibility and the ability to manage and protect the lands the trust owns or for which it holds easements. Accreditation is an arduous process. Only a small number of trusts have qualified so far. Meeting all of the requirements, however, strengthens the land trust and makes it a more solid organization.

We have established an Accreditation Committee to take the first steps. This committee has been charged with reviewing our organization's existing policies and procedures. Working with other committees and the full board, we intend to improve existing procedures and adopt new policies in areas where gaps now exist. We anticipate a long road ahead of us. Although we have no date in mind for actually applying, we expect to see improvements in our organization as we go through the process. Sometime in the future, when we feel we are ready, we will submit the actual application.

The accreditation commission considers twelve categories of standards and practices. These are:

- Mission.
- Compliance with laws and tax rules for non-profits.
- Board governance, including approval of land transactions.
- Avoiding conflicts of interest.
- Legal and ethical fundraising.
- Financial and asset management.
- Volunteers, staff and consultants.
- Evaluating and selecting conservation projects.
- Ensuring sound transactions, whether in drafting easements, keeping records, investigating title and purchasing lands.
- Appraisals.
- Easement stewardship, including funding, baseline documentation, monitoring and enforcement.
- Stewardship of owned property, including management and monitoring.

Our committee has begun by addressing the third category: board governance.

Thank you to those people who have joined me on the Accreditation Committee: Linda Lynch, Ann Woldt, Evanne Hunt, and Bill Hogseth. Nick Faessler, as Treasurer of TPE, will serve on the committee while we deal with governance issues.

We have started a long process, but we are confident that we will be a stronger organization by journey's end.

Compounding Rewards in Rural Green County

By Chuck Bauer & Chuck Beckwith

On three gently sloping knolls, separated by three somewhat deeper slow drainage runs, our 21 acres support a variety of eco-environments: dry upland prairie remnant gradually adjoining oak savanna; adjacent to slightly downhill and lightly shaded oak woodlands; and finally deeper, moister, darker "draws".

In some places there are also small conifer plantations, dating from 1980, and, finally, there is a small area of very densely covered maple woods, supporting abundant spring ephemerals and ferns.

Until 2000, all these areas were at risk of being overrun by woody and herbaceous alien invasives. Left untended, each diverse habitat would have soon become a terminal monoculture of honeysuckle, garlic mustard, and the relatively new arrival, Japanese hedge parsley. Absent control, these aggressive species would have suffocated these complex native environments within a



Upland prairie and Oak Savanna in rural Green County. Photo courtesy of Chuck Bauer and Chuck Beckwith.

few short years. These invasives would have greatly reduced and ultimately eliminated the natural diversity of both plants and animals, including numerous at-risk species.

Only ten years into our efforts at control we are seeing an accelerating bounce back. Every site visit holds surprises and increasingly rich evidence of progress. We find ample reward for the time and energy we have spent to protect what is native against what feels like a thunderous riot of aggression outside the gates. Notwithstanding the din in the air, we remain convinced that we can make these 21 acres an extraordinary example of an increasingly diverse and important habitat.

It is our hope that each year's investment will compound until control and management become less intense and less critical and, perhaps, conventional management techniques become less onerous. Nevertheless, we recognize that the task at hand is likely measured in lifetimes.

Citizens Listen and Look for Threatened Birds in the Chippewa Valley

By Bill Hogseth,
chairman Chippewa Savannas Chapter

The Chippewa Savannas Chapter has launched a project to monitor threatened and declining bird species that use grassland habitats. The project will train citizen volunteers to conduct field surveys within prairies and savannas throughout the Chippewa Valley.

"This project is about more than just collecting data," said Jeanette Kelly, the coordinator of the monitoring

project. "It is also about giving people an experience where they can connect with the natural world using hands-on science. Through close and careful observation, people can learn a lot about the lives of birds like meadowlarks, bobolinks, dickcissels, and different sparrows."

Because grassland birds are often hidden on the ground, volunteers will be trained to use their ears to locate

and identify species while they are in the field. Every bird sings a unique song that can be used to identify them.

Volunteers may then use binoculars to visually confirm the bird species. Once identified, volunteers will record the species, where it was found, and what type of habitat it was observed in.

The field surveys will focus on lands surrounding the Lower Chippewa River in southern Dunn County; specifically, the Dunnville Wildlife Area (owned and managed by the DNR) and the Tyrone Property (owned by Xcel Energy).

The Lower Chippewa River contains 25 percent of the total acreage of remaining remnant prairies and savannas in Wisconsin, the largest concentration in the state. Since the time of settlement, grassland habitats have become increasingly rare. Today, less than 0.01 percent of grasslands remain in the state of Wisconsin.

Grassland bird populations, which require prairie and savanna habitats during the nesting season, have experienced dramatic losses in the last several decades. In Wisconsin, breeding bird surveys indicate that, over the course of nearly 50 years, 77 percent of grassland bird species declined significantly, 23 percent were stable, and none showed an increase.

These losses are due primarily to habitat alteration and the fragmentation of large grassland landscapes.

“These birds are having a really hard time right now,” remarked Bill Hogseth, Chair of the Chippewa Savannas Chapter. “Birds like bobolinks migrate 12,500 miles annually, which is already stressful enough. Once they arrive back to Wisconsin there has been less and less suitable habitat each year, making it harder for them to

nest and raise young. This project is going to give citizens a chance to help. The surveys will give property managers a chance to learn exactly what species are out there and what types of sites they are using.”

Once the field surveys have been completed, the survey data will be compiled into a final report that will be delivered to the property managers at WDNR and Xcel Energy. The report will summarize survey results and provide habitat management recommendations to benefit bird species that were identified during the surveys.

The project was made possible by funding from the Wisconsin Citizen-Based Monitoring Network Partnership Program and from generous donations made by individual TPE members.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

2010 Annual Meeting and Picnic

Sunday July 18, 2010

The Southwest Chapter invites you to our newest preserve, Borah Creek Prairie, for TPE’s annual meeting and picnic. The festivities will begin at 10 a.m. with a TPE Board of Directors meeting, which is open to all members. Those who do not wish to attend the board meeting may join Southwest Chapter members on tours of the site. A picnic lunch will be served at noon. The Southwest Chapter will provide hot beef sandwiches and drinks in our newly cleaned barn. Please bring a dish to pass, your own table service and lawn chairs.

After lunch, we will hold a brief annual meeting followed by a short ceremony transferring the title of Borah Creek Prairie from The Mississippi Valley Conservancy to The Prairie Enthusiasts. There will also be a short, official dedication of Borah Creek Prairie as a State Natural Area by Mark Martin, a representative of the Wisconsin DNR Bureau of Endangered Resources.

After your lunch settles, there will be tours of Borah Creek and two other nearby prairies. Borah Creek Prairie’s 138 acres of recovering prairie have a long history of extensive grazing. With the reduction of woody vegetation and numerous invasives, the chapter dreams of a resurgence of many rare and threatened species including the federally endangered Prairie Bush-Clover and state-threatened Woolly Milkweed, Prairie Indian Plantain, Hill’s Thistle, Wild Quinine and Pale Purple Coneflower. With luck, you may see grassland birds which use the area including upland sandpiper, eastern kingbird, brown thrasher, dickcissel, eastern meadowlark, grasshopper sparrow, and bell’s virea.

Eldred Prairie and Bush Clover Prairie, which are within 10 miles of Borah Creek, are also well worth a visit. Shuttles or caravans will take folks to those prairies.

Borah Creek Prairie is located in southwest Wisconsin about 5 miles southwest of Fennimore. From Fennimore head west on US Hwy 18, Turn left onto Cemetery Road. Turn right onto Mount Ridge Road and drive about 3 miles. Mount Ridge Road makes several right angle turns so be sure to stay on the ridge top--do not go straight ahead at the T-intersection of Grahm Road. The access road into Borah Creek Prairie is on the right at 11949 Mount Ridge Road. Look for the signs and drive down to the barn.

If you wish to stay overnight, there are many lodging facilities in the area around Fennimore to fit every budget: including Life O’Riley Bed and Breakfast (www.lifeorileyfarm.com), Northwoods Retreat’s Laughing Llama (www.laughingllama.com), Napp’s Motel, (www.nappsmotel.com), and Fennimore Hills Motel and Annex (www.femorehillsmotel.com). The nearest campground is just a few miles from Borah Creek Prairie, Klondyke Secluded Acres at 6556 Pine Knob Road, Lancaster, WI 53913. It is a small campground so be sure to call for reservations at 508-723-2844.



Borah Creek Prairie. Photo courtesy of Linda Lynch.

22nd North American Prairie Conference

Save the Date: August 1-5, 2010

Experience Iowa prairies, the Cedar Falls metro area, and the Tallgrass Prairie Center at the 22nd North American Prairie Conference, held at the University of Northern Iowa. In keeping with the conference theme, "Restoring a National Treasure," there will be opportunities to observe prairie restorations and reconstructions. Participants will be able to discuss the latest prairie research, explore remnant and restored prairies on field trips, and view local and national exhibits. We anticipate a large gathering of prairie enthusiasts and hope you will be among them. Please check the NAPC web site (www.napc2010.org) often for updates.

There will be numerous sponsorship, vendor, and exhibit opportunities. For questions or more information please contact Ryan Welch at 319-273-3828 or rwelch@uni.edu.

Take a Tour, Make a Donation

*Save the Date:
September 11-18,
2010*

This fall, TPE members Ed and Sil Pemberton will lead a week-long tour through the tallgrass prairies of central Kansas and the Flint Hills ecosystem. This is the only remaining area in America with intact, extensive tallgrass prairie landscapes. The tour sponsor, Naturalist Journeys, has agreed to donate \$100 to The Prairie Enthusiasts for every participant who signs up. If you plan to go on this excursion, make sure to mention you heard about the trip through The Prairie Enthusiasts newsletter. Also, include a SASE with TPE's business address on it when you send in your registration materials to facilitate the donation.

Carol Winge
c/o The Prairie Enthusiasts
PO Box 1148
Madison WI 53701

For more information, visit The Prairie Enthusiasts' website: <http://www.theprairieenthusiasts.org/> A link to the Pemberton's trip is at the bottom of the page.

2011 TPE Conference and Banquet

Save the Date: February 26, 2011

Mark your calendar now for our 2011 Annual Conference and Banquet. The Southwest Chapter of The Prairie Enthusiasts and the Harry and Laura Nohr Chapter of Trout Unlimited will co-host the 23rd Annual Conference and Banquet at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville campus student centers. This event promises to be one you won't want to miss!

Details about the conference will be made available through *The Prairie Promoter* and our website as they become available. Watch for registration materials in the winter issue of *The Prairie Promoter*.

Seen a Badger?

Researchers at UW-Milwaukee are working with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to study the badger population in the state. Their goal is to determine the badger's status as a Species of Greatest Conservation Need in Wisconsin, and to identify conservation and management strategies to ensure this species' persistence.

If you have seen a badger or signs of a badger, please contact badger@uwm.edu or 414-229-4245. If you spot a dead badger, please either contact Dr. Emily Latch at latch@uwm.edu or 414-229-

4245 or collect a small sample of tissue and a few hairs from the animal. The 'drier' bits of tissue, such as the ear, last best. Ship the samples to:

Emily Latch
3209 N. Maryland Ave.
Milwaukee, WI 53211.

Ideally, the tissue samples should be shipped frozen or dried and mailed at room temp.

For more information about collecting tissue samples, the project in general, and badger ecology, please visit: <http://www.badgerresearch.uwm.edu>



CHIPPEWA SAVANNAS CHAPTER

Chapter Holds Prescribed Fire Workshop

On Sunday, April 18, John Thomas and Kathy Ruggles hosted a prescribed burn workshop in their recently restored historic schoolhouse and on their adjacent land. Bill Hogseth, chair of the Chippewa Savannas Chapter taught the workshop. He was assisted by Matt McFarlane, chapter vice-chair, in conducting the live fire exercise. Dunn County Pottery and Menomonie Market Food Co-op provided refreshments for the class.

The location was perfect. Thomas and Ruggles are in the process of restoring their 65 acres to its native state. They took an introductory course at Aldo Leopold Foundation on prescribed fire as a grassland management tool, and have conducted some burns of their own. The property will require periodic burns as it reverts to its natural state. Mowed walking paths through the property tie into the Red Cedar River State Trail.

The schoolhouse, which served as the indoor classroom for this workshop, will soon house Thomas and Ruggles' Dunn County Pottery showroom and gift shop. This class marked the beginning of another piece of their vision for the schoolhouse. Thomas and Ruggles plan to open the building for community meetings, events, and classes in the mornings (before 10am) and evenings (after 5pm). For more information about Dunn County Pottery and the schoolhouse, please visit www.dunncountypottery.com.



A successful burn workshop. Photo courtesy of Bill Hogseth.

COULEE REGION CHAPTER

Please check chapter newsletter for announcements.

EMPIRE – SAUK CHAPTER

Chapter Meetings

Tuesday, July 13, 6 p.m., annual meeting and pot-luck picnic at Bluestem Farm, S5920 Lehman Rd, Baraboo. All members welcome.

Interns at Mounds View Grassland and Pleasant Valley Conservancy

By Rich Henderson

For 12 weeks this summer, student interns will again be helping on TPE preserves. Most of their efforts will focus on the Military Ridge Prairie Heritage Area (located on the Dane and Iowa County line). Megan Goplin, a recent graduate from UW-Madison, will supervise two full-time interns at Mounds View Grassland and other TPE projects in the Military Ridge Prairie Heritage Area. The interns are Sam Bader, a junior at UW-Platteville, and Karen Bednar, a senior at UW-Madison.

On Mondays, five Prairie Partner interns will join Megan's crew. The Prairie Partner crew will also work at Madison Audubon's Goose Pond Sanctuary, UW-Madison Lakeshore Nature Preserve, Pheasant Branch Conservancy, Pleasant Valley Conservancy (a joint project of Savanna Oak Foundation and TPE) and, occasionally, at TPE's Black Earth Rettenmund Prairie. Megan Goplin was an enthusiastic intern with TPE at Mounds View in 2008. She enjoyed it so much that she came back as a member of the Spring 2009 Prairie Partner intern crew and is now leading interns for TPE in 2010 (see article by Megan in the Prairie Promoter, Vol. 22, No. 1, page 11). Although the interns work hard at routine land management tasks, we also strive to provide them with a variety of activities and information about the ecology and significance of our preserves.

Burn Season Stats

The Empire-Sauk Chapter had another safe and productive if short spring burn season, thanks to the early green up. A combination of dedicated volunteers, multiple burn bosses and mechanized equipment helped us complete 59 burns on 23 properties for a total of 571 acres. The burns were accomplished by 88 volunteers putting in 1,259 hours!

Thank you, volunteers! You're helping keep our prairie and savanna heritage alive and well. A special thank you to the Brocks, Hendersons and Oberles for generously letting their trucks be used once again as pack horses for the pumper units and for towing trailers.

Chapter Elections

Nominations are being sought for the position of chapter treasurer. This position has a two-year term. The election will be held at the annual meeting of the chapter membership on the evening of Tuesday, July 13 (see chapter picnic for details). We hope you are able to attend the meeting and help us fill this position.

Chapter Picnic and Annual Meeting of the Membership

Mark your calendars for the evening of Tuesday, July 13. Our chapter's Annual Potluck Picnic and Meeting of the Membership will be held at Bluestem Farm in Sauk County. Following the meal and a very brief meeting and report of the chapter's activities, landowners Scott Weber and Muffy Barrett will lead a hike to see their restoration work and nursery. If you'd like to come a little early, Scott says he'll have some time to show you around the farm.

Please don't miss the gathering. It will be a great opportunity to meet and talk with like-minded people and see great conservation work.

Date: July 13 (Tuesday evening)

Schedule of Events:

6:00 - Potluck picnic

6:45 - Brief meeting, review highlights of past year, answer questions, elect chapter treasurer

7:15 - Hike to see restoration work and nursery

Bring: A dish to pass, eating utensils and hiking shoes.

Directions: From Sauk City, travel north to Lehman Road. Lehman is about one-eighth mile north of Ski Hi Road. It is the first left after the highway goes from four lanes to two. Take a left on Lehman and travel about 1.5 miles. Scott and Muffy's home is at the second 90 degree bend in the road. Look for the blue mailbox and fire sign. If you have questions, call Scott and Muffy at 608-356-0179.

Chapter Hires Volunteer Coordinator

The Empire-Sauk Chapter has created a Volunteer Coordinator position for the purpose of recruiting more people to our volunteer community and increasing the overall amount of time contributed. We are pleased to announce that Ann Calhoun has been hired to fill this position. Ann will be recruiting and coordinating the support of a critical resource, our volunteers. Ann has previous experience in land stewardship and prescribed fire in Iowa, Arkansas, Virginia and California, as well as more recent experience recruiting, training and

supporting volunteers through her work as an AmeriCorps member with The Nature Conservancy's Wisconsin program. Ann wrote, "As a TPE volunteer myself, I have witnessed firsthand the amazingly dedicated force of volunteers that support TPE's mission and goals. It is my familiarity with this impressive volunteer base, coupled with my previous experience and passion for land management, which attracted me to this position." We are pleased to have Ann working with us! Ann's email address will be volunteers@theprairieenthusiasts.org.



Ann Calhoun. Photo courtesy of The Nature Conservancy.

Chapter Receives Donated Equipment and Antique Tools

Last fall, Ken Wade generously donated the materials and his time to outfit the pumper unit in the Polaris 6x6 with an auxiliary, electric on-demand pump. Our chapter uses this sprayer for many of our prescribed burns. Burn volunteers this spring really appreciated Ken's improvement. The electric pump is effective and far quieter than the gasoline engine, which is still available in a pinch when more volume and pressure are needed. Thank you, Ken, from all the burn volunteers!

This spring, Glenn Smith generously donated a variety of used tools and equipment to the Empire-Sauk Chapter. This donation included a floor jack, a floor creeper, a welder, an air compressor and a multitude of pneumatic tools to go with the air compressor; all of which will be useful in equipment maintenance and repair. Thank you, Glenn, for this great donation of much needed tools. They will be extremely helpful to our land management activities.

Also this spring, we received a donation of a wide variety of antique farm tools (yet to be inventoried) from Joan and Dennis Schurch-Thomson. These will be used as raffle/auction items at the annual TPE banquet fundraiser or, in some cases, used as wall decorations in the barn at the Schurch-Thomson Prairie. They also donated a variety of storage cabinets that will be put to good use at the barn. Thank you to Joan and Denny for your continued support.

Summer Help Needed with Land Stewardship

As always, we need help through the summer to collect seed; cut or pull sweet clover, parsnip, knapweed and other weeds; and tend the seed orchards. This summer, we will be working at Underwood Prairie, Schurch-Thomson Prairie, Shea Prairie, the Ripp Prairies, Kalscheur Savanna, Koltjes Prairies, Smith/Egre Drumlins, Mazomanie Bluff, Schluckebier Prairie, Black Earth Rettenmund Prairie and other sites. If you wish to be on the contact lists to help with these activities, please contact our new chapter volunteer coordinator, Ann Calhoun at volunteers@theprairieenthusiasts.org.

Are You Mechanically Inclined?

The Empire-Sauk Chapter is looking for a volunteer or two to be in charge of the maintenance and repair of field equipment. This includes, but is not limited to, drip torches, water backpack cans, backpack herbicide sprayers, hand tools, brush-cutters, chainsaws, mowers, tractors, a truck, ATV's, propane torches, fire-pump units and seeders. Most equipment will be stored at the Schurch-Thomson barn when not in use. The workshop there is ready to be used, however, maintenance work may certainly be done at other locations. If you wish to help, please contact Rich Henderson (608-845-7065 or tpe.rhenderson@tds.net).

MANY RIVERS CHAPTER

Please see article on page 1.

NORTHWEST ILLINOIS CHAPTER

Annual Meeting and Potluck Picnic at Hanley Savanna

Please join the Northwest Illinois Prairie Enthusiasts (NIPE) at Hanley Savanna on Saturday, June 26, for the Annual Meeting and potluck. The festivities will begin

at 9 a.m. with a NIPE Board Meeting—general members are encouraged to attend. Early birds who do not plan to attend the board meeting may tour the surrounding prairies.

A picnic lunch will be served at noon. NIPE will provide bison burgers and drinks under a canvas tent. Chairs and table service will be provided. Please bring a dish to pass.

There will be morning and afternoon site tours offered via hay wagon.

Hanley Savanna is a 160-acre TPE site located between and connecting the Lost Mound National Wildlife Refuge (5400 ac) and the Hanover Bluff Nature Preserve (1200 ac). Local habitats of interest include loess hill prairie, mesic oak savanna, dry sand savanna, wet sand prairie, tallgrass prairie, and Mississippi backwaters.

Hanley Savanna is located in northwest Illinois, 3 miles west of the Village of Hanover, at the junction of Whitton and South Hanover Hill Roads. The address is 9417 Whitton Road, Hanover, IL 61041. There are aeries and photographs of the site in the gallery at <http://www.nipes.org/>

PRAIRIE BLUFF CHAPTER

Spring 2010 Update

Restoration activities, field trips, and an active spring burn season have occupied the Prairie Bluff Chapter for the past few months. We got an early start with prescribed fires in March and April. We conducted seven TPE burns on 35 acres, and assisted with seven more on 46 acres. We had a total of 28 participants with four different burn bosses. The chapter has implemented many of the elements of the proposed TPE burn policy, including burn plans, go-no-go checklists, and crew training.

Through the efforts of Mike Davis, a member from New Glarus, we made arrangements to brush out and burn off Sulzer Prairie, a two-acre, privately owned, mesic remnant near Monticello. This site was inventoried in 1976 by the Scientific Areas Preservation Council and ranked very high as a potential scientific area. It holds several rare and uncommon species with deep soil affinities. Of course, since the fire, there has been a profuse blooming of fire-dependent species. Our chapter thanks Hans, Kathleen and Mike Sulzer for letting us help manage this beauty.

Bob Laeser, a chapter member from Argyle, arranged for us to burn off another small but significant remnant: Martin Prairie in Lafayette County.

We had sizeable turnouts for our field trips, especially the trip to Hoesly Prairie for pasque flowers in April and our annual trip the bluff to Muralt and Iltis in

May. We also enjoyed fine weather for trips through Abraham's Woods and Dower Prairie.

John Ochsner has led the garlic mustard patrols at Abraham's Woods while Chris Roberts, Fred Faessler and Bill Walz have led work parties pulling trash out of the dump at Iltis, where we have recycled over two tons of material in preparation for some bulldozer work.

The chapter does not schedule meetings for the summer months, although our annual chicken barbeque is planned for July 6, at Nick and Linda Faessler's farmhouse. Monthly meetings will resume in September and continue through April. Work parties have been going out most Mondays and Saturdays to manage weeds and collect seeds for summer 2010. Contact Tom Mitchell at tmitchell@tds.net to learn about current activities and to join the fun.



After the burn: chapter members Bill Walz, Peg Bredeson, Chris Roberts, Tom Mitchell, Mike Davis, and John Ochsner eat lunch on erratic boulders at Vale Prairie, March 25, 2010. Photo by Frank Grenzow

PRAIRIE SANDS CHAPTER

No information submitted

PRAIRIE SMOKE CHAPTER

No information submitted

ST. CROIX VALLEY CHAPTER

Seed Collecting Volunteers Needed

We have started a seed collection program. Locally collected seed will be used to re-seed Alexander Prairie,

the Foster Cemetery site, and the Somerset prairie. Ginny Gaynor, Wayne Huhnke and Mike Miller will lead the effort of coordinating volunteers and finding sites on which to collect.

Seed collection sites must be located in Pierce, St. Croix or Polk counties in Wisconsin or Washington County in Minnesota. We will follow TPE's seed collection guidelines by not picking more than 50 percent of the seeds available on a given site and we will seek landowners' permission.

We need your help in locating potential collection sites and in the actual collection. To volunteer or ask questions, contact Ginny, Wayne, or Mike:

Ginny Gaynor: wayneandgin@frontiernet.net

Wayne Huhnke: 715-425-7605(H) or 715-222-6910 (C)

whuhnke@dishup.us

Mike Miller: pureprairieseed@gmail.com

ATV and Trailer Ready for Fall Burns

The 2010 Polaris 400 Side-by-Side ATV finally arrived! Mike Miller mounted a water tank and pump in the cargo area. The ATV and trailer will make our prescribed burns much easier.

Having arrived too late for the spring burn season, the unit has not been fully tested. We hope to do so this fall.

The ATV was purchased using funds from a 2009 Turkey Stamp Habitat grant. This grant enables non-profits to maintain habitat for wild turkeys on public or private land.



Our new Polaris ATV. Photo by Evanne Hunt

SOUTHWEST WISCONSIN CHAPTER

No information submitted

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

The following people have joined TPE in the period March 1 – May 31, 2010.

Amy Alpine, Eau Claire, WI	Mark Krosch & Crista Browne-Krosch, Mankato, MN
Mark Anderson, Madelia, MN	Nick & Mary Kunz, Madelia, MN
Jim & Angie Archer, North Mankato, MN	Brett Larson, Bloomington, MN
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JOHN THOMSON MEMORIAL FUND

Donations to the John Thomson Memorial Fund during the period March 1-May 31, 2010 are:

James & Rumi O'Brien
Eugene & Jean Roark, *in memory of John Thomson*

THANK YOU, DONORS!

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Prairie Dawgs (Peoria, IL) processing the 2009 prairie seed harvest. 1. Feeding seed through leaf mulchers and collecting seed and detritus in mulcher bags. 2. Cleaning seed by hand through screens. 3. Seed prepped and bagged and machinery loaded up for transport to storage facility. Photos by Jim Alwill (NIPE).

**The Prairie Enthusiasts
PO BOX 1148
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