

St. Croix Chapter - Proposed Strategy

The St. Croix Chapter of TPE has three main areas of emphasis:

- Land Management
- Education
- Membership

The following describes our strategy and associated goals for each area.

Land Management Strategy

We believe it is essential to protect the few remaining prairie remnants in our chapter territory so they thrive for years to come.

Activities:

1. Align on the prioritization of the parcels we manage

- Utilize the Parcel Prioritization Scorecard to prioritize the parcels
- Manage the properties adjacent to the Foster Conservation Area as a single project

2. Manage each of our parcels according to its management plan

- Ensure each of our parcels has a management plan
- Finalize the management plan for Simon Prairie
- Develop annual work plans for each parcel with estimates of the person-hours required

3. Work towards permanent protection for each of our key parcels

- Develop an action plan for pursuing conservation easements for Covelli al. and Alexander Prairie

4. Identify and inventory significant prairie remnants in our area

- Develop a training session for conducting a prairie inventory
- Identify members willing to inventory prairies
- Develop an action plan for inventorying significant remnants over the next five years
- Document prairies inventoried in the University of Wisconsin prairie database and track the number of acres under our management

5. Communicate to members the vision and upcoming year's plan for each parcel under management at an annual chapter meeting.

- Invite non-member work day volunteers as well.

Education Strategy

We believe in educating people in our chapter territory about prairie and savannah heritage, preservation and management.

Groups to focus on include:

- Our members
- The general public
- Public officials
- School students

Activities:

1. Offer field trips to provide educational experiences to interested people.

- Offer two seed collection field trips per year. Teach how and when to collect, clean, store, scarify and plant a sampling of seeds. Creates a source of local, native seed to re-seed prairie remnants we manage.
- Offer a field trip or seminar in plant inventory methods.

2. Use work days as educational opportunities.

- Designate an informed member at each work project to engage with newcomers, explain the broader context of the work being done and be available to answer questions.

3. Enhance community awareness of the prairies we manage.

- Develop a general presentation on prairie preservation and management that can be offered to service clubs, school classes, conservation conferences, etc.
- Identify several members willing to make the presentation.

4. Consider creating a major annual or biennial event to build public interest and provide a variety of educational opportunities.

- Collaborate with other like-minded organizations to create a conservation fair.

Publicity:

1. Publicize educational events, including work days, effectively.

- Develop schedules out ahead so interested people can get dates on their calendars well in advance.

2. Develop a distribution/ mailing list for the activities schedule and event announcements.

- Include suitable public officials, local schools, "partner" organizations, etc. See if there are appropriate "partner" organizations willing to share their member lists.

3. Develop a semi-annual or quarterly printed schedule of educational activities of all sorts offered by the chapter

- Field trips, burn school, work days, annual conference, annual picnic, presentations at trade shows & conferences. Distribute it liberally.

Membership Strategy

We rely on the talents and resources of our members to achieve our goals and believe growing an active membership is essential to our success.

Reasons to build membership:

- Membership dues provide income
- Provides more volunteers on the ground to accomplish chapter priorities
- A larger organization tends to have more political clout

Activities:

1. Increase our active members to have the person-power to fulfill our priorities

- Hold an orientation event annually. Use it to get to know newcomers better, their interests and talents and get them actively involved.
- Consider doing a member survey to find out more about current members, their interests and talents. Try to match them up with an activity that they are willing to engage in.
- At each chapter meeting, share a list of tasks and efforts necessary to reaching chapter priorities. Consider passing around sign-up sheets when appropriate.

2. Double our membership by 2015

- At every event, discuss the opportunity to become a member
- Have a greeter at each event to give special attention to newcomers
- Have a sign-in sheet with address, phone number(s) and e-mail at each event; perhaps someone would be willing to follow-up individually with each newcomer to reinforce the welcome, invite them to the next event and to become a member
- Create a chapter business card that's a leave-behind for new people at events
- Consider a "bring a friend" campaign. Ask each current member household to invite a friend to an event and ask him/her to become a member. Friends and extended family members often support each others' interests and charitable organizations.