

St. Croix Valley Chapter

January 7, 2025 6pm—8pm

Location: Hudson Library and Zoom

Agenda

TPE Board recap

Peter, chapter representative to TPE Board, reported he will attend the Board strategy retreat January 17-18 in Viroqua.

Our Chapter's 3-Year Picture and 1-Year Plan are due to Chapter Support by the end of the day, Wednesday, January 8th. The deadline is so all chapter plans can be provided to the Board for their strategic planning retreat.

TPE Land Management recap

Alex Bouthilet, our chapter representative to the TPE Land Management committee, reported approval of the management plan for the wet prairie in St. Croix County. This prairie was discovered three years ago and is privately owned. Wayne Huhnke is in contact with the owner who is thrilled about the discovery of rare native plants.

TPE Land Protection recap

No report from Harvey Halvorson.

Chapter Recap of 2024

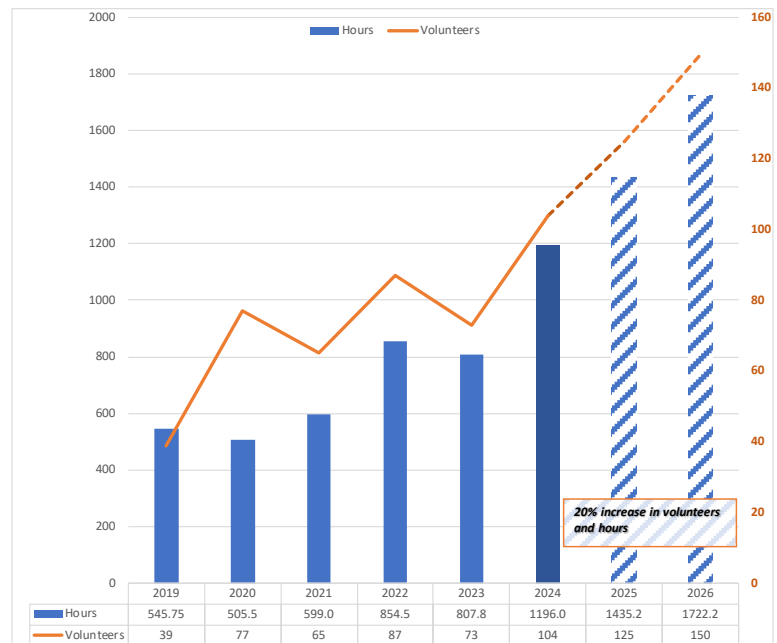
Our chapter collected seed, cut buckthorn and invasive non-native trees on Alexander savanna, Blueberry Hill, Foster Conservation Area, Rocky Branch savanna, and River Hills Park in 2024.

This year Evanne also tracked time spent on Events; e.g, staffing tables at outreach events. She did not have a report of hours spent on the “How to Plant a Prairie Workshop.”

See graph. We planned a 20% increase, but:

- We realized a 43% increase in the number of volunteers that attend our work parties.
- We realized a 48% increase in the hours volunteered for work parties and outreach events.

Year	Hours	Volunteers	Hours per person
2019	545.75	39	14.0
2020	505.5	77	6.6
2021	599.0	65	9.2
2022	854.5	87	9.8
2023	807.8	73	11.1
2024	1196.0	104	11.5
2025	1435.2	125	11.5
2026	1722.2	150	11.5



Chapter land management activity

Work party schedule on website. We have a work party scheduled every Saturday (10-2) this winter.

No update on Alexander parking lot.

Survey of Alexander savanna by Brandon King Land Surveying is still planned for this winter.

Chapter treasurer report

No report from Marti Piepgras, chapter treasurer.

Budget is due to Chapter Support by February 11. Evanne and Marti will work on this. If anyone has items to add (equipment, herbicide, etc.), let either know ASAP.

- Evanne will order more Buckthorn Blasters or Daub-Its (recommended by Dennis).
- Group approved a request to re-sell Blasters to members for a small donation.

Evanne to verify that we paid \$250 to the Town of RF.

Evanne to verify that we paid \$1,000 to the UW-RF scholarship fund.

Old Business

Ginny G. will put together a mockup for the kiosk sign at the new parking lot for Alexander.

Bill R. will attend the MN Prescribed Fire Council annual meeting – January 8, Shakopee

Discussion on chainsaw safety training. Dennis reported RF Community Ed liaison has not responded (probably due to the holidays). Alex Colling revealed he teaches classes on chainsaw use and brush saw use to Conservation Corp members. He is willing to do the same for TPE. We agreed that we want classes to emphasize safe practices of equipment. Evanne will follow up to arrange classes.

Chapter outreach events –

- Education Team has confirmed Harvey and Ruth to hold a 2-hour zoom workshop on “Choosing Prairie Seed Mixes”. Date to be during the week of Jan 20-27. Workshop is open to all.
- Chapter will have a table at the Belwin Bison Release on May 17, 2025, from 10am – 2 pm. Evanne will reach out to volunteers in late April.
- Chapter will have a table at Earth Fest on Saturday, April 26, 2025, from 12-4 pm at the UW-River Falls University Center. Evanne will reach out to volunteers in early April.
- Robust schedule of field trips is being planned. Both trips showing “in progress” prairie plantings as follow up to the “How to Plant a Prairie” workshop and to our project sites; that is, Blueberry, Alexander, etc.
- Evanne would like to have monthly chapter social events, not a business meeting, scheduled around a talk or educational presentation. She is looking for a volunteer to help plan and implement these events.

New Business

- Promoter deadline is Jan 16. Bob drafted an article for the Promoter about the “How to Plant a Prairie” workshop. Evanne will include a note about the passing of Keith Relyea.
- Alex B reported on US Fish and Wildlife report on rusty patch bumblebee habitat. Report notes that fire is a stressor on the bees, but not harmful if the burn is early. Alex reports the study was done on one bee nest; more study is needed. Currently, these recommendations only apply to UWF&W sites and federally funded projects.