



THE PRAIRIE PROMOTER

VOL 15, NO.2 Summer 2002

Preserving and Protecting Our Prairie Heritage

TPE Annual Meeting and Picnic July 21!

The Northwest Illinois Chapter will host the Annual TPE Meeting on July 21 at Palisades State Park. Bison burgers will be served. Tours will be available to Lost Mound National Wildlife Refuge, Ayers Prairie, Mill Hollow prairies, Thomson Prairie, Hanover Bluffs Nature Preserve and Lone Tree farm where NIPE does many of its prairie projects. A state nature preserve trail starts just a few steps from the park house. Here is some info about the park:

History

Located near the confluence of the Mississippi and Apple rivers in northwestern Illinois, the 2,500-acre Mississippi Palisades State Park is rich in American Indian history.

The Native American pathfinders along the rock palisades of the Mississippi River did as present-day hikers do - in coursing the bluffs, they took the paths of least resistance. The trails at the Mississippi Palisades, especially the park's southern routes, puts you in touch with the past. Walk them and you'll trace the footsteps of all those who came before you, some of whom came this way nearly a thousand years ago.

Natural Features

Palisades is the word used to describe a line of lofty, steep cliffs usually seen along a river, and Mississippi Palisades, 3 miles north of Savanna in Carroll County, handsomely lives up to its name. Caves are evident as are dangerous sink holes-limestone caves that go straight down. Erosion has carved intriguing rock formations, including Indian Head, with its aquiline characteristics, and Twin Sisters, a pair of humanoid figures on the bluff tops. The U.S. Interior Department recognized the remarkable nature of this area when in 1973 it designated acreage here as a national landmark.

Wooded ravines, whose brilliant hues splash the cliffs with color each autumn, dissect the unglaciated terrain. Ferns dot the deep ravines, while in the park's

northern region, leaves of the white birch ripple in the wind. Each spring and summer the valleys and slopes are dappled with the blooms of trillium, bluebell, lobelia, shooting star and yellow lady's slippers.

Animal life, within the park and the river areas immediately adjoining it, is varied. Waterfowl and shorebirds are numerous, as are wild turkeys. Striking pileated woodpeckers make their home in the park, and depending on ice conditions, eagles feed at the river in January and February. Because so many birds migrate along the river, their lyrical songs can be heard at the Mississippi Palisades each spring and fall.

But not all that's fascinating about Mississippi Palisades' wildlife is in the skies. White-tailed deer, gray squirrel, skunk, muskrat and weasel can be viewed in the park, as can mink, gray and red fox, woodchuck and even, occasionally, badger.

Trails

The gateway to seeing the park's impressive assortment of plant and animal life is its rugged 13-mile trail system. The five trails in the northern part of the park are generally wider and less strenuous than the five in the south, which are narrow and extremely close to the bluff. The southern trails also are very hazardous when wet.

The North System includes High Point Trail at 3.5 miles and Aspen at 1.9 miles. Sentinel Trail, at 1.2 miles including spurs, is the South System's longest hike, but it and other southern loops aren't for the tenderfoot. Ozzie's Point, Louis' Point and Lookout Point, three developed overlooks accessible by short walks, offer a surfaced trail leading to the overlook. A fourth overlook, Oak Point, offers a trail surface suitable for the physically challenged. *(article continued on page 3)*

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The Prairie Enthusiasts is a grass roots organization of volunteers which is solely committed to the protection, management and restoration of native prairies and savannas in the Upper Midwest. To date, The Prairie Enthusiasts has protected 1,372 acres that harbor at least 5 state or federally protected species through acquisitions, easements and management agreements. The Prairie Enthusiasts has a stewardship program which provides active management to ensure the ongoing health of protected sites.

The Prairie Enthusiasts is actively involved in planting prairie on its properties and on other conservation lands and has assisted both public agencies and private groups in these efforts. Thus far, more than 150 acres have been planted with seeds of prairie plants from local sources.

In addition, The Prairie Enthusiasts develop educational materials and provide presentations on prairie and savanna ecology, conservation and management for both children and adults.

The Prairie Enthusiasts was incorporated in Wisconsin in 1987 as a private nonprofit, tax exempt corporation under section 501(c) 3 of the Internal Revenue Code. Donations are tax-deductible.

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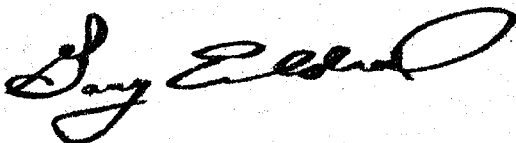
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President's Message

The awareness of the rarity and continuing decline of savanna and prairie habitat have led increasing numbers of people to realize that conservation measures are needed! One has only to look at Wisconsin's rare and endangered species to see that a very large percentage of those species listed (birds, plants, insects and animals) are prairie or savanna related species. Today there is little in the way of legislation that provides meaningful protection for these species, especially the plants. The little legal protection that exists is riddled with loopholes. In addition, enforcement is virtually nonexistent. I've never heard of a case where anyone ever has been prosecuted for stealing or killing an endangered plant.

The point I'm trying to make is that as TPE and it's chapters work to save these disappearing native treasures we see the job getting bigger and more urgent with each passing day. In fact, the "Blufflands Preservation" article that begins on page four provides compelling evidence for this perspective. On the other hand, our volunteers aren't able to keep up with the growing demand of prairie and savanna conservation. Also, we are reaching the limits of what we can do with our admirably committed all volunteer administrative team. We are the only regional conservation organization that focuses on fire dependent ecosystems, and attempts to save those islands of prairie and savanna that are too small to appear on the radar screen of larger conservation groups. That is why I am going to tell you about our Blazing Star membership again and ask you to consider joining or renewing at that level. At \$200 per year, that money is designated exclusively for the new executive director's position. The new director will have a big job, a full time job, finding funding to hire conservation work to be done, recruiting and enlarging our membership and telling people everywhere about the importance of our efforts to keep our native bio-diversity from becoming extinct. We need your help! Sometime in June or July you will also be receiving a letter from me asking all of you to make a separate donation to help fund the executive director position. I'm very hopeful that you will understand TPE's needs and I hope you can sense the urgency in my words. We cannot do this without your support. Please help!



(Meeting continued from Page 1)

Camping

With 241 Class A and B sites in both shaded and open areas, Mississippi Palisades is in demand by campers. Reservations are now accepted May 1 - Oct. 31. Electrical hookups are available at 110 sites. Showers and flush toilets are situated in three buildings and are in operation from May 1 until Oct 31. You can pick up supplies at a camp convenience store open during the summer. The campground also features water and two sanitary dump stations. Only campers with permits are allowed in the campground, with admittance prohibited from 10 p.m. to 7:30 a.m.

Two youth camping areas are also available. These may be reserved from June 1 through October 31. An adult must accompany every group of 15 minors. Any group of 25 or more must get permission from the site personnel before entering the park.



View of Palisades Park

Fishing and Boating

With the Mississippi River and its backwaters the perfect habitat for so many kinds of fish, anglers are consistently baiting their hooks at Mississippi Palisades. Catfish and carp are the most commonly caught fish, but bluegill, crappie and bass are out there too. Those long on experience might even land walleye and northern pike. There are no motor size limits on boats, and launching ramps at the river access areas are free.

Picnicking

Throw a checkered tablecloth across one of the park's many picnic tables and enjoy one of summer's simple pleasures. Playgrounds and toilets are convenient to the picnic areas. The shelter houses and drinking fountains in the park attest to the 1930's craftsmanship of the Civilian Conservation Corps. Three

shelters are available to groups of 25 or more on a reservation basis.

Concession

Forgot something? If you did, please stop by the concession stand located in the park to pick up the camping supply or grocery item you left behind or just to have breakfast or lunch. You will find the concession open from May 1 - September 15 and holidays during the week with varied hours.

Enjoy Your Visit

Your trip to Mississippi Palisades State Park will be more enjoyable for you and for everyone if you follow a few simple rules. Keep your pets leashed at all times. Stay on designated trails. Don't pick any flowers. As the Indians did, leave only footprints.

Directions

From I-90, exit at US Rt. 20 west (Galena/Freeport exit). From Rt. 20, turn south on Rt. 84. The park is located 18 miles from Rt. 20. From I-80, exit on Rt. 84 and travel north approximately 50 miles to reach the park which is located three miles north of Savanna. We have the south park house reserved for the entire day. Let me know (anyone) about scheduling, menu, or whatever questions or suggestions you may have. **I'm told that the camping is first-come-first-served, and they do not expect to be anywhere near full around July 21.**

See Ya On The Prairie,
Jim Rachuy

For more information on the Palisades Park contact:
John Jacino, Superintendent
Mississippi Palisades State Park
16327A IL Rte. 84
Savanna, IL 61074
(815) 273-2731

CHIGGER SEASON IS HERE AGAIN

Those of us who spend a great deal of the spring and summer in grassy areas, thickets bordering woods and areas dominated by shrubs have probably experienced the itching and little red welts caused by chiggers.

Chiggers are actually the larval stage of mites which are so small as to be barely discernable with the unaided eye. Unfortunately, by the time one begins to itch or to see the little red welts, little can be done.

Chiggers "home in" on us after detecting the carbon dioxide we exhale, just like ticks and mosquitoes. When we brush past vegetation, they are stimulated to come off on our shoes and clothing. They first migrate to

individual hair follicles in areas where our clothes fit tightly, typically ankles and waistbands. They extend their mouthparts into the top of the hair follicle and inject digestive enzymes, producing a feeding tube from which they consume lymphatic fluid and dead skin cells. The feeding tube actually is made by our own skin cells as they try to seal off the chigger's saliva. This is what causes the severe itching and reddish welts. If you don't cause secondary infection by scratching, the condition will heal itself since your immune system will remove any trace of the chigger. In fact, by the time the symptoms of chigger bites occur, usually within 18 hours), the chigger has likely already been killed by your immune system. So forget the common folk remedy of painting the affected area with fingernail polish and console yourself that chiggers in this area are not known to transmit diseases to humans.

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Perhaps the best prevention is to tuck pant legs into socks and apply a suitable repellent, specifically 15% diethyl-meeta-toluamide (DEET) to shoes, socks, pant legs and the waist band. Use products containing no more than 10% DEET for children. Use such a formulation sparingly on children under the age of six and not at all on children under two. Reportedly, using an old sock to apply sulphur dust to shoes and pant legs is also effective.

NOTE: Thanks to Jan Ketelle for providing the article from which this information was excerpted.

The following article is by Rob Nelson of The Aldo Leopold Foundation, Baraboo, WI. Originally published in *The Leopold Outlook*, Winter 2002. Reprinted with permission.

BLUFFLANDS PRESERVATION

Ecologists hope to get a leg up on the race to preserve the Midwest's vanishing grasslands, thanks to new research combining some of the nation's earliest aerial photography with cutting-edge computer software.

The research, currently focusing on six prairie/savanna remnants in the bluffs of the Wisconsin River valley, aims to quantify the rate at which these communities are disappearing and better direct resources toward their protection.

"I think this project easily conveys the sense of urgency that we feel into something very tangible and visual for those that may not have as much familiarity with these communities," said Steve Swenson, Aldo Leopold Foundation (ALF) ecologist and manager of The Blufflands Project, a cooperative venture between ALF and The Prairie Enthusiasts to facilitate the conservation of private grasslands.

In the absence of fire and large herbivores like elk and bison, prairie and savanna have increasingly fallen victim to invasion by trees, in particular the eastern red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*). In Wisconsin alone, these grasslands have dwindled from over 9 million acres in the early 1800s to just a few thousand acres today.

"For us to be successful doing restoration on private lands, we need to utilize whatever tools exist to merge visions that landowners have with the visions that ecologists have," added Jeb Brazen, director of field ecology at the International Crane Foundation, and an advisor to the project. "This activity allows those visions to get much closer to each other."

The seed for the investigation was planted over twenty years ago when, as an undergraduate at the University of Minnesota, Barzen observed a "very heated" discussion between landowners over the ecological history of their property. One of the landowners was leaning against a map of the original vegetation of Minnesota, although no one in the room recognized its relevance. "People assume that the way things are now have always been that way," Barzen continued. "And in many places, that assumption couldn't be more wrong."

With the recent advent of Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Barzen and Swenson felt confident that they could illustrate the grassland loss in a compelling way. A grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation helped launch the project.

This spring, an appeal for help from the University of Wisconsin-Madison Geography Department brought an enthusiastic response from Mitch Bergeson, who was nearing completion of a master's degree in Wildlife Ecology and a certificate in GIS. A self-described "wildlife ecologist/cartographer/prairie enthusiast/bird watcher," Bergeson helped Swenson formulate a research plan, then went to work solving the technical details.

"Early on, it was research and development...lots of research and development," Bergeson recalled. "We knew what we wanted, we just had to get from point A to point Z."

Several months and a few speed bumps later, Bergeson, Swenson and ALF interns Steffan Freeman and Josh LaPoint had developed a process for analyzing the historical data. The first step was locating aerial photographs. By scouring the UW's Robinson Map Library, the team managed to collect five to ten images of each grassland site, some dating back to the early days of aerial photography in the 1930s.

Next, Bergeson and the interns employed sophisticated software to "rectify" the different images: digitally wrapping the flat images onto a three-dimensional map of the earth's surface, a process made more challenging by the steep and irregular bluff terrain.

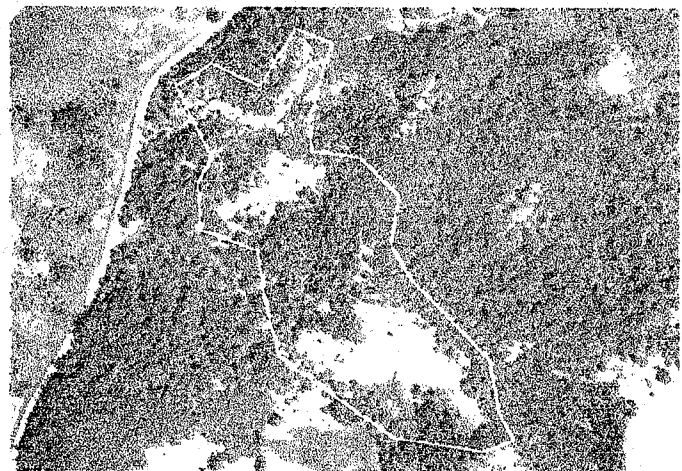
The resulting "orthophotos" standardize the images for each site and are accurate to within a few meters.

After selection of a specific analysis area, a computer identifies 256 different shades of gray on each image. Tree cover is dark while prairies appear light. The remaining challenge for Bergeson and crew is to decide exactly where the shift from "dark" to "light" occurs.

A final adjustment seeks to standardize photos taken during different times of the year or different times of the day. Some photos taken with the sun low on the horizon produce long shadows which make the prairie look dark. "That took a lot of eyeballing," said Bergeson. "It's not an exact science, but it's pretty close." After a final step- a calculation by the computer of the prairie and wooded areas within each sample plot- it became clear that any small errors in judgment were dwarfed by overall trends.

While only a few of the half dozen sites have been completed so far, the preliminary results have already yielded some dramatic results.

Aerial Photos of Taylor Bluff in NW Dane County. Trees appear dark while prairie appears light.



1968



1995

The Taylor Bluff Prairie, in northwest Dane County, which shows 14.3 acres of prairie according to a 1937 photograph, lost over 10 acres- a whopping 72%- by 1995. Similarly, at Pieper Prairie, in southwest Sauk County, 4.5 of 5.8 prairie acres disappeared between 1937 and 1978, while neighboring Chamberlain Prairie shrank by 81% over the same time frame.

"Of the remaining remnants that we have, when you look at the rate these things have closed in, basically the story will be told in twenty years if we don't do something now," emphasized Barzen. "I think that that's an important message."

The different rates at which sites are losing prairie may also help identify management priorities. Over the period studied, the Taylor Prairie lost an acre approximately every five years, while a one acre loss took over 13 years at the smaller Chamberlain site.

The images have also opened Swenson's eyes to some new restoration opportunities. For example, just outside the Chamberlain unit, a 1937 photo shows roughly two acres to be as open as any other spot on the bluff. Heavily wooded today, it is unlikely that the site would have merited much management attention.

"In fact, I've never even walked through that area," Swenson admitted. "Of course, there may be no prairie species which survive in there, but at least the project is directing my gaze toward some new areas that I've never considered before."

If geography, soils slope, aspect and other variables can be integrated in to the analysis, the project may even yield a comprehensive model for predicting which prairies are the most likely to disappear, so that limited management resources can be focused on those areas.

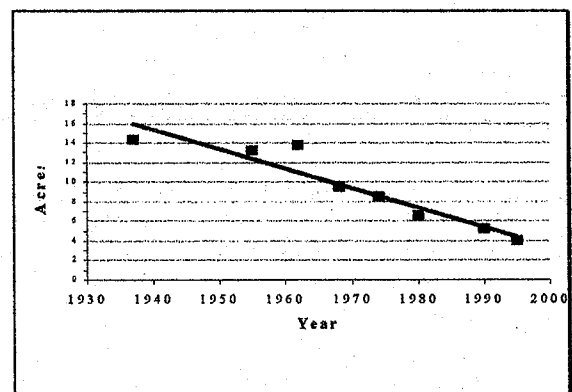
"It opens up a lot of doors to a lot of different possibilities," said Bergeson. "It's definitely a master's or PhD project."

Swenson agreed, hopeful that the project will attract a UW graduate student to pursue a study of the Leopold Memorial Preserve, Potter Preserve and other sites beyond the bluff prairies. Swenson is already busy using the resulting images, with the extent of prairie highlighted throughout the decades, to open doors among area landowners, and share with them a "visual abstract" of their property's history. The lesson not only affirms the recollection of longtime residents, but provides a perspective that is especially important for landowners new to the area. "When we talk to landowners, one of the first things they say to us is 'I remember when...'" Swenson said. "I remember when this was very open," 'I remember when you could see through the woods.' Or they say 'my father used to tell me how there was prairie back there.'" This connection to a prior landscape helps get longtime landowners "charged up" about restoration. "Maybe they don't know all the ecological rationales for what they are doing, but

rather are keying in on an aesthetic," Swenson continued. "This project visually accomplishes that same type of understanding for new landowners. "As new people move onto the current landscape, they don't have that connection to the past and that understanding of what was once there. I think this allows them visually to make that leap."

Swenson has already seen the impact the images have made on some landowners. "There's something that comes alive in them when they see those pictures," Swenson recalled. "The gears just start turning and the possibilities are endless. It's almost like as affirmation of what we're doing. We're not just cutting down trees for the sake of cutting down trees, but we are confirming that, yes, we are restoring an important part of our natural heritage." "We're just very visual creatures," he concluded. "When I tell people about this study, they say 'Oh yeah, that sounds interesting.' But when I show them the pictures, they want copies to show other people."

**GRAPH SHOWING LOSS OF PRAIRIE
CALCULATED USING THE TECHNIQUES
DESCRIBED IN THE ABOVE ARTICLE.**



THE REMNANTS WE SAVE

KALSCHEUR SAVANNA

LOCATION

The Kalscheur Savanna is located on County Highway K, two miles south of the village of Hollandale in Iowa County, Wisconsin. The property is landlocked, but TPE does have an undeveloped right-of-way which permits legal access. A nearby property owner lets TPE share access through his driveway and yard, so visiting is discouraged, except as part of scheduled work parties or field trips.

DESCRIPTION

This 19.06 acre property harbors approximately 40 native plant species, including such rarities as Hill's

Thistle. The southern part of the property is a wet meadow which rises in a 12 to 20 degree south facing slope on which there is dry prairie and savanna.

HISTORY AND STATUS

This site had served as a pasture for many years. Owner James Kalscheur approached TPE about the possible purchase of the parcel and in December 1994, with kindly assistance from the Natural Land Institute, we completed the purchase.

In January 1996, restoration began in earnest when Southwest Chapter member David Lowe felled around 150 (!) trees and fellow prairie enthusiast Ron Nieman removed all of the downed trees with his tractor and skidder. Trees removed included black cherry, slippery elm, basswood, walnut, paper birch and aspen. Some trees were processed at a saw mill and the remainder was processed into nearly 30 cords of firewood by TPE volunteers. Since then, many additional hours have been spent clearing small trees and shrubs. In the summer of 1996, 150 purple milkweed seedlings were planted on the site. In the fall, portions of the site experienced fire for the first time in many years.

MANAGEMENT NEEDS

Removal of woody vegetation and exotic species will remain high priorities for years to come. A carefully planned fire regimen will also be applied.

ASK THE EXPERTS

Question:

Which herbicides are the most effective and least toxic for controlling invasive plants in prairies?

To answer both parts of this question, we consulted information provided by the Wisconsin DNR and The Nature Conservancy. What follows is taken from two sources:

Wisconsin Manual of Control : Recommendations for Ecologically Invasive Plants, (Randy Hoffman and Kelly Kearns, eds.) at www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/er/invasive/manual_TOC.htm

Weed Control Methods Handbook: Tools and Techniques for Use in Natural Areas by Mandy Tu, Callie Hurd, and John M. Randall, at www.tncweeds.ucdavis.edu/handbook.html.

This is only an overview. Please consult the source publications for specific and complete information.

Important: Always 1) read labels before purchasing and using any chemical; 2) follow label instructions; 3) ask chemical manufacturers to send you

material safety data sheets (MSDS) for toxicity and clean-up information on their products; and 4) use impermeable gloves, safety goggles, clothing that covers your skin and a mask when applying herbicides, even those that are considered relatively harmless, to avoid the risk of skin absorption or inhalation; and 5) use common sense and caution when using potentially toxic materials, avoiding spills and contamination of non-target areas.

Not all herbicides are best for all invasives, locations or conditions. Application methods and toxicity levels vary by chemical. Some chemicals are more cost effective than others when used on large areas and some degrade more quickly than others. Some more easily than others effect nearby non-target plants and animals. Some formulations contain more than one herbicide.

Some herbicides have amine and ester formulations. Amines are less volatile, or likely to vaporize and drift, than esters. Esters should be used with caution in warm weather months. They are best used during the late fall, winter or very early spring (before buds break), when they are more readily absorbed by plant tissues.

The following chemicals are those most widely used in natural areas.

Product: 2,4-D (2,4-dichlorophenoxy)

Trade Names: Aqua-Kleen®, Barrage® and Weedone®

Description: One of the oldest herbicides used in the U.S. and one of the most commonly used on the market. No longer patented, it is available from various manufacturers in several formulations (ester, salt and acid) and sold under a variety of trade names. It kills weeds by mimicking the plant growth hormone, auxin, leading to uncontrolled and disorganized plant growth resulting in death.

Advantages: It kills broadleaf plants but not grasses. It has a relatively short half life (average of 10 days in soils and less than that in water), being degraded by microbes. It has been effective in killing Canada thistle, crown vetch, Russian knapweed, and sulfur cinquefoil.

Disadvantages: 2,4-D can bio-accumulate in animals. It can be absorbed through the skin and lungs. Though most is excreted through the urine, toxicity can occur when large amounts are absorbed, and studies show the potential for health effects from high exposure. Dogs are particularly sensitive to the chemical, leading to higher than average incidences of lymphoma. Residues can be passed from foraging animals to their products, such as eggs, milk and meat. Ester formulations are toxic to fish and aquatic vertebrates. Some crops, such as grapes, are extremely sensitive to it. Most formulations are volatile and should not be applied in windy conditions (+ 5 mph) or high temperatures.

Vaporization and dispersion can lead to destruction of non-target organisms. Some formulations absorb into soil for degradation more readily than others. The chemical in all formulations does not decompose without soil or water degradation and has the potential to be carried off site or persist in the environment.

Product: Glyphosphate (N-(phosphonomethyl) glycine)

Trade Names: Roundup®, Roundup-Pro®, Rodeo®, Accord®, Glyphomax® and Touchdown®.

Description: A broad-spectrum herbicide that controls many annual and perennial plants by interfering with protein formation. Since Monsanto's patent expired in 2000, its trade name, Roundup, has been joined by many others from various manufacturers. It can be applied to leaves, green stems, and cut stems. It is effective on bush honeysuckle, common buckthorn, glossy buckthorn, Japanese honeysuckle, smooth brome, black cherry, sweetclover, leafy spurge and bindweed. Various application methods (sprayers, controlled drop, injectors, wipe-on devices, etc.) can be used according to location and type of target plants.

Advantages: Glyphosphate does not leach excessively from soil to be taken up by the roots of non-target plants. It is degraded microbially, though more quickly (12 days to 10 weeks) in aquatic sediments than in dry soils. By itself, the chemical is minimally to non-toxic to birds, mammals and fish, and at least one formulation sold as Rodeo® is registered for aquatic use. It has low volatility and dispersal.

Disadvantages: The half-life of the chemical can be up to years in environments low in microbe action. Some formulations contain surfactants highly toxic to aquatic organisms and are therefore not registered for aquatic use. Because native plants can absorb the chemical, care must be taken when applying it. The chemical is not carcinogenic, but eye and skin contact should be avoided.

Product: Triclopyr [(3,5,6-trichloro-2-pyridinyl)oxy] acetic acid

Trade Names: Garlon and Access

Description: A selective systemic herbicide for control of woody and herbaceous broadleaf plants with little impact on grasses. It causes uncontrolled plant growth by mimicking the growth hormone, auxin, and has two formulations—a salt and an ester. Degradation occurs through microbial metabolism, photolysis and hydrolysis, giving the chemical an average half-life of 30 days. Application to freshly cut stems of woody plants is often more effective in fall when the chemical will be absorbed into the root system. Marketed by Dow as Garlon 3A® or Garlon 4, it is sold under a variety of trade names. The ester formulation is particularly effective in controlling buckthorns, ash, and black locust.

Advantages: Best used as part of a cut-stump treatment or basal bark with an effective surfactant. Unless broadcast broadly, the amount of chemical leached from the soil is unlikely to have adverse effects. Both salt and ester formulations are relatively non-toxic to terrestrial vertebrates and invertebrates, though carcinogen effects are unknown.

Disadvantages: The salt formulation can cause severe eye damage. The ester formulation can be toxic to fish and aquatic invertebrates, and can be highly volatile, making application at cool temperatures with no wind desirable. Human carcinogenicity is still unknown, therefore protection from contact and inhalation is recommended.

Product: Picloram (4-amino-3,5,6-trichloro-2-pyridinecarboxylic acid)

Trade Names: Some trade names include Grazon®, Tordon®, Access® and Pathway®.

Description: A dicot-selective, persistent herbicide for a variety of annual and perennial broadleaved herbs and woody species, particularly leafy spurge, knapweeds, toadflax, buckthorns, Russian olive, cinquefoil, thistles, birdsfoot trefoil, hoary cress, Siberian elm and native redbud. Acting like synthetic growth hormone, it causes uncontrolled and disorganized growth in susceptible plants.

Advantages: Picloram's persistence in the soil, with a half-life of one month to several years, makes it especially effective for problem invasives such as leafy spurge. It is degraded by sunlight and is not harmful to many grasses. Cut stump use is recommended for woody species. Premixed Picloram/2,4D formulations are very effective for cut-stump applications of buckthorn.

Disadvantages: Its persistence in the environment has a downside. Picloram can be released from roots of treated plants into the soil, where non-target species may take it up. Repeated exposure may harm native grasses. Not binding well with soil particles makes it easily move off-site through runoff, possibly entering groundwater. Picloram should not be applied near waters used for irrigation. Though considered not highly toxic to birds, mammals and aquatic species, chronic exposure can cause weight loss and liver damage in mammals. Some formulations are highly toxic if inhaled. Others can cause severe eye damage on contact.

Product: Clopyralid (3,6-dichloro-pyridinecarboxylic acid)

Trade Names: Transline®, Stinger®, Reclaim®, Curtail® and Lontrel®

Description: Clopyralid selectively targets broadleaves such as knapweeds, thistles, members of the sunflower, legume, violet and knotweed families, by mimicking

growth hormone and disrupting plant growth. It is not effective against members of the mustard family (Brassicaceae) and several other groups of broad-leaf plants. It is sold in a variety of formulations.

Advantages: Clopyralid passes rapidly into leaves and roots of plants and is rain-fast within two hours. It is not highly volatile and appears to be of low toxicity to animals. It can be more effective when used with 2,4D.

Disadvantages: Clopyralid should not be used in areas of high runoff. It is not registered for aquatic use. Because clopyralid is not degraded rapidly in treated plants, wildlife ingesting it can retain some amounts in their livers and kidneys. It can cause severe eye damage or blindness on contact.

Other herbicides covered by the sources we cited are:

Product: Sethoxydim (2-[1-(ethoxyimino)butyl]-5-[2-(ethylthio)propyl]-3-hydroxy-2-cyclohexen-1-one)

Trade Names: Poast®, Torpedo®, Ultima®, Vantage®, Conclude® and Rezult®

Description: Kills grasses such as crabgrass, downy brome, annual ryegrass, wild oats, and witchgrasses through leaf absorption, but has little impact on broadleaf herbs or woody plants. Readily degraded through microbial metabolism and photolysis, with a half-life of a few hours to 25 days. Water-soluble, so can be highly mobile. Low toxicity to birds, mammals, and aquatic animals, with little noticeable impact on soil microbe populations. An oil adjuvant or non-ionic surfactant should be used to facilitate absorption by plants.

Slightly to moderately toxic to animals, particularly through ingestion. Skin and eye contact should also be avoided.

Product: Imazapic ((±)-2-[4,5-dihydro-4-methyl-4-(1-methylethyl)-5-oxo-1H-imidazol-2-yl]-5-methyl-3-pyridinecarboxylic acid)

Trade Names: Plateau®, Cadre® and Plateau Eco-Paks®

Description: Recently approved by the EPA for use in pre-and post-emergent control of some grasses and broadleaf weeds, including Johnsongrass, downy brome, bermudagrass, fescue, smartweed, cocklebur, and leafy spurge. Non-native weeds can be more susceptible than the desirable native species. Relatively non-toxic to terrestrial and aquatic mammals, birds, and amphibians, aquatic invertebrates, and insects, but can be moderately toxic to fish and is not yet approved for use in aquatic systems.

Product: Fluazifop-p-butyl (R-2-[4-[[5-(trifluoromethyl)-2-pyridinyl]oxy]phenoxy] propanate)

Trade Names: Fusilade®, Horizon 2000®, Ornamec®, Fusion® and Tornado®

Description: Targets annual and perennial grasses, such as quackgrass, brome, Johnsongrass, and panic or witch-grasses, without harming most broad leafed weeds. Is of low toxicity to birds and mammals, but is highly toxic to fish and aquatic invertebrates in certain concentrations. Irritates skin, can cause eye damage, and is harmful if inhaled.

Product: Fosamine (ethyl hydrogen (aminocarbonyl) phosphonate)

Trade Names: Krenite®

Description: Targets woody and herbaceous plants, such as leafy spurge and crown vetch. Special application considerations are due to difficulty with plant absorption. Slightly toxic to birds, mammals, fish and aquatic invertebrates and causes irritation to the skin, eyes, and upper respiratory passages. Ingestion may cause nausea, headache or weakness.

Product: Hexazinone (3-cyclohexyl-6-(dimethylamino)-1-methyl-1,3,5-triazine-2,4(1H,3H)-dione)

Trade Names: Pronone® and Velpar®

Description: Targets annual, biennial, perennial and woody weeds, particularly tansy-mustard, cheatgrass, shepards-purse, false dandelion, and privet. It is of particular concern for groundwater contamination, with a high potential to move off-site and contaminate water or kill desirable plants. Residues can persist in leaf litter, releasing hexazinone into the environment long after application. Studies show harmful effects to various aquatic life forms. Contact can cause severe eye damage.

Product: Imazapyr ((±)-2-[4,5-dihydro-4-methyl-4-(1-methylethyl)-5-oxo-1H-imidazol-2-yl]-3-pyridinecarboxylic acid)

Trade Names: Arsenal®, Chopper® and Stalker®

Description: Targets grasses, broadleaves, vines, brambles, brush and trees, including privet, blackberries, field bindweed and downy brome. Slow acting, not readily breaking down in the plant, and good at killing large woody species. Can "leak" out of the roots of target plants into the soil, and can be taken-up by the roots of native, desirable species. Appears to be minimally toxic to mammals, birds, and fish, but is not approved for aquatic use. Some formulations of imazapyr can cause severe irreversible eye damage.

Do you have a question that you'd like our experts to answer? If so, send them by regular mail to N8011 975th Street, River Falls, WI 54022, or by e-mail to

eokeefe@pressenter.com

Obtaining permits for controlled burns: a Wisconsin and a local perspective

Thomas D. Brock
Professor Emeritus, U.W. Madison
tdbrock@facstaff.wisc.edu

Statewide burn permit regulations

Burning permits are required for controlled burns in some parts of Wisconsin but not others. The regulations on burning are quite complicated and there is considerable variation across the state. In general, it can be stated that regulations are most stringent in those areas that are predominantly forested. It is in these areas that the Division of Forestry of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has the responsibility for controlling forest fires. In the Wisconsin Statutes, the term "forest fire" means "uncontrolled, wild, or running fires occurring on forest, marsh, field, cutover or other lands or involving farm, city or village property and improvements..." (WS 26.11). This broad definition obviously covers the types of burning activities which concern The Prairie Enthusiasts.

Although much of the DNR regulations are focused on preventing forest fires, the DNR also recognizes that "prescribed burning reduces unwanted vegetation and logging debris. It prepares sites for tree planting or direct seeding. And it reduces the potential for destructive wildfires by reducing fuel accumulations."

In addition to the Division of Forestry, prescribed burns are dealt with on DNR's own land by the bureaus of Endangered Species, Wildlife Management and Wetlands. However, controlled burns on non-state lands outside of incorporated areas are regulated by the Division of Forestry.

As far as burning regulations are concerned, four types of areas in the state are recognized. (Some of the text below is taken directly from the DNR web site. See also the map included with this article, provided to me by the DNR but not on its web site.)

Intensive fire control areas

In Intensive Protection Areas the DNR is responsible for forest fire control. These areas are the most heavily forested and contain the most fire hazards and risk. They have more DNR fire suppression resources and ranger stations. Fire detection is accomplished with fire towers, aerial detection and citizen reporting. The most restrictive burning laws are in effect. These laws are regulated by the DNR and require a burning permit whenever the ground is not snow covered throughout the year.

The Intensive Protection Areas are primarily in the northern part of the state. Also classified as intensive is a large area centered on Necedah (see map). Note that in these areas burning permits are required *at any time*

the ground is not snow covered, except inside incorporated villages or cities. Permits can be obtained from local emergency fire wardens and DNR field stations.

Extensive fire control areas

The DNR is also responsible for forest fire control in Extensive Protection Areas. These are less forested than intensive areas and have fewer DNR suppression resources and ranger stations. Hazards and risk are still high in these areas. Fire detection is accomplished with aerial detection and citizen reporting. Burning is regulated by the DNR and except within incorporated villages and cities permits are needed whenever the ground is not snow covered from January 1 through May 31 (and other times when the department so orders). Permits can be obtained from local emergency fire wardens and DNR ranger stations.

The Extensive Fire Protection Areas are predominantly along the lower and middle Wisconsin River drainage, and include the Dodgeville and Waupaca Dispatch Groups. (see map).

Cooperative fire control areas

Some parts of the state are not sufficiently forested and do not contain the hazards and risks necessary to warrant intensive or extensive fire protection. These areas are designated as Cooperative Fire Protection Areas. DNR ranger stations and suppression resources are not located in these areas. Town chairpersons have the responsibility for suppressing forest fires. This is accomplished through the local fire departments, with the DNR providing technical and financial assistance. Citizen reporting accomplishes fire detection. The town board regulates burning and restrictions vary throughout the state.

Included here are vast areas of the state in the southern, south-central, southeast, northeast and west central parts of the states. (see map) In these areas burning permits are issued by the town chairperson or other appointed wardens. There is great variability here in how burning is regulated. Many towns do not regulate at all, and some do not even want to be notified if a controlled burn is to take place.

Incorporated cities and villages

Burning permits may be required by local ordinances, and permits are issued by local government officials or fire departments, which should be contacted for information. Regulation of controlled burning may be stricter in cities and villages than in towns, although there is considerable variation across the state. In many cases incorporated areas regulate burning not because of potential fire hazard, but due to air pollution concerns.

Fire Management Dispatch Groups

In the Intensive and Extensive fire control areas, the state is divided into a number of Fire Management

Dispatch Groups (given in the county-by-county table). These are groups named from the community in which the central office is located. Within each Dispatch Group, a number of separate Fire Response Units (FRUs) have been established. For instance, the Dodgeville Group has FRUs at Spring Green, Boscobel, Richland Center and Poynette. Burning permits are issued at each FRU for locations in its area.

The fire warden

Even in areas under DNR control, the local fire warden may be the most convenient person from whom to get the burn permit, although the warden will only issue the permit after approval by the DNR. Fire wardens are volunteers who have been trained by the DNR to write burn permits and have been approved by the county board. Identity of fire wardens in an area can be obtained from the town chairperson or from the DNR.

Daytime and evening permits

Two kinds of burn permits are issued, one for fires started after 6:00 P.M., and one for daytime fires. The rationale for the 6:00 P.M. permit is that in the evening humidity is generally higher and winds are lighter, making the burn less hazardous. Under most cases, an "after 6:00 P.M. permit" can be written by a fire warden without prior approval of the DNR in the FRU. These permits are generally written for up to a five-day period.

Daytime permits must be obtained through the local FRU. In most cases, the responsible ranger who issues the permit can arrange for it to be written by a nearby fire warden. Even with a permit, before beginning a daytime burn it is essential to notify the Dispatcher at the headquarters of the Fire Management Dispatch Group, as well as the local fire department (see below).

The local fire department

In cooperative and incorporated areas, the local fire department has the responsibility if a controlled burn gets out of hand. In intensive and extensive fire control areas, the local fire department works closely with the DNR to suppress fires. In all cases it is essential that the local fire department be notified ahead of time. In these days of widespread use of cellular telephones and the 911 emergency system, dispatching agencies occasionally receive 911 calls from citizens reporting not only wildfires but also controlled burns. Even if the local fire department has been notified ahead of time of an upcoming burn, it is still required to respond to a 911 call, but may not need to mobilize its full forces.

SUMMARY

Cooperative	No DNR burning permit required. However, the township may have its own permit system or other burning regulations. Check with the Town
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	Chairperson.
Extensive	Burning permits required from January 1 through May 31 whenever the ground is not snow covered.
Intensive	Burning permits required all year long whenever the ground is not snow covered.

Procedures for specific locations

A large amount of information on the DNR forest fire program is available on the DNR web site. A useful entry point is:

<http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/forestry/fire/index.htm>.

This web page provides a county-level map of the whole state. By clicking on an appropriate area one can determine how that area is regulated and obtain telephone numbers and other information.

It is strongly recommended that the DNR web site be accessed to obtain specific information on a particular county or part of a county. If the area to be burned is within one of the Dispatch Groups, the web site will give telephone numbers where further information can be obtained.

Some personal experiences

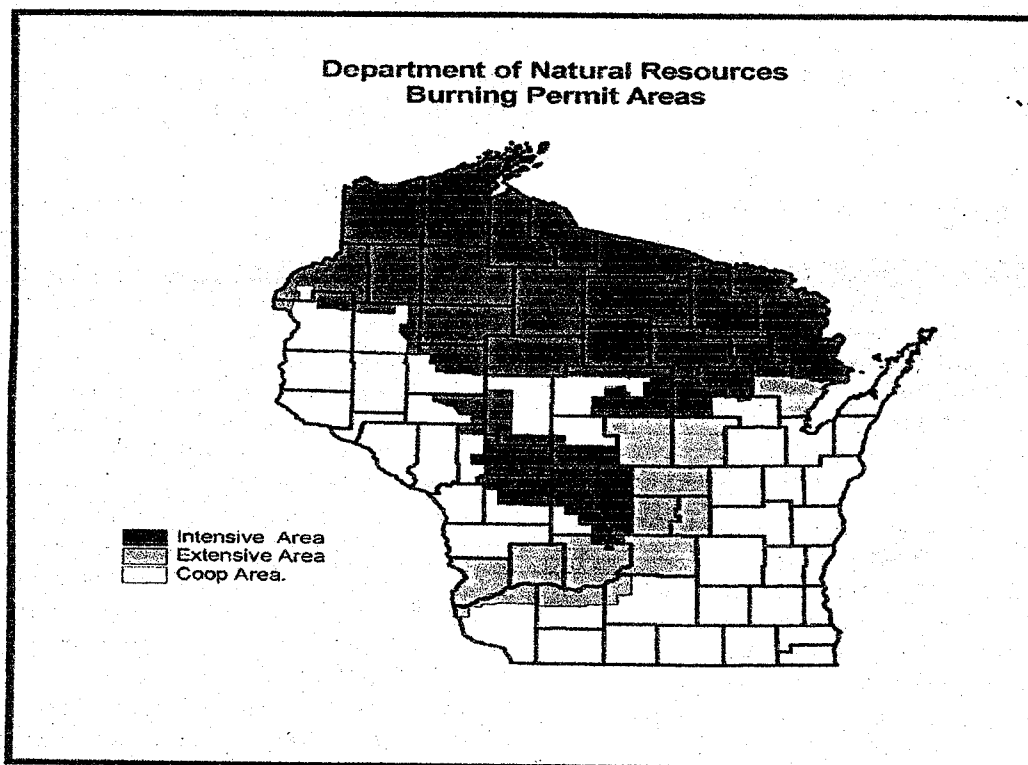
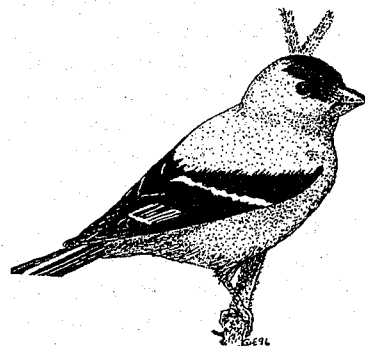
For the past six years the Prairie Enthusiasts have been helping me and my wife carry out controlled burns on the Pleasant Valley Conservancy, a prairie and oak savanna property that we manage. This Conservancy is located in northwestern Dane County, in the Town of Vermont. Although most of Dane County is in a cooperative area where DNR permits are not required, the Town of Vermont falls just inside the Dodgeville Management Dispatch Group, in the Spring Green FRU. We are able to obtain a permit to burn after 6:00 PM from one of the local fire wardens. However, under many situations, burning after 6:00 PM is undesirable. By that time humidity has often increased, and wind may be almost nonexistent. What we often need is a daytime permit, especially for the oak savanna areas.

Daytime permits in our area are issued by the DNR forester at Spring Green. Although we have found the personnel uniformly helpful, obtaining permits often presents problems. A daytime permit is only issued for a specific day, and we must state ahead of time what day that will be. Weather being variable, it is difficult to know very far ahead whether conditions will be favorable for a burn. Because Prairie Enthusiast daytime burns are almost always on weekends, this means that we must try to predict by late Thursday or early Friday whether a burn can be carried out on the upcoming weekend. We cannot attempt to recruit volunteers until we know that we will get the permit, but the forester cannot issue the permit until it is certain that the weather conditions are going to be acceptable.

So far, we have been lucky, but each spring there is a nerve-racking period while we attempt to organize everything necessary. Interestingly, if our property were four miles east or four miles south, we would be out of the Dodgeville District and would be able to burn without any permit at all.

(I would like to acknowledge the invaluable assistance in preparing this article from Blair Anderson of the Spring Green Fire Management Unit and Richard

S. Wojciak, a Land and Forestry Team Leader based in Dodgeville.)



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

COULEE REGION CHAPTER		
MEETINGS		
Tue.	Aug 20	Chapter board meeting at 6pm, at the La Crosse main library, 800 Main St.
Sat.	Sep.7	Chapter board meeting at 10am, UW La Crosse, Cartwright Center.
EVENTS		
Sat.	Jun.8.	Chapter exhibit participation at GardenFest, La Crosse WI. At the Octoberfest grounds, at the far west end of La Crosse Drive, 9am to 5pm.
Sun.	Jun. 9	As above, from 10am to 4pm.
Sun.	Jun 30	Chapter picnic at Lloyd and Mary Lee Croatts, 11am pot luck, see details in chapter news.
Tue.	Jul. 9	Chapter exhibit participation at Farm Progress Days, Gotham, WI. 8:30am to 4:30pm. Call 414-421-5928 or 608-634-2110 to volunteer.
Wed	Jul 10	As above.
Thu.	Jul.11	As above.
SOUTHWEST CHAPTER		
MEETINGS		
Sun.	Jul. 21	Meeting places for chapter meetings will be announced by flyer in early July. Watch your mailbox.
Sun.	Aug.18	TBD
Sun.	Sep.15	TBD
EVENTS		
Sat.	Jul. 6	Work party at Bush Clover Prairie at 10am. Call Gary Eldred at 608-375-5271 for details.
Sun.	Jul.14	Work party at Heather's Prairie at 10am. Call Gary Adams at 608-624-5797 for details.
Sat.	Aug.10	Work party at Bush Clover Prairie at 10am. Call Gary Eldred at 608-375-5271 for details.
Sat.	Aug.24	Work party at Heather's Prairie at 10am. Call Gary Adams at 608-624-5797 for details.
PRAIRIE BLUFF CHAPTER		
MEETINGS		
Tue.	Jul. 2	Chapter meeting at Magnolia Bluff upper Picnic Area at 7pm. From Evansville east on Hwy. 59 .turn south just before the junction with Hwy. 104 on Croak Rd. Entrance is a quarter mile on east side. From west and south, turn right just past the junction of Hwy's

		59/1104 on Finneran Rd (east) then north on Croak Rd (1 st left) half mile to entrance on east side. (Rock County Park.)
Tue.	Aug.6	Chapter meeting at Brigg's Wetland in Rock County at 7pm. From the west, (Monroe area) Hwy's 11/81 east, then Hwy 81 southeast to Newark/Beloit Rd (left-east) then left (north) on Brosteum Rd to the intersection with Cleophas Rd. (watch for sign).
Tue.	Sep.3	Chapter meeting at Brewster's Café and Cheese, 210 W. Water Street, Shullsburg, at 6:30pm.
PRAIRIE SMOKE CHAPTER		
EVENTS		
Mon.	Jul. 1	Savanna Spring Nature Area Potluck and Workday at Chatfield High School Hwy 52 at 6pm Bring pruners/loppers if you own one (extras will be available). Bring dish/food item to pass. Wear long pants and have a long sleeve shirt available. Backup day is Tues. 7/2/02 at 6pm. Coordinator is Tim Gossman (507) 867-3129 or pinelily@msn.com.
Tue.	Jul. 9	Pin Oak Scientific and Natural Area Prairie Walk with a little work cutting wild parsnip, from 7pm to 9pm. Wear waterproof boots, long pants and long sleeve. 4 miles SW of Chatfield on Cty Rd. 5. then .05mi S on gravel road. Backup day is Thursday, 7/11/02 at 7pm. Coordinator is Tim Gossman (507) 867-3129 or pinelily@msn.com.
Mon. & Sat	Jul 8 & 13	Northern Hills Nature Area/City Park mornings to attack the invasive weeds. Help restore this beautiful important butterfly habitat in NW Rochester. Coordinator is Sue Wieseler (507) 289-3033, cell (507) 358-2311. Wear long pants and long sleeved shirt. May bring pruners/loppers if you have a pair.
Sun.	Jul. 14	Tour the Mueller's prairie remnant/restoration with picnic to follow 13134 Mill Creek Rd, Chatfield, at 5pm. Andrea & Dan Mueller (507) 867-9229 or andreasaysgonative@att.net.

Sun.,	Jul. 28	Pin Oak Scientific and Natural Area Prairie Walk hoping to spot the Purple Fringed Orchid. If you're from Rochester meet at RCTC parking lot East at 3pm or meet at 3:30pm at the SNA 4 miles SW of Chatfield on Cty Rd. 5. then .05mi S on gravel rd. Joel Dunnette (507) 365-8091. Wear waterproof boots.
Sat.,	Aug. 10	Prairie Days at Chester Woods County Park. Prairie walks are scheduled throughout the day – specifics TBA. Contact Andrea Mueller for more info (507) 867-9229, andreasaysgonative@att.net.
Sat.,	Aug. 18	Savanna Spring Nature Area Walk at Chatfield High School Hwy 52 at 5pm. Contact is Tim Gossman (507) 867-3129 or pinelily@msn.com.
Sat.,	Aug. 24	Northern Hills Park Prairie Walk in NW Rochester at 5pm. See meadow blazing stars surrounded by monarchs. Contact is Sue Wieseler (507) 289-3033 or cell (507) 358-2311.

COULEE REGION CHAPTER

Chapter Picnic

The Coulee Region Chapter Annual picnic will be held Sunday, June 30, 2002 at the prairie shed of Lloyd and Mary Lee Croatt. Their prairie is located midway between Avalanche and Bloomingdale on CTH S in Vernon County. Their fire number is S2993. The party will begin with a hike to the prairie/savanna and a tour of the prairie plantings. The hike is scheduled for 11am, with the picnic following. Meat and drinks will be provided, please bring a dish to pass.

Spring Burn Season

Some burns on chapter prairies were successful, some partially successful, due to weather conditions. Regardless, volunteers worked hard and responded quickly. At Sugar Creek Bible Camp, one of our community projects and a high quality site for restoration, our steward, Armund Bartz, conducted a very successful burn. This is the start of our ten year agreement with the camp. A previous examination of this goat prairie/oak savanna site indicates it has several listed plant and animal species. It is becoming clear to me that our chapter is becoming very involved with protection and restoration. We will continue to reshape the current thinking of society and strive to save our natural systems.

Fun Burn

By Mary Lee Croatt

What a spring! How is it that we were able to accomplish burning seven sites on our property this season? It continues to mystify me. We had more than our usual commitments elsewhere.

Two different times this season some of our Prairie Enthusiast friends worked with us. I participated in the last burn. That time was truly fun for me.

Anyone watching me would wonder: Fun? My eyes burned from the smoke. Snot ran from my nose from inhaling smoke. My legs ached from climbing up and down the steep incline. My skin was burning from the radiant heat. My body was sweaty and fatigued from the effort. Fun? Fun?? Fun??? How could this ever be fun? Was something in the atmosphere? Was it that our bodies were so limber from the two strenuous burns we did yesterday on Byron Annis's property?

The fun was having Diane Hanson and Byron share in the workload. Fun was learning more about their lives apart from land restoration. Fun was having the expertise of Greg Nessler bolster our confidence. Fun was hearing Greg and Lloyd Croatt communicate on walkie talkies sharing the bandwidth with two fishermen in the area.

Fun was a spent body relaxed after a good work out. Fun was sitting in lawn chairs in shade afterwards swilling a cold beer and munching snacks. Fun was replaying the work party efforts and laughing over past stories of our adventures. Fun was the satisfaction of a burn done well. Fun was smelling smoky, looking sooty, and anticipating a hot tub of suds to soften sore feet and achy muscles.

In reflecting on this experience, I think that the real fun was the camaraderie of working with willing, like-minded volunteers. Working in concert toward a common good for our Mother Earth was true satisfaction. In the vernacular of our young friends we could sum it up their way: "How fun is that?" "Totally."

EMPIRE-SAUK CHAPTER

Another successful burn season

Even with less than cooperative weather at times, the Empire-Sauk chapter still managed to have a very successful spring burn season, thanks to our growing pool of volunteers. The Blufflands Project (a joint effort between TPE Empire-Sauk and the Aldo Leopold Foundation) alone accomplished 18 burns totaling 266 acres. This was done with the help of only 25 volunteers, but they put in over 400 hours.

In addition to the Blufflands Project, the chapter completed another 23 burns totaling 185 acres. These latter burns were accomplished with the help of 7 phone-tree volunteers and 104 burn volunteers! The

latter group put in 234 person/burn events. The total effort came to 710 volunteer hours. This doubled last year's participation. Thank you to all 104 volunteers for keeping our prairie and savanna heritage alive and well, but a special thank you goes to a stalwart core of burn volunteers who always seem to be there. Rich Henderson, Richard Oberle, Karen Agee, Scott Fulton and Pat Handrick helped on at least 10 burns each. Scott Sauer, Susan Slapnick, Jan Ketelle, Jerry Bartelt, Tom Brock, Kathie Brock, Victoria Dulaney, Paul Michler and Willis Brown helped on 5 to 9 burns each.

This spring TPE and Dane County Parks volunteers conducted another cooperative burn at Walking Iron County Park oak barrens and sand prairies. Our chapter also helped the Verona Area High School, the Cross Plains Elementary, and the West Middleton Elementary burn their prairie restorations.

Nominations Sought for Chapter Treasurer

Nominations are being sought to fill the treasurer's and chapter vice-president positions. These are two-year terms. Elections will be held at the general meeting of the membership on the evening of July 18 (see above/below). If you wish to serve or nominate someone, please attend the meeting or contact Rich Henderson, 608-845-7065.

Our chapter is very much in need of someone to step forward and take on the duties of treasurer. Currently this position carries no responsibilities of writing or making deposits. The central TPE treasurer currently does that for our chapter. The next chapter treasurer may take on these duties if he or she wishes to do so, and the chapter board approves. The primary duties of chapter treasurer include maintaining our chapter's financial records by project area, approving reimbursements and payments of invoices and forwarding them on to the central TPE treasurer, checking statements from the TPE treasurer against chapter records, and providing reports to the chapter board on the status of our finances.

Field Trip Ideas? If you have ideas for field trip destinations, topics, leaders (including yourself), contact our chapter's field trip coordinator Mark Martin (608-635-4160). Trips can be weekend days or weekday evenings. They can be near or far. What do you wish to see? Let Mark know.

Gifts and Donations are Flowing in – Thank You!

In the past three months, the Empire-Sauk Chapter has received \$2,000 worth of cash and donated items. This has been a great Spring for our chapter. We received \$500 from the CUNA Mutual Group Foundation's Dollars for Doers Program. This is a program where employees of CUNA Mutual are recognized for the time they volunteer to non-profit organizations that benefit the local community. If they

put in 50 or more volunteer hours a year and submit a request, the non-profit becomes eligible for a \$500 grant. We owe TPE member Richard Oberle for this first of what we hope will be many grants to come from this generous program. Pat Handrick also works for CUNA and has recently submitted another request for his many hours of volunteer work with TPE. Keep your fingers crossed. Thank you Richard, Pat and the CUNA Mutual Group Foundation.

This spring the Dane County Conservation League awarded \$500 to the Empire-Sauk Chapter. The funds come from an annual special raffle DCCL holds at their spring banquet. The proceeds go to groups doing habitat restoration work in Dane County. They also gave us two bluebird houses. Thank you to DCCL for recognizing TPE and supporting our mission, and to Nancy Schlimgen and Rich Lampe for nominating TPE for this award.

Many TPE members also came forward with donations this spring. Thank you to the following supporters:

- Tom and Kathie Brock for donating 10 sets of high quality padded belts and shoulder straps for backpack water cans. Burn volunteers truly appreciated those this spring.
- Richard Oberle for donating 4 sets of backpack straps and belts, a Nomex suit and \$100 towards our new trailer.
- Jon and Peggy Traver for donating \$200 for use on burn equipment maintenance in honor of Wayne Pauly and all he does for prairie restoration and management.
- John and Olive Thomson for donating \$100 for use on land management.
- Scott Sauer for donating two MicroTalk radios for use on burns.

Rich Henderson, Chapter President

New Trailer

Thanks to the leg work of Richard Oberle, our chapter now owns a new trailer. This will be used for transporting tractors and mowers to sites where the need for mowing parsnip, sweet clover, brush, etc. is on a scale too large for our walk-behind mower. In the past, several generous TPE members have offered the use of their tractors, but none of them had trailers for getting the equipment to the sites. This problem has now been solved! Anyone wishing to donate to the purchase of this trailer may send a check, made out to TPE Empire-Sauk Chapter, to chapter treasurer Jim Welsh, 170 Dunning Street, Madison, WI 53704.

Help Needed on Summer Work Parties

Looking for some exercise this summer? There are prairie remnants out there in need of assistance. Main summer activities include tree girdling and the cutting/pulling of wild parsnip and sweet clover. Be on

the lookout for a work party flier in late June for July/August activities.

There will also be a couple opportunities to help in late June. They are (1) a brush clearing work party at Reddeman Ledge Prairie in southern Columbia County on Saturday, June 22, 9:00-Noon work with potluck at noon at the house; contact Meagan Yost (608-635-7181); and (2) tree girdling at Mazomanie School Section Bluff to liberate 200 year old bur oaks from upstart competition; contact Rich Henderson (608-845-7065).

Anyone wishing to workout with a walk-behind exercise brush-mower should contact Rich Henderson (608-845-7065). There is no charge for training lessons, and there are ample opportunities for gaining experience.

Summer Seed Collecting

Not all prairie seed ripens in the fall. Some prairie plants start setting seed in late June, while others come into seed in July or early August. Unfortunately, collecting seed of these species is a more tedious and time-consuming task than fall seed collecting. Thus, these species are often not included in restorations.

We wish to avoid this oversight on our chapter projects. Therefore, volunteers are needed to collect seed of early species at several TPE sites where we are restoring prairie next to remnants. This collecting requires frequent site visits and sometimes even collecting on hands and knees. No experience needed. Training will be provided. Contact Rich Henderson (608-845-7065). The locations are near Cambridge, Waunakee and south of Blue Mounds. Wages are low, but the knowledge and satisfaction gained are invaluable.

Volunteer Needed for Dane County Farmers Market

Please contact Scott Sauer at 608-273-0904 if you are interested in helping the chapter develop a presence at the Dane County Farmer's Market.

PRAIRIE BLUFF CHAPTER

PBC Member of the Year Award

John Ochsner has been an enthusiastic member of TPE since the inception of the parent association and became a key figure in our local chapter. John has worked on the acquisition and maintenance of several prairie remnants and was a key figure in the development of the Abraham Lincoln School Prairie in Monroe. Spring will find him working on the chapter fire crew with chapter members and volunteers. John is the steward of the UW Madison Abraham's Woods; is leader of the annual Pasque Flower Hike; organizes tours of historical sites and "champion trees" in southern Wisconsin; and is host of the popular Jordan Prairie

Potluck in the Spring. John was chosen as PBC member of the year and the award was to be presented at the TPE banquet in La Crosse. Due to the flu bug and some unpredictable weather, John and his best friend Jennifer Salt, were unable to make the conference and banquet. The award was presented at the April PBC monthly meeting.

The inscription reads: Thank You... John Ochsner... for your continued enthusiasm, dedication and commitment to the mission of The Prairie Enthusiasts and the Prairie Bluff Chapter. The Certificate of Appreciation was presented by Robert Baller, PBC Chairperson.

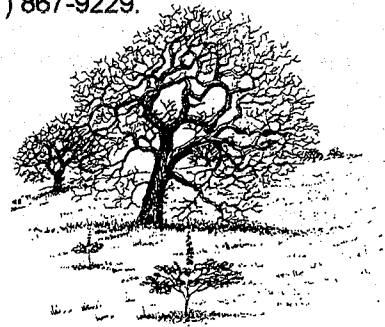
PRAIRIE SMOKE CHAPTER

Getting off the Ground

The first scheduled event for this new chapter was a talk from Kathy Bolin in March called *From Buffalo Breath to the Bread Basket of the World*. It was like story time for adults as she poetically described the history of the tallgrass prairie, giving us all a greater appreciation for this now endangered ecosystem. Some of Kathy's presentation included descriptions of the sod houses in which the settlers survived on the prairie, how the bison were more than just a food source to Native Americans and what led to their sorrowful fate. After her talk we were able to mingle around our "Information Stations" to offer and discuss different aspects of prairie and prairie management. The *Burn Information Station* seemed to be the popular site with many newcomers interesting in burning their native or planted prairies. Thanks to Greg Munson and his staff, we were able to hold this meeting at Quarry Hill Nature Center in Rochester that accommodated us perfectly.

Opportunity Knocks

Our chapter was asked by the DNR to host the state-wide Prairie Day on August 10th this year for SE Minnesota. Since the desired impact of Prairie Day is "to have large numbers of people experience prairies in such a way as to create a positive, lasting impression of the need to protect this resource and its significance to the local community," how could we pass this up? There will be some state-wide promotion such as the MN Explorer and DNR publications. We have made the commitment to have Prairie Day at Chester Woods County Park and have started the planning process. We welcome anyone from the chapter to participate in the planning/organization of Prairie Day – just call Andrea Mueller at (507) 867-9229.



THE PRAIRIE ENTHUSIASTS MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____ County _____
 Phone _____ e-mail _____

PREFERRED CHAPTER AFFILIATION (please check one)

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ General (member at large)
☐ Coulee Region Chapter
Buffalo, Jackson, La Crosse, Monroe,
Trempealeau, Vernon (WI) Houston,
Winona (MN).
☐ Empire-Sauk Chapter
Columbia, Dane and Sauk
☐ Northwest Illinois Chapter
Carroll, Jo Davies and Stephenson
☐ Prairie Bluff Chapter
Green, Lafayette and Rock
☐ Prairie Smoke Chapter (SE MN)
Fillmore, Dodge, Mower, Olmsted, Steele,
and Wabasha. | ☐ Southeast Wisconsin Chapter (pending)
Dodge, Jefferson, Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine,
Sheboygan, Walworth, Washington and Waukesha
☐ Southwest Wisconsin Chapter
Crawford, Grant, Iowa and Richland
☐ West Central Chapter
Barron, Chippewa, Dunn, Eau Claire, Pepin,
Pierce, Polk, and St. Croix (WI) and Washington (MN)
☐ Winnebago Land Chapter (EC WI)
Calumet, Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Outagamie, Waupaca,
Waushara, Winnebago. |
|---|---|

Membership Level

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| ☐ \$10 Student
☐ \$20 Individual | ☐ \$30 Family
☐ \$75 Sustaining
☐ \$200 Blazing Star | ☐ \$1,000 Individual Life |
|---|---|--|
- ☐ Seed Collecting/Planting
☐ Stewardship (Brush Cutting/Burning)
☐ Staffing Displays/Speakers Bureau
- ☐ Fund Raising/Grant Writing
☐ Social Activities (banquet/picnics)
☐ Newsletters/Articles

Can we provide your name to other Prairie
 Enthusiasts in your area? Y / N

Can we provide your name to other
 conservation organizations? Y / N

I wish to help with (please check
 off):

- ☐ Plant/Animal Inventories
☐ Landowner Contacts
☐ Field Trips
☐ Educational materials

Mail and Make Check Payable to: The Prairie Enthusiasts, PO Box 112, Boscobel, WI 53805

(PRAIRIE SMOKE CHAPTER NEWS CONT.)

Thank you Tom Ryan of Oxbow Park

With many newcomers interested in burning their prairie, our burn seminar conducted by Tom Ryan in April was just right for the 20 attendees. Tom offered a great introduction to burning, instilling a healthy respect for fire, and explained some the burn history of Chester Woods and Oxbow parks. Now we just need the weather to be more cooperative during the next burn season so we can get more experience.

Burn Season has mixed success

Yes, weather is always unpredictable and it always seems like an unusual season, but this year, having the best prairie burn weather in January and February just seems wrong. The chapter's spring burn season began

on the Mueller's prairie remnant in February. It presented only one problem, a fiery oak, which in the end was safely and thoroughly extinguished. During an April burn, the owner had better than textbook fire breaks. That made a great demonstration for the local fire department, which insisted on being within 100 yards of the property with over 2000 gallons of water in waiting. Weekend burning was disappointing since most weekends consisted of uncooperative weather. We were hoping that more people who wanted experience would have opportunity to participate on a weekend, but it didn't happen. We'll have to hope for some good weekend fall burns.

THE PRAIRIE ENTHUSIASTS
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Share your Talents and Time

In a letter to the editor in the last issue of *The Prairie Promoter*, Tanis Cuff questioned the lack of action on the part of The Prairie Enthusiasts when it came to public education. The response was sound and fair, and both articles pointed out the limits of an all-volunteer organization. Many of the "career" volunteers find themselves at the end of their ability to contribute, yet more needs to be done if TPE is to grow and prosper in pursuit of its mission. The volunteer needs of TPE extend far beyond education and stewardship. At both the chapter and organizational levels, there is a constant need for people to lend us their various talents and abilities. Among these needs are: Elected Officers, (President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary); people for Education and landowner contacts; specialists in finance, money management, fund raising and membership development and Maintenance. If you have talent and time to share, please contact your chapter representative listed on page two of this newsletter or to donate time to the main organization, contact Scott Sauer at 273-0904.

WAYS OF GIVING TO TPE

In addition to accepting traditional monetary gifts, The Prairie Enthusiasts can also accept gifts of stock, real estate, easements, equipment and planned gifts through estate planning. Gifts of stock are an excellent way to make a charitable gift without suffering the burden of capital gain taxes, and planned giving enables you to see the legacy of conservation embodied in The Prairie Enthusiasts continue into the future. Please contact your local Chapter representatives or Treasurer Kathy Henderson (608-845-7065) for details and to make arrangements.

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