

Lakeshore Nature Preserve Current Projects - Spring 2009

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All Over the Preserve

In addition to the specific projects described below, staff and volunteers will be removing weeds and invasive shrubs all over the Preserve from April to October.

East Lakeshore Path

- We are continuing to remove honeysuckle and buckthorn along the shoreline to open views of the lake and to provide more light. The increased light will help new seedlings and existing ground layer plants grow and hold the soil.
- In situations where it is not appropriate to remove all the buckthorn, we are cutting all the fruiting branches to stop seed production, reduce the seed bank, and slow the spread of this invasive shrub. In 2008 we removed fruiting branches from the Center for Limnology to Lot 34. This year we will continue past Lot 34.
- A new stormwater infiltration basin has been constructed below Lot 34. We will be seeding it with grasses and wild flowers.
- There is a serious erosion channel on the shoreline below this basin. We will be repairing it by removing buckthorn and installing erosion control fabric and plants.
- We will be caring for plants and weeding the wooded area below Lot 34 and the planting between the infiltration basin and the sidewalk.
- We are implementing small erosion interventions with fabrics and seeding mixes along the lakeshore side of the path. Different control devices are selected according to whether the slope will be impacted by ice is intended to block water from the path above or protect the slope itself. These are minor interventions and the specific number and locations for the year have not yet been selected.

Muir Woods

- We will maintain trails, new plantings, and add plants to the southern edge of the woods.
- We will maintain erosion check dams installed by students.

Willow Creek Woods Savanna Project

- This is an important Native American archaeological site and our plan is to gradually return it to a savanna-like condition over the next three years.
- Grounds Department staff and Preserve staff and students completed the removals of all undesirable vegetation in the west section in 2008, exposing the old oaks to full sun and seeding the exposed soil with vegetation we can mow. **On April 21 we will have an EARTH DAY event planting prairie and savanna plants on this section.**
- The Grounds Department has been removing understory plants and hazard trees which have been encroaching on the large oak and hickory trees of the east section. These have created so much shade that there is much bare ground, leading to erosion. The remaining removals will be phased over a two year period. Only a few oak and hickory trees will then remain.

- We will be implementing erosion controls and planting ground layer species appropriate to the conditions this spring and over the next two years as light levels to the ground level are increased.

Central Lakeshore Path shoreline and Triangle Marsh

- We will care for plantings installed fall 2008, control reed canary grass in planted areas, reduce seed production of reed canary grass along the path and around the Triangle Marsh by mowing, reduce cattail growth in the Triangle Marsh by cutting stems below the water level, weed undesirable plants, control buckthorn resurgence where we have removed it along the path.
- **On April 22 we will have an EARTH DAY event planting wildflowers between Willow Creek and Picnic Point.**
- We will select one section of shoreline to improve erosion with establishment of erosion materials and plantings.

Picnic Point

Area near the entrance

- Last year we removed extensive amounts of invasive buckthorn and reed canary grass and opened up views of the lake and the opposite shore. We also added wildflowers and other low growing plants. We will be monitoring this area and following up with care of the new plants and mowing periodically to control buckthorn resprouts. Observation of the success of mowing to eventually kill the buckthorns by depletion of energy will help us develop “grazing” practices for more herbicide free buckthorn control on other sites.
- We will begin reclamation into the woods of the eroded trails north of the lawn by filling the first one with wood chips.

Area close to the the tip

- In other parts of the Preserve, we have found that clearing buckthorn lets in light and encourages ground layer plants, sometimes including a spontaneous reemergence of wildflowers and sedges (although they are often accompanied by garlic mustard). We will be clearing dense buckthorn and monitoring what comes up as part of the preparation for developing a plan for the tip of the Point.

NW section of Bill's Woods (West of the Grounds berm and south of the Eagle Heights Community Gardens and stretching to Lake Mendota Drive)

- This area has been overrun by undesirable trees as well as long term unauthorized debris and runoff from surrounding use areas. We will be making the boundaries between the Physical Plant storage area and the woodland more obvious. We will be repeatedly mowing the grassy area below the Garden compost pile. This area is to become a grassy site for infiltration of nutrients to keep them from flowing into the lake. We will continue to remove undesirable trees over the next few years as tree removal resources become available.
- In future years as we increase light levels by removal of Norway Maples we will develop settling basins with wetland plants in the storm water channel above the bicycle path.

Frautschi Point

- In 2008 we cleared invasive shrubs and planted native wildflowers between the lake and the Lakeshore Path west of the Jackson fire place. We will continue to weed these sections and care for these new plants
- In the triangle area at the lake end of the asphalt trail, we will clear undesirable vegetation from around a young red oak tree. We will monitor the site for emergence of desirable plants in the seed bank before adding new plants.
- Near the juncture of the main entrance path and the Big Oak Trail we will be experimenting with success over time of weed wrenching and mowing (grazing) of buckthorn. After removal some plots will be prepared for seeding and others left without new plantings so that we can monitor for the possible reemergence of native wildflowers.
- In the areas southeast and west of the Big Oak of the Big Oak trail we will begin new woodland thicket and future canopy by planting shrubs and oak trees purchased through the Carter Denniston fund.
- We will continue weed control and care of new plants in the newly opened cedar opening and the storm water gully.
- We will define mowing zones for pedestrian routes and fire control routes between Frautschi Point and the prairie and Second Point Woods and the prairie.

Tent Colony Woods

- We will be planting red oaks, native shrubs, and wildflowers in some of the areas where we removed buckthorn and other undesirable vegetation over the winter .
- Some of the clearing last year was done using weed wrenches and some was done by cutting and treating with herbicide. We will be obtaining data concerning the relative effectiveness of the two methods and the possible reemergence of native plants.
- We will be seeding and stabilizing open areas to protect soils from erosion. Some areas will also be stabilized with erosion matting.
- We will weed and care for planting areas from 2007 and 2008 on the east end of Tent Colony Woods.
- We will prune for filtered views of the lake and select areas for replacement of undesirable vegetation with native shrubs next year to keep people from approaching the high shoreline edge and still open views, increase vegetation for erosion control.

Raymer's Cove

- Volunteers have worked hard here weeding and planting to reestablish a native plant community. However, users have ignored polite signs and rope fencing and walked where they were asked not to. This has destroyed plants and created erosion channels. We will be putting up larger barriers and again repairing the slope.