

Lakeshore Nature Preserve Committee
Monday April 15, 2016
9:00-10:30AM
30 N. Mills St., 4th floor
Approved MINUTES

Present

David Drake, Sara Hotchkiss, Donna Paulnock, Anne Pearce, Alan Turnquist, Mattie Urrutia

Also Present

Janet Batzli (Biocore), Kennedy Gilchrist (Friends), Adam Gundlach (Preserve), Seth McGee (Biocore), Bryn Scriver (Preserve), Margaret Tennessen (FP&M), Laura Wyatt (Preserve)

Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes from March 14, 2016 was made by Sara Hotchkiss and seconded by Donna Paulnock. The motion was approved with one abstention.

Announcements

Kennedy Gilchrist reported a great turnout for the UW Science Expeditions field trip at Picnic Point on April 3. They created an exploration booklet and staffed 4 exploratory stations along the path. Laura Wyatt expressed her enthusiasm for the event that would not have been possible without the Friends of the Preserve.

Introductions

David Drake introduced Margaret Tennessen, Deputy Associate Vice Chancellor for Facilities Planning & Management, who thanked the members of the Preserve Committee for the time and energy they put into the Preserve.

Biocore Prairie Restoration Project Report presentation (Janet Batzli and Seth McGee)

Janet Batzli is the Associate Director of the Biocore Program and Seth McGee is the Biocore Lab Manager; together they lead the Biocore Prairie Restoration Project. The Biocore Prairie Restoration Project Report (March 21, 2016) provides the 2014-2015 status for the Project and plans for 2016.

Biocore is a four semester honors biology program. Most students start as sophomores and come from departments all over campus. The students meet at Biocore Prairie on the very first day of class for the Evolution, Ecology and Genetics section. Batzli introduces the Preserve to the students as the, “biggest and best classroom at the UW”.

The project goals are: 1) ecological education; 2) support restoration as an outdoor living laboratory; 3) engage in ecological research and stewardship; 4) engage and collaborate with campus and community partners through education, outreach, and research.

Outside of class undergraduates can engage in mentored research projects with faculty and staff and each summer Biocore employs 5-7 students for a summer prairie crew to weed, plant, and support research projects.

On December 11, 2015 the “west inset” section of the prairie was seeded with a mix of 73 prairie species. Students have been involved in growing an additional 40 conservative species (including 15 threatened and endangered species) in the D.C. Smith greenhouses to supplement the seeding.

The south central area is the only area of the prairie left to be planted. This area was used as a dump in the mid-1990s for a large floating bog from Lake Mendota. Canada thistle and other weeds are a problem. To

combat weeds and prepare the site for planting, Biocore has tested reverse fertilization by planting and harvesting oats, herbicide till and no-till treatments, and mowing to prevent seed production.

Biocore and Preserve staff collaborate on planning prescribed burns as well as coordinating research requests that utilize the prairie. Staff share mowing equipment and volunteer and intern labor.

Drake was impressed to find out how well developed the Biocore Prairie curriculum was. He suggested that Biocore contact UW Communications science writer Kelly Tyrrell to do a story.

Janet shared an idea of incorporating the Preserve in the May 2017 teaching symposium sponsored by the Teaching Academy of the University of Wisconsin-Madison which would acquaint faculty and staff to the Preserve as a teaching/learning resource.

Staff Reports

1. Director Report

See Preserve Staff Reports – April 15, 2016

2. Program Manager Report (Laura Wyatt)

See Preserve Staff Reports – April 15, 2016

There is still time to submit comments on the Draft Campus Master Plan to Phil Townsend. He will compile the comments and bring them to the May meeting for review.

Five Student Engagement Grants have been awarded for 2016:

Exploring the Wisconsin Prairie Ecosystem: Studying Cold Tolerance of Forbs
Emily Nettesheim; \$600.00

Survival and Habitat Use of Eastern Gray Squirrels in an Urban Preserve
Jonathan N. Pauli; \$980.00

Estimating survival, dispersal, and habitat use of Common Yellowthroats and Song Sparrows in Biocore Prairie at the University of Wisconsin-Madison
Matt Hayes and Mara McDonald; \$600.00

Exploring Seasonal Yeast Biodiversity in the Lakeshore Nature Preserve
Martin Jarzyna; \$1,000.00

Urban Canid Use of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve
David Drake; \$1,000.00

3. Capital Projects Report

See Preserve Staff Reports – April 15, 2016

4. Field Activities Report (Adam Gundlach)

See Preserve Staff Reports –April 15, 2016

5. Volunteers and Outreach Report (Bryn Scriver)

See Preserve Staff Reports –April 15, 2016

Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve report (Will Waller)

Waller not present; no report.

Review of draft policy proposal regarding slacklining and hammocks in the Preserve (Laura Wyatt)

We have 2 concerns with slacklining and hammock use in the Preserve; 1) as a nature preserve we try to maintain dead trees as habitat for wildlife and these trees are not appropriate for tying onto, 2) the Grounds Department does not allow either activity to prevent injury to trees, especially oaks and elms that are susceptible to disease transmission during the growing season.

Wyatt acknowledged that we have no way of enforcing a ban on these activities within the Preserve. However we would post the policy on the Preserve website and kiosks and speak to people as we see it happening.

A suggestion was made to add rope swings to the policy.

The policy will be brought back to the May meeting for discussion and approval.

Adjournment

Submitted by Bryn Scriver, Preserve Outreach Specialist