

# UW-Madison Lakeshore Nature Preserve 2021 Work Plan – Approved 6-month status update -September 2021

The following document provides a first 6-month status update on the 2021 Lakeshore Nature Preserve Work Plan (March 1, 2021 – February 28, 2022) facilitated by our professional staff within Facilities Planning & Management. This is not an exhaustive list of accomplishments but does provide a general understanding of the completed work in the past 6 months. The initiatives shown in the Work Plan are also not prioritized, understanding that Preserve staff will work on the initiatives throughout the year with the ultimate goal to complete as much of the work as possible based on available staff and financial resources. The Work Plan, annually reviewed by Preserve staff and approved by the Lakeshore Nature Preserve Committee, provides guidance on priorities and initiatives for the year ahead.

## 1) LAND MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

- Continue to use prescribed fire across a variety of sites and seasons to achieve management objectives and promote diverse natural communities. Continue to recruit individuals with wildland fire training to expand prescribed fire capacity to achieve management objectives.
  - **Status** - *Worked with Preserve staff, contractor crews, and student volunteers during the spring '21 season to complete burns of Raymer's Cove prairie planting, Eagle Heights Woods Mounds unit, Frautschi Point 2<sup>nd</sup> Oak unit, portions of Biocore prairie, multiple units on Picnic Point, and Willow Creek savanna.*
- Bill's Woods – Complete remaining invasive brush removal in western section, following up on prior work by AmeriCorps NCCC.
  - **Status** - *No activity.*
- Limnology garden – (Pending additional development) - Replant the native planting bed following disturbance from construction in 2020.
  - **Status** - *Replanted with prairie partners intern crew and maintained over the summer.*
- Frautschi Point – Monitor the Second Oak project site and areas cleared of invasive brush in recent years. Control herbaceous weeds and re-sprouts. Plan and implement prescribed burns across southern portion of the site. Assess potential need for additional tree thinning in the Second Oak project site to achieve oak savanna community objectives.
  - **Status** - *First Rx burn completed April 4, 2021. Volunteers, Preserve staff and interns continue to control undesirable woody resprouts and herbaceous weeds to encourage a diverse groundlayer community.*
- Second Point Woods – In pursuit of the “Savanna Transition Zone” identified in the 2006 Master Plan, remove undesirable trees along southern border of the woods that are growing into oaks, as well as the utility path along the north side of Biocore prairie.
  - **Status** - *A few select trees were felled and removed along the Second Point Woods edge east to the Biocore overlook.*

- Biocore Prairie – Continue to support management of the prairie restoration through prescribed burn planning and implementation, assistance with invasive species control, seed collection, and routine mowing of surrounding paths and gathering spaces.
  - **Status** - *Priority areas of Biocore prairie that did not burn in fall 2020 were burned April 4. Perimeter paths and gathering spaces mowed throughout the summer.*
- Eagle Heights Woods Implementation – Continue control of invasive woody re-sprouts and herbaceous weeds across the site. Perform post-management vegetation surveys in the Central Zone. Plan and implement prescribed burns to meet management goals. Identify hazard and undesirable trees for removal. Consider and plan future management needs to inform the Master Plan process. Implement phase two of storm water control project for erosion on the Shady Lane trail segment in the SW portion of Eagle Heights Woods.
  - **Status** - *Rx burn completed in Mounds unit on April 4. Volunteer GM removal completed across the site. Spring and summer vegetation surveys completed in the Central Zone with assistance from Suzy Will-Wolf and Prairie Partners intern crew.*
- Lot 130 – Monitor condition of new plantings in former Lot 129 site and bioswale in center of Lot 130, and communicate management needs to contractor.
  - **Status** - *Good Oak Ecological Services is in year one of a two-year maintenance contract. Though weedy, a variety of native species are establishing in areas seeded in the former Lot 129 footprint.*
- Monitor and control priority non-native plant species across the Preserve (e.g., porcelain berry, Japanese hedge parsley, Canada thistle, fig buttercup, garlic mustard, buckthorn).
  - **Status** - *Worked with University Apartments staff to remove fig buttercup from turfgrass areas adjacent to the Preserve. Preserve staff, volunteers, and interns worked to remove garlic mustard from across the site. Porcelain berry control still in progress.*
- Continue follow-up management in sites cleared of invasive brush in preceding years (i.e., re-sprout control, herbaceous weed control, and sowing native seed).
  - **Status** - *Maintenance of cleared areas across the Preserve is ongoing.*
- Establish greater diversity of native vegetation through seeding and planting in sites that have been adequately prepared.
  - **Status** - *Continue to discover new species emerging from seed sown in previous years.*
- Continue to implement approved management plans and support Preserve Facilities Master Plan update process. Prioritize areas of the Preserve for the development of future management plans.
  - **Status** - *Working to support the Master Plan update process.*
- Continue to plan management activities that promote oak regeneration. Identify tree removal priorities and phasing plan. Identify outlets for productive use of wood generated during tree thinning activities. Develop a communication and outreach plan to engage stakeholders.
  - Eagle Heights Woods, Frautschi Point, Bill’s Woods, and Picnic Point
  - **Status** – *No activity.*
- Complete service agreement with UW Grounds outlining the services/locations routinely provide the Preserve, the approximate value, processes for review, and requests.
  - **Status:** *Initial discussions have occurred with UW Grounds staff and a first draft created.*

## 2) OUTREACH AND INFORMATION ACCESS

- Implement volunteer program goals and policies.
  - **Status:** *UW-Madison COVID-19 guidelines are being followed and health and safety taken into consideration for all activities.*
- Engage volunteers in meaningful land stewardship activities in support of Preserve goals.
  - **Status:** *On-going. Engaged 6-7 Volunteer Stewards in caring for the Preserve (invasive plant removal, trail monitoring). Invited additional experienced volunteers to pull garlic mustard in the spring. Resumed group volunteer activities in April and May with 2 annual Friends of the Preserve events (garlic mustard pull and spring wildflower planting). Reengaged 2 UW student groups in September (weeding, invasive woody plant removal, seed collecting.) Sixty-three volunteers donated over 824 hours to the care of the Preserve in the last 6 months.*
- Manage the Lakeshore Nature Preserve website and social media sites.
  - **Status:** *Ongoing. Staff utilizes the Preserve website and social media sites (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram) to share news, updates, and images.*
- Continue to provide site-based and virtual information through temporary work activity signs, audio trail recordings, and the website.
  - **Status:** *Ongoing. Staff updated and replaced Preserve hours and fire circles closed signs. Staff utilized temporary signage to communicate land management and restoration activities in the Frautschi Point and Second Point Woods areas. Preserve staff continues to support the Lakeshore Audio Trail and Class of 1918 Marsh Audio Field Trip and added a recording on the Future of the Marsh.*
- Continue to develop on-going partnerships with organizations and community groups, including the Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve.
  - **Status:** *Partnered with Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve to hold annual garlic mustard pulling and planting events and successfully reengaged 2 long-running UW student service events (Master of Public Health and Master of Business Administration) in September. Supported Friends self-guided tours. Successfully engaged RecWell who offered yoga and forest bathing activities for students during spring 2021 exam week. Providing location for Outdoor UW to facilitate canoe/watercraft seasonal and annual rental storage at Willows Beach.*
- Assist promotional activities as appropriate for development initiatives.
  - **Status:** *Participated in virtual Day of the Badger fundraising campaign successfully raising \$5,160 from 50 donors plus a \$4,000 challenge match from the Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve. The total raised was \$9,160.*
- Partner with UW Arboretum staff to develop ecological restoration focused WI Master Naturalist training program to train and recruit new volunteers (rescheduled to 2021)
  - **Status:** *The Preserve in cooperation with the UW-Madison Arboretum will offer an Ecological Restoration Master Naturalist Training on Oct. 1-3 and Oct. 22-24). Registration and the waitlist are full.*
- Analyze volunteer program to support strategic planning efforts.
  - **Status:** *Ongoing. Completed initial reviews.*
- Develop and implement a communications plan.
  - **Status:** *Communication plan has been completed and FP&M Communication staff will assist Preserve staff in facilitating. A new Preserve logo and tagline— UW-Madison Lakeshore Nature Preserve: Outdoor Learning is our Point have been developed.*

### 3) SITE INFRASTRUCTURE

- Maintain trails, parking areas, and work with campus partners for user safety and enjoyment of the Preserve.
  - **Status:** *Trails have received above average use during the COVID-19 restrictions. UW Grounds surfacing team has made numerous repairs on limestone paths.*
- Maintain fire circles and stock wood racks (with assistance from UW Grounds Department).
  - **Status:** *Fire circles have remained closed since mid-March 2020 due to the COVID-19 safety guidelines. Preserve staff routinely monitors and addresses unauthorized use of these sites. Open hours for the Preserve have been temporarily changed to sunrise to sunset.*
- Remove hazard trees, control erosion, and install safety signs and barriers (with assistance from UW Grounds and contractors).
  - **Status:** *Hazardous and downed trees have been removed from trails through a combined effort of Preserve staff and the UW Grounds Department crew. UW Grounds staff has also repaired erosion on the main limestone paths.*

*Monitoring of hazard trees continues to be conducted by both Preserve and UW Grounds staff. Emerald ash borer infestation has resulted in an increasing number of declining and dead ash trees and increased hazard trees requiring mitigation. A proposal for additional financial support from the University is being formulated to address increasing tree removal.*

- As defined in the Preserve Master Plan, install benches as donations allow, and maintain views through selective vegetation removal.
  - **Status:** *New bench site installed at Frautschi Point (sedge point).*
- Maintain Picnic Point pit toilets (Custodial & Plumbing Departments), continue regular trash collection (Waste and Recycling Department), and maintain hand water pump (Plumbing Department).
  - **Status:** *After a hiatus since March 2020, Custodial Services returned to maintaining the Preserve pit toilets. Waste and Recycling Department continues regular trash collection. The historic drinking water pump has been out of service since the summer of 2019 due to vandalism. Because of the extensive age of the mechanism, parts are difficult to obtain. FP&M is evaluating the ability to maintain service.*
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- Analyze visitor use data generated through the visitor counter.
  - **Status:** *Working in partnership with UW Transportation, a mobile pedestrian trail data counter installed along the path to the tip of Picnic Point is gathering information on visits. **An estimated 88,337 (one way) passes were recorded from January 1, 2021 to July 31, 2021.***

*Once we have one year of data along the path to Picnic Point, we will move the device to other Preserve locations to learn approximate visitor use throughout the Preserve.*

- Picnic Point Gate repaint and reinstall –Remove gates from site, strip paint and rust and repaint, reinstall on separate posts from the stone pillars. A mechanical opener may be added to the gate with other funds, when available.
  - **Status:** *Project is beginning in September 2021 and should be complete by January 31, 2022.*

### 4) ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

- Continued development of safety operational handbook, and training opportunities.
  - **Status:** *Ongoing and continuous improvement.*

- Provide support for the Preserve Committee and subcommittees.
  - **Status:** *Staff provided administrative support for Preserve Committee meetings and additional meetings of the “Planning and Implementation” and “Education” subcommittees held to date. Support includes coordination of schedules and setting dates of meetings, distribution of meeting announcements and support materials, agenda, and minutes preparation, maintaining the Preserve Committee webpage, and the archiving of Committee documents in the on-line Committee document library. Staff has assisted the transition of a new Preserve Committee chair and recruitment of five new members to the committee.*
  
- Assist with capital project planning.
  - **Status:** *See section 5 Capital Project Support below.*
  
- Develop annual budgets and work plans.
  - **Status:** *The budget planning process has been initiated with development of the 6-month status report for the 2021 work plan and the second public Stakeholder Meeting for FY21 has been scheduled for Tuesday, September 28, 5:00pm and will be held remotely. A call for project proposals will be published on the Preserve website with a deadline of November 1, 2021. Our budget year is shifting to July1 to June 30 to coincide with UW-Madison budget year.*
  
- Master Plan Update – Project to begin in January 2021 and tentatively be complete by March 2022. Project to include hiring a consultant team to inventory and analyze the existing conditions, discuss what healthy ecosystems can look like at the Preserve, make recommendations for improvements and help set criteria for prioritizing the recommendations. At each step along the way a public input/review session will be included. The Preserve Committee will also be fully involved in the process.
  - **Status:** *Project is beginning in September 2021 and should be completed by June 2022. Project has hired SmithGroup as the consultant team to inventory and analyze the existing conditions, discuss what healthy ecosystems can look like at the Preserve, make recommendations for improvements, and help set criteria for prioritizing the recommendations. At each step along the way a public input/review session will be included. The Preserve Committee will also be fully involved in the process.*
  
- Provide development opportunities for UW Foundation fundraising, grants, and financial support to continue building the Preserve endowment and stewardship resources. Complete a fundraising and fund development plan in conjunction with the WFAA.
  - **Status:** *The Director and Program Manager continue to work with the Wisconsin Foundation and Alumni Association to cultivate private support for the Lakeshore Nature Preserve. Information on making gifts to the Preserve is available on the Preserve website. Preserve staff continue to participate in meetings hosted by the Wisconsin Foundation and Alumni Association (WFAA) which bring together University programs to discuss current best management practices in fund development. The Preserve participated in the Day of the Badger giving event sponsored by WFAA in spring of 2021 successfully raising \$5,160 from 50 donors plus a \$4,000 challenge match from the Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve. The total raised was \$9,160.*
  - *The Stewardship Fund has received 80 donations totaling \$43,183 and the Endowment Fund has received 1 donation totaling \$5,000 since March 1, 2021.*
  
- In support of the Strategic Plan Priorities, continue process improvement initiatives with documentation of internal organizational operations, processes, procedures, and policies. This includes operational, program and land management functions.
  - **Status:** *Ongoing effort.*
  
- In support of the Strategic Plan priorities, identify partner organizations and establish a framework and implementation plan for engaging partners in work supporting the Preserve mission.
  - **Status:** *No activity.*



- CALS, FH King, GreenHouse Learning Community, Eagle Heights Community Garden – Continue to support management of agricultural units, ensure adherence to land use policies amid organizational turnover, and coordination among stakeholders through participation in the Garden Oversight Committee and routine maintenance of garden boundaries.
  - *Status: Organized a “meet and greet” gathering for leads of the various garden organizations to meet each other and discuss mutual organizational issues. Rhonda James leading community gardens through a review and planning process.*
- Manage permits and collaborate with student life and academic programs to enrich the quality of the resource.
  - *Status: Education/research permits continue to be awarded with added review of permits requests for COVID-19 related compliance. Twenty-seven permits have been awarded since March 1, 2021. Additional review and processes are being developed to ensure protection of archeologically sensitive areas.*

## 5) CAPITAL PROJECT SUPPORT (ALPHA ORDER BY NAME, NOT PRIORITIZED)

- a. Class of 1953 Central Lakeshore Path improvements – Continue regular maintenance. Monitor and control purple loosestrife population identified in 2017. (continuing project)
  - *Status: Performed maintenance activities at the Lot 60 swale site.*
- b. Class of 1955 Tent Colony Woods improvements – Continue regular maintenance with volunteer assistance from Roma Lenehan to control weeds along the Lake Mendota Drive corridor. (continuing project)
  - *Status: Roma continues to keep the Lake Mendota Drive corridor beautiful.*
- c. Eagle Heights Woods Management Plan – Continue control of invasive woody re-sprouts and herbaceous weeds across the site. Perform post-management vegetation surveys in the Central Zone. Plan and implement prescribed burns to meet management goals. Identify hazard and undesirable trees for removal. Consider and plan future management needs to inform the Master Plan process. Implement phase two of storm water control project for erosion on the Shady Lane trail segment in the SW portion of Eagle Heights Woods. (continuing project)
  - *Status: Rx burn completed in Mounds unit on April 4. Volunteer GM removal completed across the site. Spring and summer vegetation surveys completed in the Central Zone with assistance from Suzy Will-Wolf and Prairie Partners intern crew.*
- d. Frautschi Point improvements – Monitor the Second Oak project site and areas cleared of invasive brush in recent years. Control herbaceous weeds and re-sprouts. Plan and implement prescribed burns to meet management goals. Assess potential need for additional tree thinning in the Second Oak project site to achieve oak savanna community objectives.
  - *Status: First Rx burn completed April 4, 2021. Volunteers, Preserve staff and interns continue to control undesirable woody resprouts and herbaceous weeds to encourage a diverse groundlayer community. Additional tree thinning targets being considered for winter 2021-22.*
- e. Friends sponsorship of Prairie Partners intern crew – Five *Prairie Partners* interns receive educational experiences while assisting Preserve staff with field work 1 day per week during the summer. (continuing project)
  - *Status: Completed a successful field season working and learning in the Preserve and at Partner sites.*
- f. Willow Creek Woods savanna restoration – Implement prescribed burn. Continue to manage invasive species and undesirable woody regrowth across entire site. (continuing project)
  - *Status: Rx burn completed March 20, 2020. Follow-up weed and woody control ongoing. In spite of aggressive clones of Canada goldenrod and stinging nettle, the site is more diverse than ever.*
- g. Picnic Point fire circle improvements sites – Review needs and costs for improvements to these areas.
  - *Status: Ongoing.*

- h. Picnic Point Gate repaint and store – Remove gates from site, strip paint and rust and repaint, reinstall on separate posts from the stone pillars. A mechanical opener may be added to the gate with other funds, when available.
  - **Status:** *Project is beginning in September 2021 and should be complete by January 31, 2022.*
  
- i. Lakeshore Nature Preserve Master Plan Update – Project to begin in January 2021 and tentatively be complete by March 2022.
  - **Status:** *Project is beginning in September 2021 and should be completed by June 2022. Project has hired SmithGroup as the consultant team to inventory and analyze the existing conditions, discuss what healthy ecosystems can look like at the Preserve, make recommendations for improvements and help set criteria for prioritizing the recommendations. At each step along the way a public input/review session will be included. The Preserve Committee will also be fully involved in the process.*