

UW-Madison Lakeshore Nature Preserve 2020 Work Plan – Approved 6-month Status Report – September 2020

The following document provides a first 6-month status update on the 2020 Lakeshore Nature Preserve Work Plan (March 1, 2020 – February 28, 2021) 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 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 target the use of prescribed fire across a variety of sites and seasons to achieve management objectives and promote diverse natural communities. Continue to recruit trained individuals to assist with burn implementation and expand capacity to achieve management objectives.

Status: 2020 prescribed fire activities were suspended for the spring season due to COVID-19, including the UW course (LA375) that had provided some trained student volunteers in spring 2019.

- Bill's Woods – Complete remaining invasive brush removal in western section, following up on prior work by AmeriCorps NCCC. Complete south slope brush/sapling removal in eastern section, plan prescribed fire and seeding to increase herbaceous diversity in this section.

Status: No activity to report.

- Limnology garden – transplant out desirable specimens ahead of planned construction that will disturb the garden.

Status: Numerous plants were transplanted prior to maintenance of the Lake Mendota shoreline in this area. Construction was completed in August 2020. We will receive funds from the project to purchase plants and restore the garden and disrupted areas surrounding the garden in spring 2021.

- Continue to evaluate impact of high-water levels on shoreline and low-lying areas in the Preserve.

Status: No activity to report.

- Frautschi Point – Monitor tree thinning site near Second Oak. Control herbaceous weeds and re-sprouts. Plan and implement prescribed burns across southern edge of the site.

Status: Routine site monitoring. Volunteer work by Glenda Denniston controlling brush regrowth has continued in the area.

- Second Point Woods - Remove trees along southern border of the woods that are growing out into young oaks as well as the utility path along the north side of Biocore prairie.

Status: No activity to report.

- Eagle Heights Garden/Lake Mendota Drive R-O-W – Continue to manage swath of vegetation that was forestry mowed in fall 2018 through a combination of periodic mowing and spot herbicide application.

Status: Utility R-O-W was mowed several times during growing season to keep weeds and brush regrowth in check. Weed removal performed by volunteer Roma Lenehan.

- 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: No activity to report.

- Eagle Heights Woods Implementation – Continue follow-up control of invasive woody re-sprouts and herbaceous weeds across the site. Perform post-management vegetation monitoring in Indian Mounds and Central Zones. Plan and implement prescribed burns to meet management goals. Identify hazard and undesirable trees for removal. Complete invasive brush removal in East Zone. 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: Post-brush removal vegetation surveys have been completed in the Mounds Zone by Preserve staff. Volunteer Suzy Will-Wolf is assisting with data entry and interpretation. East Zone brush removal completed. Brush re-sprout control on north slope performed by Applied Ecological Services. Phase two of Shady Lane trail improvements have not been addressed to date and will be when personnel is available.

- Monitor and control priority non-native plant species across entire Preserve (e.g., porcelain berry, Japanese hedge parsley, Canada thistle, fig buttercup, garlic mustard).

*Status: Bryn Scriver coordinated 22 volunteers, contributing 763 hours operating under COVID-19 safety guidelines to remove garlic mustard across 90 acres of the Preserve. Herbicide applications were made to dense garlic mustard infestations in portions of Bill's Woods. Japanese hedge parsley removed by volunteers Roma Lenehan and Glenda Denniston in Frautschi Point and Tent Colony Woods. Mowing/cutting performed in various locations to prevent or reduce seed production of undesirable species. Porcelain berry control efforts by Preserve staff are ongoing. Preserve staff facilitated a project between WI DNR and UW Apartments to treat an infestation of *Ranunculus filaria*, (Lesser Celandine) within the adjacent UW Housing Apartments property.*

- Continue follow-up management in sites cleared of invasive brush in preceding years (i.e., re-sprout treatment, herbaceous weed control, and seeding native species), such as Bill's Woods and Big Woods.

Status: Volunteer stewards have been busy removing brush regrowth in Frautschi Point in areas cleared in recent years. Applied Ecological Services staff performed targeted applications to buckthorn re-sprouts on the north slope of Eagle Heights Woods. All following COVID-19 safety protocols.

- Establish greater diversity of native vegetation through seeding and planting in sites that have been adequately prepared.

Status: Several bareroot native shrubs were planted in a recently cleared portion at the northeast end of Frautschi Point. Native species were replanted in the fire circle #3 planting beds to replace what was damaged during 2018 high lake levels.

- 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: Preserve staff, volunteers and contractor crews continue to work in Eagle Heights Woods, Frautschi Point and Willow Creek Savanna.

- 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 to report.

- Complete service agreement with UW Grounds outlining the services/locations routinely provide the Preserve, the approximate value, processes for review, and requests.

Status: Draft proposal prepared and waiting action by FP&M administration.

- Continue to implement a management initiative focused on control of invasive and weedy plant species. Incorporate use of Invasive Species Management and Early Detection & Distribution Mapping System * (ISM Track/EDDMaps) data program to document invasive species management activities.

Status: ISM Track/EDDMaps being used to track porcelain berry monitoring/control efforts.

2) OUTREACH AND INFORMATION ACCESS

- Implement volunteer program goals and policies.

Status: Ongoing. Created new safety and reporting guidelines for volunteers working on the land during the pandemic. Utilizing a new waiver with COVID-19 language. Shared our guidelines with UW Arboretum and Allen Centennial Gardens at their request.

- Engage volunteers in meaningful land stewardship activities in support of Preserve goals and continue to expand the Volunteer Steward program.

Status: Ongoing. From January 1-September 16, 2020, 73 volunteers donated 1,293 hours to the care of the Preserve. We had 2 drop-in volunteer events and 1 group volunteer event before the pandemic paused volunteer activities across the university. In May we were allowed to invite a small number of volunteers to pull garlic mustard following strict public health guidelines. Then we brought back 7 Volunteer Stewards to monitor trails and remove invasive species, also under strict health guidelines.

- Manage the Lakeshore Nature Preserve website and social media sites.

Status: Ongoing. Preserve staff regularly updates the website to announce news and post notices, especially related to COVID-19. Staff also utilizes Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to reach out to stakeholders with important and interesting information and images.

- Continue to provide site-based and virtual information through temporary work activity signs, audio trail recordings, and the website.

Status: Ongoing. Preserve staff collaborates with FP&M Communications staff to create and continually update temporary signage and website information regarding COVID-19 precautions, fire circle closures, and new hours. Preserve staff also continues to support the Lakeshore Audio Trail and Class of 1918 Marsh Audio Field Trip.

- Continue to develop on-going partnerships with organizations and community groups, including the Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve.

Status: Due to COVID-19 we have suspended group volunteer activities until further notice. Preserve staff continues to work with the Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve, including inviting members with experience to join the garlic mustard volunteer efforts this spring.

- Assist promotional activities as appropriate for development initiatives.

Status: Ongoing. We had originally planned to participate in April 2020 Day of the Badger fundraising campaign but unfortunately, it was canceled. We now plan to participate in the "Fill the Hill" fund development initiative schedule for October 21-23, 2020

- Continue to partner with UW Arboretum staff on developing a community of practice for land managers who work with volunteers in the Dane County region.

Status: We continue to utilize the network of land managers who work with volunteers to discuss, problem-solve, and share resources regarding COVID-19 and volunteers.

- Partner with UW Arboretum staff to develop ecological restoration focused WI Master Naturalist training program to train and recruit new volunteers.

Status: Initial meetings to plan training were scheduled, but then put on hold since all 2020 WI Master Naturalist training courses were canceled. Plan to reschedule for 2021.

- Review volunteer program and outreach activities to support strategic planning efforts.

Status: Completed initial reviews. We will meet with FP&M Communication staff to determine process for Communication plan development.

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. Parking lot 130 redevelopment has been completed and parking lot 129 has been removed and restored with plantings.

- Maintain fire circles and stock wood racks (with assistance from UW Grounds Department).

Status: Fire circles have been closed since mid-March 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 Department 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.

- As defined in the Preserve Master Plan, install benches as donations allow, and maintain views through selective vegetation removal.

Status: An additional bench has been constructed adjacent to the bath house in honor of Washburn, Cadmen, Fenska Wisconsin Partners, given by Edward Washburn.

- Maintain Picnic Point pit toilets (Custodial & Plumbing Departments), continue regular trash collection (Waste and Recycling Department), and maintain hand water pump (Plumbing Department).

Status: Since mid-March the Preserve staff have been cleaning and supplying toilet paper to the pit toilets due to the unavailability of Custodial Services. The Waste and Recycling Department has been able to continue 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 and often must be custom made. Due to the pandemic, replacement parts were not obtained to service repairs.

4) ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

- Continued development of safety operational handbook, and training opportunities.

Status: Staff continues to develop safety and training materials. A new resource developed to assist with onboarding new team members was especially helpful as we welcomed two new seasonal staff members this past August and needed to work remotely as much as possible.

- 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.

- 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 2020 work plan and the first public Stakeholder Meeting for FY21 has been scheduled for Tuesday, September 29, 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, 2020.

- 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 planned to participate in the Day of the Badger giving event sponsored by WFAA in spring of 2020, but it was cancelled due to the pandemic. We are planning to participate in a revised "Fill the Hill" event sponsored by WFAA and held on October 21-23, 2020. The Stewardship Fund has received 21 donations totaling \$13,035 and the Endowment Fund has received 2 donations totaling \$ 5,250 since March 1, 2020.

- 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: On-going – The strategic planning process has been completed. Preserve staff are working on the six strategic priorities which include:

1. Consolidate and clarify our vision & mission statements (Done!)
2. Develop and implement a communications plan (in progress)
3. Grow resources to support our mission (in progress)
4. Building our strategic partnerships (in progress)
5. Continue on-going process improvement initiatives (in progress)
6. Update the 2006 Preserve Master Plan (in progress)

- Identify and secure funding to initiate Facilities Master Plan update process.

Status: A funding proposal was submitted to the Eyjue Foundation in February 2020, for consideration with the spring award cycle. In response to current social unrest, all awards were given in support of social justice issues. The funding matrix was adjusted, and proposals will be made to additional stakeholders.

- 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: Working with CALS on the reassignment of land from the Experiment Station to their new Agroecology Program.

- Manage permits and collaborate with student life and academic programs to enrich the quality of the resource.

Status: With the COVID-19 pandemic and the initial suspension of research on campus, permit requests have been reduced. Early on we developed a process to review and reinstate permit requests, as needed, before the UW Research Reboot was launched and continue an added review of permits requests for COVID-19 related compliance during this period of pandemic restrictions. As of September 11, we have processed 23 new permits requests (4 associated with Spring 2020 semester which were not acted upon). By comparison, last year by this time we had processed 39 new permits.

Research equipment/instruments continue to be installed by the National Atmospheric Deposition Program (NADP) at the Lakeshore Nature Preserve, on land managed by the Madison Water Utility where the NADP is establishing a quality assurance and testing site.

* Invasive Species Management (ISM) Track is powered by IPCCConnect™. Developed by a partnership between Invasive Plant Control, Inc. and the University of Georgia – Center for Invasive Species and Ecosystem Health with support from University of Minnesota - Extension, Minnesota Dept. of Agriculture and University of Wisconsin - Extension.

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

- a. Bench – Back country (rustic) bench to be constructed in vicinity of the old Bathhouse.

Status: An additional bench has been constructed adjacent to the old Bathhouse in honor of Washburn, Cadmen, Fenska Wisconsin Partners, given by Edward Washburn.

- b. Class of 1953 Central Lakeshore Path improvements – Continue regular maintenance. Monitor and control purple loosestrife population identified in 2017. (continuing project)

Status: No activity to report.

- c. Class of 1955 Tent Colony Woods improvements – Continue regular maintenance with volunteer assistance from Roma Lenahan to control weeds along the Lake Mendota Drive corridor. (continuing project)

Status: Roma does amazing work!

- d. Eagle Heights Woods Management Plan – Continue follow-up control of invasive woody resprouts and herbaceous weeds across the site. Perform post-management vegetation monitoring in the Indian Mounds and Central Zones. Plan and implement prescribed burns to meet management goals. Identify hazard and undesirable trees for removal. Complete invasive brush removal in East Zone. 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: Post-brush removal vegetation surveys completed in the Mounds Zone by Preserve staff. Volunteer Suzy Will-Wolf is assisting with data entry and interpretation. East Zone brush removal completed. Brush re-sprout control on north slope performed by Applied Ecological Services. Phase two of Shady Lane trail improvements have not been addressed.

- e. Facilities Master Plan Update – Initiate master plan update process in 2020.

Status: Working on developing a request for proposals to hire a consultant team to assist with the process.

- f. Frautschi Point improvements – Continue land care improvements, including trail maintenance, brush removal with volunteer groups to maintain lake views, and native planting with the Friends of Lakeshore Nature Preserve to increase herbaceous diversity in the tree thinning project area. . Assess tree thinning project areas around Second Oak. Control woody re-sprouts and herbaceous weeds.. Plan and implement prescribed burns along southern edge bordering old field and Biocore prairie. (continuing project)

Status: Volunteer stewards continue to perform volunteer brush removal along shoreline stretches and around the Second Oak project area. Prescribed fire operations were suspended for the spring 2020 burn season. A planned spring planting event sponsored by the Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve was also canceled, though a handful of native bareroot shrubs were ordered and planted by Preserve staff in a recently cleared section of Frautschi Point.

- g. Friends Interns – Five *Prairie Partners* interns receive educational experiences while assisting Preserve staff with field work 1 day per week during the summer. (continuing project)

Status: The Preserve was not able to participate in the program for the 2020 season due to UW-Madison restrictions on activities and events related to COVID-19.

- h. Willow Creek Woods savanna restoration –Implement prescribed burn. Continue to manage invasive species and undesirable woody regrowth across entire site. (continuing project)

Status: Continued invasive species control and monitoring. Prescribed fires canceled for spring 2020 season.

- i. Picnic Point fire circle improvements sites 1 – Review needs and costs for improvements to these areas.

Status: Working toward this.

- j. Picnic Point fire circle repair at site 6 – Reestablish a ring of stone around the fire pit and deter use of user made path to the east of the steps to the lower platform.

Status: Project completed.

- k. Picnic Point Gate repaint and store – Remove gates from site, strip paint and rust and repaint, then store on campus until funds for reinstallation is budgeted.

Status: Project cost estimate completed; waiting for coordination and funding plan to initiate the project.