

Prairie Crossing Homeowner's Association

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR OUR COMMON AREAS

2014

Liberty Prairie Foundation
(Joe Marencik, Jim O'Connor, Bill Pogson, Michael Sands)

The Prairie Crossing Homeowner's Association (HOA) is responsible for the management of approximately 252 acres of common area land and 27 acres of lakes and ponds. The land and cover types are shown in the attached figure (Land Cover).

In 2002 and again in 2013, the Prairie Crossing Homeowners Association Board adopted the following set of underlying principles for managing the real estate owned by the HOA.

The Prairie Crossing Homeowners' Association is committed to stewarding its common areas and natural areas such that the ecological health and functions improves every year until it reaches a "steady state" of sufficient quality that it enhances the surrounding open space in the Liberty Prairie Reserve. We recognize that the successful integration of a vibrant human community and a healthy and diverse native ecosystem requires balance and compromise. Each of the landscape types or ecosystems has specific long-term and multi-year management goals that are consistent year after year. The Annual Management Plan is an annual document laying out in detail the work proposed for that year to advance the long term goals for each area. Ecosystem management is an ongoing program, and the annual management plans are designed to manage these areas for the long-term within the context of annual budgets.

Prairies and Wetlands: The planted prairies, meadows and wetlands were created from sterile chemically dependent farmland. They were planted with a broad variety of adapted native species. Additionally, early successional weed species colonized much of the bare ground in the early years and established seed reserves in the soil. The prairie and wetland area under HOA management is 203 acres. The prairies and wetlands are critical for the treatment of our stormwater and the maintenance of extremely high water quality in our lakes and ponds. In addition to providing quality habitat for desired insects, birds and other wildlife, they provide aesthetically pleasing vistas that reflect the value the community places on conservation of our natural resources. These natural areas require active management to reach their potential in both ecosystem health and full beauty.

Ecosystem Goal: Establish and maintain healthy prairies and wetlands that are stable, functional native ecosystems with broad plant diversity and minimal weed pressure. Healthy prairies and wetlands have minimal woody shrubs and trees, and are not compromised by Eurasian weeds. While fully mature native prairies and wetlands need minimal management with occasional

prescribed burns, they often take decades to really reach maturity. The PC planted prairies are still in the establishment phase and require more active management for the control of weed species.

Lakes/Ponds: The ponds and lake were dug as part of the initial residential development. While serving as the primary storage for storm water, their relationship with the wetlands and prairies also allows for high quality habitat. In addition to their use as stormwater detention and wildlife habitat, the lakes are used for swimming, winter skating, fishing, and non-motorized boat traffic. The water quality has been maintained at a high standard, such that the IL DNR has stocked the ponds with 4 species of State Threatened or Endangered fish species. The natural progression for a lake or pond is to gradually fill with dead plant material and become a wetland or bog.

Ecosystem Goal: Maintain a high standard of water quality, diversity of native aquatic vegetation and integrity of the shorelines. While native aquatic vegetation is critical to maintaining water clarity, excessive Eurasian weeds (e.g. Eurasian milfoil) and algae both detract from the habitat value and the attractiveness of the lake. The community values a significant amount of open water in the lakes. Managing base nutrient levels is a critical component of the lake management to interrupt the natural succession process and maintain the high quality open water status. This may entail periodic removal of relatively small amounts of nutrient rich sediment.

Formal Managed Landscapes with Turf, Landscape Trees and Shrubs, and Plantings

The major turf areas with landscape trees and formal planting include the Village Green, Station Village Green, Road Edges, and Center Courts of home clusters for a total of approximately 30 acres.

Ecosystem Goal: Provide aesthetically pleasing and comfortable recreational surfaces, using no irrigation and minimal fertilization and pesticides. Turf areas should be healthy with no noxious weeds and reflect well on the appearance of the community. Entrance plantings provide an important first impression. These areas are more formal in appearance, planted with native varieties and require more intensive annual attention including plant additions and replacement.

Hedgerows: The hedgerows are remnants from the prior use of the farm land. These hedgerows were planted by early settlers. The principal tree species are Osage Orange, Hackberry, Black Cherry, Mulberry, Norway Maple, Red Maple, Box Elder and Silver Maples.

Ecosystem Goal: Convert the hedgerows to predominantly healthy native tree species that provide attractive landscape features and high quality habitat for desired wildlife. Weedier species (Norway Maple, Mulberry, Box Elders etc) will be slowly replaced by high quality native species.

Understory shrubs will be native species with no Eurasian weed species (buckthorn, honeysuckle, multiflora rose, tree of heaven etc).

The process of removing weedier species, safety pruning of older branches and replanting with native species is ongoing with a rotation of focus areas each year. Each hedgerow will receive priority attention every 4 years.

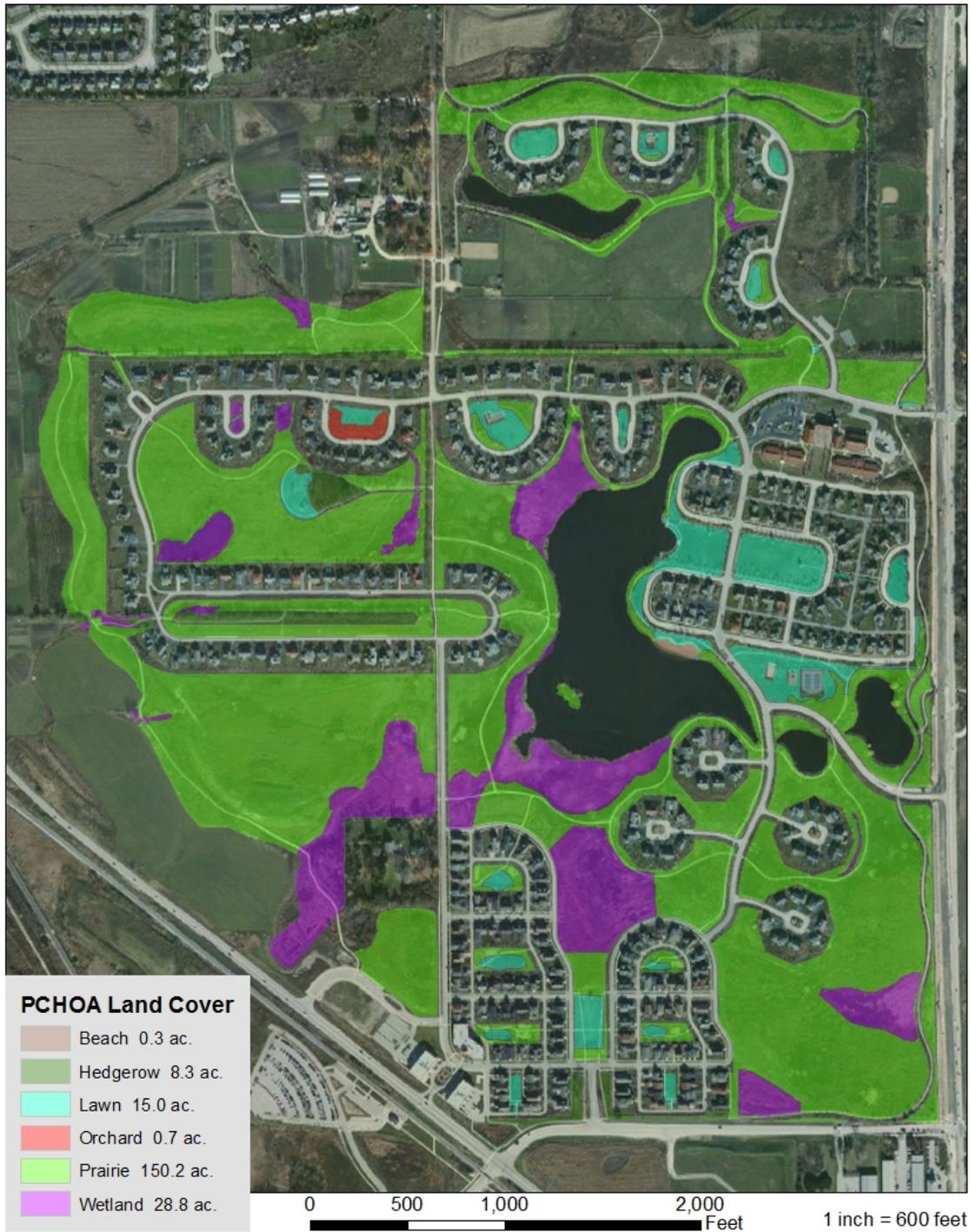
Trails & Fences: Over 10 miles of crushed gravel surface trails have been constructed at Prairie Crossing. The perimeter trail running from Lake Forest Hospital around to the Train Station, and the trail along Harris Road are public regional trails that have been conveyed to the Village of Grayslake. The internal trails are the property of the HOA. The trails provide recreational opportunities for walking, jogging, bicycling, and limited horseback riding. Additionally, they provide pedestrian and bicycle commuting opportunities.

Amenity Goal: Maintain the trails so they are attractive and safe to be used during all but the most extreme weather events. As trails are composed of gravel aggregate, they require regular management for weeds and structural integrity. Work with the Village of Grayslake to ensure the Regional Trail sections are maintained to the same standard as our internal trails.

At a minimum, all common area management decisions should consider the following points:

1. Aesthetic expectations should be consistent with a healthy, rural environment.
2. All management decisions should recognize the importance of the interconnections within an ecosystem. The health of the entire ecosystem should be the principle criteria.
3. It is usually cheaper to prevent a problem than to fix it.
4. Healthy native ecosystems contain low levels of non-native plants that compromise the diversity and function of the ecological community.
5. Inputs that are not immediately used entirely by the intended plant community run off and become pollutants in downstream areas and water bodies.
6. No pesticides or fertilizers should be applied on common areas without being first reviewed (ingredient list, application procedures, MSD sheets) by the Environmental Consultant.
7. All proposed inputs for natural resource management should enhance the ultimate long-term biodiversity, stability and sustainability of the targeted ecosystem and affected ecosystems "downstream".

PCHOA Land Cover



2014 Management Objectives

Prairies & Wetlands: The prairie and wetlands are all planted, with oldest areas being 19 years old. The wetlands and prairie/meadow area under management in 2014 is 203 acres.

Current Objective: Facilitate the development of stable, functional native ecosystems with broad plant diversity and minimal weed pressure that provide quality habitat for desired wildlife and aesthetically pleasing vistas. Continue the control of perennial Eurasian weeds (e.g. sweet clover, purple loosestrife, Canadian Thistle, Phragmites) and woody invasives

<i>Recommended 2014 Tasks/Practices</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Estimated Cost</i>
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Do Spring burns on priority areas (See PC Burn Priorities 2014)	Applied Ecological Services ETL managed volunteers	\$12,000
Do Fall burns on priority areas (See PC Burn Priorities 2014)	ETL managed volunteers	NAC
Enhance Casey Road Entrance with additions of native plant plugs and additional native trees, evaluate garden beds around signs.	Contractor Environmental Stewardship Committee	\$3,000
Initiate the restoration of natural areas in South Village midblock gardens. Includes tree pruning & planting, intensive replanting of natural areas. (see separate "South Village Common Area - 5 Year Management Strategy)	Contractor	\$3,000
Selectively herbicide for specific weeds. See Annual Calendar Summary attached Hire outside contractor for intensive control effort on purple loosestrife and reedcanarygrass.	Jim O'Connor & volunteers Contractors	\$30,000
Selective cut and herbicide invasive woody species (Buckthorn, <i>Malus sp</i> Box elder, Willow, Cottonwood on 1) swale in SE prairie (LCM) 2) SE lake edge (LCM) 3) west side of lake, north of Boat Dock (See PC Woody Invasives Priorities 2013)	Jim O'Connor & volunteers Contractor	NAC
Selective restoration pruning (ie cutting to the ground without herbicide application) of woody shrubs (e.g. sumac, Cornus ssp, filberts). 2014 focus Calamus Lane, lake edge, north and west berms.	Contractor	\$2,000
Monitor presence & impact of <i>Galerucella</i> beetles on purple loosestrife	Joe Marencik, Jim O'Connor Mike Sands	NAC

Continue training and implementing volunteer stewardship volunteers program	Mike Sands & Jim O'Connor	NAC
Continue selective prairie enhancement with over seeding of conservative forbs and planting of plugs.	Jim O'Connor & volunteers	\$3,500 in materials
Do spring monitoring and adding of goose nests.. Submit reports and 2014 permit application to IDNR	Integrated Lakes Management	\$1,500
Monitor use of nesting structures	volunteers	NAC
Conduct appropriate homeowner education programs	Environmental Stewardship Committee	NAC
Review wetland restoration & lake edge stabilization grant opportunities	Joe Marencik, Mike Sands	NAC
Document all treatments.	Environmental Team	NAC
Mow 2014 fire breaks in Nov	LPF managed labor	
Apply for 2015 burn permits in August (application for 2014 permit submitted, current expires 10/15/13)	Environmental Team	NAC
Write and publish appropriate stories in Newsletter on monthly basis	Jim O'Connor, Environmental Stewardship Committee	NAC

2014 Burn Priorities

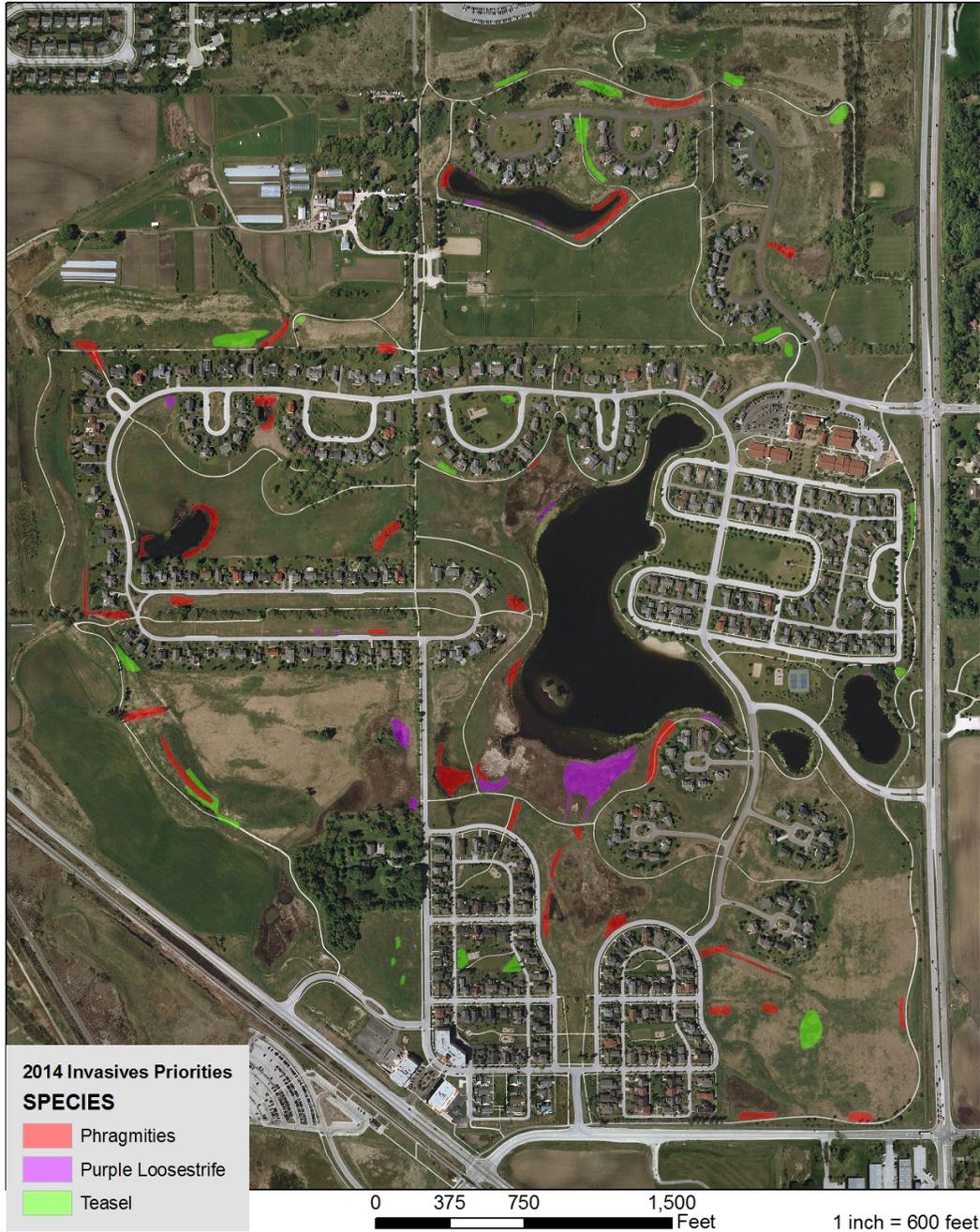
68.3 acres



MONTHLY SUMMARY OF ANNUAL FIELD STEWARDSHIP ACTIVITIES

With the continued caveat of weather conditions, the following is a summary by month of the expected natural area stewardship activities. Members of the ESC will also be included in many of these activities under the LPF's leadership. All herbicide use will conform to the guidelines of the Illinois Nature Preserve Commission (the least toxic herbicide at the lowest effective dose). Particular areas of concern are indicated on the following figure.

2014 Invasive Species Priorities



JANUARY

- Brush cutting and cut stump herbicide with Garlon 4,
- Cutting down dead or invasive trees.
- Frost seeding of native species if the ground permits (thaw).

FEBRUARY

- Brush and tree clearing, as above,
- Wetland prescribed burns if conditions warrant,
- Order native plugs for spring delivery.

MARCH

- Brush clearing herbicide Garlon 4,
- Herbicide Garlic mustard at rosette stage glyphosate 1% before spring ephemerals emerge,
- Frost seed prairie and woodland seed if bare ground,
- Begin early spring prescribed burn season.

APRIL

- Sow prairie and woodland grass seed mixes, rake in if possible.
- Conduct prescribed burns,
- Plant trees,
- Plant bare root stock of conservative forbs,
- Herbicide cool season grasses (grass specific herbicide).
- Herbicide reed canary grass with glyphosate 5%,
- Prepare planting beds for plugs.
- Enhance entrance beds

MAY

- Pull garlic mustard and remove flowering plants.
- Plant native grass and legume seed, rake in on bare or burnt ground.
- Conduct late spring prescribed burns.
- Plant small oaks,
- Herbicide crown vetch, bird's foot trefoil, thistle, teasel, and burdock rosettes preferably with Transline.
- Pull and remove Dame's Rocket.
- Plant conservative native plugs.

JUNE

- Herbicide first year patches of sweet clover.
- Pull and discard bolting garlic mustard, Queen Anne's lace.
- Spray Canada thistle with Transline.
- Herbicide purple loosestrife & reed canary grass.
- Begin cutting and herbicide woody resprouts with 50% glyphosate.

JULY

- Pull or cut flowering yellow sweet clover and remove,

- Herbicide Canada thistle and purple loosestrife,
- Cut and herbicide woody resprouts.
- Cut nodding thistle, remove seed heads.
- Mow large stands of tall goldenrod before flowering.
- Water entrance beds July through September as needed

AUGUST-

- Cut flowering White sweet clover and remove.
- Cut and herbicide honeysuckle, willows and buckthorn with 50% glyphosate.
- Herbicide purple loosestrife, Phragmites, teasel and thistle rosettes.

SEPTEMBER

- Collect seed from early flowering native plants,
- Continue to cut and herbicide woody resprouts,
- Herbicide reed canary grass.
- Herbicide stems of Oriental bittersweet and White mulberry with Garlon 4.
- Repair/replace entrance bed plants as needed.

OCTOBER

- Collect seed for storage and use in 2015,
- Herbicide woody invasives, teasel rosettes, and reed canary grass (5% glyphosate).
- Frost seed forbs from late October through late March.
- Later in the month begin fall burn season.

NOVEMBER

- Conduct fall burns especially wetlands,
- Frost seed forbs,
- Herbicide garlic mustard rosettes, cut brush herbicide with Garlon 4.

DECEMBER

- Frost seeding forbs,
- Cut teasel heads and remove,
- Continue brush clearing and herbicide cut stumps,
- Conduct burns if weather permits.

Monitor beach bacteria levels and manage beach as appropriate.	County Health Dept	NAC	
Monitoring for potentially toxic blue algae blooms	Joe Marencik Integrated Lakes Management	NAC	
Develop muskrat control program for Sanctuary Pond & Lake Leopold	Joe Marencik contractor		
Work with IDNR and other county Forest Preserve Districts to evaluate additional dispersal of T&E fish from SP	Mike Sands Joe Marencik Integrated Lakes Management	NAC	
Monitor spring goose populations and addle goose eggs.	Integrated Lakes Management	\$1,500	
Document all treatments.	Environmental Team	NAC	

Hedgerows: The hedgerows are remnants from the prior use of the farm land. The principal tree species are Osage Orange, Hackberry, Black Cherry, Mulberry, Norway Maple, Red Maple, Box Elder and Silver Maples. The lower shrub layer is dominated by buckthorn, honeysuckle and wild grape. The current acreage approximately 4 acres. During the winter of 2013, Landscape Concepts Management aggressively weeded all hedgerows. These hedgerows are now divided into separate areas to allow for a 4 year rotational focus on specific areas.

Hedgerow & Natural Area Trees Management Zones



1 inch = 600 feet

Current Objective: Encourage the growth of healthy native tree species that provide attractive landscape features and quality habitat for desired wildlife with a minimum of weed species.

Recommended 2014 Tasks/Practices

Responsible

Estimated Cost

Remove both species of Buckthorn, Honeysuckle in hedgerows along Hedgerow and old Farmstead (green on exhibit). Cut and apply Garlon to stumps. Wick application of Garlon on small plants.	Landscape Concepts Management	NAC
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Replant a limited number of oaks and native understory shrubs (e.g. red twig dogwood, hazelnut, buckeyes, oak leaf hydrangeas, filberts, viburnums) in all hedgerows weeded last winter to compete with buckthorn.	Contractors Environmental Stewardship Committee	\$5,000 in
Prune as necessary to eliminate dangerous snags. Leave snags for wildlife habitat where they present no human danger.	Landscape Concepts Management	\$1,500
Document all treatments.	Environmental Team	NAC

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Current Objective: The trails provide recreational opportunities for walking, jogging, bicycling, and limited horseback riding. Additionally, they provide pedestrian and bicycle commuting opportunities.

<i>Recommended 2014 Tasks/Practices</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Estimated Cost</i>
Mow trail edges (2 ft) in July & Sept, Focal point of April site inspection will be to reduce any unnecessary mowing around light poles, boulders etc.	Landscape Concepts Management	NAC In Bid
Apply two seasonal (May & August) applications of RoundUp plus marker for weed control.	Landscape Concepts Management	\$3,500
Cut and herbicide sandbar willows alongside trails. Cut w/o herbicide sumac. Particular attention in 2014 to west end of Prairie Trail, west of outlot, and along Middle Pond along Prairie Smoke.	Landscape Concepts Management	\$5,000
Identify and remove dead trees along trail. Crown raise others to stimulate greater shade.	Contractor	
Repairs of surface as needed 1) washouts 2) drainage issues Monitor results of 2012 & 2013 repairs	Bill Pogson Landscape Concepts Management	\$3,000
Monitor and replace degraded split rail fence sections along Route 45 & Casey Road	LPF managed labor	\$3,000