

Land Steward Report – February, 2016 (Covers Jan 2016)

We received word from the Wildflower Association of Michigan (WAM) that they are giving us a second grant to complete the Oak Savanna Short Grass Prairie Conversion project. This time it is for \$1000 (last year's was \$698). Frank and I will attend the WAM Conference in East Lansing on March 6 to receive the check. I will likely attend the following day also at an expected cost of \$55. We will need another Eagle Scout candidate to do this project. Fundraising as part of the Eagle project will include an interpretive sign.

Clearing (cut and daub) was done in the following area: (1) All honeysuckle between the outlet channel, the southern end of the berm and Pond Circle Trail; (2) honeysuckle and buckthorn along the east and northeast edges of the pond. A few multiflora rose and overgrown grape vines were also removed in these areas.

Some seed for the Savanna and Prairie areas and the top of the Island is going through its cold stratification and can be germinated in pots or sowed on the ground in spring. Will burn the Island and Prairie area before sowing seeds there. I found some exceedingly hard to find (at least, for under \$1/seed) purple milkweed seed that Neal Foster and I will try to raise as seedlings to transplant into the north half of the Oak Savanna next fall.

Emergent aquatic plants for around the island and along the edge of the new berm are mostly selected. Still looking for a few more appropriate species, especially for the shadier southern end of the berm. Proposal:

Around Island	Northern End of Berm	Southern End of Berm
Common Bur-Reed	Sweet Flag	Lizard's Tail
American Water Plantain	Southern Blue Flag Iris	Water Arum (Wild Calla)
(Green) Arrow-Arum	Bristly sedge	Marsh Marigold
Common Arrowhead	American Water Plantain	
Sweet Flag	(Green) Arrow-Arum	
Southern Blue Flag Iris	Common Arrowhead	
Marsh Marigold		

Expected cost for these emergent plants is \$700-800. All except the Wild Calla are available at WildType.

Spring Burn Plans:

- Phragmites and cattails at Bridge (before ice melt?) and north side of pond near Antietam inlet
- Prairie, North Prairie (1st time), and strip of uncleared land on north edge of North Prairie
- Northern half of Oak Savanna
- Potentially, the Oak/Hickory Woodlot, between Clague and Antietam entrances (suggest hiring Dave Borneman or another professional to be burn boss for this, to assuage any concerns about the homes near here).

Because of the incomplete burn of the cattails along the south side of the pond, there are above-water stems that can bring oxygen to any surviving rhizomes, which will facilitate regrowth. We may want to cut the stems at the surface level while there is still ice on the pond. These stems should then be underwater once the pond fills further. As of late January, water is within about 6-7" of overflowing into the beehive grate.