

Land Steward Report – March, 2016 (Covers Feb 2016)

Frank and I will attend the WAM Conference in East Lansing on March 6 to receive their \$1000 grant check for completing the Oak Savanna conversion. I will attend sessions the following day also. We will need another Eagle Scout candidate to do this project. Fundraising as part of the Eagle project will include an interpretive sign. We have asked for the plastic being used to cover the two OHAC pools, for smothering the existing turf grass.

In mid-March, Neal Foster and I will begin to grow purple milkweed seedlings to transplant into the north half of the Oak Savanna next fall.

We placed an order with WildType for aquatic/emergent plants for the edges of the water by the berm and island. We estimated mid-May for the pickup but we might want to get them earlier if they are available. I would like to suggest lowering the pond by about a foot before then to make transplanting into the water easier.

I cut most of the cattail and phragmites stalks that were above ice-level between the amphitheater and the tip of the peninsula, and also by the bridge. I was able to rake the ones by the bridge off the ice before it melted.

Spring Burn Plans:

- Phragmites and cattails near the Bridge. Would have liked to burn the ones on the north side of the pond near the Antietam inlet also, but they are in the water now.
- The island: the dead oats need to be burned to provide a soil surface for the seeding that still needs to be done. Lowering of the water will also help this burn.
- Prairie, North Prairie (1st time), and strip of uncleared land on north edge of North Prairie
- Northern half of Oak Savanna
- The Oak/Hickory Woodlot, between Clague and Antietam entrances. We are negotiating a price for David Borneman, LLC to help us do this burn. They have asked us to do the prep work of blowing or raking leaves from around sensitive trees, fence posts, and the paths, and to clear brush from the fence lines. They usually like to do these “small” local burns on weekdays since they are often doing large burns elsewhere in the Midwest on weekends. We proposed we attempt to do the burn during the schools’ spring break April 4-8 if the weather cooperates.

As of late February, after the rapid melting of a lot of snow, the pond surface is within about 3” of the top of the beehive grate.

Jim Vallem
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