

Land Steward Report – June, 2020 (Covers November, 2019 – May, 2020)

Color key: Black = Work performed in period. Red = Future plans.

Prairie: Sowed a mix of prairie plant seeds in the bare, gravelly spots, November. The Prairie, minus the newer plantings, was burned in March. Pulled a lot of garlic mustard and yellow rocket in May. Transplanted some early (or false) sunflower and daisy fleabane in late May. Making the large TNC sign to replace the Prairie sign destroyed during the water line project has been delayed by the closing of the shop where the lettering will be cut.

North Prairie: We burned North Prairie at the same time as the Prairie. Planted some wild geranium and heart-leaved aster in the northern-most section in May.

South End of Conboy Trail: Sowed Palm Sedge, Thimbleweed, Prairie Dropseed and N.J. Tea seeds in November, in the area we planted shrubs and groundcover earlier in July. Plan is to extend the planted area further to the east and west in Fall 2020. Need to pull Dame's Rocket near the middle of the trail.

Hummingbird Rain Garden: Sowed some bottle gentian seed into the southern pool in November. There has been ongoing work to maintain the area this Spring. Work is beginning to extend the rain garden from the trellis towards the northwest, where there is often standing water.

Oak Savanna (South): Did not get to burn in the spring due to burn restrictions, after missing last year also because it was too wet. It is unlikely to be dry enough for a Fall burn, so we have to get to this next year.

Oak Savanna (North): Area was seeded in fall 2018, so we should be seeing more of the native plants this year. Hopefully some rare purple milkweed plugs we have been growing can be transplanted this year.

OHAC: A native plant buffer strip was planted last year along the pond edge to reduce runoff and discourage geese from coming up onto the lawn. This will take another year or two to really fill in. Most plants are doing okay but there is a fair amount of non-desired plants. OHAC will need to weed the area in the spring. May need to kill the nutsedge creeping up into the planting from the waterline. We may need to add more Shrubby Cinquefoil to get a better hedge against the geese.

NE of Pond: Some phragmites to kill next fall.

Oak/Hickory Woods Rain Gardens: Planted Golden Ragwort, Cutleaf Coneflower and White Snakeroot in the wet areas above the eastern Rain Garden in May (38 plants total). Also planted two Bladdernut trees there, and sowed Palm Sedge seed. Both Rain Gardens leak water through the berm, and could use a thicker berm. The east one has been overtopped by water and needs reinforcing, along with a proper overflow, using flexible drain pipe buried under the path.

Oak/Hickory Woods: We were not able to do a burn here this spring due to business shutdowns. The western-most merganser/wood duck house had a hooded merganser hen nesting this spring. We later found her on the pond with six babies. We have quotes for dealing with the winter creeper, vinca major

and minor, and English ivy on the east end but have not gone forward yet. Would like to tie this effort into working with neighbors where these plants originated.

SE of Bridge: Removed some Asian Bittersweet in November. A few smaller Redbuds might be transplantable, to the south end of Conboy Trail. There are phragmites to kill this fall.

The Hollow (low area west and south of the berm): Lots of buckthorn and honeysuckle growing back, since we were not able to burn this spring (business shutdowns) or last (too wet). Possibility that we could burn some of this area this summer. If not, we will have to wait until next spring.

Peninsula: A few phragmites need to be killed next fall near the eastern bench, and north of the outlet settling pool.

Amphitheater: Will need to remove Dame's rocket and purple loosestrife during the summer. We had intended to hire some goats to eat the buckthorn in the area east of the amphitheater, between Pond Circle Trail and the paved path, in early June while school was still in session. Will consider this for fall (though now would be the best time to weaken the buckthorn). There are some phragmites to kill next fall near the bench near the pond. Replacement DNR and BoE dedication signs are being (slowly) worked on.

Turtle Rain Garden: Burned this in March.

Jim Vallem, 6/2/2020