



Natural Resource Department

November 2015 – PROGRESS REPORT

Deer Management Program: The program this year will be conducted at Grant Woods, Lakewood/Ray Lake, Lyons Woods, Middlefork Savanna, Old School, Ryerson Conservation Area/Cahokia Flatwoods, and Wright Woods/Grainger/MacArthur Woods. Management of deer will not take place at Independence Grove and Rollins Savanna/Fourth Lake this year because vegetation surveys indicated that deer were not negatively impacting the native plant communities. Signs notifying preserve visitors about the program will be placed at management sites on November 23. Bait sites for deer will also be established at management sites on November 23. Village Administrators and law enforcement from municipalities adjacent to management sites will be notified in late October. Based on assessments of impacts by deer to native plant communities and population estimates of deer, the District plans to remove a total of 335 deer this winter. This will provide an estimated 15,000 pounds of ground venison to be donated to local food pantries here in Lake County.

Lake Michigan Strike Team: has worked across more than 17 properties, controlling over 300 invasive plant populations

Grant Submitted: on behalf of the lake plain partnership by us to EPA Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Program requesting approximately \$650,000 to continue and expand habitat restoration work in the Lake Plain. Awards should be announced in December.

Reforestation: Projects completed at Singing Hills, Fort Sheridan and along the Southern Des Plaines River (shrub enhancement). Planning for 2016 projects has begun.

Drain Tile Investigations: 17 parcels are under contract for this fall-next spring. Initial reconnaissance work has begun on several sites.

CHI-CAL Grant (Middlefork Savanna): Final hydrologic modification plans have been developed. Work is anticipated to begin in late spring/early summer 2016 – tile removal, control structure installation, wetland planting. 2015 work at the site: invasive species control, wetland plug planting (YCC and in-house projects), and savanna/prairie seeding, will be counted as match for this grant.

Farm Program: Ten parcels were up for bid this year. The Wadsworth Savanna – Stonehill parcel was not rebid this year and will be permanently retired. This parcel had been in the farm program since its acquisition in 1990 (25 years) and will now be restored with a native prairie cover crop.

Pine Dunes – SMD: Development activities are complete; initial restoration activities have been completed. Additional follow-up invasive species control and inter-seeding efforts will take place in the coming years, as well as installation of native trees and shrubs. Opening date is November 20, 2015

Lakewood – Broberg Marsh Restoration: Follow-up to last winter's clearing efforts were completed this summer. Native seed installation is anticipated to begin in November to all cleared areas. Drain tile removal and additional invasive species control efforts are being planned for 2016.

Controlled Burning: The priority list for controlled burns has been completed, plans with Operations and Infrastructure are in place, permits have been secured.



Fort Sheridan Great Lakes Fish and Ecosystem Restoration Program:

Contract has been signed with John Keno and Company and the notice to proceed has been issued with a December 15, 2015 start date for the project which could take two years to complete. Fencing to close off access to the construction zone will be installed by November 15th with appropriate signage educating the public about the project and required closures

Winter Clearing Efforts: will soon begin at these sites

Greenbelt – Grant funded
Singing Hills/Kettle Grove – Private Donation
Southern Des Plaines Woodland Restoration Sites - CIP
 Captain Daniel Wright Woods
 Lloyd's Woods
 Edward L Ryerson Conservation Area
 MacArthur Woods
Grassy Lake - CIP
Spring Bluff - Grant Funded
Van Patten Woods – In-House Staff
Grant Woods- Private Donation - In-house staff and contractor
Cuba Marsh - CIP
Lakewood - CIP
 Preserve Boundary Enhancement
 Schreiber Bog Area
Wadsworth Savanna – Habitat Restoration Fund

Nursery:

- Nursery operations are winding down for the year, with only about a dozen species left to collect in the Nursery beds.
- Field collection is ongoing, and the volunteer Stewards are bringing in seeds from their workdays.
- Groups from Deerfield High School and Hampton Inn & Suites came out to volunteer their time and learn about seeds, restoration, and the District.
- A staff workday was hosted in late September, allowing members of Marketing, Finance, Planning, IT, and Ops to connect with volunteers and gain a better understanding of restoration.
- Several hundred shrubs were delivered to the Nursery for our care. Most of them have been planted by staff and volunteers already; the remaining shrubs are waiting for scheduled volunteer workdays.
- Nursery planting has been concluded for the year and remaining plants are being prepped for overwintering.
- Outdoor irrigation has been winterized.
- Seed deliveries are arriving for this winter's seeding projects.
- The CLC internship has just concluded, and her time at the Nursery has influenced her career path; she is completing her Associates in Horticulture this year, and has now decided to pursue Bachelor Degree in Environmental Studies rather than staying with a traditional horticultural direction.