

## **Lakeshore Nature Preserve Committee**

**Tuesday March 11, 2014**

**2:00-3:30PM**

**350 Bascom Hall**

### **APPROVED MINUTES**

#### **Present:**

Mike Amato, Gary Brown, Jacob Hahn, Kelly Ignatoski, Ken Raffa, Sissel Schroeder, Phil Townsend, Alan Turnquist, Mattie Urrutia, Chloe Wardropper

#### **Also Present:**

Janet Batzli (Biocore), Galen Bergquist (F.H. King), Cathie Bruner (Preserve), Ann Burgess (Friends), Curt Caslavka (Emeritus Biocore Prairie Lab Manager), Glenda Denniston (Friends), Kennedy Gilchrist (Friends), Adam Gundlach (Preserve), Seth McGee (Biocore), Bryn Scriver (Preserve), Will Waller (Friends)

#### **Minutes:**

A motion was made to approve the minutes from the Feb 11, 2014 meeting, was seconded and approved with a change to the discussion on the campus weapons policy.

#### **Public Comment Period for Items not on the Agenda:**

None

#### **Project Updates**

##### 1) Rec Sports Master Plan (Gary Brown)

The Rec Sports Referendum passed with an 86% yes vote and a 14% no vote. About 14,000 students or 34% of the student population voted for rebuilding the SERF, NAT and the 2 playing fields on either side of the Nat. The SERF is the highest priority project with the west playing fields second. FPM is working hard to get documents submitted to include it in the 2015-2017 capital budget. The Nat and east playing fields will be included in the 2017 and 2019 budgets. The student segregated fees allow the projects to go forward. There will be significant review by the Board of Regents, the Department of Administration and the full legislature. The University Bay playing fields and Nielsen Tennis Stadium projects will not move forward until funding is found. Only then will they go through the capital budget process. FPM is in the process of hiring a consultant to do an environmental assessment for all the outdoor fields. This isn't usually done until there is a real project but we're starting early due to the concerns that have been brought

up. Rec Sports will fund the Environmental Impact Assessment once the Department of Administration approves it.

2) Drake fox-coyote research (Cathie Bruner)

David Drake and his student have captured and collared 2 coyotes and one fox. They have for now suspended the attempt to collar another fox. They have found that fox are being driven to the east end of campus because the coyote are on the west end including the University Bay and Class of 1918 Marshes and the Village of Shorewood Hills. The fox has only been picked up on the radio collar once but it has been sighted on Main Street by MG&E, the Limnology Lab, and in Camp Randall Stadium. Two people who have been very helpful to the researchers are Richard Ness the campus pest control person and Heidi Landrie the west campus community officer. Bob Mitchell from CALS is working on an article about the research that will come out sometime this month.

3) Eagle Heights Woods implementation (Adam Gundlach)

The mound zone has been cleared of invasive woody brush—more than 2 acres. All brush has been dragged and piled and it will be chipped this week. The chips will be used on the trails surrounding the site. The view toward the lake is now more visible. All stumps have been treated. All stumps will be cut off the mounds and the others may be left to decay.

4) Spring burn plans and brush pile burning pilot at Arboretum (Adam Gundlach)

Maps showing 6 potential burn units were passed around. Gundlach worked with Seth McGee from Biocore to develop the Biocore Prairie burn plan. Quercus Land Stewardship Services is the prescribed burn contractor for the Preserve.

The Madison Fire Department recently granted a variance to the Madison fire code to the Arboretum for one season allowing them to burn brush piles. If the Arboretum can demonstrate their ability to observe appropriate safety practices and to avoid nuisance responses or uncontrolled fire issues the variance could be extended to both the Arboretum and Lakeshore Nature Preserve in the future.

Preserve and Arboretum staff are drafting a UW prescribed fire policy for all UW lands. They hope to have a draft for the Preserve Committee to look at by the end of the semester.

Denniston wanted the prescribed fire policy to address insects, and wondered if it was being reviewed by an insect ecologist. Raffa offered to review the policy and suggested Dan Young as another person to contact for review.

5) Volunteer Program (Bryn Scriver)

Drop-in volunteer workparty dates and times have been set through August and we're planning some fun planting events with students for May. The next drop-in volunteer event is Sat. April 12 from 9AM-Noon at Picnic Point. On Sunday morning we had 25 volunteers representing 6 student organizations remove invasive shrubs on Picnic Point. On Sunday afternoon 7 members of the Platoon Leaders Club helped haul and pile cut brush at Eagle Heights Woods to help us prepare for chipping this week. We're also working closely with the Friends of the Preserve who will be doing outreach for the Preserve this spring at several Earth Day events.

### **Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve report (Will Waller)**

The Friends have published the first 2/3rds of their field trip offerings. John Magnuson did some salt research on the Class of 1918 Marsh and did a presentation to the Friends Board. John would like to present his findings at the April 8 Preserve Committee meeting. Schroeder said the item is already on the next Preserve Executive Team meeting agenda

### **Biocore discussion**

While restoration work in most of the Biocore Prairie has been very successful, the south central area has continued to be a challenge.

There is no committee support for removing soil or importing soil into the south central area for the establishment of prairie. Concerns included the cost of removing soil, what to do with the resultant hole, where to haul the removed soil, the impacts to soil porosity and bulk density.

According to Batzli the problem is the excess nutrients and the competition from weeds in establishing a prairie.

The current plan is to plant 2 rounds of oats and take off biomass twice this season. She has arranged a discounted rate from CALS for the work done last season.

Waller sees the weed problem as being exacerbated by disturbance from repeated plowing and disking. Biocore does not intend for the soil to be broken up before seed drilling the oats. They say it was necessary in the past due to weed conditions. Waller also suggested putting in oats and then burning them off instead of harvesting them. Batzli said CALS offsets their costs by using the oats, and there's no guarantee that fire can be used each year to burn off the oats.

Townsend sees the problem as an educational opportunity. A long-term plan can be designed so that students collect data to track how nitrogen and the seed bank changes through time. Students can monitor soil nitrogen, calculate the yields in the oats, and do a nitrogen budget. McGee likes the idea of establishing long term research questions including looking at different cover crops and burning versus harvesting.

Batzli and McGee explained that they only came up with the bold plan to remove soil because they kept hearing from the Preserve Committee, “What’s going on here? Why no prairie?”

Batzli asked the committee to contact her anytime with other ideas.

### **Subcommittee Reports and Discussion**

#### 1) Information Dissemination /Education (Chloe Wardropper)

They have sent out a request for proposals for distributing small student grants (*Student Engagement Grants*) from the Academic Fund. Proposals are due April 1. Five people from the Committee and Preserve staff will review the proposals and present the final candidates to the Preserve Committee at the April 8 meeting. Announcements will be made by April 11.

#### 2) Communications /Archives (Cathie Bruner)

A Library Studies course taught by Kristin Eschenfelder is digitizing Ecology 460 data and 1918 Marsh history. Bruner is also working to get historical Preserve documents into the UW Archives. We also have a lot of historical documents on our website.

#### 3) Planning & Implementation

No report

#### 4) Development (Gary Brown)

Brown drafted a white paper to recommend the creation of a \$3 million dollar endowment as part of the next UW Capital Campaign that will start this fall.

### **Other Topics**

Gilchrist invited the Committee members to attend the Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve Annual Meeting on April 8. The speaker is bumble bee researcher Hannah Gaines Day. The event will start at 6:30 with refreshments with the program starting at 7pm.

A motion was made to adjourn. The motion was moved by Townsend and seconded by Raffa.

### **Adjournment**

Submitted by Bryn Scriver