



## **Natural Resources**

*November 4, 2015*

*1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.*

*Red Wing Public Library, Red Wing*

### Attendees:

*Brian Peterson, City of Red Wing Planning*

*Bruce Blair, Project Manager*

*Shawn Blaney, City of Red Wing Public Works*

*Pat Ramaker, City of Red Wing Public Works*

*Bruce Chamberlain, LOAM*

*Jennifer Cater, HKGi*

*Sarah Evenson, HKGi*

*Tim Connolly, USFWS*

*Dustin Looman, Conservation Corps*

*Doug Ekstrom, Conservation Corps*

*Kit Elstad-Haveles, DNR*

*Tim Schlagenhaft, Audubon Society*

# SUMMARY

## **Introductions**

Review why the city is conducting a park master plan and where we are at in the beginning of the process. Purpose of the meeting is to gain input about context, knowledge, activities and sensitives related to park use and planning for the future.

## **Discussion Items**

### Priorities:

- Maintain habitat diversity and quality
  - There's not a lot of prairie bird (ground nesting) diversity, but the river corridor is a national flyway
  - Red-headed woodpecker present
  - The west prairie is about 4 acres and could be expanded
  - The east prairie is 33 acres
  - Site is 73 acres total
  - Third Tier bullet
- Ongoing habitat management
  - Youth conservation corps are pulling sweet clover (to break biennial cycle)
  - Focus on drainage-ways on the east prairie to keep woodies contained
  - Burns needed at 3-5 year intervals with woody removal in between
  - Citizen intervention often impedes scheduled maintenance (fires too soon)

- Brush/tree removal in the fall, piled, then burned in winter
  - Restore and buffer high quality habitat areas to prevent woody encroachment along edges, then work out from there
  - Oak savanna is a high priority for maintenance
  - Removal of ash, walnut
- Limit future trails and reduce existing trails if not needed
  - Education is needed
    - People need to understand why they should stay on existing trails
    - Prairie management could be a topic for interpretive signage
    - Global significance of the prairie and savanna ecosystems should also be signage topics
  - Add boot cleaners and an educational kiosk with pictures of the invasives whose spread we are working to prevent and a schedule of upcoming maintenance activities so people understand what's going on in the park (look at Memorial Park's signage for an example.)

#### Potential Future Management:

- Goats
  - Fence mending is a safety issue
  - Would likely need to be used for 3+ years
  - Expense is an issue
  - Should be used either first, to clear low, young growth before manual cutting+treating of larger specimens; or after larger specimens have been cleared to continue to deplete the seedbank before the saplings can reproduce.
  - Could also burn and use goats afterwards to manage seedlings
  - Burning buckthorn is difficult on shady or wet sites
- Expansion of prairie areas to the south (removal of encroaching forest)
  - Would need lane closures along Hwy 61 to account for falling rocks
  - Ideally, burns would happen in 3 distinct segments over 3 years so as to leave enough habitat for animals displaced by each burn
  - Burns would only take 1 day/year and could be done at Barn Bluff, Sorins Bluff, and the other bluff in Red Wing in the same day in order to fit this O&M task into the city's broader O&M needs efficiently (this is important)

#### Potential Programming:

- Interest in birding walks

#### **Next Steps/Resources**

- Audubon Winter Meeting in January. Will discuss the 2016 work plan
- Talk to Jaime Edwards with the DNR about habitat management techniques (she's a specialist)
- Look into A.P. Anderson Park- they used goats for management
- Look into Andersen Center for buckthorn removal/ management example