

**MINUTES**  
**STATE PRESERVES ADVISORY BOARD**  
**Boone Research Station**  
**September 8, 2006**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

Scott Moats  
Carl Kurtz  
Laura Jackson, Chair  
Cindy Peterson  
Liz Christiansen  
Armando Rosales

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT**

Deb Lewis

**STAFF PRESENT**

John Pearson  
Daryl Howell

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Laura Jackson called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM on September 8, 2006 at the Boone Research Station.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Add: Update on Steele Prairie – John Pearson

***Motion was made by Armando Rosales to approve the agenda as amended. Seconded by Liz Christiansen. Motion carried.***

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

***Motion was made by Liz Christiansen to approve the minutes from the July 14th meeting. Seconded by Cindy Peterson. Motion carried.***

**PERKINS PRAIRIE**

The board toured Perkins Prairie earlier in the morning.

Carroll and Karen Perkins and Tim Healy (son-in-law) were in attendance.

Laura Jackson raised concerns about the long term management and it's location in relation to the watershed.

Scott Moats said that he would like to see the whole parcel included as a preserve.

***Motion was made by Armando Rosales to have John Pearson and Daryl Howell move forward with the process beginning with a biological inventory first, and then moving forward if approved. Seconded by Cindy Peterson.***

John Pearson said that this would include a management plan, species inventory, and a definition of the preserve boundary.

Scott Moats said that he would like to see more information about Perkins Prairie before moving forward with preserve status. Including the buffer area is a good way to control invasive species.

Karen Perkins said that they are open to any academic comments.

Carroll Perkins said that he would like to set up a trust fund and use the interest to pay for the incidentals of the possible preserve. My daughter would be entrusted with the future management of this land. Public access would be fine to me.

Cindy Peterson asked if the board was skipping a step in getting approval beforehand from the Governor, rather than spending the time to develop a management plan and species inventory, only to hope that it's all approved in the end. We just need to be sure that the land being evaluated qualifies as a preserve.

John Pearson said that this specific prairie is a good area. I expect that it will improve under more management.

Armando Rosales said that this prairie deserves preserve dedication.

Liz Christiansen suggested that as a group, we should make a list of the steps that we go through when identifying if a parcel of land would qualify as a preserve.

***Motion carried.***

## **PRESERVE UPDATES**

### **Steele Prairie**

John Pearson said that Ginger Vietor, Director of Cherokee County Conservation Board submitted recommendations for management strategies at Steele Prairie.

John read through the submitted Management Plan.

*This update is presented to address the current ecological status of Steele Prairie in Cherokee County. It is primarily intended as a starting point for a renewed effort toward controlling invasive species and preserving native species diversity and wildlife habitat quality on both Steele Prairie units. It is our hope that the suggestions presented below will be critically and immediately considered by the State Preserves Advisory Board, so that management practices may be implemented in the very near future. We respectfully submit the following management ideas and look forward to your feedback.*

Invasive Species Concerns: *Steele Prairie includes distinctly different hydric and mesic prairie plant communities, each with its own invasive pressure. Smooth brome is the most widespread threat to Steele's mesic community. Other mesic invaders include leafy spurge, red clover, Canada thistle and musk thistle. There is very little woody species growth on these sites.*

*The wetter sites on Steele Prairie have become heavily infested with reed canary grass. These sites have also hosted two endangered orchid species, the western prairie fringed orchid and the small white lady's slipper. For this reason, burning after April 20 has been avoided in the reed canary infestations.*

Recommended Actions: *We propose that beginning immediately and continuing indefinitely, we will map and quantify the invasive species found on Steele Prairie, in order to gauge the effectiveness of our management regime. Existing data and maps assembled by Bill Watson for the IDNR should be forwarded to the CCCB for this purpose. Photo points will be established as well. In 2001, flea beetles were released on the leafy spurge patch in the northwest portion of the 160 acre tract of Steele Prairie. We are particularly interested in knowing whether they have begun to impact the leafy spurge population.*

*In addition, a new system of burn units is proposed that separates mesic and hydric areas of Steele Prairie (see Maps 1 and 2, attached) for management purposes. While we avoid burning sensitive species after April 20 in the low areas, we propose that permission should be granted to begin burning upland brome infestations in late May, beginning in 2007. Wetter units will be burned sometime from Fall through April 20, beginning Fall 2006. There are four basic units, further divided into subunits, and as the pressure from invasive species changes, we recommend that the boundaries among burn units should evolve to meet the prairie's needs. We will continue to burn on an annual, rotating basis, but also recommend consecutive Fall 2006 and Spring 2007 burns on adjacent units in order to make up for very low burn frequency over the past 20 years.*

*In order to address the invigorated reed canary growth that will result from this burn schedule, we propose two management scenarios. First, Bill Watson has provided evidence that mowing and spraying glyphosate on reed canary grass is an effective*

*method for restoring species diversity to infested areas. This method works well in heavily infested areas that are not too wet for mowing/trimming and spray equipment operation. Another possibility is a grazing/burning schedule.*

*We also propose that Steele Prairie is an excellent candidate area for grassland banking and/or prescribed grazing methods that have been proven effective in other parts of Iowa. Local IDNR and NRCS staff have expressed an interest in submitting a WHIP (Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program) application for Steele Prairie to provide funding for prescribed grazing and burning practices. We would like the Preserves Board to consider this potential practice.*

*An additional benefit of reshaping the burn units is that it limits the need for mowing firebreaks or operating fire suppression equipment across wet areas where such equipment has become stuck in the past. This will minimize prairie disturbance by trucks and tractors and potentially save lives and equipment during prescribed burning activities.*

Scott Moats said that he would like to see more diversity with prescribed burning. Haying might be a good option as well.

Laura Jackson said that maybe we should have a phone conference to discuss different initiatives and follow up measures.

Scott Moats said that if grazing is used, we should get specific results on the outcome of grazing.

John Pearson said that he will set up a conference call with Ginger.

***Motion was made by Carl Kurtz that our subcommittee will coordinate with the county conservation board on the details. Seconded by Scott Moats.***

## **GOAL SETTING**

Laura Jackson said that each board member should select a one goal to focus in on. The two goals set at the last meeting were professional development for land managers or neighbor relations for eyes and ears on a preserve.

### Professional development planning team

Scott Moats

Carl Kurtz

Liz Christiansen

John Pearson

Lisa Nissen (not in attendance)

Neighbor relations planning team

Deb Lewis  
Armando Rosales  
Laura Jackson  
Cindy Peterson  
Daryl Howell

The board members and staff divided up into their teams and discussed objectives.

Liz Christiansen gave the overview of the Professional Development team: The team decided to hold a day and half session including classroom and field time in conjunction with the Iowa Prairie Conference meeting which will be held July 13-15 in Sioux City.

Options:

We could start the day before – July 12<sup>th</sup> with an evening class time and the second day would be the field trips. Participants would be back in plenty of time before the Iowa Prairie Conference begins Friday evening July 13<sup>th</sup>.

Issues to discuss:

Controlling Reed Canary Grass  
Various management towards group of species and grazing

Field trips would possibly include:

Stone State Park  
Broken Kettle  
Deer Creek  
Mount Talbot

Mailing lists from board members would be needed for invites.

Laura Jackson suggested that we should present a recognition award for managers who accomplished great improvements in the previous year.

Laura Jackson gave the overview of the Neighbor Relations team:

- 1) Ask each preserve manager for a list of neighbors surrounding the area.
- 2) Send preserve guide pages and friendly information on the preserve. Encourage correspondence.
- 3) Find appropriate people with information to be the eyes and ears of the preserve that would report to the board on current happenings.
- 4) Find a way to sponsor visits in preserves by garden clubs, 4H, local clubs, etc.
- 5) Get an article in the Iowa Outdoors magazine interviewing a neighbor of a preserve that enjoys the benefits of it.

Laura Jackson said that she would draft a letter for the preserve neighbors and bring it to the next meeting for review. It would be a personalized letter in relation to their preserve and area.

***Motion was made by Scott Moats that the committees continue working and report back at the January meeting. Seconded by Cindy Peterson. Motion carried.***

### **OPEN DISCUSSION**

John Pearson said that Inger Lamb of the Prairie Network had offered to bring stewardship services from IPN members to prairie preserves. They committed to collecting seed at Steele Prairie with Bill Johnson. They will also be removing brush on Cedar prairie.

If there are any other management concerns to be addressed please let John know so they can be forwarded to Inger.

John Pearson said that Ryan Slater of DNR Forestry expressed his interest in prescribed burning at White Pine Hollow.

### **NEXT MEETING**

January 5<sup>th</sup> (Friday) – Wallace State Office Building in Des Moines

April 5<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> (Thursday and Friday) – visit to Fort Atkinson and Montauk State Preserve

Liz Christiansen suggested presenting a certificate of appreciation to the gentlemen at Fort Atkinson.

July 12<sup>th</sup> (Thursday) – Sioux City The with tour will be in conjunction with the Field trip on the 13<sup>th</sup> with the preserve managers.

October 4<sup>th</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> (Thursday and Friday) – Follow up to Glenwood Preserve (if paperwork completed) or Pellet Wood

## **ADJOURNMENT**

***Motion was made by Liz Christiansen to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Scott Moats. Motion carried.***

With no further business to come before the State Preserves Advisory Board, Chairperson Laura Jackson adjourned the meeting at 4:15 PM on September 8, 2006.

**A**  
Adjournment, 7  
Approval of agenda, 1  
Approval of Minutes, 1

**B**  
Board Members Absent, 1  
Board Members Present, 1

**C**  
call to order, 1

**G**  
goal setting, 4

**N**  
Next Meeting, 6

**O**  
Open Discussion, 6

**P**  
Perkins prairie, 2  
preserve updates, 3

**S**  
staff present, 1  
Steele Prairie, 3