

MINUTES
STATE PRESERVES ADVISORY BOARD
Wallace State Office Building – Des Moines
July 27, 2010

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Armando Rosales
Deb Lewis, Chair
Carl Kurtz – arrived at approximately 10:00
Inger Lamb
Stephen Dinsmore

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Lynn Alex
Richard Leopold, DNR Director

STAFF PRESENT

John Pearson
Daryl Howell
Lisa Nissen

Inger Lamb informed the board that she owns a landscaping business that promotes native species.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Deb Lewis called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM on July 27, 2010 at the Wallace State Office building.

SHEEDER PRAIRIE - PRESENTATION

Loren Lown, Natural Resource Specialist with the Polk County Conservation Board presented information on the use of goats to control buckthorn and other woody species. There are 500 plus acres at Chichaqua Bottoms that are filled with uncontrolled buckthorn. The Leopold Center supports a 3 year study that researched the benefits of goat and cattle grazing on grassland.

Tom Rosburg, from Drake University is conducting a before and after study on flora, butterflies, snakes and small mammals in regards to land in grazing.

It appears that the method of grazing is succeeding. We still see a little buckthorn seedlings even after 3 years of grazing but that could be spot sprayed.

The study also looks at the fitness of the goats before and after. They want to make sure that they are gain weight and provide a benefit to the farmer.

Armando Rosales expressed his concern with controlling erosion from the goats.

Loren said that their biggest concern is the cost of electric fencing and maintenance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Move: Sheeder Prairie up to after the approval of the minutes

Motion was made by to approve the agenda as amended. Seconded by. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Carl Kurtz to approve the April 30, 2010 minutes as presented. Seconded by Armando Rosales. Motion carried unanimously.

SHEEDER PRAIRIE

Despite repeated efforts by DNR staff and volunteer to reduce and control encroachment of woody vegetation in to the prairie, the problem persists. Browsing by goats as a management prescription could aid in solving this problem, but is a novel application to preserves requiring Board discussion and approval.

John Pearson proposed the option for goat grazing to control the woody vegetation at Sheeder Prairie.

Carl Kurtz agrees that we should proceed.

Stephen Dinsmore said that he would approve but would like to have some information on the preserve before, during and after the process.

Motion was made by Stephen Dinsmore to approve the use of goat grazing at Sheeder Prairie with the caveat that the board is informed of the before and after impacts. Seconded by Carl Kurtz.

Inger Lamb asked about how the before and after survey would be conducted.

John Pearson said that this could be added to the list of proposal selections in April.

Stephen Dinsmore said that the study doesn't need to be extensive.

John Pearson indicated that he could conduct simple before and after comparisons.

Motion carried unanimously.

FIVE RIDGE PRAIRIE

The Plymouth County Conservation Board requests that hunting hours for spring turkey be changed from the current ½ hour before sunrise until noon to ½ hour before sunrise until sunset. The proposed change will make hunting hours on the preserve consistent with those for the rest of the state. The current hunting hours require additional enforcement effort by the conservation board and could lead to inadvertent violations by hunters. The Nature Conservancy, a partner in the original purchase of the preserve, supports the proposed change.

Steve Griebel from the Plymouth County Conservation Board answered questions about the proposed change.

Inger Lamb asked what the original reasons were for the different hours.

Daryl Howell said that they thought there would be issues with preserve users and the hunters but that hasn't been the case.

Inger Lamb suggested that we implement some signage at the preserve posting the hours.

Motion was made by Carl Kurtz to approve the change in hunting hours as proposed. Seconded by Stephen Dinsmore. Motion carried unanimously.

SYLVAN RUNKEL PRESERVE MANAGEMENT

This year's prescribed burn of the Sylvan Runkel prairie was conducted on May 26 burning 90% of the preserve within the preserve. Although large prairie areas are adjacent to the preserve, this burn raised attention to the need to revise preserve management, possibly burning smaller areas.

Scott Moats said that small isolated burns can have their own issues. We're not in favor of subdividing. We would rather look at the landscape as a whole rather than in small units.

DNR staff will explore ways of burning smaller units without compromising safe burning practices.

Informational

MALCHOW MOUNDS

John Pearson said that this land was purchased by the DNR with the stipulation that his cattle could graze on the land until the original owner passed away. During the time of the grazing, recent cattle trampled the area and caused erosion on the mound. Following a recent recommendation by the Office of the State Archeologist, DNR staff will repair the mound this summer by filling and stabilizing the problem spot.

Cattle have not been allowed on the land for about 10 years and many of the original problem areas have recovered naturally.

The State Historical Preservation Office and Office of State Archeologist both support this repair.

<i>Informational</i>

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The North American Prairie Conference will be held August 4-6.

Mike Osterholm, MN resident has visited many of Iowa's preserves and he felt that there was a lot of sweet clover.

Inger Lamb asked if we could recruit volunteers to help with the management of preserves.

John Pearson said that volunteers are good for a one day event and it's hard to get folks out to areas that are not highly populated.

Carl Kurtz said that he has visited MN and MO preserves, and haying was a highly used option. Mowing is very effective in controlling sweet clover as well as May burns. Maybe we could work with a private adjoining landowner to mow our preserves.

Deb Lewis said that Ames High Prairie has a friends group that works with The Nature Conservancy. Possibly some fund raising efforts.

Daryl Howell said that we have funding available for the archeological survey at Glenwood. This money will be used for matching other funds. We should have a good survey ready by July 1st, 2011.

NEXT MEETING

October 29, 2010

Due to the recent budget cuts, all meetings will start at 10:00 AM in the Des Moines area unless a tour is necessary in making a decision.

Board members would like to be notified when department activities do become available to participate in.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Stephen Dinsmore to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Carl Kurtz. Motion carried.

With no further business to come before the State Preserves Advisory Board, Chairperson Deb Lewis adjourned the meeting at 11:40 PM on July 27, 2010.

A
Adjournment, 5
Approval of agenda, 2
Approval of Minutes, 2

B
BOARD MEMBERS Absent, 1
BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT, 1

C
call to order, 1

F
Five Ridge Prairie, 3

G
General discussion, 4

M
Malchow Mounds, 4

N
Next Meeting, 5

S
Sheeder Prairie, 2
Sheeder Prairie - Presentation, 1
staff present, 1
Sylan Runkel Preserve Management, 3