



## **Trails and Natural Areas 2009 Annual Report**



Greenfield Park Woods: Marsh marigolds and ephemeral wetlands

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## Major Accomplishments

1. Development of a Mission Statement for the Natural Areas Program: [Blending Milwaukee County's diverse and unique natural areas with its culturally rich communities to preserve and nurture its natural heritage for current and future generations](#)
2. Redevelopment of the DPRC's Agricultural Lease Policy
3. Redevelopment of the DPRC's Geo-caching Policy
4. Creation of a Natural Areas Internship Program (5 interns in 2009)
5. Development of a 6-month AmeriCorps Stewardship Position with NRF
6. Partner acquisition and development - worked with 46 organizations in 2009
7. Volunteer program expansion: from 1,600 in 2008 to 3,000 in 2009
8. In 2009 the Natural Areas volunteers graciously donated 10,000 hours of labor assisting with the ecological restoration of DPRC managed lands
9. Development of Natural Areas standards for contractors working on DPRC property
10. Added a second university (MATC) to the Natural Areas Service Learning Program and added a second class from UW-Milwaukee (112 students in 2009)
11. Initiation of natural resource inventories to establish baseline data for ephemeral wetlands, invasive species, unofficial trails, and rare species of flora & fauna
12. Implementation of the DPRC's Emerald Ash Borer Plan
13. Warnimont Bluff Fens and the Root River Forest were recognized by the Wisconsin Wetland Association as "Wetland Gems" two of Wisconsin's best wetlands

## Parks- Natural Areas Project Locations 2009

### **Jacobus**

- Invasive Species Control
- Eagle Scout projects to enhance lagoon buffer and repair railing.
- Service Learning Park
- Natural Resource Inventories
- Aldo Leopold Benches

### **Warnimont**

- Invasive Species Control
- Service Learning Park
- Natural Resource Inventories

### **Cudahy Nature Preserve**

- Invasive Species Control
- Natural Resource Inventories

### **Lake- Locust Street Ravine**

- Erosion control in the ravines due to flooding
- Invasive Species Control
- Service Learning Park

### **Bender**

- Invasive Species Control
- Prescribed burn on bluff lands

### **Estabrook**

- Invasive Species Control
- Natural Resource Inventories

### **Greenfield**

- Natural Resource Inventories
- Service Learning Park
- Invasive Species Control

### **Grobschmidt**

- Erosion control project with DATCP to stop sedimentation in NW wetland
- Grassland habitat enhancement
- Invasive Species Control
- Natural Resource Inventories



### **Kohl Park**

- Trail development
- Invasive Species Control

### **Rainbow Airport Prairie**

- Invasive Species Control
- Continued work on the Youth Campground installation
- Natural Resource Inventories
- Seed collection day with volunteers
- Natural Resources Inventories
- Prescribed burn



### **Rawson Woods**

- Invasive Species Control
- Natural Resource Inventories

### **Oak Creek Pkwy**

- Invasive Species Control
- Service Learning Park
- Native pollinator garden site prep

### **Mitchell Blvd**

- Invasive Species Control
- Prairie enhancement through City of Milwaukee Neighborhood Grant
- Native planting expansion with Hawley Environmental School



### **Juneau**

- Service Learning Park
- Invasive Species Control
- Expansion of the native pollinator garden with the USFS & the Hyatt

### **Fitzsimmons Woods**

- Invasive Species Control

### **Parks Administration**

- Maintained native pollinator garden

### **Doctors Park**

- Invasive Species Control
- Natural Resource Inventories
- Service Learning Park

### **Grant Park**

- Invasive Species Control
- Rain garden expansion
- Erosion control in the ravines
- Natural Resource Inventories
- Service Learning Park

### **Root River Corridor**

- Service Learning Park
- Invasive Species Control
- Natural Resource Inventories

### **Falk Park**

- Invasive Species Control
- Natural Resource Inventories
- Modification of CRP requirements

### **Noyes Park**

- Trails work (mulching)
- Service Learning Park
- Invasive Species Control
- Natural Resource Inventories with St Bernadette School
- AmeriCorps work day (450 members)



## Larger Program Undertakings

### Encroachment

- Encroachment is a concern throughout the park system. Unfortunately, private citizens and businesses have extended lawns, cut down trees, built structures, and disposed of yard waste and refuse in the County Park's natural areas throughout the system
- Encroachment issues were resolved at 8 sites (4 sites in Oak Creek, 1 in the Root River Corridor, and 3 in the Menomonee River Corridor)



### Trails

- Complete reconstruction of the Oak Leaf Trail (2+miles) between Congress and Silver Spring
- Mountain bike trails under construction at Mangan Woods and the Menomonee River Parkway
- Forestry crews worked along the Oak Leaf Trail countywide
- Represented the DPRC at Trails Council meetings

### Education

- Presentations at SEWISC's public land management seminars
- Nature hikes and trails presentations throughout system
- Noyes Park Restoration day with St. Bernadette
- Elementary school presentations at St. Bernadette's, German Immersion, Fernwood, and Maple Tree
- Savanna restoration day with Hawley Environmental School at Mitchell Blvd
- Natural resources career presentation for the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the Dane County Parks Department.
- Presented at the WPRA conference on the issue of summer youth employment

### Natural Areas Interns

- Donated 2000 hours to the DPRC for the opportunity to develop career skills
- Trained volunteers and Park's staff
- Conducted natural resource inventories



### Lagoon Treatments

- Veterans
- Mitchell
- Jackson
- Greenfield
- Humboldt
- Brown Deer
- Holler



### Lagoon Shoreline Restorations

- McGovern
- Jacobus



### Prescribed Burns

- Bender Park
- Rainbow Airport Prairie

## Notable Partnerships

The **Milwaukee County Parks Forestry Department** was instrumental in the completion/progression of many projects namely in Greenfield Park, Oak Creek Parkway, Bender Park, Rainbow Airport Prairie, and Jacobus Park. They also chipped a substantial amount of material that was generated by The Park People's weed-out events on Park properties throughout the system

### Summer Youth Employment Program

- Two crews in 2009, one working on trail maintenance and the other on playground renovations throughout the system



### SCA- Conservation Leadership Corps

- Wehr – trails development and invasive species removal
- Grant – Cribbing, trail work, invasive specie removal, rain garden expansion
- Washington – Trail work, invasives removal, and native landscaping
- Kohl – Constructed trail turnpikes and wood chipped trails
- Bender – Continued work on the County Parks first youth campground
- Kletzsch – Trail work and creation of canoe landing
- Riverside – Trail construction, invasive species removal, and facility development
- Rawson Woods- Trail repair and stabilization
- Playground Service Day – renovation of 8 playground units
- Colors training

### AmeriCorps NCCC Team (6th team)

- Invasive species removal at Riverside, Greenfield, Jacobus, and Noyes Parks
- Trail work and erosion control at Riverside Park
- Extended the East Bank Trail (ADA Accessible)



### Scout & Brownie Projects

- Railing replacement and pollinator garden at Jacobus
- Native pollinator garden and reflection area at Copernicus
- Bat Houses at Whitnall Park
- Wood duck houses throughout the system
- Educational tree identification signs at Kletzsch Park
- Aldo Leopold Benches



## Neighborhood Associations & Friends Groups

- Many of these organizations stepped forward in 2009 and provided herbicides, native plants, and grant funds for natural areas projects throughout the system. Of special note were the Grant Park Friends, Holler Park Neighborhood Association, and the Story Hill Neighborhood Association

## UWM & MATC Service Learning Projects

- Ecological journal writing at 4 parks
- Educational signage created for 5 parks
- Educational brochures created for Kletzsch and Warnimont
- Natural resource inventories at 8 parks
- Ecological restoration work at 11 parks

### Take a Hike

Enjoy unobstructed views of Lake Michigan and thick wooded areas along the Lake Path and the Oak Leaf Trail, which is over 100 miles long and runs through a large number of parks in Milwaukee County. The trail branches off in several areas allowing you to take in the scenery and differences in the environment. Come with a friend or take the family through the trail and witness a calm and beautiful atmosphere that resembles a natural city backyard. It runs north and south going around the golf course and cutting in and out of dense woods and park lands.



### History

Warnimont Park is named after Eugene Warnimont, a former county supervisor starting in the early 1900's. The original acquisition of land for the park began in 1948 and development of this site was initiated in 1956. The golf course started in 1960 and was expanded to 18 holes in 1965. The Lawrence P. Kelly Senior Center was constructed during the 1960's and named after a long time former Mayor of Cudahy. This land was previously used for a U.S. Army "Hose Lake" hose lines were used to store high explosives and nuclear weapons which were capable of surviving missiles against several attacks.



### Native Plant Community

Behind the Kelly Senior Center along the shoreline lies the Warnimont Bluff Natural Area. This area is owned by Milwaukee County and was designated a State Natural Area in 2002. Public access to this part of the park is limited to research and education. It is dedicated to the preservation of highly unusual alkaline wetlands that are situated on 100 foot high clay banks along the shore. This region supports a variety of few-plant species of significant botanical interest.

#### Species Include:

Ohio goldenrod  
Swamp loosewort  
Kuhm's lobelia  
Scopberry  
Field horsetail  
Elk and brittle-leaf edge



This region is also home to several state threatened plants. The uniqueness of the location of these banks makes it the only natural community of this type in the state of Wisconsin.

### Welcome to Warnimont Park

This park consists of 292 acres of Wisconsin woodlands and offers a variety of elements and activities. It lies in between Grant Park and Sheridan Park in Cudahy. Included within the park are a golf course, archery range, paved bike trail, recreational trail, and Native plant communities. Also located at the park is the Lawrence P. Kelly Senior Center.



**LOCATION:**  
Cudahy, Wisconsin  
3400 S. Lake Dr.  
Unit Office (414) 752-1350



## DATCP/DNR/NRCS

- Erosion control designs developed for Franklin Savanna SNA
- Grobschmidt erosion control
- Butler gartersnake inventories at 4 locations
- Ephemeral wetland survey
- Gypsy Moth spraying coordination
- EAB treatment at 12 Parks

## SEWISC (South-Eastern Wisconsin Invasive Species Consortium)

- Assisted with two seminars on invasive species management
- Assisted with annual symposium
- Received the Governor's Award for Invasive Crusader for 2009
- Assisted with the development of Articles of Incorporation
- Natural Areas Coordinator serves as the current Vice-President



## The Park People Weed-outs

Weed-outs to remove invasive species were conducted in spring and/or in fall at Lake, Menomonee River Pkwy, Estabrook, Grant, Greenfield, Holler, Kletzsch, Juneau, Sheridan, and Honey Creek Pkwy



## Training

**(In all cases training was paid for by a partner organization or by the employee)**

- WI Prescribed Fire Council's Burn Conference
- Invasive Plants Association of Wisconsin Conference
- DNR Aquatic Invasives Training
- UW-Milwaukee Field Station training – WI Lepidoptera and WI Fungi
- International Wetland Scientists/WI Wetland Association Conference
- Milwaukee County Zoo bat survey training
- International Mountain Bike Association –Trail Building Workshop
- Wild Ones Native Landscaping Seminar
- Gypsy Moth Identification and Control Training

## Staff

- Deputy Regional Manager
- Natural Areas Coordinator
- Natural Areas Stewardship Assistant
- Natural Areas Interns



Rainbow Airport Prairie, Prairie Dock August 2009