

**TO: Natural Resource Advisory Group Members**  
**FROM: Ruth Nissen, Natural Resource Advisory Group Chair**  
**DATE: August 10, 2023**  
**RE: Meeting Notice**  
**Thursday, August 24, 2023**  
**3:45 pm, La Crescent City Hall**  
**315 Main Street**

I. Old Business-

- A. Approve Minutes from 7/20/23
- B. Review/follow-up Migratory Bird Day - Ruth will try to enter that info on the Migratory Bird page for La Crescent and.
- C. Signage update (Frank J. Kistler Memorial Park, Vetsch/Stoney, Wagon Wheel) flower guide sign at Kistler. Design for signs at Stoney is done, no date on completion. Wagon Wheel sign letters will be painted black and sealed. Jim and Ruth will clean up splashing.
- D. Vetsch/Stoney boundary update
- E. Review updates for Tree Care and Preservation Ordinance-sent out by Jason -
- F. Dog Park update
- G. Food forest update
- H. Date with Val Green for Forest Habitat Review (a Park Plan objective) - is set for Wed Sept 27 with October 4 as backup. This will be a pilot effort - a walk-through with conversation producing a written summary. The plan is to rotate this effort through the woodland parks.
- I.

II. New Business

- A. . Blufflands Funding Request- Jason will send the request for a letter of support for funds which could be used for easement, prairie restoration and land acquisition. Discuss at the August meeting.
- B. Trail maintenance
  1. Reviewed trails (map) in Stoney Point/Vetsch and discussed maintenance whether some trails might return to a wild state. Continue at the August meeting.
  2. Weed whipping and trail width - discussed what is appropriate. Continue research and discuss at the August meeting
  3. Potential for CPL grant for removal of woody invasives removal on the lower 1/3 of Stoney Point (removal, disposal, reforestation), - to be determined
  4. Bikes on Stoney - will address with signage (progress)
  5. Maintenance criteria for volunteers discussion

C. Additional project identification (ideas from Jason) - discussed how to approach volunteer engagement? Progress?

1. Weeding during the establishment phase

- Veterans park prairie planting behind Kwik Trip
- Veterans park native plantings in the parking lots
- Vetsch park prairie planting - ragweed, Canada thistle, sumac
- MnDOT Landscape Partnership prairie/landscaped areas Hwy 14/61
- Pine Creek Prairie Establishment Mowing's

2. Siberian Elm Removal in the MnDOT planting sites along the highway.

D. Buckthorn Removal - HELP Grant Funds - county received grant with funds with cost share for buckthorn removal 75% of cost. Up to \$600. Discuss at the August meeting

D. Public Input

III. Next meeting

**Minutes, July 20, 2023**

**Present:** Betsy Knowles, Marge Loch-Wouters, Jason Ludwigson, Ruth Nissen, Randy Urich, Bill Waller

**Guests:** Steve Hoff

I. Old Business

- A. Minutes from 5/9/23 approved
- B. Minutes from 5/23/23 approved
- C. Review/follow-up Migratory Bird Day - Ruth will ask for a record of the birds banded that day. Next year we will start to plan earlier - hopefully no avian influenza.
- D. Signage update (Frank J. Kistler Memorial Park, Vetsch/Stoney, Wagon Wheel) Bill will follow up on posting the flower guide sign at Kistler. Design for signs at Stoney is done, no date on completion. Wagon Wheel sign letters will be painted black and sealed. Jim and Ruth will clean up splashing.
- E. Frank J. Kistler Park plantings. Some butterfly weed was lost in drought - in the future the city will water if we identify the need. Next year - mark power lines in veterans planting and pre-order plants needed from Diane.
- F. Vetsch/Stoney boundary update - Tim is working on maps and descriptions for where trails leave the park boundaries.
- G. Tree Care and Preservation Ordinance - updates made, Jason will circulate the updated version.
- H. Dog Park update - Donor contributions for the dog park are in. County is agreeable with the driveway plan. The Eagle Scout group will clear brush at the end of July. Discussed the need for grass cover mix and Randy will help mark trees.

II. New Business

- A. Public Input arrangements for meetings - plan to keep informal
- B. Food Forest - The original grant was for the design, which is completed. Possible locations have been identified and Jason is looking at funding sources for a phased development.
- C. Date with Val Green for Forest Habitat Review (a Park Plan objective) - is set for Wed Sept 27 with October 4 as backup. This will be a pilot effort - a walk-through with conversation producing a written summary. The plan is to rotate this effort through the woodland parks.

D. Bird City Update - We have a new contact, and an engagement page on the MN/IA web page. Information needs to be updated and then linked to the La Crescent City web page.

E. Tree Steward Training Oct. 14<sup>th</sup> 2023 - online sign up.

F. Additional project identification (ideas from Jason) - discussed how to approach volunteer engagement

1. Weeding during the establishment phase

- Veterans park prairie planting behind Kwik Trip
- Veterans park native plantings in the parking lots
- Vetsch park prairie planting - ragweed, canada thistle, sumac
- MnDOT Landscape Partnership prairie/landscaped areas Hwy 14/61
- Pine Creek Prairie Establishment Mowing's

2. Siberian Elm Removal in the MnDOT planting sites along the highway.

3. Buckthorn Removal - HELP Grant Funds - county received grant with funds with cost share for buckthorn removal 75% of cost. Up to \$600. Discuss at the August meeting.

4. Blufflands Funding Request- Jason will send the request for a letter of support for funds which could be used for easement, prairie restoration and land acquisition. Discuss at the August meeting.

G. Public input - input heard on Vetsch/Stoney trail conditions and potential changes.

H. Trail maintenance

1. Trail maintenance day - general feeling is this was very worthwhile and efficient. A city maintenance crew of 3 did all of the power cutting.

2. Reviewed trails (map) in Stoney Point/Vetsch and discussed maintenance whether some trails might return to a wild state. Continue at the August meeting.

3. Weed whipping and trail width - discussed what is appropriate. Continue research and discuss at the August meeting

4. Potential for CPL grant for removal of woody invasives removal on the lower 1/3 of Stoney Point (removal, disposal, reforestation), - to be determined

5. Bikes on Stoney - will address with signage

6. Maintenance criteria for volunteers discussion

III. Next meeting tentatively Aug 24 at 3:45 with a hiking meeting before the 24th