

"Watch your thoughts; they become words. Watch your words; they become actions. Watch your actions; they become habits. Watch your habits; they become your character. Watch your character; it becomes your destiny."

If you believe you can, or you believe you can't, you're right.

- Henry Ford.







# Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission

From Grassroots to Deep Roots  
Small Organizations With Big Ambitions

February, 2017





# Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission

[Home](#) [Projects](#) [Nature Speaks](#) [Calendar](#) [Volunteering](#) [Sponsors](#) [Gallery](#) [Publications](#) [Contact us](#) [Links](#)

Welcome to the Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission website.

Our mission is to preserve, protect and restore natural areas and raise awareness of environmental issues affecting Prospect Heights Illinois.

It is our goal to guide the community in natural open space preservation efforts and encourage private land owners to adopt land management practices that protect and enhance natural resources. We promote community awareness and education of environmental issues affecting Prospect Height's natural resources such as Emerald Ash Borer, storm water and flood management and the threat of invasive species.



NEW PHNRC PRESENTATIONS

city.

Our organization is an all volunteer network designed to enhance, restore and manage the natural areas and resources in order to maintain and improve their ecological health and biodiversity. During the year, we conduct work events where volunteers come together to participate in organized restoration projects. We welcome all volunteers.

SEE THE LATEST ON THE PHNRC PRESCRIBED BURN AT THE SLOUGH

Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission  
8 N. Elmhurst Road  
Prospect Heights, IL. 60070

Subscribe to the Resources Journal  
Receive Work Day Notices





# The Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission

## About Us

1. We are an all volunteer organization
2. We were founded in February of 2014 by Agnes Wojnarski and Kari Spiegelhalter
3. Governed by 6 Commissioners appointed by the City council of Prospect Heights
4. Conduct work days every other Sunday year round with special work days during seed collection and special events
5. We have a reservoir of 30 dedicated volunteers
6. Our projects are all surrounded by residential property



# PHNRC Project Sites July 2016



- ComEd Prairie Restoration
- Somerset Park
- Remnant Prairie
- Remnant Sedge Meadow
- Slough & Hillcrest Lake
- Morava Nature Preserve
- Tully Park



# So what have we accomplished in 3 years?

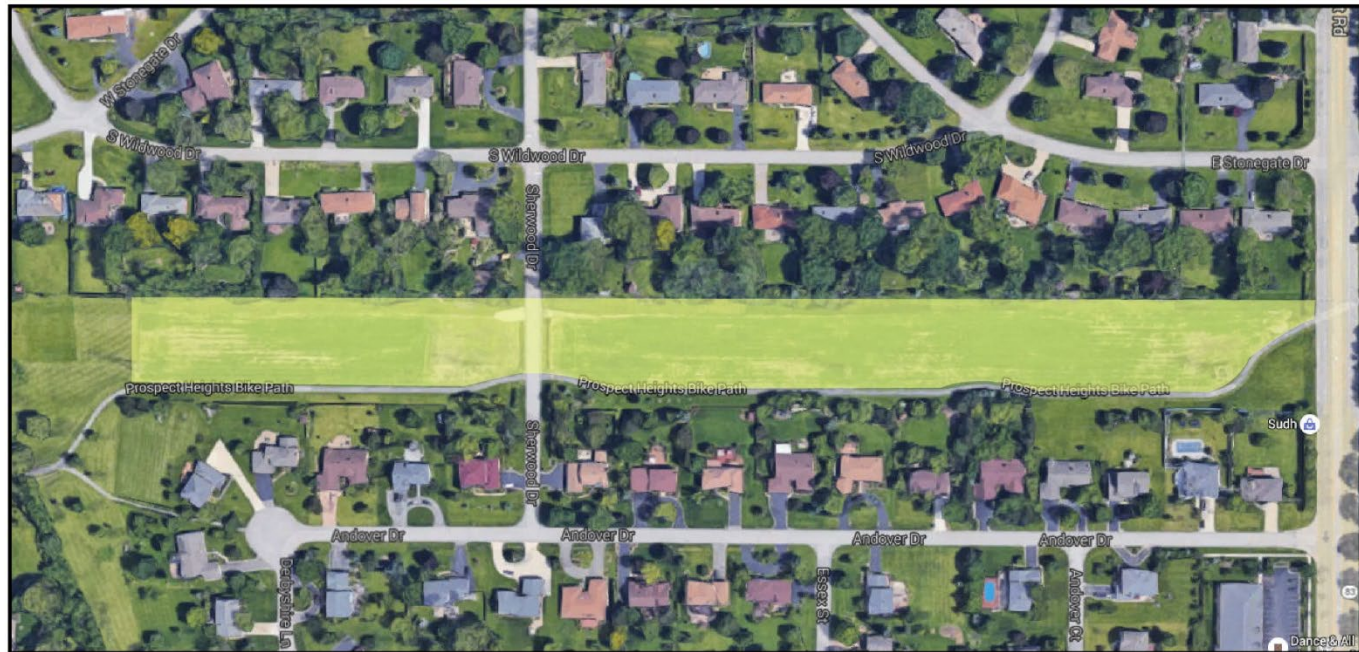
We established a loyal, dedicated volunteer base of 30 plus that works year round every other week, on special occasions and double time during seed collection











PHNRC Project Sites - ComEd Prairie Restoration - 2016

Park District Project - ComEd Lease Agreement

■ Work area



Woodland  
Trails Park





In 2014, we received the first of two Openlands - ComEd Green Regions grants. Consisting of two parts, the bulk of it was to restore 5 acres of mowed ComEd right away into a prairie.















Prairie  
Restoration in  
Progress  
No Motorized  
Vehicles



[www.illinois.gov](http://www.illinois.gov)









PHNRC Project Sites  
 Slough & Hillcrest Lake - 2016  
 Joint Park District Project & City Project

- Work area City
- Work Area Park District





The other part of the grant assisted in the restoration of a portion the wetlands known as the Prospect Heights Slough.

The Slough is 8 acres in size and took a year and a half to remove the buckthorn.







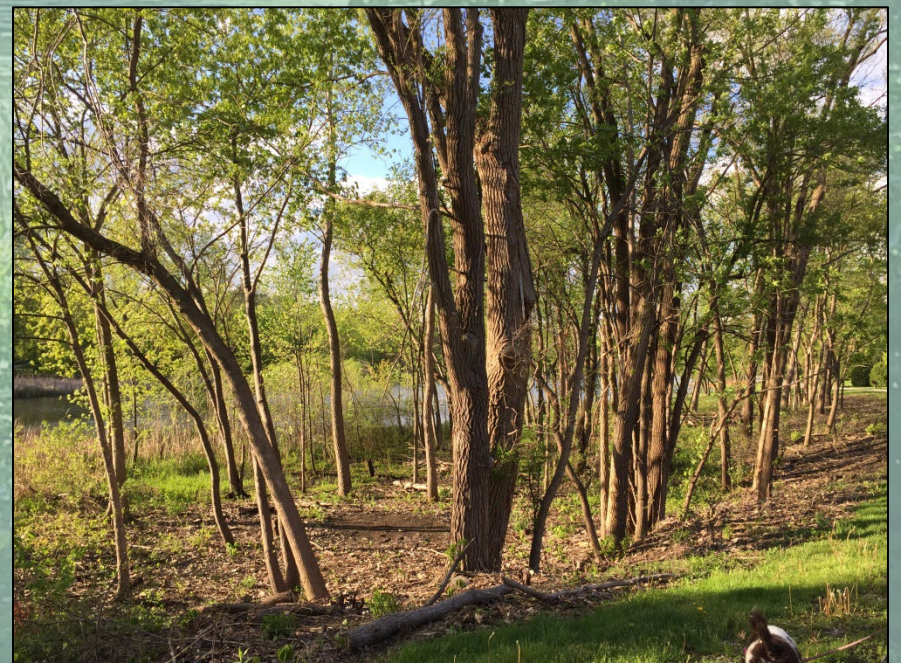












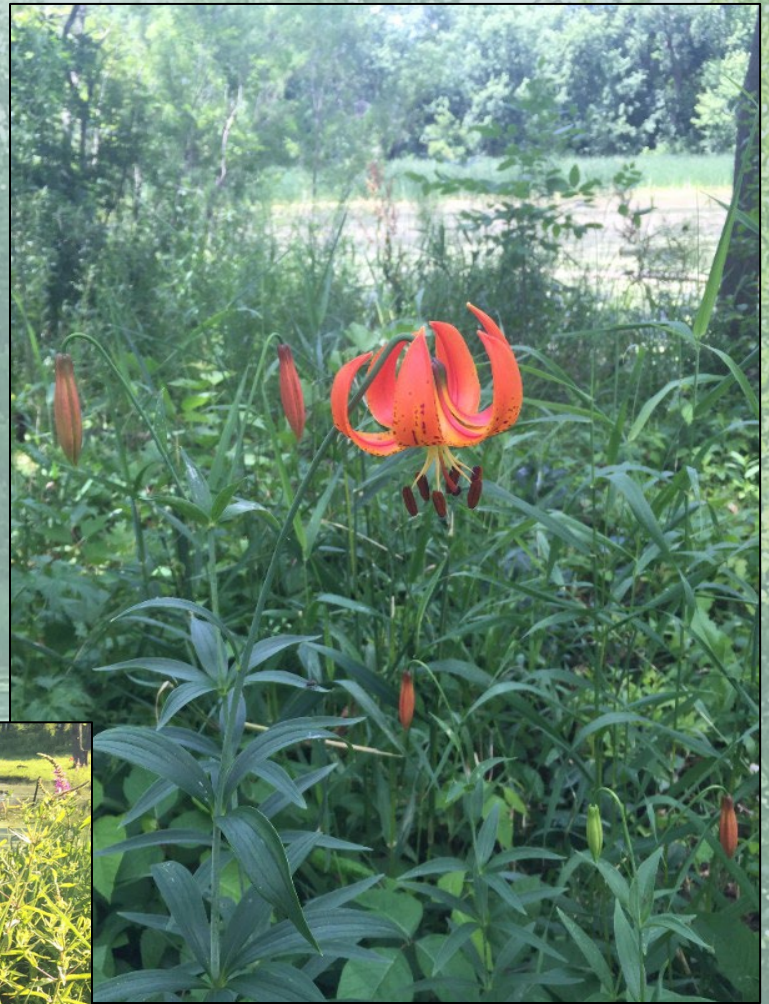






























# Conducted the first prescribed burn in Prospect Heights



The burn was conducted at the Slough in a residential area.



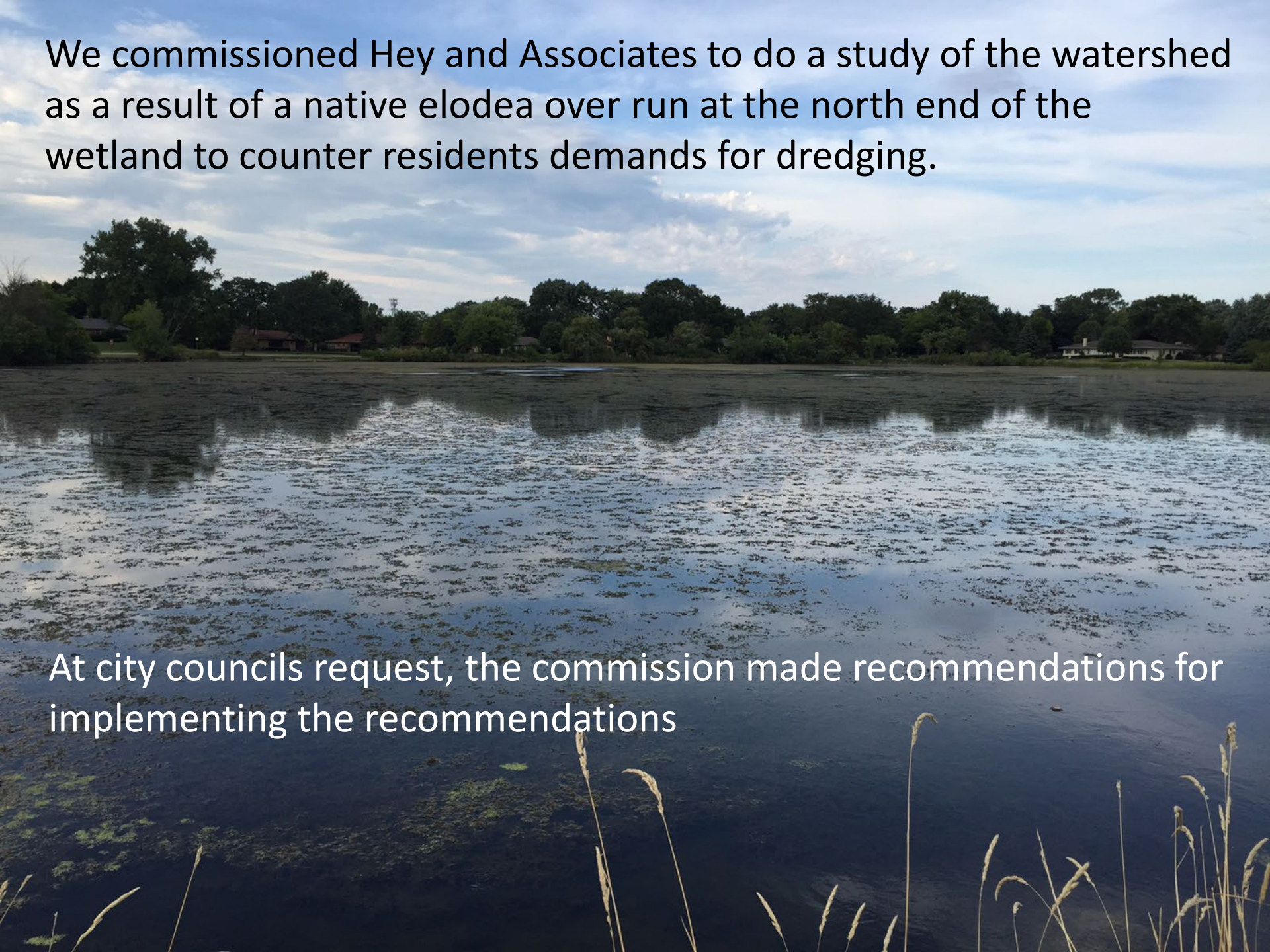






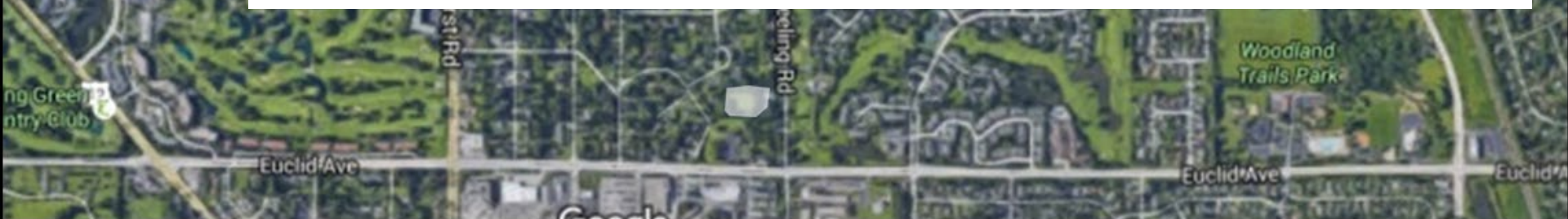
We commissioned Hey and Associates to do a study of the watershed as a result of a native elodea over run at the north end of the wetland to counter residents demands for dredging.

At city councils request, the commission made recommendations for implementing the recommendations





PHNRC Project Sites  
Tully Park - 2016  
Park District & Tully Park Residents Project  
 Work area








We inspired, empowered and organized a residential community to secure and restore their landlocked park into a natural area







The image shows two greenhouses in a wooded area. The greenhouse on the left is dark green with a gabled roof and a door that is open. The greenhouse on the right is white with a similar gabled roof and a door that is also open. Both greenhouses have multiple shelves inside. The ground in front of the greenhouses is covered with a stone path and some grass. There are trees in the background.

We started a greenhouse program to propagate our own local native species for use in our restoration and outreach programs













Last year we grew and planted over 30,000 native plugs comprised of over 80 species.







PHNRC Project Sites  
 Remnant Prairie - 2016  
 Park District Project  
 ComEd Lease Agreement  
 ■ Work area







We manage a remnant prairie and sedge meadow as the seed source for our green house program. Additional seed comes from our restored work sites.

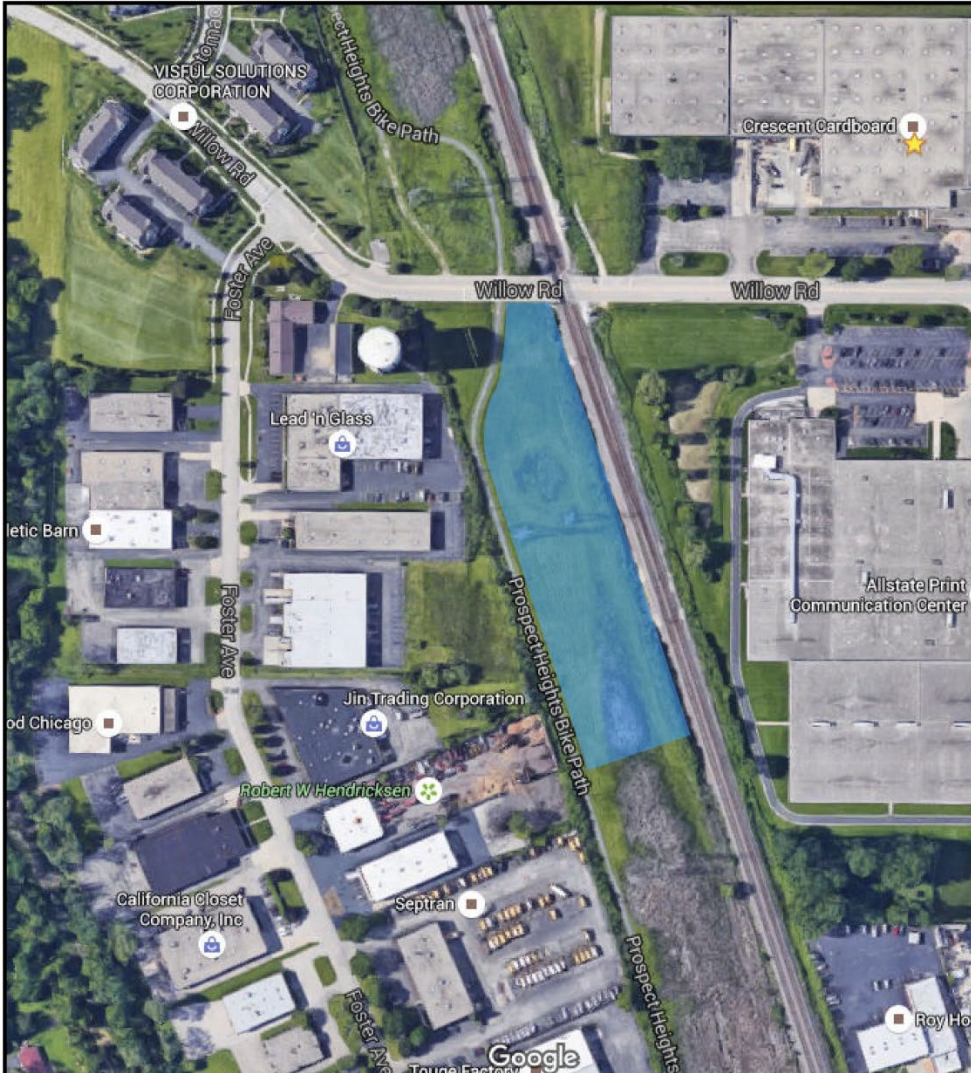












PHNRC Project Sites  
 Remnant Sedge Meadow- 2016  
 Park District Project - ComEd Lease Agreement  
 ■ Work area











E Palatine Rd

E Palatine Rd

Palatine Rd



N Schoenbeck Rd



Schoenbeck Rd

Anne Ct

Andover Dr

Derbyshire Ln

Garage Storage Cabinets

N Schoenbeck Rd

Anne Ct

Anne Ct

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church

Derbyshire Ln

Palatine Frontage Rd

Palatine Frontage Rd

E Palatine Rd

PHNRC Project Sites  
Somerset Park - 2016  
Park District Project  
Work area





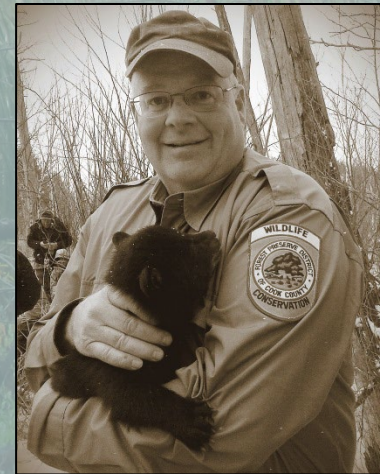
We were awarded a Capstone Project from the University of Wisconsin at Madison to work with a senior landscape design student in the design for Somerset Park





Our Outreach programs took several avenues.

# NATURE SPEAKS



Nature Speaks was designed to bring in one nationally or locally prominent speaker per season to give education lectures about restoration, wildlife and conservation





We partnered with the Park District to offer nature based classes for children and adults





We offered bird walks, plant id, prairie and slough walks and tree maintenance





We hosted the Chicago Wilderness Green Infrastructure Mapping Project and launched a nature based art program with our public library





We created interactive programs for students at local grade schools.



300 packets of native seeds were distributed to 2<sup>nd</sup> graders as part of the Prairie-in-a-Packet

In-school presentations are made in an attempt to peak interest in nature and restoration



Our work days often include scout troops





Our Grow-it-Don't-Mow-It allowed us to field test ideas and practices while converting residents mowed lawns into part of the naturalized corridor.







Through the generosity of one of our dedicated Volunteers, we employed our first summer intern.



With the success the intern program had, the offer was renewed for 2017.....



and the Park District budgeted for a second position

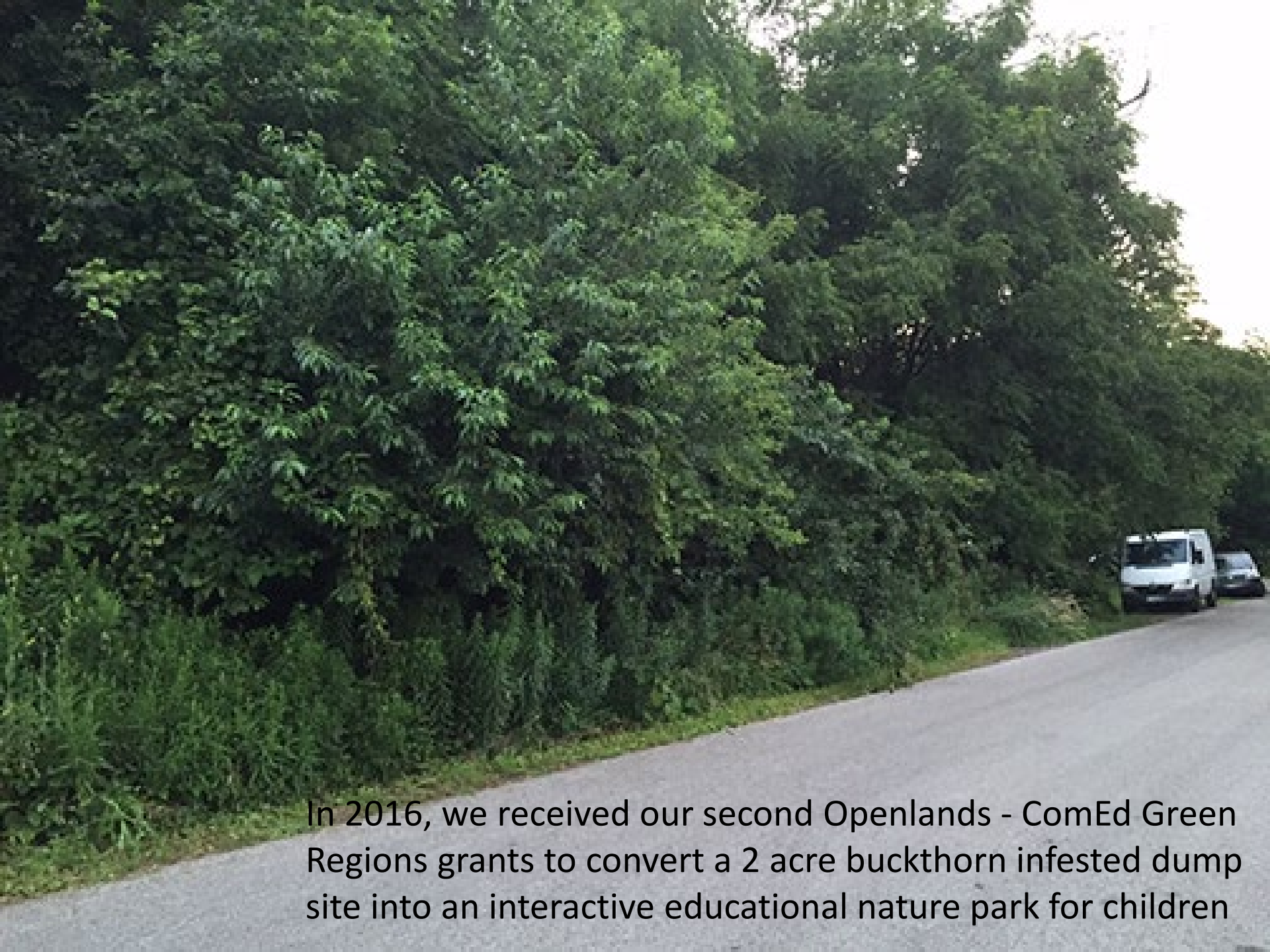




PHNRC Project Sites - Morava Center Nature Preserve - 2016  
Park District Project  
■ Work area







In 2016, we received our second Openlands - ComEd Green Regions grants to convert a 2 acre buckthorn infested dump site into an interactive educational nature park for children





The grant was partnered with the Park District





The site featured a meandering tributary creek with heavy erosion that bisected it into an upland and a low land







The grant incorporates an interpretative bridge that links the upper and lower sections together. Meet Sam. Sam is Scout who Volunteers with us. He is becoming an Eagle Scout. His project? He wants to do the bridge. Sure we said. He went out and got a prestigious Architectural firm to design it Pro Bono.





To effectively communicate, we created our website phnrc.com,



## Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission

[Home](#) [Projects](#) [Nature Speaks](#) [Calendar](#) [Volunteering](#) [Sponsors](#) [Gallery](#) [Publications](#) [Contact us](#) [Links](#)

### Publications

#### Resources Journal Archives

##### 2017

January

##### 2016

December  
November  
October  
September  
August  
July  
June  
May  
April  
March  
February  
January

##### 2015

January  
February  
March  
April  
May  
June  
July  
August  
September  
October  
November  
December

##### 2014

December  
November  
October  
September

#### PHNRC Presentations

Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission  
8 N. Elmhurst Road  
Prospect Heights, IL. 60070

Subscribe to the Resources Journal  
Receive Work Day Notices







## Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission

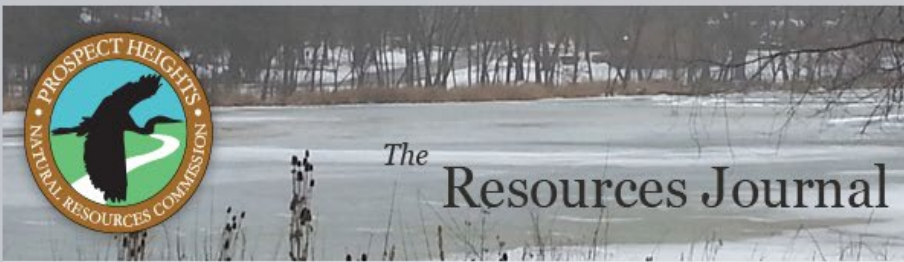
[Home](#) [Projects](#) [Nature Speaks](#) [Calendar](#) [Volunteering](#) [Sponsors](#) [Gallery](#) [Publications](#) [Contact us](#) [Links](#)

Informational videos and....



Prospect Heights  
Natural Resources Commission  
Progress Report on ComEd  
Prairie Restoration. 2016





December 2016

And our monthly  
e-news journal

## 2016, The Year That Was!

It is impossible to believe that another full year has come and gone. It has become a PHNRC December tradition to pause and reflect back on the things that we have accomplished over the year. This year, there is much to remember as this was our best year ever.

**January 2016**, we welcomed Al Steffen as the new Police Chief of Prospect Heights and very quickly understood what a great appointment the city had made. As a naturalist from boyhood on, Chief Steffen has become a great friend and supporter of the NRC.

In what could have been the most significant event of the entire year, the Commission received the unbelievable anonymous donation of a paid summer intern, something we could have only dreamed of but so dramatically changed the landscape.



Prospect Heights Police Chief Al Steffen



John McCabe

Nature Speaks saw our good friend John McCabe, Director of the Department of Resource Management for the Forest Preserve District of Cook County come out on a cold January to talk fire while Agnes told us all about mosses and lichening it.

**February 2016** started in high gear with a work day visit from Prospect Heights based



# So how did we accomplish all this?

The short story? In everything we do we strive to:

To communicate effectively, be kind, treat everyone with respect, adhere to science and best land management practices, be accessible, over achieve, appreciate everything, learn as much as possible, and preserve, protect and expand the natural areas and green corridors for the insects, birds, mammals, amphibians and fish that depend on US.

## What we did

### 1. We established our leadership

We looked for and recruited expertise especially from within

We build on the diverse strengths of the group

We share in the decision making

We allow for diversity and difference of opinion

We reach conclusions and make decisions

We spent time learning how the system works and how to use it

We spend time together outside of our work

We have a healthy balance of science and romance



## 2. We concentrated on building our volunteer base

We understood we were nothing without our volunteers

We knew we would accomplish little without the volunteers

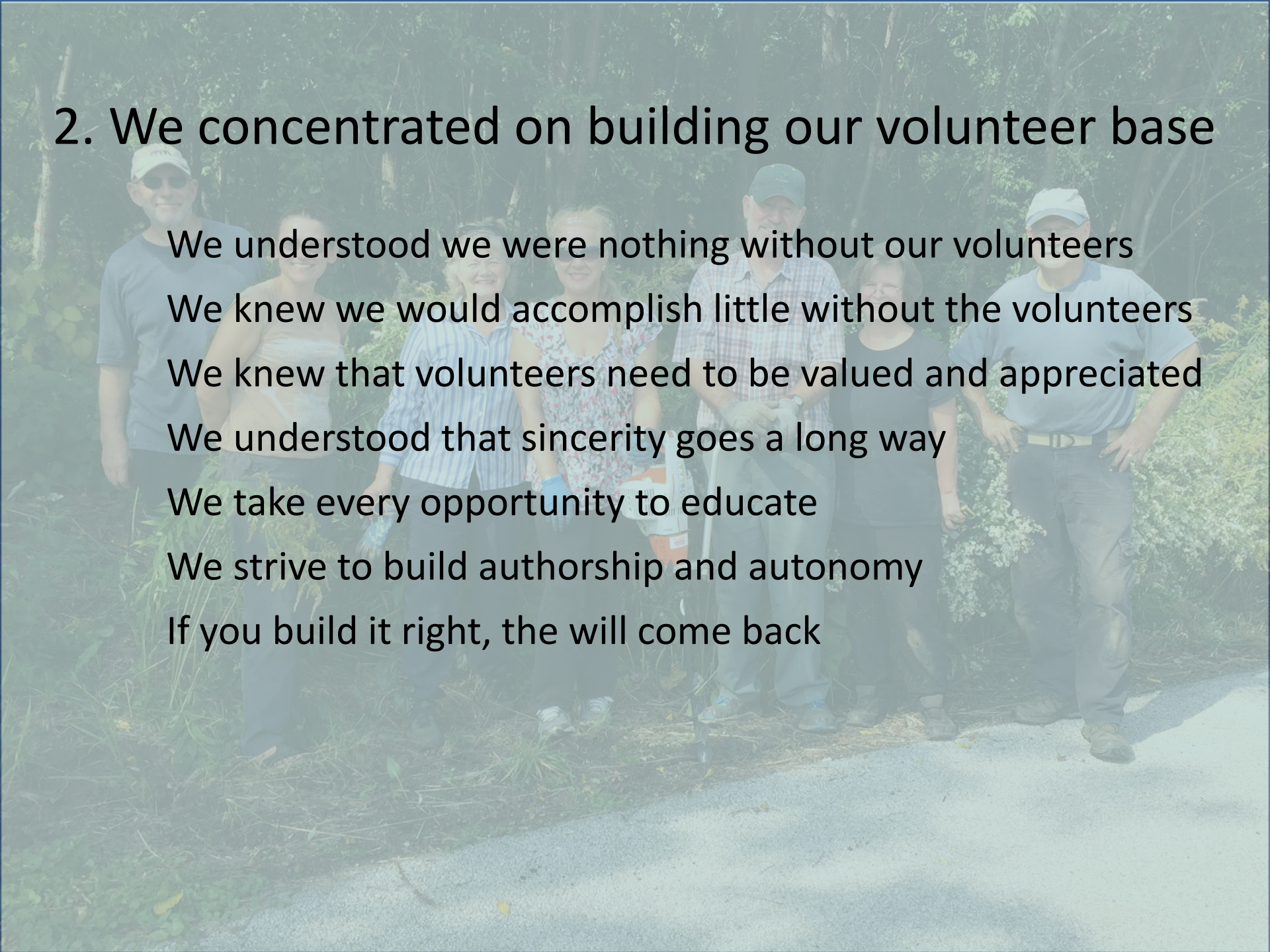
We knew that volunteers need to be valued and appreciated

We understood that sincerity goes a long way

We take every opportunity to educate

We strive to build authorship and autonomy

If you build it right, the will come back





### 3. We focused on outreach and communication

Being understood is necessary for survival

We sought to communicate in every way possible

We learned to communicate in a lot of different ways

We learned to communicate through adverse situations

We sought to make communication as personable as possible

We sought to raise our profile and influence in the community

We sought to include people



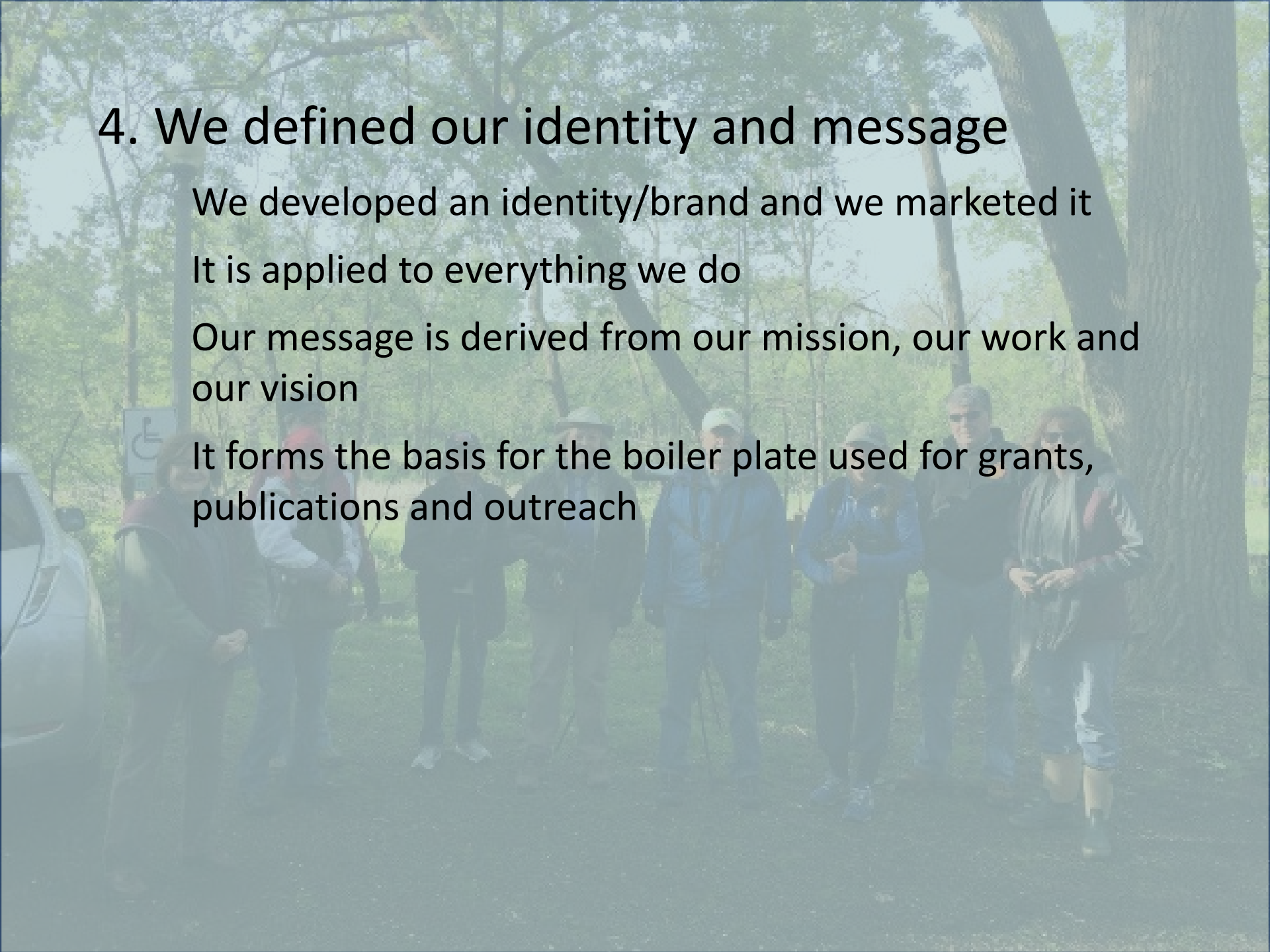
## 4. We defined our identity and message

We developed an identity/brand and we marketed it

It is applied to everything we do

Our message is derived from our mission, our work and our vision

It forms the basis for the boiler plate used for grants, publications and outreach





## 5. We Covet goodwill

You will accomplish nothing without goodwill

We strive to be NICE to everyone

We strive to be good in everything we do

We make a concerted effort to engage people

We overachieve and do the unexpected

We respect everyone whether they have earned it or not

We always try to send a clear message

We strive to be authentic

We always listen even if we don't want to hear it

We look to resolve conflict as fast as possible



6. We are committed to upgrading ourselves and the commission

We are always looking to get better and more effective

We study our work and learn from the results

We take classes

Education and experience are key

There are opportunities everywhere

Morton Arboretum – Woodland Stewardship Program, plant ID, ecology, burn certification

Forest Preserves of Cook County – Volunteer opportunities, brush pile burning, using a chainsaw, internships etc.

We learn from volunteers and mentors

We learn from Mother Nature

We are not afraid to experiment or make mistakes as long as we learn from them



## 7. We work on purpose and with intention

We try to work mindfully

We work with intention and visualize the outcome

We believe in what we are doing

We allow nature to influence and inspire us

We really love what we are doing

We allow time to breath it all in and fully appreciate accomplishments



## 8. Formed alliances with local city government and the restoration community.

We work hand-in-glove with the Park District, Public Works, the Police Department, The Public Library, the Fire Department, City Council and the Mayor.



We have partnered with The Bird Conservation Network, the Poplar Creek Stewards, Fermilab Natural Areas, The Morton Arboretum and the Forest Preserves of Cook County



BIRD CONSERVATION NETWORK



We have been fortunate enough to be sponsored by ComEd and Openlands



An Exelon Company



openlands  
conserving nature for life



## 9. We volunteer everywhere

Volunteering creates opportunity

Volunteering is an opportunity to learn

Volunteering is an opportunity to create partnerships and networks

Volunteering creates friendships and professional relationships

Volunteering can give insight and solutions to problems



# Importance of Communication

Informs (& calms) the public

Builds credibility with governmental/local officials

Recruits new volunteers

Motivates current volunteers

Increases visibility in your community



# Types of Communication

Website

Email/newsletters/journals/work day notices

Library events

Signs at work sites

Elected officials and council meetings

Letters and notices to residents

Local cable stations (photos and videos)

Engage passers by

Participate at community events

Press releases



# Website



## Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission

[Home](#) [Projects](#) [Nature Speaks](#) [Calendar](#) [Volunteering](#) [Sponsors](#) [Gallery](#) [Publications](#) [Contact us](#) [Links](#)

### Welcome to the Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission website

Our mission is to preserve, protect and restore natural areas and raise awareness of environmental issues affecting Prospect Heights Illinois.

It is our goal to guide the community in natural open space preservation efforts and encourage private land owners to adopt land management practices that protect and enhance natural resources. We promote community awareness and education of environmental issues affecting Prospect Heights's natural resources such as Emerald Ash Borer, storm water and flood management and the threat of invasive species.

We work in conjunction with the City of Prospect Heights, reporting to the City Council and making recommendations for legislation and other actions that would pertain to the natural resources of the city.

Our organization is an all volunteer network designed to enhance, restore and manage the natural areas and resources in order to maintain and improve their ecological health and biodiversity. During the year, we conduct work events where volunteers come together to participate in organized restoration projects. We welcome all volunteers.

[SEE THE LATEST ON THE PHNRC PRESCRIBED BURN AT THE SLOUGH](#)



[Read the Journal](#)

[NEW VIDEO GALLERY](#)



[NEW PHNRC PRESENTATIONS](#)

Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission  
8 N. Elmhurst Road  
Prospect Heights, IL. 60070

[Subscribe to the Resources Journal](#)  
[Receive Work Day Notices](#)





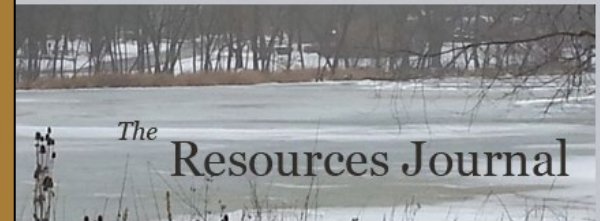


# Volunteer Work Day

11/20/2016



**PHNRC Annual Seed Processing & Volunteer**



## The Resources Journal

...y Creates Unique Work Days



January brought one of the most unique and memorable work days for PHNRC. An "Instant Winter Classic", the day went from pushing cranberry on the west side of the Slough, to skating on black ice to remove invasive buckthorn from the steep banks of the pond.

...s Thanksgiving!

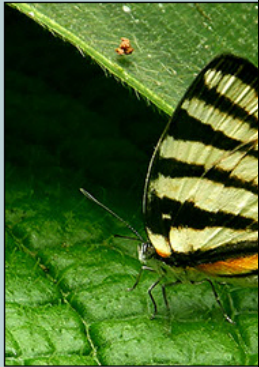




April 19, 2017 - **Doug Taron**

monarch. Learn what you

Doug Taron is the Curator of the Academy of Sciences' Pegasus since the museum's opening oversees management of the insect conservation biology a dozen imperiled butterfly



Taron shares leadership in Cook County, Illinois. Since Network. Taron received a



July 11th, 2017 - **Dr. Abigail Derby Lewis**  
Senior Conservation Ecologist and Senior Program Manager for



September 27, 2016 - **Kurt Dreisilker**  
Head of Natural Resources - Morton Arboretum.

Since 2004, Kurt Dreisilker has developed and led the natural resource program at The Morton Arboretum. As the Head of Natural Resources he leads and implements ecological restoration programs and projects throughout 900 acres of the Arboretum, including oak woodlands, wetlands, and prairies.

The Morton Arboretum provides a unique perspective on invasive plant species. In Dreisilker's presentation "Invasive Plant Prevention at Morton Arboretum" you will learn how this public garden controls invasive woody species by using several unique resources, such as: ninety two years of history, 1700 acres of living collections surrounded by natural areas, a herbarium, and numerous naturalists employed over time who recorded information about the regional flora. The presentation will share

examples and insights into how The Morton Arboretum deals with plant invasions and evaluates the plant collections for invasive species.



NATURE

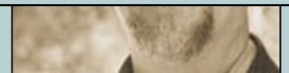
NATURE

NA  
SPE

REGIS

All progr  
at the Pro  
Public Lib  
meeting r  
promptly  
Speaks i  
but regist  
necessar

its Migration" explores the life cycle and the incredible migration of this most determined and most well know





# Signage at the work sites





# Notices to residents



## Notice to Prospect Heights Residents

---

**ITEM:** Fall 2016 Prescribed Burn of the Prospect Heights Slough natural areas.

---

### **NOTICE:**

Dear residents in the vicinity of the Prospect Heights Slough,

This is to notify you that the Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission will be conducting a one day prescribed burn of the Slough somewhere between November 11<sup>th</sup> and December 15<sup>th</sup>. In order to conduct a prescribed burn safely, precise weather and atmospheric conditions must be present, so advanced notice of a burn date may only be a day or two. We will make every effort possible to notify residents in advance on our website on the calendar of events page, through an email blast to our subscribers and a reverse 911 call on the morning of. PHNRC will work with Peter Falcone of the City Administrators office to keep residents informed and up to date.

The purpose of a controlled burn is to manage the natural areas of Prospect Heights, in this case the Slough. Burning is the most important tool in the restoration tool box. It is the single most effective tool for removal of invasive buckthorn re-sprouts other invasive woody vegetation and fire intolerant species. Burning saves countless hours of volunteer labor, while promoting strong new growth of fire tolerant native plants. Burning is necessary to achieve a healthy, biodiverse habitat.

All of the crew members have completed Chicago Wilderness Burn Crew training and are certified burn crew.

The burn will be conducted with a very slow and controlled strip burn against a favorable wind. The entire burn should be completed within 4 hours. The



# Local cable stations





Engage passersby





PROSPECT HEIGHTS

Community events



A large black display board is the central focus, featuring a variety of content. At the top center is a circular logo for 'PROSPECT HEIGHTS' with a silhouette of a person and a tree. Below the logo, there are several sections: 'OUR PROJECTS' with a list of items, a 'MISSION STATEMENT' with a paragraph of text, and a 'Volunteering' section with a list of names and photos. The board is also decorated with numerous small photographs showing people at various events and activities. A map of the area is visible in the lower-left corner of the board. To the right of the board, there are several trays of small green seedlings on a white table. In the foreground, two large terracotta pots contain young plants. The entire scene is set outdoors on a paved area under a blue tent.



# Old school publicity

## Sample press release

# Use lots of pictures and images to grab attention



--- PRESS RELEASE ---

## **NATURE SPEAKS** LIBRARY PROGRAM

**"Fire and the Forest  
Preserves of Cook County"**



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
January 19, 2016

Contact: Agnes Wojnarski (224) 659-0002

PROSPECT HEIGHTS - The Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission and the Prospect Heights Public Library are co-sponsoring an educational and informational program on prescribed burning in an urban environment.

### **NATURE SPEAKS**



The program entitled "Fire and the Forest Preserves of Cook County" will be held on, Tuesday, January 26th at 7:00 pm at the Prospect Heights Public Library, 12 N. Elm Street in Prospect Heights.

John McCabe, Director of Resource Management for the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, will discuss prescribed burning in the urban environment and how the Forest Preserve District applies this critical management tool safely and effectively.

Residents of Prospect Heights will find this talk particularly informative, useful and comforting as the Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission plans to have a prescribed burn of the Slough in the spring or fall of 2016.

John has worked in several positions for the Forest Preserves since May of 1990 when he was employed as a Student Forester while completing his degree in Forestry at Michigan Technological University. Since then he has worked as a Woodsman, Forester, Resource Manager, Training and Safety Coordinator, and Deputy Director.

During his time at the Forest Preserves he has dramatically improved training in prescribed burning and the effective and safe use of chainsaws and other mechanical tools. John coordinates spring and fall burn seasons and supervises the department's resource management, trails, wildlife, ecology, project management, conservation corps and fisheries divisions. He has participated in almost 500 fires in his twenty plus years working for the District.



*NATURE SPEAKS* is a partnership between Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission and the Prospect Heights Public Library and registration for this event is necessary. Please register by calling or visiting the library's information desk or calling 847.259.3500 ext. 35. Please register early as seating is limited.

Complete information about the *NATURE SPEAKS* series is available at [www.phnrc.com](http://www.phnrc.com). One can also learn more about our area's natural resources, native prairies, volunteer activity days, and other educational information there as well.

###



Interesting  
Title



--- PRESS RELEASE ---

## NATURE SPEAKS LIBRARY PROGRAM

"Fire and the Forest  
Preserves of Cook County"



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 19, 2016

Contact: Agnes Wojnarski (224) 659-0002

PROSPECT HEIGHTS - The Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission and the Prospect Heights Public Library are co-sponsoring an educational and informational program on prescribed burning in an urban environment.

**NATURE  
SPEAKS**



The program entitled "Fire and the Forest Preserves of Cook County" will be held on, Tuesday, January 26th at 7:00 pm at the Prospect Heights Public Library, 12 N. Elm Street in Prospect Heights.

John McCabe, Director of Resource Management for the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, will discuss prescribed burning in the urban environment and how the Forest Preserve District applies this critical management tool safely and effectively.

Residents of Prospect Heights will find this talk particularly informative, useful and comforting as the Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission plans to have a prescribed burn of the Slough in the spring or fall of 2016.

John has worked in several positions for the Forest Preserves since May of 1990 when he was employed as a Student Forester while completing his degree in Forestry at Michigan Technological University. Since then he has worked as a Woodsman, Forester, Resource Manager, Training and Safety Coordinator, and Deputy Director.

During his time at the Forest Preserves he has dramatically improved training in prescribed burning and the effective and safe use of chainsaws and other mechanical tools. John coordinates spring and fall burn seasons and supervises the department's resource management, trails, wildlife, ecology, project management, conservation corps and fisheries divisions. He has participated in almost 500 fires in his twenty plus years working for the District.



*NATURE SPEAKS* is a partnership between Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission and the Prospect Heights Public Library and registration for this event is necessary. Please register by calling or visiting the library's information desk or calling 847.259.3500 ext. 35. Please register early as seating is limited.

Complete information about the *NATURE SPEAKS* series is available at [www.phnrc.com](http://www.phnrc.com). One can also learn more about our area's natural resources, native prairies, volunteer activity days, and other educational information there as well.

###



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
January 19, 2016



--- PRESS RELEASE ---

## NATURE SPEAKS LIBRARY PROGRAM

"Fire and the Forest  
Preserves of Cook County"



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
January 19, 2016

Contact: Agnes Wojnarski (224) 659-0002

PROSPECT HEIGHTS - The Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission and the Prospect Heights Public Library are co-sponsoring an educational and informational program on prescribed burning in an urban environment.

### NATURE SPEAKS



The program entitled "Fire and the Forest Preserves of Cook County" will be held on Tuesday, January 26th at 7:00 pm at the Prospect Heights Public Library, 12 N. Elm Street in Prospect Heights.

John McCabe, Director of Resource Management for the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, will discuss prescribed burning in the urban environment and how the Forest Preserve District applies this critical management tool safely and effectively.

Residents of Prospect Heights will find this talk particularly informative, useful and comforting as the Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission plans to have a prescribed burn of the Slough in the spring or fall of 2016.

John has worked in several positions for the Forest Preserves since May of 1990 when he was employed as a Student Forester while completing his degree in Forestry at Michigan Technological University. Since then he has worked as a Woodsman, Forester, Resource Manager, Training and Safety Coordinator, and Deputy Director.



During his time at the Forest Preserves he has dramatically improved training in prescribed burning and the effective and safe use of chainsaws and other mechanical tools. John coordinates spring and fall burn seasons and supervises the department's resource management, trails, wildlife, ecology, project management, conservation corps and fisheries divisions. He has participated in almost 500 fires in his twenty plus years working for the District.

*NATURE SPEAKS* is a partnership between Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission and the Prospect Heights Public Library and registration for this event is necessary. Please register by calling or visiting the library's information desk or calling 847.259.3500 ext. 35. Please register early as seating is limited.

Complete information about the *NATURE SPEAKS* series is available at [www.phnrc.com](http://www.phnrc.com). One can also learn more about our area's natural resources, native prairies, volunteer activity days, and other educational information there as well.

###



Contact: Agnes Wojnarski (224) 659-0002



--- PRESS RELEASE ---

## NATURE SPEAKS LIBRARY PROGRAM

"Fire and the Forest  
Preserves of Cook County"



Contact: Agnes Wojnarski (224) 659-0002

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
January 19, 2016

PROSPECT HEIGHTS - The Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission and the Prospect Heights Public Library are co-sponsoring an educational and informational program on prescribed burning in an urban environment.

**NATURE  
SPEAKS**



The program entitled "Fire and the Forest Preserves of Cook County" will be held on, Tuesday, January 26th at 7:00 pm at the Prospect Heights Public Library, 12 N. Elm Street in Prospect Heights.

John McCabe, Director of Resource Management for the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, will discuss prescribed burning in the urban environment and how the Forest Preserve District applies this critical management tool safely and effectively.

Residents of Prospect Heights will find this talk particularly informative, useful and comforting as the Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission plans to have a prescribed burn of the Slough in the spring or fall of 2016.

John has worked in several positions for the Forest Preserves since May of 1990 when he was employed as a Student Forester while completing his degree in Forestry at Michigan Technological University. Since then he has worked as a Woodsman, Forester, Resource Manager, Training and Safety Coordinator, and Deputy Director.



During his time at the Forest Preserves he has dramatically improved training in prescribed burning and the effective and safe use of chainsaws and other mechanical tools. John coordinates spring and fall burn seasons and supervises the department's resource management, trails, wildlife, ecology, project management, conservation corps and fisheries divisions. He has participated in almost 500 fires in his twenty plus years working for the District.

*NATURE SPEAKS* is a partnership between Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission and the Prospect Heights Public Library and registration for this event is necessary. Please register by calling or visiting the library's information desk or calling 847.259.3500 ext. 35. Please register early as seating is limited.

Complete information about the *NATURE SPEAKS* series is available at [www.phnrc.com](http://www.phnrc.com). One can also learn more about our area's natural resources, native prairies, volunteer activity days, and other educational information there as well.

###



PROSPECT HEIGHTS - The  
Public Library are co-sponsor  
urban environment.



--- PRESS RELEASE ---

## NATURE SPEAKS LIBRARY PROGRAM

"Fire and the Forest  
Preserves of Cook County"



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
January 19, 2016

Contact: Agnes Wojnarski (224) 659-0002

PROSPECT HEIGHTS - The Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission and the Prospect Heights Public Library are co-sponsoring an educational and informational program on prescribed burning in an urban environment.

NATURE  
SPEAKS



The program entitled "Fire and the Forest Preserves of Cook County" will be held on Tuesday, January 26th at 7:00 pm at the Prospect Heights Public Library, 12 N. Elm Street in Prospect Heights.

John McCabe, Director of Resource Management for the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, will discuss prescribed burning in the urban environment and how the Forest Preserve District applies this critical management tool safely and effectively.

Residents of Prospect Heights will find this talk particularly informative, useful and comforting as the Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission plans to have a prescribed burn of the Slough in the spring or fall of 2016.

John has worked in several positions for the Forest Preserves since May of 1990 when he was employed as a Student Forester while completing his degree in Forestry at Michigan Technological University. Since then he has worked as a Woodsman, Forester, Resource Manager, Training and Safety Coordinator, and Deputy Director.

During his time at the Forest Preserves he has dramatically improved training in prescribed burning and the effective and safe use of chainsaws and other mechanical tools. John coordinates spring and fall burn seasons and supervises the department's resource management, trails, wildlife, ecology, project management, conservation corps and fisheries divisions. He has participated in almost 500 fires in his twenty plus years working for the District.



NATURE SPEAKS is a partnership between Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission and the Prospect Heights Public Library and registration for this event is necessary. Please register by calling or visiting the library's information desk or calling 847.259.3500 ext. 35. Please register early as seating is limited.

Complete information about the NATURE SPEAKS series is available at [www.phnrc.com](http://www.phnrc.com). One can also learn more about our area's natural resources, native prairies, volunteer activity days, and other educational information there as well.

###



# Concise Content



--- PRESS RELEASE ---

## NATURE SPEAKS LIBRARY PROGRAM

"Fire and the Forest  
Preserves of Cook County"



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
January 19, 2016

Contact: Agnes Wojnarski (224) 659-0002

PROSPECT HEIGHTS - The Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission and the Prospect Heights Public Library are co-sponsoring an educational and informational program on prescribed burning in an urban environment.

**NATURE  
SPEAKS**



The program entitled "Fire and the Forest Preserves of Cook County" will be held on, Tuesday, January 26th at 7:00 pm at the Prospect Heights Public Library, 12 N. Elm Street in Prospect Heights.

John McCabe, Director of Resource Management for the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, will discuss prescribed burning in the urban environment and how the Forest Preserve District applies this critical management tool safely and effectively.

Residents of Prospect Heights will find this talk particularly informative, useful and comforting as the Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission plans to have a prescribed burn of the Slough in the spring or fall of 2016.

John has worked in several positions for the Forest Preserves since May of 1990 when he was employed as a Student Forester while completing his degree in Forestry at Michigan Technological University. Since then he has worked as a Woodsman, Forester, Resource Manager, Training and Safety Coordinator, and Deputy Director.



During his time at the Forest Preserves he has dramatically improved training in prescribed burning and the effective and safe use of chainsaws and other mechanical tools. John coordinates spring and fall burn seasons and supervises the department's resource management, trails, wildlife, ecology, project management, conservation corps and fisheries divisions. He has participated in almost 500 fires in his twenty plus years working for the District.

*NATURE SPEAKS* is a partnership between Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission and the Prospect Heights Public Library and registration for this event is necessary. Please register by calling or visiting the library's information desk or calling 847.259.3500 ext. 35. Please register early as seating is limited.

Complete information about the *NATURE SPEAKS* series is available at [www.phnrc.com](http://www.phnrc.com). One can also learn more about our area's natural resources, native prairies, volunteer activity days, and other educational information there as well.

###



# Ending Hashtags

####



--- PRESS RELEASE ---

## NATURE SPEAKS LIBRARY PROGRAM

"Fire and the Forest  
Preserves of Cook County"



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
January 19, 2016

Contact: Agnes Wojnarski (224) 659-0002

PROSPECT HEIGHTS - The Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission and the Prospect Heights Public Library are co-sponsoring an educational and informational program on prescribed burning in an urban environment.

NATURE  
SPEAKS



The program entitled "Fire and the Forest Preserves of Cook County" will be held on, Tuesday, January 26th at 7:00 pm at the Prospect Heights Public Library, 12 N. Elm Street in Prospect Heights.

John McCabe, Director of Resource Management for the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, will discuss prescribed burning in the urban environment and how the Forest Preserve District applies this critical management tool safely and effectively.

Residents of Prospect Heights will find this talk particularly informative, useful and comforting as the Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission plans to have a prescribed burn of the Slough in the spring or fall of 2016.

John has worked in several positions for the Forest Preserves since May of 1990 when he was employed as a Student Forester while completing his degree in Forestry at Michigan Technological University. Since then he has worked as a Woodsman, Forester, Resource Manager, Training and Safety Coordinator, and Deputy Director.



During his time at the Forest Preserves he has dramatically improved training in prescribed burning and the effective and safe use of chainsaws and other mechanical tools. John coordinates spring and fall burn seasons and supervises the department's resource management, trails, wildlife, ecology, project management, conservation corps and fisheries divisions. He has participated in almost 500 fires in his twenty plus years working for the District.

NATURE SPEAKS is a partnership between Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission and the Prospect Heights Public Library and registration for this event is necessary. Please register by calling or visiting the library's information desk or calling 847.259.3500 ext. 35. Please register early as seating is limited.

Complete information about the NATURE SPEAKS series is available at [www.phnrc.com](http://www.phnrc.com). One can also learn more about our area's natural resources, native prairies, volunteer activity days, and other educational information there as well.

###



Northwest suburbs  
**Daily Herald**

Comics 2

Movie guide 4

Classifieds 5,6

dailyherald.com

# Neighbor & Classifieds

B5A

## Prospect Heights honors nature volunteer with its annual Golden Loopers award

*Submitted by City of Prospect Heights*

Prospect Heights Mayor Nicholas Helmer has presented Karl Humbert with the city's National Resources Commission Volunteer of the Year Award, the Golden Loopers.

"The hard work and dedication you and all the volunteers put into this community make Prospect Heights the great city it is," Helmer

said in presenting the award, according to the city newsletter.

The award is in recognition of Humbert's support of the mission of the Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission and his countless hours of volunteering. Humbert said he finds his volunteer work fulfilling.

"It is so rewarding to see wildlife

like the bald eagle returning to the slough and knowing your work contributed to that," he said.

Prospect Heights Mayor Nicholas Helmer presents the Golden Loopers award to volunteer Karl Humbert. Prospect Heights City Administrator Joe Wade is on the right.



COURTESY OF CITY OF PROSPECT HEIGHTS

## Bold and majestic

American bald eagle makes its way to Prospect Heights' slough



COURTESY OF JOHN KAMYKZ

Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commissioner John Kamykz has photographed an American bald eagle that is hanging out at the Prospect Heights Hillcrest Lake and slough area.

By JOHN KAMYKZ  
*Special to the Daily Herald*

**Editor's note:** The Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission has released this firsthand account of one of its commissioner's observations of an American bald eagle at the Prospect Heights Hillcrest Lake and slough area.

I have the good fortune of being able to observe Hillcrest Lake on a daily basis.

Two days after Thanksgiving, among the usual seagulls, Canada geese and mallard ducks, a particularly large bird was swooping around low over the lake. It clearly was not one of the several red tail hawks or owls I see in the area; it was larger.

On closer inspection, I saw its bald, white head and snow white tail feathers and realized our bald eagle had returned for some lunch. I'd seen him once before in the distance about a month earlier.

This time he was here for a prolonged visit as he scanned the lake with several turns and finally dove to the lake, crashing its surface with its talons and arising with a nice, 12-inch fish. He carried it to a tree on the east side of the lake and began eating it under the mid afternoon sun. I was able to affix my spotting scope on it and took several digital photographs, but it was still at some distance for a clear shot.

When finished, he took off again and did the familiar swoop. All the other birds cleared out for his acrobatics, and on his second attempt for another fish he missed. He now flew to a tree on the west side of the lake and perched, overlooking the entire scene, in no particular hurry.

Luckily, this perch was only about 50 yards from me and my scope, and I was able to capture multiple zoomed-in shots of the majestic bird.

His "bald" head was mildly spotted with darker feathers, indicating a juvenile eagle, but nearing adulthood very soon. His stern look, curved, yellow hooked beak, broad wings and thick tufted legs all were clearly visible, confirming its bold strength and character, and making me realize firsthand why this bird is our national symbol.

Bald eagles have been very rare, if not completely absent, in the Chicago area for decades. They have been sighted with more frequency along our river waterways, most often the Mississippi and Illinois rivers; however, sightings away from these areas are more rare. In Prospect Heights, Illinois, a nesting pair has been seen at



COURTESY OF JOHN KAMYKZ

Bassie Woods Forest Preserve, and one would have to wonder if this particular bird is one of those, or perhaps one of their offspring looking for more hunting territory.

Either way, it is a testament to the health of the slough and Hillcrest Lake area in Prospect Heights, and to the success of the restoration work that has been done in the past several years (and that still is being done).

The variety of birds being sighted in the area has grown exponentially, as the invasive plant species such as buckthorn has been removed and native grass and tree species of Northeast Illinois have been allowed to return. Native species allow the more numerous and healthy insect species to thrive, and thus the entire food chain benefits.

The sighting of bald eagles on the lake brings attention to its health and the quality of the water and fish population within it. This clearly is a waterway to be respected and cared for, not only for our human enjoyment, but that from which our enjoyment rises — the return of wildlife and its utilization of the nourishment it provides for survival.

• Additional information about the Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission and the area's natural resources, native prairies and volunteer activity days is available at [www.phnrc.com](http://www.phnrc.com).



# In Summary





# Accomplishments

3 years

7 major sites of restoration.

30 + volunteers enlisted.

2 internships per year.

Multiple grants awarded.

Ecologic biodiversity, flora and fauna.

Respect from community and its leaders



# Challenges

Community acceptance

Individual acceptance

Political acceptance

Funding

Man/women power.



# Hillcrest Lake Battle with Elodea and Residents





# ComEd Prairie Site





# Flora

Site: Prospect Heights slough.

Have increased native plant species by approximately 100%, (from approximately 30 to approximately 60).

Includes thousands of sedges and river bulrush.

Native seed bank appearances including the Michigan Lily















# Fauna

|                    |                        |                    |                      |
|--------------------|------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| American Goldfinch | Great Blue Heron       | Solitary Sandpiper | Purple Martin        |
| American Robin     | Great Egret            | Song Sparrow       | Wood Duck            |
| Belted Kingfisher  | Hairy Woodpecker       | Spotted Sandpiper  | Mallard Duck         |
| Blue Jay           | House sparrow          | Swanson's Thrush   | Canadian Goose       |
| Cedar Waxwing      | Killdeer               | Cardinal           | Cormorant            |
| Cooper's Hawk      | Morning Dove           | Ring billed Gull   | Hummingbirds various |
| Downy Woodpecker   | Northern Flicker       | Great Horned Owl   |                      |
| Dunlin             | Red bellied Woodpecker | Red Tailed Hawk    |                      |



# Bird species observed

Canada Goose  
Green Heron  
Wood Duck  
Mallard  
Blue-winged Teal  
**Black-crowned Night-Heron**  
Red-bellied Woodpecker  
Downy Woodpecker  
Hairy Woodpecker  
**Northern Flicker**  
Mourning Dove  
Eastern Phoebe  
Blue Jay  
American Crow  
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher  
White-breasted Nuthatch (probably nests here though not observed this spring/summer)  
House Wren  
Tree Swallow  
Barn Swallow  
Rough-winged Swallow  
Black-capped Chickadee  
Gray Catbird  
Warbling Vireo  
American Robin  
European Starling  
Cedar Waxwing  
Yellow Warbler  
Common Yellowthroat



Song Sparrow  
Northern Cardinal  
Baltimore Oriole  
**Orchard Oriole**  
Red-winged Blackbird  
Common Grackle  
American Goldfinch  
House Sparrow (nests at houses - near people)  
Double-crested Cormorant  
Great Blue Heron  
**Great Egret**  
Killdeer  
Ring-billed Gull  
Brown Creeper (migrant: early spring or late fall; winter)  
Yellow-rumped Warbler (in migration: April-May, September-October)  
**Bald Eagle**













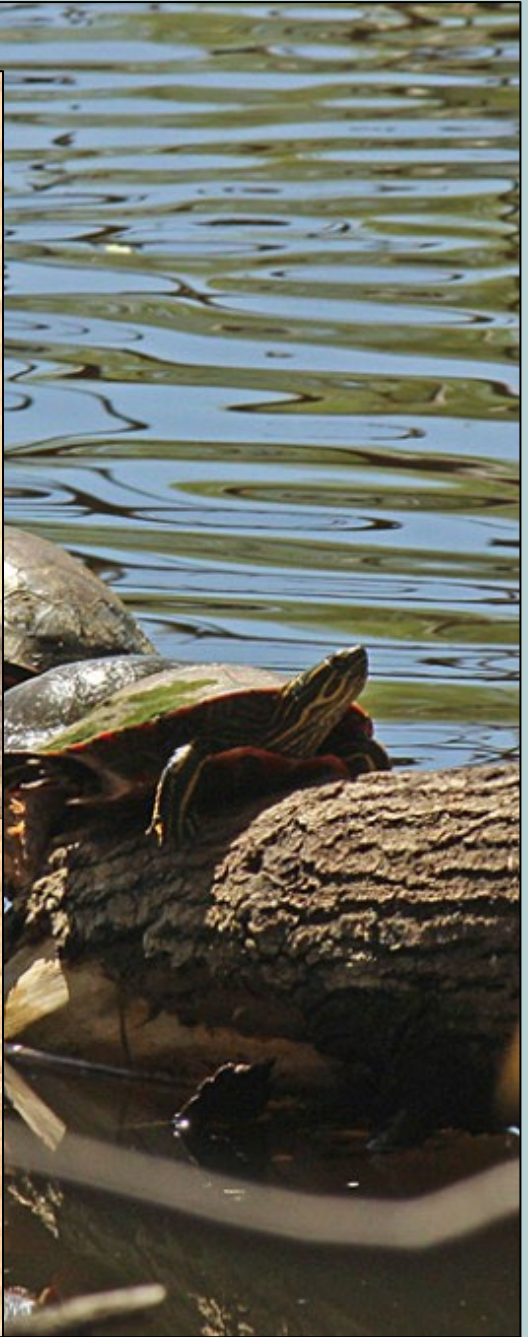
Bald Eagle





















# So What's Ahead?

New area of restoration, Heron Pond

Creek restoration

Finish Morava Interpretive Nature Park

Recruit more volunteers and engage community and government

Expand on Grow it, don't Mow it program for residents to plant native prairie gardens

More...



Questions?

[phnrc.com](http://phnrc.com)  
[info@phnrc.com](mailto:info@phnrc.com)

