



CONSERVATION • COLLABORATION • COMMUNITY

Amsterdam Dunes Preservation Area Habitat Restoration

Wet Meadow Restoration



Native tree planting



Wetland plug installation

Lakeshore Natural Resource Partnership (LNRP) is working closely with Sheboygan County to restore portions of the Amsterdam Dunes Preservation Area (the “Preserve”), located in southern Sheboygan County, along the western shore of Lake Michigan. The 328-acre Preserve is owned by Sheboygan County and adjacent to the Cedar Grove Ornithological Research Station and State Natural Area. **Together, these conservation properties form a significant undeveloped, protected natural area that is considered a priority area for conservation**, based on the presence of a combination of significant natural features, including stopover habitat for migratory avian species; presence of globally rare Great Lakes ridge and swale ecosystem; documented presence of Threatened/Endangered/Special Concern (TES) plant and animal species; a diverse assemblage of connected upland, wetland, and aquatic habitat types; presence of 1900 feet of undeveloped Lake Michigan shoreline; and a relatively undisturbed coastal bluff system.

LNRP secured grant funding from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Wisconsin Habitat Partnership Fund on behalf of Sheboygan County to reduce degraded agricultural lands to mesic prairie, wet meadow, dry-mesic forest and hardwood swamp. Restoration will increase floristic diversity, provide stabilization of soils, promote infiltration of runoff to improve downstream water quality, reduce stormwater peak flows, restore contiguous habitat corridors, and provide an important migratory stopover habitat along the Lake Michigan flyway. The project will also provide important hunting, wildlife viewing, and other outdoor recreation opportunities within a 1-hour drive of over 1 million people.

Restoration tasks completed in 2020 and 2021 include site preparations with herbicide application to existing agricultural fields, prairie planting (including purchase and installation of native seed) in existing agricultural fields, management mowing, native tree and shrub planting, and spot herbicide treatments. A total of 25 acres of new prairie were installed and 16 acres of existing prairie were managed for invasive species. Native tree and shrub plantings were installed to diversify the habitat. Restored plant communities are comprised of diverse native grasses, forbs, sedges, shrubs, and trees, which will provide high quality habitat for a variety of wildlife species, migratory and resident birds, amphibians, pollinators, including vulnerable, rare, and TES species.

PROJECT GOALS & OBJECTIVES:

- Increase the availability of high-quality grassland, wet meadow and forested habitats to benefit declining grassland and forest bird populations; to enhance upland game bird habitat; and to create a diverse, nectar-rich herbaceous habitat to support declining populations of pollinators.
- Increase hunting, trapping, and wildlife viewing opportunities on public property, and protect contiguous high-quality wildlife habitat types and corridors by restoring connected habitat blocks.
- Protect watershed values through promoting infiltration of surface water, stabilizing soils, and improving water quality for downstream wetlands and Lake Michigan.
- Increase public opportunities for nature-based outdoor recreation in a growing metropolitan area, for first-hand experience of diverse natural communities and wildlife habitat.
- Establish deep-rooted, diverse native plant communities that are highly adaptable to changing climatic conditions.
- Addressing ecosystem stressors such as invasive species Emerald Ash Borer, climate change, habitat loss, and fragmentation.

PROJECT OUTCOMES:

- 25 acres of new prairie installed
- 16 acres of existing prairie and wet meadow managed for invasive species
- 2,492 native wetland plant plugs installed
- 180 native container trees/shrubs installed
- 600 native bare root trees/shrubs installed



Great Lakes Ridge and Swale community



Invasive cattail control



Native plug installation