



PRESERVE!

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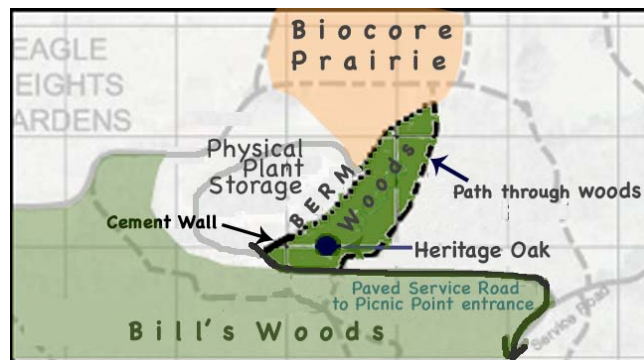
Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve Newsletter

Dedicated to the Preservation and Stewardship of our Woodlands, Wetlands, Prairies and Shorelines

Heritage Oak Project: Connecting the Woodland to the Prairie

by Gisela Kutzbach

Expanses of woods, prairie, and savanna once graced this land. For ten years the Friends of the Preserve have worked hard to restore much of Bill's Woods to a diverse native woodland. During the same period, the students and staff of the Biology Core Curriculum established and maintained the Biocore Prairie. Missing is the savanna landscape with its scattered open-grown trees, the natural CONNECTION between woodland and prairie.



The new 2011 Friends project aims to CONNECT the woodland and prairie by restoring the Bill's Woods Heritage Oak area to savanna, as specified in the Preserve Master Plan. This will allow generations of students to study and the public to experience all three communities. You can help complete this project by contributing money or labor (by attending a work party, listed on page 9).

The Project: Let the Sun Shine In

The magnificent Bur Oak southeast of the Physical Plant Storage area is the centerpiece of the Heritage Oak Project. This oak once grew in the open, slowly stretching its big branches, but in recent years it has been choked and shaded by fast growing trees and non-native shrubs.

Friends and other volunteers led by Preserve staff have begun to enhance the health of this beautiful tree and to improve the surrounding area. The first step was to reopen the understory by removing undesirable vegetation including piles and piles of buckthorn. Now the large open-grown oak and scattered young oaks of the next generation can thrive again. This May volunteers planted scores of native savanna plants under the drip line of the Heritage Oak, and seeds will be distributed in fall.

Our Challenge

This restoration will cost \$13,000. Most of the money will go to professional contractors with specialized equipment who will remove larger undesirable trees around the oak and throughout the woods. Other money will be spent on savanna plants and seeds. Countless volunteer hours along with professional work by Preserve staff will be required to plant and maintain this area.

Ten Years of Partnership

The ongoing partnership of Friends and Preserve staff over the last ten years has helped both groups to:

- Fulfill goals set forth in the Preserve Master Plan.
- Focus volunteer and staff work.
- Foster learning and appreciation of restoration and help all users of the Preserve enjoy our shared successes.

Help us to conduct this exciting project. With your aid the Heritage Oak and its offspring will flourish again and the understory will support diverse savanna vegetation, now a rare community in Wisconsin. Please help us with this project - donate to this special fund drive.

**Send your contribution today –
complete and mail the form on page nine!**

LET THE SUN SHINE IN – 2011

First things first: open up the understory

- Cut brush, small competitive trees, and stumps
- Remove invasive groundcover from the Heritage Oak area and the earth berm
- Remove trash and debris along the cement wall

A taste of savanna

- Plant woodland savanna flowers and grasses within the drip line of the Heritage Oak
Blue smooth aster, wild columbine, culvers root
Bottle brush grass, Sprengler's sedge

The next step: more light and air circulation

- Take down selected, large and undesirable trees
- Cut more brush and stumps; remove invasives
- Seed Oaks' drip line area with woodland savanna species and the berm with grasses

2012-2014: repeat the cycle, maintain and gain

- Expand the area of woodland savanna
- Plant shrubs to hide the cement wall from view