

Wildlife Preservation Fund

Gravel Prairie Reconstruction at Allison Prairie Restoration Project, Lawrence County (03-004W)

Final Report

INTRODUCTION

The Allison Prairie Restoration Project is a 5 acre gravel prairie reconstruction located adjacent to a remnant population of the state endangered royal catchfly (*Silene regia*) about 6 miles east of Lawrenceville, IL. The goals of the project are the reconstruction of a gravel prairie typical of the Wabash Border Natural Division and to provide a refuge for the royal catchfly. The Restoration Project was initiated in 1991 with the execution of a management agreement between the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the Bi-State Airport Authority who owns the property. The site has been actively managed since 1991 by INPC staff and local volunteers. Management activities include prescribed burning, brush removal, exotic species control, seed collection and dispersal, rootstock planting, and annual monitoring of the royal catchfly populations. The north half of the project area has been completed and includes a population of royal catchfly that has been established for several years. Reconstruction of the remaining portion has been slowed by the lack of local seed sources due to continued loss of native prairie remnants. The Bi-State Airport Authority received funding from the Illinois Wildlife Preservation Fund to purchase prairie forb seed to complete the reconstruction process.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Perennial prairie forb seed was purchased from Big Stem Nursery (see attached invoice for species and quantities). Prescribed burning to reduce grass and leaf litter was conducted by personnel from the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission (INPC), Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) and volunteers on February 12, 2003. Prairie forb seed was broadcast on the site on March 21, 2003 by INPC personnel.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The site will be monitored throughout the growing to determine the rate of forb recruitment in the project area. Most of the species are long-lived perennials and are expected to appear in their vegetative forms during the 2003 growing season. Additionally, seed of some species require scarification or stratification to induce germination; therefore, the overall success of the project will not be fully understood until the fall of 2004.

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Figure 1. View of Allison Gravel Prairie Reconstruction Project looking to the southwest. Photo date: April 4, 2003.



Figure 2. View of Allison Gravel Prairie Reconstruction Project looking to the southwest. Photo date: April 4, 2003.



Figure 3. View of Allison Gravel Prairie Reconstruction Project looking to the northwest. Photo date: April 4, 2003.



Figure 4. View of Allison Gravel Prairie Reconstruction Project looking to the north. Photo date: April 4, 2003.



Figure 5. View of Allison Gravel Prairie Reconstruction Project looking to the north. Photo date: April 4, 2003.