

Final Report

Howard D. Colman Dells Reforestation Project
Grant Agreement #03-042W

Prepared for the Wildlife Preservation Fund
Illinois Department of Natural Resources

By the Natural Land Institute
320 South Third Street
Rockford, Illinois 61104
February 25, 2003

Introduction

The Natural Land Institute's nine-acre reforestation site is a field of predominately cool season grasses surrounded by mature woodland in Ogle County, Illinois. It is part of the 92-acre Colman Dells Preserve donated to the Natural Land Institute in 1997 by Dorothy C. Wallace in memory of her father, the late Rockford industrialist Howard D. Colman. Fifty-four acres are dedicated as an Illinois Nature Preserve. The property adjoins the Severson Dells Forest Preserve (Winnebago County Forest Preserve District) and privately-held woodland tracts.

Project goals are: 1) to collect the seed needed to plant nine acres to forest, 2) to control weedy growth on the site prior to planting, 3) to incorporate local youth groups and volunteers into the project to educate them about forests, 4) to plant the nine-acre site with a minimum of 4,500 heavy tree seeds per acres, and 5) to control weedy growth the following season as necessary.

Reforestation of this site will decrease edge habitat, resulting in improved habitat for forest interior birds and more habitat for the uncommon woodland plants found in the preserve. Reforestation will decrease the pioneering sites for some exotic plants. The project has been designed to introduce local youth to a high-quality preserve and help them build appreciation for forest communities.

Materials and Methods

Natural Land Institute staff recruited youth groups to collect and spread seed. Staff helped youngsters identify seed-producing trees at local parks, forest preserves and on privately-owned land and educated them about trees and forest ecology.

These seeds were collected from within a 20-mile radius of the project site: black walnut, *Juglans nigra*, 600 lbs.; butternut, *Juglans cinerea*, 850 nuts; burr oak, *Quercus macrocarpa*; black oak, *Quercus velutina*; red oak, *Quercus rubra*; white oak, *Quercus alba* (all oaks 150 lbs.); sugar maple, *Acer saccharum*, 20 bushels; green ash, *Fraxinus americana* 8 bushels; grey dogwood, *Cornus spp.*, 8 lbs.; ironwood, *Ostrya virginiana*, 1 bushel.

Weedy growth on the nine-acre site was controlled by mowing and spraying in August with Round Up. In October the seed bed was prepared by disking.

On November 2, seed was hand broadcast throughout the field and disced into the soil. Approximately 90 students from Durand, Pecatonica, Poplar Grove, Rockford, South Beloit and Winnebago planted the seeds. NLI hosted the youngsters, most from local girl and boy Scout troops, at a tree planting festival in conjunction with the planting.

Immediately after the seeds were broadcast, the field was shallowly disced to cover the seeds.

Results

Weed control will occur in 2003 to minimize competition and herbivore pressure.

The planting will be monitored to ensure that adequate tree germination and survival occurs, with a goal of 450 trees per acre after three years.

By planting with native tree seed and minimizing weedy competition, the result should be a high concentration of native tree seedlings throughout the field.

Discussion

Progress of the restoration will be monitored to ensure a successful result and to provide long-term educational benefits. In the early fall of 2003, the Natural Land Institute will host a field trip to the restoration site for volunteers. Groups will help collect data on seed germination success. The data will be compiled by youngsters with the help of staff from Turtle Pond, Inc., so they can learn to use computers to see what happened with all the seed they helped collect and plant.

The Natural Land Institute's partners in the project include the Rockford Park District, Winnebago County Forest Preserve District, Blackhawk Area Council-Boy Scouts of America, Rock River Valley Girl Scout Council, the Burpee Museum of Natural History and Turtle Pond, Inc.

Pictures of the planting and updates can be found at www.turtlepond.org/colman.

Summary

Funding help for the project was supplied by this Wildlife Preservation Fund grant and the Bergman Benjamin Moore Trust. Some of these dollars were passed on the youth groups for their help in gathering and planting the seeds. A copy of the book "The Man Who Planted Trees" was given to each child who helped to collect and plant seeds. Tree identification booklets and posters were distributed to the groups.

Enclosed are copies of pictures and thank-you notes the Natural Land Institute received from youngsters and their leaders.



Tree Planting Festival

Howard D. Colman
Dells Preserve

Saturday, November 2, 2002

Sponsored by the
Natural Land Institute

Trees and shrubs being planted:

Black Oak - *Quercus velutina*

Bur Oak - *Quercus macrocarpa*

Red Oak - *Quercus rubra*

White Oak - *Quercus alba*

Shagbark Hickory - *Carya ovata*

Black Walnut - *Juglans nigra*

Butternut - *Juglans cinerea*

Hophornbeam - *Ostrya virginiana*

Green Ash - *Fraxinus pennsylvanica*

Sugar Maple - *Acer saccharum*

Black Cherry - *Prunus serotina*

Gray Dogwood - *Cornus racemosa*

Thank you to our partners in this project:

Illinois Dept. of Natural Resources -

Illinois Wildlife Preservation Fund

Bergmann Benjamin Moore Trust

Rockford Park District

Winnebago County Forest Preserve Dist.

Blackhawk Area Council, Boy Scouts of America

Rock River Valley Girl Scout Council

Burpee Museum of Natural History

Turtle Pond, Inc.

National Arbor Day Foundation

Live Bait

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Estimated Project Budget:

Labor	842
Equipment	762
Contractual	758
Travel	65
Commodities	273
Total cost of project	2700
Less funds you will provide	1700
Funds requested	1000

Actual Project Costs:

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Labor			
Seed scouting,	30 hours @ 17	510	
Seed collecting	67 hours @ \$17	1,139	
Educating and organizing groups	48 hours @ 17	816	
Coordinating volunteers	15 hours @17	255	
Organizing festival	35 hours @17	595	
Media contacts	7 hours @17	<u>119</u>	
			3,434 (202 hours)
Equipment	None; were donated	0	0
Contractual			
Mowing and discing	Warren Newman	500	
Technology to track planting	Turtle Pond, Inc.	200	
Spray and application	DeLong Company	275	
Educational activities	Burpee Museum	120	
Music, entertainment	Gregg Nybo	<u>200</u>	
			1,295
Travel	958 miles @ .325	311	311
Commodities			
Refreshments		68	
Books		540	
Tent		343	
Photos		<u>20</u>	
			971
Funds distributed to Scout troops			1,050
Total project cost		\$7,061	
Less funds provided by Natural Land Institute		6,061	
Total Illinois Wildlife Preservation funds requested		1,000	





