



Open Space 2015 Annual Report

Libertyville Township Open Space District owns over 1,500 acres of Open Space. The Township has 2 full time employees who are responsible for all maintenance and restoration efforts. In addition to the staff, Libertyville Township has a long standing established partnership with Conserve Lake County. Conserve Lake County links the Township to grant opportunities, coordinates volunteer work days and provides professional assistance in a variety of areas.

Special Projects

Bull Creek Trail Construction Project

Libertyville Township began construction of the Rt. 137 Bull Creek Trail Connector Project. The trail connection provides a critical link to the regional trail system. The project is a partnership between the Township, the Village of Libertyville and Commonwealth Edison as portions of the trail will be constructed on each of our properties. Pearson, Brown & Associates, Inc. provided engineering services and Team REIL, Inc. was awarded the construction contract. It is anticipated the project will be completed by June 2016. In addition, the Lake County Audubon Society has received several grants on behalf of the Township to assist in the restoration efforts and improve bird habitat.

Canterbury Herbicide Project

In spring and fall of 2015, herbicide was applied to 80 acres at Canterbury to control reed canary grass and phragmites. A follow-up application is scheduled for spring 2016.

Casey Road Land Use Plan

The Township has started the implementation phase of the Casey Road Land Use Plan with technical support provided by Conserve Lake County. Activities have included: wetland delineation, applying and securing grant funds, the exploration of mitigation bank opportunities, and the retiring of one farm field.

Partnership with Mundelein Park and Recreation District (MPRD) on Prescribed Burns

Libertyville Township entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Mundelein Park and Recreation District to assist in the development of the District's burn project and shared resources. In spring of 2015, MPRD conducted their first prescribed burn with the assistance of Township staff. In turn, MPRD provided assistance on two Township burns.

Snake Hibernaculum

Two students from the Prairie Crossing Charter School installed a snake hibernaculum at the Canterbury property with assistance from Dr. Michael Corn, Libertyville Township Open Space staff and Libertyville Township Highway Department staff.

Volunteer Herbicide Class for Open Space Volunteers

On January 10, 2015, Libertyville Township and Conserve Lake County partnered to provide an herbicide training class to 14 volunteers interested obtaining a volunteer herbicide license. The license allows open space volunteers to participate in herbicide activities under the supervision of Township staff and Conserve Lake County's Director of Volunteers.

Volunteer Work Days

Volunteer Work Days are held the second Saturday of each month from 9:00 to Noon at Oak Openings or Liberty Prairie. The Work Days are a coordinated effort between the Township and Conserve Lake County. In 2015, 9 work days were held at Oak Openings and 3 were held at Liberty Prairie. On average, 5 volunteers attended per work day. Activities included applying herbicide, clearing invasive species, collecting seed, pulling garlic mustard and/or clover and participating in prescribed burns.

Conservation Easement Baseline Data

In 2010, Libertyville Township began documenting baselines and conducting annual monitoring for the conservation easements it holds on 6 privately owned properties. The work is being carried out with the assistance of Conserve Lake County. This provides an opportunity for the Township to partner with the landowners to ensure the integrity of each conservation easement is maintained. In 2015, the Township completed the following monitoring activities:

- Brennan Easement – During the construction, the property was monitored on a weekly basis to ensure no impacts to easement occurred. On April 24, 2015, the Township completed the annual easement monitoring on the entire site.
- Bott Easement – Completed annual easement monitoring on September 2, 2015.
- Getz Easement – This easement covers three separate properties. Separate baselines have been created for each property. In 2015, all 3 properties were purchased by a single owner.
 - Completed annual easement monitoring for Getz 1 on September 2, 2015.
 - Completed annual easement monitoring for Getz 2 on September 2, 2015.
 - Completed annual easement monitoring for Getz 3 on September 2, 2015.
- Maxey Easement – Completed annual easement monitoring on April 28, 2015.
- Bleck Easement – In 2015, the Township met with family members of the property owner of the conservation easement to discuss the Township's desire to begin monitoring of the conservation easement.

Site Specific Activities

In 2015, the Libertyville Township Open Space District applied approximately 113.07 gallons of herbicide, planted 11 trees, removed 97 dead or dying trees, spread approximately 946 pounds of seed covering 22.8 acres, cleared .85 acres of invasive woody species, planted 71 plants, and conducted prescribed burns on 12.95 acres. These numbers will fluctuate based on each property's needs over time.

Atkinson

- Land and Water Resources and Applied Ecological Services continued restoration efforts on mitigation bank
- Applied 30.96 gallons of herbicide to invasive species
- Approximately 25 trees were removed from Wilton Court area
- Reconstructed trail was monitored following rain events for potential drainage issues
- Conducted property inspections and monitored encroachments

Canterbury/Butterfield

- Applied 473.39 gallons of herbicide to invasive species
- Planted 8 trees and 25 shrubs
- Removed 49 dead or dying trees
- Herbicide invasive plant control project conducted by ILM
- Installed 12 fences around trees to protect from deer
- Installed snake hibernaculum

- Property surveyed and markers installed
- Repaired sections of trail and rolled entire trail
- Trimmed and raised trees along the trail
- Conducted property inspections and monitored encroachments

Kildare

- Conducted property inspections and monitored encroachments
- Conducted stream assessment

Liberty Prairie

- Applied 182.14 gallons of herbicide to invasive species
- Cleared 10 acres of invasive species
- Conducted prescribe burn on 4.5 acres
- Installed one pet station
- Installed one “no snowmobiles” sign
- Spread 110 pounds of seed to 1 acre
- Site of 3 volunteer work days (2 Saturday and 1 mid-week) – Spread 10 lbs. of seed to .5 acres, applied herbicide and removed woody invasives
- Repaired sections of trail and rolled entire trail
- Wetland delineation
- Conducted property inspections and monitored encroachments

Milwaukee Road

- Applied 18.44 gallons of herbicide to invasive species
- Conducted stream assessment
- Conducted property inspections

Libertyville Township Soccer Complex (LTSC)

- Weekly site visits during construction project
- Conducted property inspections and monitored encroachments

Oak Openings

- Applied 86.24 gallons of herbicide to invasive species
- Conducted stream assessment
- Planted 13 shrubs
- Installed “no snowmobiles” sign
- Installed new kiosk sign
- Removed 44 dead/dying trees
- Repaired sections of trail and rolled entire trail
- Site of 9 volunteer work days (8 Saturday & 1 mid-week) activities included applying herbicide, spreading 10 pounds of seed to 1 acre, removing invasive species and collecting 20 lbs. of seed
- Wetland delineation
- Conducted property inspections and monitored encroachments

Old School

- Applied 6.29 gallons of herbicide
- Installed fire break
- Installed sign

- Began exploring additional land protection options with the Illinois Nature Preserve Commission
- Conducted property inspections

River Road

- Applied 20.01 gallons of herbicide
- Applied sealcoat to trailheads
- Installed 110 feet of fencing at trail heads
- Installed wire gait
- Planted 2 trees
- Repaired sections of trail, improved ditching and rolled entire trail
- Conducted property inspections

Rt. 45

- Applied 12.61 gallons of herbicide
- Began exploring land use options
- Conducted property inspections

Rt. 137

- Applied 47.59 gallons of herbicide to invasive species
- Began construction of Bull Creek Trail
- Cleared trail corridor
- Checked beaver dam and creek levels
- Conducted stream assessment
- Spread 218 lbs. of seed to 3.5 acres
- Conducted property inspections and monitored encroachments

St. Mary's

- Applied 195.24 gallons of herbicide to invasive species
- Cleared .25 acres of invasive species
- Completed Trail Resurfacing Project
- Planted 8 shrubs
- Spread 243 pounds of seed to 13 acres
- Conducted property inspections and monitored encroachments

Lindholm Park

- Applied 58.43 gallons of herbicide
- Conducted prescribed burn on 2 acres
- Conducted playground inspection on 10.6.15
- Ballfield infield renovations completed by Van's Enterprise Ltd.
- Planted 2 shrubs
- Spread 195 pounds of seed on 2.5 acres
- Conducted property inspections

Seasonal Maintenance Activities

Winter:

- Clearing of buckthorn and other invasive trees
- Burning of brush piles
- Monthly Volunteer Work Day

- Open Space employees assist with snow removal in the unincorporated areas of Libertyville Township
- Open Space employees assist with the maintenance of Township grounds
- Assist with food pantry activities as needed

Spring:

- Herbiciding invasive plants
- Planting native species
- Trail maintenance and repairs
- Burning is done on a rotating basis during March and April. Sites are prioritized and are burned in accordance with the prescribed burn management plan.
- Clean and inspect water control structures for wetlands – close for the spring
- Weekly activities: mowing, weed whacking, raking of baseball diamonds
- Monthly Volunteer Work Day
- Open Space employees assist with the maintenance of Township grounds
- Assist Road District in weather related events as needed
- Assist with food pantry activities as needed

Summer:

- Grading of dirt along trail edges
- Herbiciding invasive plants
- Trail maintenance and repairs
- Weekly activities: mowing, weed whacking, raking of baseball diamonds
- Monthly Volunteer Work Day
- Open Space employees assist with the maintenance of Township grounds
- Assist with food pantry activities as needed

Fall:

- Seed collection
- Planting native species
- Herbiciding invasive plants
- Trail maintenance and repairs
- Clean and inspect water control structures for wetlands – open for fall
- Burning is done on a rotating basis during the month of November. Sites are prioritized and are burned in accordance with the prescribed burn management plan
- Weekly activities: mowing, weed whacking, raking of baseball diamonds
- Monthly Volunteer Work Day
- Open Space employees assist with the maintenance of Township grounds
- Assist with food pantry activities as needed

Public Communication and Outreach

J. Happ served on the Bull Creek Bulls Brook Watershed Council Board

Libertyville Township became a member of Chicago Wilderness

K. O'Connor served as Chair for the Bull Creek Bulls Brook Watershed Council

K. O'Connor served on the ComEd Green Region Advisory Grant Committee

Libertyville Township approved Intergovernmental Agreement with Village of Libertyville on Bull Creek Trail Project – June 11, 2015

Libertyville Township approved lease agreement with Commonwealth Edison for Bull Creek Trail Project – July 1, 2015

D. Cederberg and J. Happ represented the Township at the Green Industry Forum at the College of Lake County – November 6, 2015

Professional Development

D. Cederberg and J. Happ attended conservation easement monitoring webinar training at Conserve Lake County – March 9, 2015

D. Cederberg and J. Happ attended Restoration Symposium – June 12, 2015

D. Cederberg and J. Happ became certified flaggers – June 24, 2015

D. Cederberg, J. Happ & K. O'Connor attended Bull Creek Bull's Brook Watershed Council Meetings – February 17, June 18, & September 17, 2015

D. Cederberg and J. Happ attended Deicing Workshop sponsored by Lake County Stormwater Management Commission and Lake County Health Department & Community Center – October 7, 2015

D. Cederberg attended the Illinois Arborist Association Conference – October 20 & 21, 2015

D. Cederberg and J. Happ obtained CDL-A driver's license – December 2015