



Open Space 2017 Annual Report

Libertyville Township Open Space District owns over 1,500 acres of Open Space. The Township now has 3 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 that has now merged with Openlands. They have linked the Township to grant opportunities, coordinated volunteer work days and provided professional assistance in a variety of areas.

In 2017, the Township applied 2,132.53 gallons of herbicide, 7,610.3 pounds of native seed was sowed, 410 acres mowed, 75 trees were removed, 80 acres underwent a prescribed burn, 154 native trees were planted, 6.5 acres were cleared of invasive species, 18 brush piles were burned, 19 volunteer work days were held and 73 individuals volunteered.

Special Projects

Bluebird Nest Boxes Project

A Libertyville High School Eagle Scout installed bluebird nest boxes at Canterbury for his Eagle Scout project. A total of 6 bluebird next boxes were installed with assistance provided by Libertyville Township Opens Space staff. In 2017, the signage for the project was installed.

Casey Road Farmland Restoration Project

The restoration of the 303 acres of agriculture land continued with technical support provided by Openlands. Legal descriptions were created and boundaries were marked for 195 acres of the site. Year 2 of Phase 1 activities included spreading approximately 6,000 lbs. of native seed, water sampling, cleared approximately 5 acres of invasive species, planted 125 native trees, and additional acreage added as buffer to the Illinois Nature Preserve. The Township received \$201,450 in grant funding for the restoration efforts. In 2017, the Township was notified it was awarded up to \$120,000 for the Illinois EPA's 319 Clean Water Act Grant.

Equipment Auction and Purchase

The Township auctioned off several pieces of aging equipment. The revenue generated offset the cost of the purchase of a new Ford F-550 and ASV RT – 120 Forestry.

Morton Arboretum Tree Grant

The Township was award \$11,450 to plant 125 trees of 8 different species at our Casey South property. This project was part of a larger restoration effort. The planting was held on October 21 and 28, 2017. It was supported by a strong community effort that provided 110 hours of volunteer support.

River Road Fire Training

In 2016, Libertyville Township acquired a parcel with a home on the property as part of a land swap transaction. The Township contacted Waukegan Fire Department offered the site as a location for a burn training. The joint project allowed the Township to reduce the cost in the demolition of the home and provided a unique fire training opportunity for the Waukegan, Libertyville and Gurnee Fire Departments. In 2017, the Township completed restoration efforts by removing the structures not completely demolished by the fire: the garage, house basement, remaining home structure and driveway. Site

restoration activities included: applying 9.5 gallons of herbicide, planting 3 trees and spreading 78 lbs. of native seed to 5 acres.

Township Open Space 5 K Fun Run

The Township Clerk organized a 5K Fun Run that was held at the Canterbury Property. There were a total of 72 participants and 9 sponsors. The race raised \$820 after expenses to benefit the Open Space District.

Volunteer Herbicide Class for Open Space Volunteers

On January 14, 2017, Libertyville Township and Openlands partnered to provide an herbicide training class to 7 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

A majority of the Volunteer Work Days are held the second Saturday of each month from 9:00 to Noon at are typically held at Oak Openings or Liberty Prairie. This year, work days were held at the Rt. 137 and Old School properties. Those work days are a coordinated effort between the Township and Openlands. In 2017, the Township held 19 volunteer work days with participation from 73 individual volunteers. 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 Openlands. This provides an opportunity for the Township to partner with the landowners to ensure the integrity of each conservation easement is maintained. In 2017, the Township completed the following monitoring activities:

- Brennan Easement – Completed annual easement monitoring on September 11, 2017.
- Bott Easement – Completed annual easement monitoring on May 8, 2017.
- Getz Easement – This easement covers three separate properties. Separate baselines have been created for each property. In 2016, all 3 properties were purchased by a single owner.
 - Completed annual easement monitoring for Getz 1 on May 8, 2017.
 - Completed annual easement monitoring for Getz 2 on May 8, 2017.
 - Completed annual easement monitoring for Getz 3 on May 8, 2017.
- Maxey Easement – Completed annual easement monitoring on September 11, 2017.
- Bleck Easement – In 2017, the Bleck property was sold to a new property owner. The Township met with the new the property owners to discuss the Township's desire to begin monitoring of the conservation easement. It is anticipated the baseline will be created in 2018.

Site Specific Activities

In 2017, the Libertyville Township Open Space District applied approximately 2,132.53 gallons of herbicide, planted 154 trees, removed 75 dead or dying trees, spread approximately 7,610.3 pounds of seed, cleared 6.8 acres of invasive species, 18 brush piles burned and conducted prescribed burns on 80 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 approximately 21.5 gallons of herbicide to invasive species

Atkinson (con't.)

- Land & Water Resources, Inc. hired Applied Ecological Services to conduct a prescribed burn on 79 acres.
- Conducted property inspections and monitored encroachments
- Installed signage as needed
- Repaired fence and raised bollard
- Replaced culvert under trail
- Reconstructed trail was monitored following rain events for potential drainage issues

Butterfield/Canterbury

- Applied approximately 469 gallons of herbicide to invasive species
- Planted 16 trees
- Conducted property inspections and monitored encroachments
- Collected 1 lb. of native seed
- Burned 1 brush pile
- Repaired sections of trail and rolled entire trail
- Installed signage as needed

Casey North/Oak Openings

- Applied 292.205 gallons of herbicide to invasive species
- Collected 4 lbs. of native seed
- Conducted property inspections and monitored encroachments
- Cleared .6 acres of invasive species
- Conducted a prescribed burn on .7 acres
- Spread 1,302 lbs. of native seed
- Installed 100 ft. of fencing
- Installed signage as needed.
- Repaired sections of trail and rolled entire trail
- Site of 7 volunteer work days (6 Saturday & 1 mid-week) activities included applying herbicide, removing invasive species, and burning brush piles. Volunteer Work Days were held: 2/11, 4/8, 5/16, 6/10, 8/12, & 12/9
- Applied for grants and explored other funding opportunities to support restoration activities

Casey South/Liberty Prairie

- Applied 265.70 gallons of herbicide to invasive species
- Cleared 4.3 acres of invasive species
- Collected 3 lbs. of native seed
- Conducted property inspections and monitored encroachments
- Installed signage as needed.
- Planted 125 trees
- Spread 4,663 pounds of seed
- Repaired sections of trail and rolled entire trail
- Held Volunteer Work Days: 3/11, 5/13, 7/8, 8/2, 10/21, 10/28 & 11/11
- Applied for grants and explored other funding opportunities to support restoration activities

Kildare

- Conducted property inspections and monitored encroachments
- Installed 5 loads of riprap

Lindholm Park

- Applied 3 gallons of herbicide
- Conducted ball field maintenance
- Conducted property inspections & monitored encroachments
- Installed signage as needed
- Installed porta potty
- Planted 4 native trees
- Removed 6 diseased and/or dying trees

Milwaukee Road

- Applied 19 gallons of herbicide to invasive species
- Conducted property inspections & monitored encroachments
- Repaired split rail fence post

Old School

- Applied 3.125 gallons of herbicide
- Conducted property inspections and monitored encroachments
- Held Volunteer Work Day – June 14, 2017
- Reinstalled 2 property markers

River Road

- Applied 9.5 gallons of herbicide
- Conducted property inspections
- Completed demolition and removal of house, garage and driveway
- Installed signage and property markers as needed
- Planted 3 trees
- Spread 78 lbs. of native seed to 5 acres
- Trail maintenance

Rt. 45

- Applied 2.5 gallons of herbicide
- Installed signage and property markers as needed
- Conducted property inspections and monitored encroachments

Rt. 137

- Applied 105.5 gallons of herbicide to invasive species
- Conducted property inspections and monitored encroachments
- Installed 50 ft. of fencing
- Installed 22 signs, 2 garbage cans & 2 dog waste centers
- Picked up 1 pile of trash
- Spread 167.38 lbs. of seed
- Volunteer Work Day was held on June 14,2017

St. Mary's

- Applied 241.075 gallons of herbicide to invasive species
- Conducted property inspections and monitored encroachments
- Installed signage as needed
- Planted 57 trees

St. Mary's (con't.)

- Spread 75 lbs. of seed to 6 acres

Township Grounds

- Applied 51.5 gallons of herbicide to invasive species
- Installed 1 load of asphalt grindings on shoulder of Technology Way
- Installed 4 loads of screening for trails
- Removed 10 dead and/or dying trees

Winchester Rd/Libertyville Township Soccer Complex (LTSC)

- Monitored installation of artificial turf
- Conducted property inspections and monitored encroachments

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

Fall (con't.):

- 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

K. O'Connor served as Chair for the Bull Creek Bulls Brook Watershed Council; J. Happ served on the Bull Creek Bulls Brook Watershed Council Board

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

K. O'Connor presented an update on the Open Space District at the Liberty Prairie Homeowners Association Meeting – March 14, 2017

K. O'Connor presented at the 7th Annual Green Living Fair on the Casey Road Farmland Retirement and Restoration Project – March 18, 2017

K. O'Connor presented an update on the Open Space District at the Libertyville Sunrise Rotary Meeting – July 5, 2017

K. O'Connor attended the Illinois Nature Preserve's Commission Meetings – January 24, May 9 and September 12, 2017

K. O'Connor attended ComEd's Green Region Grant Luncheon – October 13, 2017

K. O'Connor attended Openlands Annual Luncheon – Thursday, November 9, 2017

K. O'Connor attended Conserve Lake County's Annual Meeting – December 7, 2017

Professional Development

D. Cederberg and J. Happ attended Community Tree Workshop – February 13, 2017

D. Cederberg, J. Happ and A. Rodriquez attended Lake County Stormwater Management Commission's deicing workshop – September 27, 2017

J. Happ and/or K. O'Connor attended Bull Creek Bull's Brook Watershed Council and/or Leadership Meetings – January 31, March 16, June 15, July 6, September 1, & October 12, 2017

K. O'Connor attended a meeting for the Des Plaines River Watershed Workgroup – October 12, 2017

J. Happ attended the Des Plaines River Watershed Workgroup Meeting – November 16, 2017

D. Cederberg attended the Illinois Arborist Association Conference – October 17 & 18, 2017