



## **Open Space 2018 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 2018, the Township applied 2,746.79 gallons of herbicide, 1,160.1 pounds of native seed was sowed, 412.06 acres mowed, 11 trees were removed, 46.62 acres underwent a prescribed burn, 53 native trees were planted, 9.79 acres were cleared of invasive species, 12 brush piles were burned, 18 volunteer work days were held and 41 individuals volunteered.

### **Special Projects**

#### **Birdscaping Project**

The Township received a \$4,000.00 grant from DAS Charitable Fund for the Preservation of Feline Animal Life for birdscaping in the Liberty Prairie Reserve. The goal of the project was to provide improved bird and small animal habitat, promote water infiltration, improve habitat for pollinators, enhance water quality and reduce erosion experienced during heavy rains. Bird surveys were conducted by a volunteer. Highlights from the survey included: Henslow's Sparrow, Dickcissel, Red-headed Woodpecker, Sedge Wren and Willow Flycatcher. There were 308 lbs. of seed sown and 2,470 plugs planted. Volunteer work days were held on May 12 and June 9 to assist with the plug planting activities.

#### **Casey Road Farmland Restoration Project**

The restoration of the 303 acres of agriculture land continued with technical support provided by Openlands. The Township was notified it was awarded up to \$120,000 from the Illinois EPA's 319 Clean Water Act Grant. The western boundary of the site in Oak Openings was surveyed and signage installed. The Lake County Forest Preserve District disabled 2,765 lineal feet of drain tile. In addition, they graded the overflow swale near the existing trail and day lighted the existing tile along the driveway. The construction plans were nearly completed and the bid schedule was drafted.

#### **Installation of Horse Dismount Blocks**

A Libertyville High School Eagle Scout built and installed six (6) horse dismount blocks at Oak Openings and Liberty Prairie for his Eagle Scout project with assistance provided by Libertyville Township Open Space staff.

#### **Morton Arboretum Tree Grant**

The Township was awarded \$15,031.33 to plant 175 trees of 8 different species at our Casey South property. This project was part of a larger restoration effort. There was a volunteer work day held on June 16, 2018 which resulted in additional 50 trees planted.

#### **Township Open Space 5 K Fun Run**

The Township Clerk organized a 5K Fun Run to benefit the Open Space District. The event was held on July 14, 2018 at the Canterbury Property. There were a total of 73 participants and 8 sponsors.

### **Volunteer Herbicide Class for Open Space Volunteers**

On January 14, 2018, Libertyville Township and Dave Eubanks from Eubanks Environmental 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 Dave Eubanks.

### **Volunteer Work Days**

A majority of the Volunteer Work Days are held the second Saturday of each month from 9:00 to Noon and are typically held at Oak Openings or Liberty Prairie. In 2018, the Township held 19 volunteer work days with participation from 41 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 2018, the Township completed the following monitoring activities:

- Brennan Easement – Completed annual easement monitoring on September 11, 2018.
- Bott Easement – Completed annual easement monitoring on May 8, 2018.
- 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, 2018.
  - Completed annual easement monitoring for Getz 2 on May 8, 2018.
  - Completed annual easement monitoring for Getz 3 on May 8, 2018.
- Maxey Easement – Completed annual easement monitoring on September 11, 2018.
- Bleck Easement – In 2018, 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. The finalization of the baseline document will be completed in 2019.

### **Site Specific Activities**

In 2018, the Libertyville Township Open Space District applied approximately 2,746.79 gallons of herbicide, planted 53 trees, removed 11 dead or dying trees, spread approximately 1,160.1 pounds of seed, cleared 9.79 acres of invasive species, 12 brush piles burned and conducted prescribed burns on 46.62 acres. These numbers will fluctuate based on each property’s needs over time.

### **Atkinson**

- The Township assumed oversight of the mitigation bank. Land and Water Resources and Applied Ecological Services continued restoration efforts on mitigation bank
- Applied approximately 176 gallons of herbicide to invasive species
- Removed a fallen tree
- Rolled trails
- Conducted property inspections and monitored encroachments
- Installed signage as needed
- Reconstructed trail was monitored following rain events for potential drainage issues

### **Butterfield/Canterbury**

- Applied approximately 766 gallons of herbicide to invasive species
- Planted 63 lbs. of seed on .10 acres
- Planted 1 tree
- Conducted property inspections and monitored encroachments
- Collected 1.5 lbs. of native seed
- Burned 2 brush piles
- Began cleanout of seavey ditch
- Installed 1 bench
- Repaired sections of trail and rolled entire trail
- Installed signage as needed

### **Casey North/Oak Openings**

- Applied approximately 221 gallons of herbicide to invasive species
- Burned 4 brush piles
- Cleaned out underpass drainage and creek culvert
- Collected 8.5 lbs. of native seed
- Conducted property inspections and monitored encroachments
- Conducted a prescribed burn on 26.22 acres
- Lake County Forest Preserve District disabled 2,765 lineal feet of drain tile
- Installed signage as needed.
- Mowed 97.62 acres
- Planted 50 trees
- Repaired sections of trail and rolled entire trail
- Spread 134.55 lbs. of native seed on 7.52 acres
- Site of Eagle Scout Project – installation of mounting blocks
- Site of 2 volunteer work days and activities included applying herbicide and removing invasive species. Volunteer Work Days were held: 2/10, 6/16, 8/11 & 12/8
- Applied for grants and explored other funding opportunities to support restoration activities

### **Casey South/Liberty Prairie**

- Applied approximately 761 gallons of herbicide to invasive species
- Collected 10.5 lbs. of native seed
- Conducted a prescribed burn on 7.2 acres
- Conducted property inspections and monitored encroachments
- Installed signage as needed.
- Mowed 257.8 acres
- Site of Eagle Scout Project – installation of mounting blocks
- Spread 361 pounds of seed on 11.55 acres
- Repaired sections of trail and rolled entire trail
- Held Volunteer Work Days: 3/10, 5/12, 6/9, 7/4, 9/8 & 11/10
- Applied for grants and explored other funding opportunities to support restoration activities

### **Kildare**

- Conducted property inspections and monitored encroachments
- Cleaned out 950 feet of the Bull Creek corridor

**Lindholm Park**

- Applied approximately 24 gallons of herbicide to invasive species
- Collected .25 lbs. of native seed
- Conducted a prescribed burn on .4 acres
- Conducted ball field maintenance
- Conducted property inspections & monitored encroachments
- Installed signage as needed

**Milwaukee Road**

- Applied approximately 20 gallons of herbicide to invasive species
- Cleared .1 acres
- Collected 6.5 lbs. of native seed
- Conducted property inspections & monitored encroachments
- Mowed .98 acres

**Old School**

- Applied approximately .94 gallons of herbicide to invasive species
- Cleared .1 acres of brush
- Conducted property inspections and monitored encroachments

**River Road**

- Applied 58 gallons of herbicide to invasive species
- Cleared 2.89 acres
- Conducted property inspections
- Completed demolition and removal of house, garage and driveway
- Installed signage and property markers as needed
- Mowed 15.6 acres
- Trail maintenance

**Rt. 45**

- Applied approximately 12 gallons of herbicide to invasive species
- Collected .45 lbs. of seed
- Installed signage and property markers as needed
- Conducted property inspections and monitored encroachments

**Rt. 137**

- Applied approximately 245 gallons of herbicide to invasive species
- Cleared 6.7 acres
- Conducted property inspections and monitored encroachments
- Installed 1,300 feet of a fire line
- Installed signage and property markers as needed
- Spread 450 lbs. of cover crop over 6.7 acres
- Spread 12 lbs. of native seed to 2 acres

**St. Mary's**

- Applied approximately 422 gallons of herbicide to invasive species
- Collected 1 lb. of seed
- Conducted a prescribed burn on 12.8 acres

**St. Mary's (con't.)**

- Conducted property inspections and monitored encroachments
- Installed signage as needed
- Mowed 12.73 acres
- Spread 139.75 lbs. of seed to 16.4 acres

**Township Grounds**

- Applied approximately 13 gallons of herbicide to invasive species
- Planted 2 trees
- Removed 16 dead and/or dying trees

**Winchester Rd/Libertyville Township Soccer Complex (LTSC)**

- Monitored installation of artificial turf
- Monitored repairs to the berm
- Installed signage as needed
- 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
- 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 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 3, 2018

K. O'Connor participated on the Village of Libertyville's Parks and Recreation Master Plan Stakeholders Meeting – March 15, 2018

K. O'Connor attended the Illinois Nature Preserve's Commission Meetings – May 8 and September 11, 2018

K. O'Connor attended Openlands Annual Luncheon – October 18, 2018

**Professional Development**

D. Cederberg, J. Happ, A. Lindquist and A. Rodriguez attended the Flagger Re-certification Training – January 24, 2018

D. Cederberg, J. Happ and A. Lindquist attended a presentation on grazing practices – February 2, 2018

J. Happ, A. Lindquist and A. Rodriguez attended a Chainsaw Training Class – April 4, 2018

J. Happ attended the Des Plaines River Watershed Workgroup Meeting – February 15, May 17, August 16, and November 15, 2018

D. Cederberg attended the North Branch of the Chicago River Watershed Workgroup Meetings – January 17, February 21, March 14, May 9, June 13, and December 12, 2018

D. Cederberg, J. Happ and A. Rodriguez attended Lake County Stormwater Management Commission's deicing workshop – September 27, 2018

K. O'Connor successfully completed the Midwest Ecological Prescription Burn Crew Member Training Class – October 5, 2018

D. Cederberg attended The Illinois Arborist Association Conference – December 12, 2018