



Winter 2011

The Sauk Prairie Conservation Alliance

Working for a New Future for the Sauk Prairie on the Badger Lands



Behind the Fence

Our Mission:

The Sauk Prairie Conservation Alliance promotes conservation of the former Badger Army Ammunition Plant lands and the greater Sauk Prairie landscape through ecological restoration, education, research and recreation.

We provide opportunities for individuals and partner organizations to pursue these activities guided by the values and goals of the Badger Reuse Plan.

For additional information:

TSPCA
PO Box 403
Baraboo WI 53913-0403
www.saukprairievision.org

Join Us for the Sauk Prairie Premiere of *Green Fire!*

"Tell me of what plant-birthday a man takes notice, and I shall tell you a good deal about his vocation, his hobbies, his hay fever, and the general level of his ecological education."

...so wrote Aldo Leopold c. 1935, in observation of the landscape on and around his Sauk County farm.

As we weave along life's highways, marking the transition of the seasons with russet colored leaves, frosty windows, and spring's first robin, how often do we stop to celebrate a "prairie birthday" each summer when the remnants of Wisconsin's native flora come into bloom?

In celebration of these native plant communities, tucked discreetly into the corners of the Badger lands and elsewhere across southern Wisconsin, we welcome you to join us on **Saturday, March 26** at the **River Arts Center** in Prairie du Sac for the Alliance's Annual Meeting, and a screening of the Leopold inspired film *Green Fire!*

Green Fire explores the life and legacy of Leopold, and the many ways his land ethic idea is living in the work of people and organizations all over the world today. The film shares highlights from Leopold's career that shaped the modern environmental movement, and continues to tell the stories of Leopold's vision of communities that care about both people and the land. According to the Aldo Leopold Foundation, producer of *Green Fire*, "the film challenges viewers to contemplate their own relationship with the land community."

The meeting itself begins at 6pm with election of officers and general business. The film begins promptly at 7pm, and will be followed by a discussion with Dr. Curt Meine, Leopold biographer, conservation biologist, local writer, and founding member of the Alliance. Meine will discuss not only his experience in making the film, but its pertinence to the greater Sauk Prairie's historical landscapes and cultural heritage.

Please watch for additional information regarding the Annual Meeting in early March, or check out the Alliance website for up to date information on this, and other Alliance sponsored events: www.saukprairievision.org. ❁



Service Learning for Portage Scouts

A group of Portage Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts spent a brisk November morning on the Sauk Prairie learning about the land inside the Badger fence, while earning achievements toward their Conservation, Leave No Trace, and Outdoor Activity awards.

Sporting several layers to ward off the chill, Scouts quickly got to work removing brush from the Hillside Prairie off of Highway 78. Using loppers, clippers, and rakes, Scouts tackled a variety of unwanted invasive plants such as autumn olive, honeysuckle, and common buckthorn. Scouts spent the remainder of the morning reseeding areas that were previously cleared of undesirable plants in an effort to encourage native prairie species to grow!

As both the morning and the work progressed, Scouts stopped to shed a layer or two, and enjoy a brief snack while learning about the importance of preserving not only prairies, but the history of a place so formative to the southern Wisconsin landscape: within their view were not only remnants of a native habitat, but foundations of the Badger munitions era, and windbreaks planted by farming families nearly a hundred years earlier.

This same group of Scouts will be returning to the Hillside this spring to continue their role in restoring remnants of the great Sauk Prairie! 🌻



Scouts sow native prairie seed at Badger's Hillside Prairie; funding was provided by the Greater Sauk County Community Foundation and the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin.

Experiential Education Highlights Buddies Program

This past fall, approximately 260 Sauk Prairie School District first and fourth grade Buddies headed out to Badger aboard six buses to experience the Sauk Prairie first-hand! Upon their arrival at Badger, they discovered how to identify prairie flowers and grasses, and learned about invasive species and what can be done to protect native habitat.

They also learned about the history of the land at Badger, walked deer trails, and helped collect seeds from the Kindschi Prairie along Hwy 12. Students filled paper bags with seeds from Indian grass, as well as bergamot and stiff goldenrod, and had fun measuring themselves against Big Bluestem grass; the prairie was so tall, that students appeared to vanish after they had walked only a few steps!

Students will be studying more about prairie plants, animals, and habitat in their classrooms, and plan to make a follow-up trip to August Derleth Park in spring to help with restoration activities there.

For more information on the Alliance's *Education Through Restoration* program at Badger, please contact us today! 🌻



Yes, I would like to support a sustainable future for the Badger lands and the greater Sauk Prairie landscape with my tax-deductible gift of

\$ _____.

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Please send me a poster.

Members joining or renewing at the \$50 level or higher are eligible to receive a poster of Victor Bakhtin's painting, *Sauk Prairie Remembered: A Vision for the Future*.

Please make checks payable to TSPCA. Thank You!



2011 Volunteer Restoration

With the advent of our 2011 Volunteer Restoration season upon us, we are grateful to all of our volunteers who donate their time, energy, and good humor in rejuvenating prairie remnants at Badger!

This year, we invite YOU to join us for a day on the prairie, and see what the excitement and hard work is all about! Enthusiasm is required, experience is not!

Workdays are scheduled one Saturday per month, March thru November, weather permitting. In 2011, we will be focusing our work at the Hillside Prairie, a 15 acre remnant at the south end of Badger. Mark your calendars, 9am until noon:

- Saturday, March 12
- **Saturday, April 9**
- Saturday, May 14
- **Saturday, June 11**
- Saturday, July 9
- **Saturday, August 13**
- Saturday, September 10
- **Saturday, October 8**
- Saturday, November 12

RSVP to workdays@saukprairievision.org for more details! A full calendar of Alliance and Badger related events is listed on our website at: www.saukprairievision.org/newsroom. 🌸

Moely Opportunities Expand!

Last winter the Alliance began working with a private landowner, Aldo Leopold Foundation, and three local volunteers on outreach activities pertaining to an often overlooked prairie remnant known as Moely Prairie, located across from the Sauk Prairie airport on Cty Road PF.

Moely is a privately-owned, 23.5-acre remnant of the original 14,000-acre Sauk Prairie, and harbors a rich diversity of native plant and animal life. Sue Kenney and Gerry Clausen, who have teamed up to form Environmental Stewards of Sauk Prairie, have observed Violet Wood Sorrel, Balsam Ragwort, and two varieties of Pussy Toes on the property, as well as Wood Cock, Killdeer and American Lady Butterfly!

This winter, work at Moely has begun again with renewed muster, as the Alliance and Environmental Stewards have begun to coordinate volunteer restoration workdays there!

Approximately 18 hardy volunteers joined us at Moely on January 16 in an effort to both beat cabin fever, and to move and burn several brush piles that had been accumulating from previous activities. Efforts will continue through February, as we gear up for the spring restoration season. Please join us at Moely and see what a treasure it is!

- **Saturday, February 12 - starting at 12pm**
- Saturday, February 19 - starting at 12pm
- **Saturday, March 5 - starting at 12pm**

For more information on activities at Moely, please contact Sue Kenney at skennyfen@yahoo.com. 🌸





TSPCA, PO Box 403, Baraboo WI 53913

NON-PROFIT

Baraboo, WI
53913



*To make a prairie it takes a clover and one bee,
One clover, and a bee,
And revery.
The revery alone will do,
If bees are few.*

~Emily Dickinson

The Sauk Prairie Conservation Alliance

Winter Newsletter 2011

Prairie Remnants...

With the upcoming premiere of the Aldo Leopold film *Green Fire*, it seems an appropriate time to catch up on Leopold's life in a recently re-released book by Curt Meine entitled ***Aldo Leopold: His Life and Work***. Published by the University of Wisconsin Press, it is the first book to follow Leopold from childhood until death, and has been described as both a fascinating and lively read!

Mark your calendar now for the **2011 Sauk County Earth Day Celebration** on April 17! Located at UW-Baraboo, this fun, family oriented event will both entertain and teach people about energy conservation, the environment and sustainability. Stop by and see us at the Alliance booth!

The Badger Oversight and Management Commission (OMC) will be hosting a celebration in honor of the **Tenth Anniversary of the Badger Reuse Plan** the weekend of October 8. As the event is still in the planning stages, those interested in helping out should please contact Dave Tremble at david.tremble405@gmail.com.



American Transmission Company has signed on to help support the Alliance's restoration work at Badger: *"We are proud to support the Sauk Prairie Conservation Alliance and their efforts to conserve and restore the Sauk Prairie."* This new partnership presents an opportunity to both grow our programs, and maintain an open dialogue with ATC on their proposed transmission routes, in the interest of maintaining the integrity of the conservation goals set forth in the Badger Reuse Plan.

A full schedule of volunteer opportunities, outings, and other events at Badger is listed on our website. Visit today and check out our calendar, sign up for ENewsletters, support our sponsors, and take advantage of our online giving option: www.saukprairievision.org ! 🌻