



Summer 2013

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
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Baraboo WI 53913-0403
www.saukprairievision.org



Call for Action: WDNR Seeks Comment on Alternative Land Uses at Badger

By Dave Tremble, TSPCA President

The heat and humidity have passed for now, but the forecast for Badger looks hotter than ever, at least for the next five weeks. For months now we've been promising that the time will come when we need your concerted and forceful action. *That time has come.*

Recently, WDNR issued its **Draft Preliminary Vision, Preliminary Goals and three Conceptual Alternatives** for the proposed Sauk Prairie Recreation Area (SPRA), the WDNR portion of Badger, the next step in their required planning process for the property. We ask you to review these draft documents on the WDNR's SPRA website (dnr.wi.gov/topic/lands/masterplanning/SaukPrairie/) and make comments within the comment period ending **Friday, August 30, 2013.**

The WDNR website also offers folks a chance to respond directly to an on-line survey about your preferences for the SPRA. We encourage you to look at and respond to the survey with your support for the Badger Reuse Plan.

Please also visit the Alliance website homepage (www.saukprairievision.org), which includes links to the aforementioned WDNR drafts, and also a link to a terrific op-ed piece written by Wisconsin Assembly Representative Fred Clark. Fred hit a homer with this article, which captures the essence of our concerns with the WDNR process, and with this disappointing current set of draft alternatives.

It's patently clear that WDNR is attempting to "divide and conquer" by issuing only options that split valid conservation purposes from all the yummy public recreation possibilities at Badger. They separate the good conservation options from all human interactions, then burden the good recreational alternatives with noisy, intrusive, hard to manage uses like ATV trails and shooting ranges. As WDNR has framed these alternatives, to like any of the fun parts requires that you hold your nose and swallow the whole mess. Badger, as we all know, is not *either* conservation *or* recreation...it's both, as long as the activities are compatible. So it will be necessary for lots of people to tell WDNR what is good, bad and downright ugly about their proposals.

Beyond that, rather than quibble with WDNR about the language of their alternatives, we are simply proposing our own.

Working with our partners on the Badger Oversight Management Commission (BOMC), the Alliance will present a fresh alternative that captures the spirit and promise of the Reuse Plan, and contains specific recommendations for implementation. We have posted this "Conservation/Low Impact ...continued on pg 2

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Recreation Alternative” on our website for your review. As you offer comments to WDNR, you can refer to this new alternative for additional information and inspiration.

We will bring the **Conservation/Low Impact Recreation Alternative** to the BOMC meeting next Thursday, July 25 for approval. The meeting starts at 6:00 at the West Square Building in Baraboo, and is open to the public. The BOMC will submit the Conservation/Low Impact Recreation Alternative to WDNR.

Additionally, the Wisconsin Natural Resources Board (NRB/WDNR Board) meets in Baraboo on Wednesday, August 14. We plan to be there, and several speakers will address the Board about Badger, its significance and its promise. This action extends our series of appearances before the NRB, to provide some needed context to the Badger discussion for the Board, before it is asked to review the WDNR’s Master Plan for the property. This meeting is open to the public. You must register to speak by August 11, if you would like to. Check the NRB website for registration details (dnr.wi.gov/about/nrb/public.html).

I want to say thank you to all of you for your continued help and support! This is a critical moment, and your efforts now will pay dividends for years to come. Here are some important dates of upcoming events for you to keep in mind. Feel free to pass any or all of this information along to your friends and colleagues. We need all the help we can get:

1. **BOMC 7/25 6:00pm, West Square Bldg, Baraboo**
2. **WDNR Open House 7/31 5-7:30pm, River Arts Center, Prairie du Sac**
3. **WDNR board 8/14 11:00am (public comment slot), Clarion Hotel & Convention Center, Baraboo (You must register to speak before 8/11--go to WDNR board web site to register for citizen participation; only one person per organization/however anyone may speak for themselves.)**
4. **TSPCA Open House 8/21 7-8:30pm, River Arts Center, Prairie du Sac**
5. **WDNR comment period closes 8/31 5:00pm**

Stay tuned, as things are changing rapidly because of your dedication! Remember to check back often...find updates on our website at www.saukprairievision.org, as well as on our Facebook page.

Thanks from all of us here at the Alliance! 🌸

Volunteer Spotlight

By Jessie Conaway, Volunteer Outreach

The mighty Mary Zenker plays many roles for the Alliance! In 2012, she trained as a Volunteer Leader under the Alliance’s newly created Skills Builder program, and has since shown her dedication by showing up ready to work, lead, monitor, and do whatever restoration work needs attending at the Hillside Prairie.

She takes full advantage of her volunteer perks, and has joined us for every Alliance Volunteer BenEvent from kayaking at Mirror Lake, to touring at the International Crane Foundation, to bird watching at Badger.

Mary is a librarian at Sauk City library, and has helped to offer that public space to promote the Alliance’s work to local communities, hosting a community forum last year, and giving the Alliance the opportunity to display in the entrance of the library for the month of May 2013.

Being a natural at archiving, Mary has also been crucial in Alliance efforts to organize a decades-long collection of Alliance files in Building 207 at Badger, no small feat!!!

Mary is fun, hardworking, and quite photogenic...she has served consistently as our poster girl for just about every event and activity!

Thank you, Mary, for your dedication and willingness to share what you have learned with future volunteers! 🌸



Field Notes

Invasive shrubs don't stand a chance on the Hillside Prairie! We are expanding our influence onto the west slope of the Hillside, and our excellent volunteer crew has been enhanced by two certified Chainsaw Operators! Check out our website for a schedule of restoration volunteer opportunities to see how you can get involved!

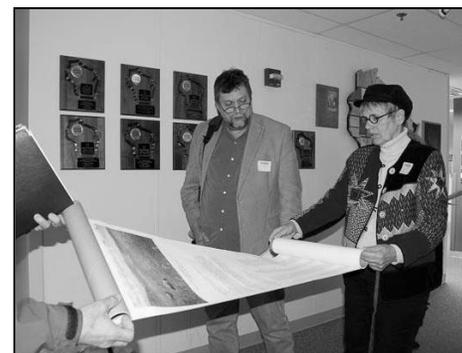
Volunteer Leaders honed their GPS and compass skills during a recent Skills Builder training at the Hillside in preparation for citizen monitoring and other management activities. Upcoming Skills Builders include Native Plant ID, Restoration Planning, and Group Management. Plan to join us, and Build your Skills! Consider becoming a Volunteer Leader today!



WDNR ecologist Mike Mossman hosted an Alliance member and volunteer BenEvent in May-- a walk, talk, and drive through of some of Badger's birding hotspots--The Magazine Meadow, The Rocket Meadow and the Henry Homestead, identifying 39 species of birds!

For a third season, graduate student Cherrie Nolden is returning to Badger to continue her studies in conservation agriculture, in partnership with USDA Dairy Forage Research Center, in an attempt to discern what amount of goat browsing pressure and time is required to remove invasive plants like prickly ash, buckthorn, and autumn olive.

Few in number, but strong in heart, Alliance members Bill & Donna Stehling, Curt Meine and Gail Lamberty took the Badger story to the Village of Witwen's Annual Fourth of July Parade, pounding the pavement to rally support for a conservation future at Badger.



Since February, in response to WDNR's master planning process for the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area, Alliance members have been providing testimonial to the WDNR Board on such topics as the Reuse Plan, restoration, stewardship, low impact land use, and Badger's cultural history. Visit our website for the full story! 🌻



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NON-PROFIT

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*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

Summer Newsletter 2013

Prairie Remnants...

Interested in learning how to improve your identification of invasive plants? Attend the **Invasive Plants Association of Wisconsin's (IPAW) August 6** free field day event for land managers, staff and others interesting in invasive plant management. This 5 hour event includes hands-on training in identifying common invasive plants to Wisconsin's forests and grasslands, as well as how to correctly use herbicides to manage these pests. The training will be held from 9am to 2pm at the UW's Arlington Research Station (N695 Hopkins Road, Arlington, WI 53911). Lunch will be provided. For more information, please visit www.techlinenews.com/articles/2013/wisconsin-tour-2013.

It's Picnic Time! Invite a friend, and come to our annual **Prairie Picnic on August 10** at noon, following our volunteer workday. Meet fellow prairie enthusiasts, go on a prairie walk to discover what prairie plants are reemerging from the soil, and tour the Hillside Prairie to see the progress Alliance Volunteers are making in restoring this high quality prairie remnant. Bring a blanket as well as a picnic dish to share! Please RSVP to: workdays@saukprairievision.org.

Join us for a tour of ecologist Steve Apfelbaum's **Stone Prairie Farm on August 17** from 10am to 1pm. For over thirty years, Apfelbaum has been transforming his eighty-acre Stone Prairie Farm into a biologically diverse ecosystem of prairie, wetland, spring brook, and forest, inspiring his book, *Nature's Second Chance*. This tour is being offered at no cost to our members and volunteers as one of several annual educational *BenEvents*. To register, please email workdays@saukprairievision.org.

Citizens for Safe Water Around Badger has drafted a letter in support of the most complete level of cleanup at Badger. The letter encourages the WDNR to ensure the highest level of clean-up possible, in concert with the Badger Reuse Plan. To read the letter and indicate your support, contact cswab@merr.com.

Sign up for our ENewsletter, link to our Facebook page, make a donation, and join us in thanking our 2013 sponsors at www.saukprairievision.org!

We acknowledge and thank our 2013 Visionary Sponsors!

