



Winter 2015

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

Ho-Chunk Nation Receives Lands at Badger

After more than fifteen years of effort, the Ho-Chunk Nation (HCN) has finally received ownership of some 1,500 acres of the former Badger Army Ammunition Plant lands. The transfer of this land was accomplished through the National Defense Authorization Act which was passed by Congress and signed by President Obama in December 2014. Wisconsin Senator Tammy Baldwin was instrumental in this effort. The Sauk Prairie Conservation Alliance (TSPCA) has sent a letter to Ho-Chunk Nation President Jon Greendeer congratulating the HCN on acquiring these lands and offering TSPCA's assistance as the HCN plans for, and begins management of its lands.

With this land transfer, the long-envisioned land ownership plan for the former Badger Army Ammunition Plant by the Ho-Chunk Nation, the Dairy Forage Research Center and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources is largely in place. Now the challenge is to encourage these owners, with respect for their individual missions and responsibilities, to work together to manage the Badger lands cooperatively in keeping with the Badger Re-use Plan.

The Ho-Chunk Nation has long been an important voice in the process of the planning for the future of the Badger lands. Currently, the HCN's representative to the Badger Oversight and Management Commission (BOMC), Randy Poelma, serves as the Vice-chairman of the BOMC and the Chairman of the BOMC's Planning and Land Use Committee. ❁

Update on the WDNR Master Planning Process

For more than a year, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) has been stating that its Draft Master Plan for the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area (SPRA) will be released soon. Most recent information indicates that the Draft will be finished during the next couple of months, and is expected to be released for public review and comment in April 2015. The WDNR has committed to a 45 day public comment period for this Draft, including at least one public forum. After the public comments are received, a Final Master Plan will be completed which will be presented to the Department's Natural Resources Board for approval. There will again be an opportunity for public input when this Final Master Plan goes before the WDNR Board.

Continued, page 2...



...continued from page 1.

During the 2013 comment period on conceptual plans for the SPRA, there was very strong support for a plan that was in keeping with the Badger Reuse Plan's commitment to restoration and low-impact recreation. This was put forward as Alternative 4 by the Badger Oversight and Management Commission, with the work of TSPCA and other organizations, in contrast to the three alternatives proposed by the WDNR. Sadly, the WDNR did not follow through with its announced plan to release a "preferred alternative" and provide a public comment period prior to developing the Draft Master Plan, thus there is very little, if any, reliable information about what is being included in the Draft. We can only hope that the WDNR heard the strong public support for restoration and low-impact recreation, and that the Draft will accurately reflect the public's opinion and the WDNR's previous commitments to that approach to the management of the SPRA.

When the Draft Plan is released, it will once again be important for everyone to carefully read and consider the plan, and be ready to express strong support for those parts of the plan which are in keeping with the values of the Badger Reuse Plan, and to express opposition to any proposed inappropriate uses of the land. TSPCA will do all that it can to publicize the release of the Draft Master Plan and related public events. Please be prepared to do your part by providing thoughtful public comments and encouraging others to do so as well! 🌻



Kindschi Prairie Glory!

✂

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!

TSPCA Annual Meeting

Each year in late winter, The Sauk Prairie Conservation Alliance holds an annual meeting of our membership, the primary purpose of which is to elect members to serve on our Board of Directors. This involves appointing both new Board members, and re-appointing board members whose terms are ending and who wish to continue on the board.

This year's Annual Meeting will be held Tuesday, March 10, 2015 at 6:30pm, in the basement meeting room of the Sauk City Library, 515 Water Street, Sauk City. The meeting is open to the public, but only currently paid-up members of the Alliance are eligible to vote; our Treasurer will be happy to receive membership donations at the meeting!

Like all small organizations, we are on the lookout for folks willing to serve on our Board! A good humored warning however: ours is a "working board" with minimal staff support, so expect time spent beyond attending board meetings. Ensuring a conservation future for the former Badger Plant is a demanding, multi-layered affair, but one that comes with great rewards! If you are interested, please contact a current Board member or email our current TSPCA President at serafycx@sbcglobal.net. 🌻

TSPCA Committees

The mission of The Sauk Prairie Conservation Alliance (TSPCA) covers a variety of goals, including advocating for the implementation of the Badger Reuse Plan, educating the public about the Sauk Prairie, and on-the-ground restoration projects. This work is coordinated by a fourteen member board of directors that meets monthly. In order to help share the workload and allow folks to focus on specific interests, TSPCA has established several committees: *Badger Forward*, to coordinate our advocacy activities; *Education*, to focus on public events and educational programming; *Restoration*, to continue volunteer restoration workdays and related efforts; and *Outreach*, to coordinate newsletters, website and social media, and membership promotion.

Though TSPCA has used paid staff to accomplish some of its goals, we remain, at heart, a volunteer organization! These committees are a way for our members and volunteers to become actively engaged in the work of TSPCA. If you are interested in helping with the work of any of these committees, please contact TSPCA President David Serafy-Cox at serafycx@sbcglobal.net.

Volunteer Restoration Program

As in past years, TSPCA will again sponsor a volunteer restoration program at Badger! The exact form it will take this year, and on which sites, is still being investigated by our Restoration Committee, in consultation with Badger landowners. Sites may include the Hillside Prairie, the Kindschi Prairie, the Fordham Prairie, or other identified sites. As always, our aim is to reduce invasive plants and woody shrubs on these remnant and restored prairies, in order to improve habitat quality for native plant species, as well as grassland birds. *Please watch* for details via email, and on our website and Facebook pages.

And a **HUGE THANK YOU** to all our Volunteer Restoration workers, all our member donors and financial supporters, all those who toil as meeting attendees, letter writers, detail trackers, Board members, commission representatives, and general enthusiasts on behalf of the Badger lands and the Badger Reuse Plan! 🌻



A hardy and devoted group of Alliance volunteers (top) takes a break from their hard work for a photo op! TSPCA president David Serafy-Cox (bottom) mans the fire break out on the prairie.

Joan Kenney Retires

Joan Kenney, the public face of the U.S. Army at Badger, and for the past fourteen years the Army commander's representative, quietly retired in January after 25 years working at the plant.

A biologist by training, Kenney witnessed Badger's transformation from an industrial landscape peppered by 1,400+ buildings, to a now open landscape intended for restoration, recreation, and agricultural research. Under her supervision, a decade of demolition, recycling, decontamination, and other cleanup activities were carried out at the former Badger Plant, with the appointed goal of making the land suitable for conservation-related uses. Kenney will be replaced by Mike Sitton, former manager of contractor programs at the plant during its deconstruction.

TSPCA wishes Ms. Kenney well, and thanks her for her efforts toward realization of the Badger Reuse Plan! 🌻



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



Prairie Remnants...

Mark your calendar now for the **Sauk County Earth Day Celebration** on Sunday, April 26 from 11am to 3pm! Located at UW-Baraboo, this event celebrates WATER WONDERFUL WORLD, with workshops on water use and conservation, and related topics.

Our volunteer **Apple Corps** crew continues to partner with UW-Madison graduate student and Alliance Board member Katherine Braun to locate, care for, and connect back with pre WWII farm families, the numerous apple trees that span over all three land owner properties on the Badger lands. For a map of apple sites at Badger, check out our website: www.saukprairievision.org/current_projects.

Looking to plant a prairie garden of your own? Whether starting from scratch or restoring a remnant site, using seed and plant stock suited for your specific region is ideally recommended, not only to ensure the successful establishment of those plants, but also to protect nearby wild plant populations. For a list of **native plant nurseries** in Wisconsin, please visit: www.grandprairiefriends.org/nurseriesWI.php.

Looking for a little **inspired reading** to while away your winter days? Why not learn more about what is arguably North America's most historic and complex ecosystem, the tallgrass prairie! Visit www.amazon.com, search keyword "*prairie*" and you'll find books for all ages ranging from natural history to fiction, poetry, biography, gardening and even frontier cooking!

The Alliance's website software is outdated, and we will be working hard in the coming months to make the necessary changes to bring our website up to date in order to keep you informed of changes occurring at Badger! Please be patient with us, and check back frequently for updates to our webpage and calendar of events; while you're there, sign up for our electronic "enews" updates, support our sponsors, and take advantage of our online giving option: www.saukprairievision.org ! 🌱

We acknowledge and thank our 2015 Visionary Sponsors...

