



Natural Resource Management Department Memorandum

TO: Benjamin Haberthur, Executive Director
FROM: Patrick Chess, Director of Natural Resources
RE: September 2024 Department Monthly Report

LAND MANAGEMENT

NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Restoration

Weed Management

Staff continued to focus primarily on Chemical Weed Management at nearly every preserve in September, totaling over 200 hours. Target species this last month were purple loosestrife, tree of heaven and common reed.

Seed Harvesting

Seed collection continues with many species including compass plant, butterfly milkweed, and nodding onion. Weekly volunteer seed collections began this month and were held at Meissner-Corron, Dick Young, and Aurora West Forest Preserves. We have about 20 regular volunteers and several partner agencies that come out every Wednesday to assist us with seed collection. Additionally, staff added over 200 hours of harvesting native seed.

National Public Lands Day

The District joined forces with Toyota on National Public Lands day for an event held on September 27th at Fabyan Forest Preserve. Volunteers helped staff plant shrubs across some of the woodlands previously cleared. This will help restore the understory and provide additional habitat for migratory birds utilizing the site as a respite along the Fox River migratory corridor. Volunteers also helped harvest native seed during the event.

Wildlife

Carpentersville Dam Mussel Relocation

Contractors began lowering and notching the Carpentersville dam this month. As the water levels began to change, the District was monitoring and prepared a plan to protect mussels that were unable to move themselves as the water receded. District staff from NRM, Operations and Trades are visiting the site regularly to monitor the newly



National Public Lands Day event with Toyota at Fabyan.



Staff have been working to relocate mussels back into wetter areas while the Carpentersville Dam comes down. Restoration Crew leader Ryan Kurtz holds up his haul.

exposed mudflats and sand bars. Mussels found in these areas were moved into deeper water to prevent them from dying. Assistance was also provided by volunteers and individuals from Friends of the Fox River.

Deer Management Program

Participants in the District's 2024-2025 Deer Management Program were given access to scout their hunting zones and prepare for the upcoming management season at all sites, except Big Rock. Staff prepared and mailed neighbor notices for properties adjacent to preserves included in the program. The season will officially begin on 10/1.

Avian Research

Wildlife staff began weekly Muirhead surveys again to track any and all water-related bird species using the preserve. As we get into fall migration, several types of shore & marshbirds have been seen using the site. The main species highlight was an American Bittern which resided in the main pond for about a week in mid-September. Other highlights were the Common tern, & the growing arrival of several waterfowl and shorebird species.



Wildlife Biologist Bill Graser displays an armful of mussels.



Staff were able to capture this photo of a mussel with its travel trail.