



# Natural Resource Management Department Memorandum

TO: Benjamin Haberthur, Executive Director  
FROM: Patrick Chess, Director of Natural Resources  
RE: January 2025 Department Monthly Report

## LAND MANAGEMENT

### NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

#### *Restoration*

##### Tree & Brush Clearing

Despite cold winter conditions, the Natural Resource Management field staff are right in their element, tackling invasive tree and brush throughout the forest preserves. Major removal projects of buckthorn, honeysuckle, and other brush were the focus for weeks of cold-weather work at Rutland, Chicago Premium Outlets Wetland, and Forested Fen Forest Preserves.

Progress was slowed due to warmer temperatures at the end of the month. However, Contractors also continued their work at Big Rock, Hannaford, and Bliss Woods Forest Preserves.

##### Seed Preparation & Planting

Staff continued planting seed last month. Our Plant Technician, Monika Kastle, creates enhancement seed mix recipes unique for each site. With a combination of purchased seed and seed harvested during the 2024 Seed Team, these seed mixes are broadcasted by hopper or by hand into our preserves. Last month, staff sowed seed at Mill Creek Greenway, Johnson's Mound and Binnie Forest Preserves.

#### *Wildlife*

##### Deer Management Program

The 2024/25 Deer Management program ended on January 19<sup>th</sup>, with the close of the archery deer season. Participants removed their equipment from the preserves by 1/26. Final harvest numbers were: Bruner/FRS (26), Freeman Kame (16), Lone Grove (7), Binnie (4),



*Tree clearing work done at LeRoy Oakes FP.*



*Staff seeding a field at Binnie FP.*

**Natural Resource Management Department Memorandum**  
January Report

---

and Needham (3). IDNR is still testing samples for chronic wasting disease at this time so final the final number of CWD positive deer is unknown at this time. There were at least 4 known positives on 1/31.

Avian Surveys and Studies

Wildlife staff attended additional raptor banding outings with Millikin University in January. Staff is being trained on trapping, handling and sampling techniques to contribute towards on-going avian health studies. This includes adding a health element to our on-going American Kestrel color band study.

Staff continue to conduct owl surveys throughout the county. January and February can be a very active time for owls as they are pairing up and preparing for nesting season, which typically occurs during late winter to early spring. A total of 3 Eastern Screech owls, 2 Northern saw-whet & 2 Barred owls were all found in a single preserve in late January.



*NRM Staff Johnson, Kastle, and Reed cutting brush and treating stumps at Rutland bog.*