



LOWER PLATTE SOUTH natural resources district

3125 Portia Street | P.O. Box 83581 • Lincoln, Nebraska 68501-3581 | P: 402.476.2729 • F: 402.476.6454 | www.lpsnrd.org

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Dan Schulz, Resources Coordinator *Dan*

DATE: February 12, 2019

SUBJECT: Minutes-Recreation, Forestry and Wildlife Subcommittee Meeting

On Monday, February 11, 2019, the Recreation, Forestry and Wildlife Subcommittee met in the District conference room at 5PM. Subcommittee members present were Chair-Anthony Schutz, Gary Aldridge, Don Jacobson, Chelsea Johnson, Dan Steinkruger, Ray Stevens and Sarah Wilson. Others present were Nicole Fleck-Tooze – Lincoln Parks & Recreation, Bruce Kennedy-Audubon Nebraska, Jason Pickerel – Great Plains Appraisal, David Potter, Dan Schulz, Jay Seaton, Maggie Stuckey – Executive Director of the Lincoln Parks Foundation and Paul Zillig.

The first agenda item was the Prairie Corridor on Haines Branch – Samani appraisal. Fleck-Tooze handed out the attached maps showing the Prairie Corridor and Haines Branch Project area and where the Samani property is located within the project area. The other map shows the Samani property divided into Tract A and Tract B. She reviewed the history of the two conservation easements over approximately 170 acres shown in green, Samani motocross- approximately 58 acres and Samani dwelling- 20 acres (Samani Tract B).

Fleck-Tooze requested the subcommittee to consider the acquisition of Tract A (228 acres) and that options were still being considered about moving forward on Tract B depending on the success of acquiring Tract A. She indicated the funding sources for the acquisition would be a combination of Nebraska Environment

Trust grant and other funding sources but would not include any additional funds from the District. She indicated Pickerel would review the appraisal.

It was moved by Stevens, seconded by Jacobson and unanimously approved that the Directors go into closed session to protect the public interest and develop strategy with respect to negotiations related to the acquisition of the Samani property for the Prairie Corridor on Haines Branch Project.

The subcommittee went into closed session at approximately 5:30PM.

It was moved by Stevens, seconded by Jacobson and unanimously approved to come out of closed session.

The subcommittee came out of closed session at approximately 6PM.

It was moved by Jacobson, seconded by Stevens and unanimously approved to recommend that the Board of Directors approve the Prairie Corridor on Haines Branch Samani property appraisal and authorize District staff to negotiate and acquire fee title in accordance with Stevens guidance.

The second agenda item was the road side seeding demonstration – Audubon’s Spring Creek Prairie. Former NRD Director Kennedy reviewed the efforts over the past several years to work with the Lancaster County Engineers office promoting the planting of native grasses and forbs on county right-of-way. He indicated, the current county engineer, Pam Dingman has agreed to a demonstration seeding at the entrance to Spring Creek Prairie. The attached information includes emails between Spring Creek Prairie staff, a map of the demonstration area and the approved seed mix. Kennedy also explained that the brome grass historically seeded along county right-of-ways is very aggressive and is considered an invasive weed in prairies. He also discussed the efforts Spring Creek Prairie staff constantly exert to control the spread of brome grass on Audubon’s property.

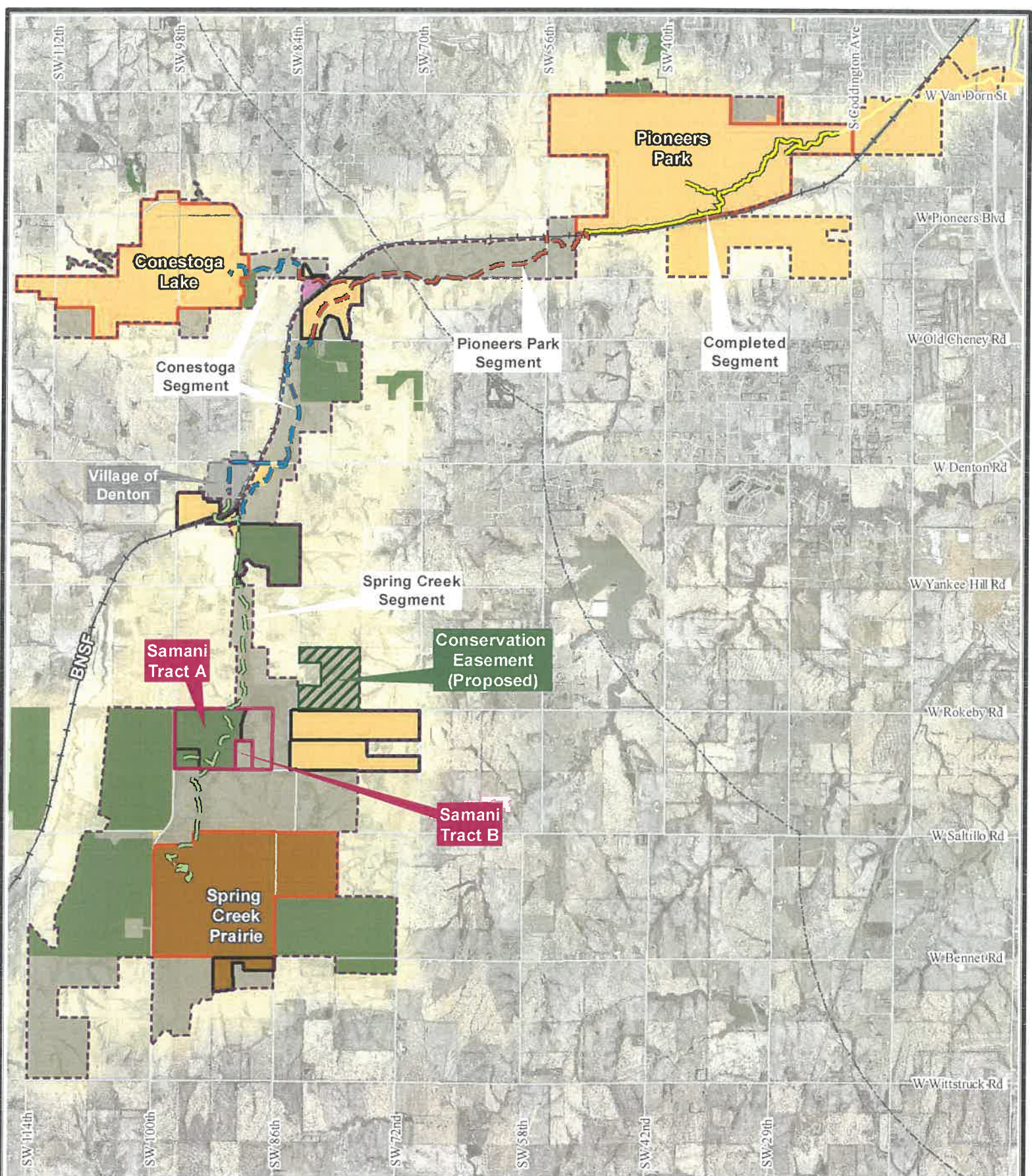
Kennedy requested the District consider contributing \$300 towards the seeding demonstration.

It was moved by Stevens, seconded by Wilson and unanimously approved to recommend that the Board of Directors approve the Spring Creek Prairie road side seeding request not to exceed \$300.

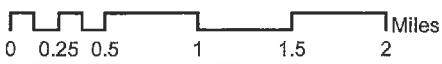
The third agenda item – Nebraska Forest Service Annual Report. Seaton distributed copies of the report and noted several portions dealing with eastern red cedar control and utilization, emerald ash borer (EAB) and the need to develop a better insect trap to monitor the spread of EAB, the utilization of EAB killed ash trees, and statewide windbreak inventories and trials. Seaton indicated he would provide the Directors with an electronic link to the report.

The fourth item was an update on Wilderness Park. Zillig reviewed the history of Wilderness Park when Lancaster County purchased the property in the 1960's. At that time, the park land was out in the country and who'd of thought it would wind up on the edge of Lincoln? He indicated a group has been formed to figure out over the next few months how to transfer ownership of Wilderness Park to the City of Lincoln.

With no other business, Schutz adjourned the meeting at 6:45PM.



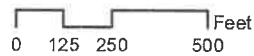
**Prairie Corridor
on Haines Branch:
Samani Property Reference Map**



- Priority Area
- Destination Areas
- 3-mile Jurisdiction
- Public/Conservation Ownership
- Public/Conservation Ownership (Addition)
- Spring Creek Prairie (Addition)
- Conservation Easement
- Conservation Easement (Addition)
- Under Contract
- BNSF RR
- Existing PC Trail Segments
- Future PC Trail Segments



Prairie Corridor on Haines Branch:
Samani Property Aerial Map



- Parcels
- Samani Tracts
- Samani 1 Conservation Easement
- Samani 2 Conservation Easement

Dan Schulz

From: Sittler, Meghan <msittler@audubon.org>
Sent: Wednesday, February 6, 2019 2:01 PM
To: Dan Schulz
Subject: FW: Wachiska's legislation committee minutes for 9/27/18
Attachments: Ditch seeding map Oct 2018.docx; Suggested low grow-Kay Kottas 110717.docx

Let me know if you have questions. I'll follow up with the email from Pam.

From: Hubbs, Edward <ehubbs@audubon.org>
Sent: Tuesday, February 5, 2019 4:37 PM
To: Sittler, Meghan <msittler@audubon.org>
Subject: FW: Wachiska's legislation committee minutes for 9/27/18

Meghan,

Below is the email that I sent to Arlys, Sam, and Bruce Kennedy. If memory serves I also sent it to you and Kristal.

There was some quick math in this email, but not a final dollar amount, so I can't remember exactly how we came up with \$300. I think that the important things to point out are that 1) the herbicide cost is higher, because we were planning 2 treatments. And 2) the seed cost is not exact for three reasons. The rate was for drilling, since we will broadcast the seed it should be increased by 20-25%. It did not include a cover crop such as oats, this is needed to help minimize erosion. The price and seed availability was for a 2018 planting, now we are a year later and the prices may have changed and/or some species may not even be available.

Ed Hubbs

Habitat and Resource Manager
402.797.2301

Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center

11700 SW 100th St, Denton, NE 68339
springcreekprairie.audubon.org

From: Hubbs, Edward
Sent: Friday, October 12, 2018 5:34 PM
To: 'Wachiska Office' <office@wachiskaaudubon.org>; Truax Sam <samjtruax18@gmail.com>; Bruce Kennedy <brucemargekenn@gmail.com>
Subject: RE: Wachiska's legislation committee minutes for 9/27/18

Arlys,

Here is the project as I understand it.

Sam brought this potential idea to myself and county engineer Pam Dingman in 2017. I understand that it goes back further than that, but that was when it was first brought to my attention. The goal was to have the county use native plants to seed the road ditches instead of invasive brome-grass.

In the fall of 2017 Sam, Pam, and myself met at Pam's office to develop a plan. We came up with the following goals.

- 1) Provide an option of native plants for seeding the road ditches to replace current practices of seeding invasive brome-grass. This may be cost prohibitive, but could at least be considered in areas of conservation priority, such as Spring Creek Prairie, properties protected by Wachiska...etc.
- 2) The mix should be a low growing option that would reduce or eliminate the frequency of mowing.
- 3) Serve the same purpose as brome **in helping to minimize erosion.**

As a result of this meeting it was decided that a section of road ditch along Spring Creek Prairie would be a good location for a demonstration site. Action items for the three of us were:

Ed Hubbs

- 1) Propose a site for the demonstration project.
- 2) Develop a species list that would address the goals of the project.
- 3) Determine the costs associated with seed, herbicide treatments, and Spring Creek Prairie owned equipment.
- 4) Confirm that Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center is willing to continue supporting the project by means of staff time. This will be **considerable** and the most expensive part of the project.

Pam Dingman

- 1) Make known any objections or issues with the proposed site.
- 2) Determine if the county has any restrictions or objections to the herbicide treatments.
- 3) Make county staff aware of what is happening and to not interfere with the project by way of unnecessary mowing...etc.
- 4) Work with Ed to determine equipment available for the project.

Sam Truax

- 1) Inform Wachiska of the status of this project, including the proposed site and seed list.
- 2) Determine if Wachiska would be willing to further help with the project by covering the cost of herbicide and seed.

Communications between engineer Dingman and myself have been ongoing. However, after the meeting in 2017 neither of us were able to get in contact with Sam. At that point the project was put on hold. On September 21, 2018 Sam sent me an email asking about the status of the project. I informed him that with one of our key partners missing, the project had stalled.

I have attached two word documents to this email. The first document is the proposed site at Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center. It is slightly under 1 acre in size. The second document is a proposed species list for the project. This list includes recommended rates as well as a cost per acre. However, this list was established using seed cost and availability based on our meeting last fall with an early 2018 planting. I will have to re-visit with the company, Prairie Legacy, to determine if the same species are currently available, as well as any changes to the cost. The seeding method and timing will have an effect on the exact rates needed. We may also need to include a temporary cover crop such as wheat or oats to help prevent erosion while the native species get established.

I have confirmed the continued support of Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center for this project. Internally, we have approved the proposed site location. Between planning and field work, I have already invested over 20 hours toward the project. 10 hours of site prep has already taken place.

I have concluded that the cost of herbicide will be approximately \$25. The exact cost of the seed is unknown but I would guess it will be \$150-\$225. The cost of equipment (vehicles, tools, and sprayer) will vary based upon what is available from the county and what is needed from Spring Creek Prairie. Use of Spring Creek Prairie owned equipment will be valued at is \$20 per hour.

Hopefully that helps catch you up on the project. As I said, I have every intention of continuing our work to make it a reality. Unfortunately, the timing is going to put us in a tight spot as the best time for the initial herbicide treatment is after the first hard frost. It is important to know as soon as possible if Wachiska is still supporting this project. We do not want to have to put this off for another year.



The proposed area is slightly less than 1 acre. It extends from the north boundary of Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center to the north side of the turn in off of SW 100th St. It includes the area from the shoulder of the road to the fence, plus the fenced in area at the entrance. This area houses 2 center signs, and 1 historical sign. It is approximately 4,400 square yards. 1 acre=4,840 square yards

In summer of 2018 woody vegetation was removed from the southern portion of the proposed area.

Suggested seed mix for a native, low-growing ditch planting.

11/7/17

Kay Kottas, Ph.D.
 President, Prairie Legacy Inc.
 Botanical Consulting, prairielegacyinc.com
 Managing Member, Witt's End Homestead LLC
 Native seed and plant production

Here is a suggested mix. The cost is 120.92 per acre as is. The price can be easily changed with changes in species, species numbers or amounts of species.

Some notes:

This mix has 40 seeds per square foot. I recommend keeping that rate of seed per square foot. It has 75% grasses and 25% forbs. Forbs like Liatris, Echinacea, and New Jersey Tea are the most expensive species in this mix. Junegrass is often hard to find in the trade, so if the highway department has a hard time finding that, we could sub other shortgrass species such as Bouteloua gracilis or midgrass species like little blue or sideoats.

A suggested mix based on current availability.

Species		PLS lbs per acre	% by weight	PLS seeds per sq ft	% of Mixture PLS
yarrow	Achillea millefolium	0.004	0.153	0.262	0.0067
meadow garlic	Allium canadense	0.004	0.153	0.014	0.0004
candle anemone	Anemone cylindrica	0.015	0.575	0.143	0.0037
cudweed sagewort sage	Artemisia ludoviciana	0.005	0.192	0.465	0.0120
whorled milkweed	Asclepias verticillata	0.01	0.383	0.040	0.0010
heath aster	Aster ericoides	0.002	0.077	0.147	0.0038
blue grama	Bouteloua gracilis	0.45	16.924	6.612	0.1670
purple poppymallow	Callirhoe involucrata	0.01	0.383	0.008	0.0002
short-beak sedge	Carex brevior	0.02	0.767	0.298	0.0077
redroot New Jersey tea	Ceanothus herbaceus	0.001	0.038	0.004	0.0001
plains coreopsis	Coreopsis tinctoria	0.03	1.150	2.219	0.0571
easter white prairie-clover	Dalea candida	0.05	1.916	0.441	0.0113
purple prairie-clover	Dalea purpurea	0.05	1.916	0.364	0.0094
narrow-leaf coneflower	Echinacea angustifolia	0.02	0.767	0.003	0.0001
Junegrass	Koeleria macrantha	0.29	11.115	15.412	0.3966
dotted gayfeather	Liatris punctata	0.01	0.383	0.026	0.0007
tube penstemon	Penstemon tubaeflorus var. tubaeflorus	0.01	0.383	0.294	0.0076
Pennsylvania cinquefoil	Potentilla pensylvanica	0.02	0.767	1.690	0.0435
self-heal	Prunella vulgaris	0.03	1.150	0.521	0.0134
upright prairie-coneflower	Ratibida columnifera	0.02	0.767	0.338	0.0087
black-eyed Susan	Rudbeckia hirta	0.05	1.916	1.809	0.0465

little bluestem	Schizachyrium scoparium	1	38.329	5.525	0.1422
stiff goldenrod	Solidago rigida	0.02	0.767	0.309	0.0080
showy-wand goldenrod	Solidago speciosa	0.008	0.307	0.787	0.0202
tall dropseed	Sporobolus compositus	0.02	0.767	0.689	0.0177
American germander	Teucrium canadense	0.01	0.383	0.073	0.0019
Grasses Total:		2.28	85.747	29.637	0.7485
Wildflower/Forb/Legume		0.379	14.253	9.956	0.2515
Total:					
Total Mixture:		2.659	100.000	39.593	

Dan Schulz

From: Sittler, Meghan <msittler@audubon.org>
Sent: Wednesday, February 6, 2019 2:17 PM
To: Dan Schulz
Subject: Roadside Seeding--Lancaster County Engineer

On November 1, 2018, I along with Ed Hubbs, Spring Creek Prairie (SCP) Habitat Manager, met with Pam Dingman, Lancaster County Engineer, and Ron Bohaty, Lancaster County Engineer Office Road/Maintenance Supervisor. The meeting took place at Spring Creek Prairie. One of the primary purposes of that meeting was to discuss the proposed road side seeding demonstration project at SCP. During that meeting Pam and Ron expressed their support of this project. The County offered to provide their hydromulcher to mulch over the seed if possible. Pam also indicated her support of the potential to expand demonstration sites dependent upon outcomes of this project, as well as support from Wachiska, the County and others as would be needed to expand to several road corridors in the county. Pam's primary request was that the planting be comprised of low growth natives.

Meghan Sittler
Center Director
402.797.2301

Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center
11700 SW 100 Street
PO Box 117
Denton, NE 68339
springcreek.audubon.org