

Winter 3-1-2023

Irvine Prairie Outreach and Education

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IRVINE PRAIRIE

Winter Meeting | March 1, 2023

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Tallgrass Prairie
CENTER

University of Northern Iowa.

Outreach and Education 2022



Outreach work in 2023 will focus on celebrating the Irvine Prairie Expansion and using Irvine Prairie to help raise awareness of the mission of the TPC. We will continue to explore ways to efficiently meet the need for field trips and group tours, to inform and inspire the public to explore Irvine through print and electronic communications, and improve the visitor welcome area. Tasks to support 2023 operations include:

Education

Involve K-12 Students in Restoration Work

We will finalize plans for 2023 visits after prescribed burns are complete.

Personnel: LW, JM, AmeriCorps

Materials: Transplants, dibbles, marking supplies, watering supplies

Field Trips and Tours

We will continue to staff field trips when requested and staff time allows. Thanks to previous visitors, we now have sets of tried and tested activities we can use for student-focused events.

Personnel: LW, AmeriCorps, volunteers

Materials/Equipment: Varies by activity type and season but may include sets of insect nets, field guides, binoculars, seed collecting supplies

Community Engagement

Communication

Activities in 2023 will focus on the Irvine Prairie Expansion. We will continue to use the Irvine Prairie web pages and Facebook posts to publicize and share information about Irvine Prairie. We will seek opportunities to publish information and articles about Irvine in mainstream local and/or statewide publications. We will use the species lists from the research reports to create printable checklists of plants for the website. Staff members will take photographs of the landscape, flora/fauna, and activities at Irvine throughout the seasons for use in electronic and print publications.

Personnel: AP (lead), all staff and AmeriCorps

Materials/Equipment: NA

Logistics

Work will focus on improving the visitor welcome area: staging and parking areas. We will investigate and select designs, locations, and contractors for constructing an information kiosk and a wall to hide the portapotty (if this can be done in a way that is compatible with servicing the toilet).

Personnel: MW, KN, LJ, AP

Materials/Equipment: TBD

Events



2022

- March 3, 2022 – Winter Meeting 2022
- April 25 – Irvine Prairie burn drone video taken
- May 26 – Union High School, La Porte City, transplanting project, approximately 50 10th-grade students under the direction of Craig Hemsath
- August 22 – Cathy named Iowa Conservation Woman of the Year by the Conservation Districts of Iowa
- September 26 – Benton County Nutrient Reduction Project holds event honoring Cathy
- Oct. 14 – North Tama Schools eighth-grade science classes visited Irvine Prairie under the direction of Jean Matzen, educational project, approximate students
- December 6 – Irvine Strategic Planning Meeting at TPC (combined with holiday potluck)

2023 *(included for reference)*

- Jan. 25, 2023 – Signing of papers transferring Irvine Prairie to the UNI Foundation Properties LLC
- Feb. 2 – Irvine Prairie expansion featured in front page story in Waterloo-Cedar Falls Courier, *Irvine Prairie size tripled*
- Feb. 2 – Irvine Prairie expansion featured in North Tama Telegraph Herald, *Irvine Prairie to triple in size*
- Feb. 10 – Irvine Prairie expansion featured on *Talk of Iowa* on Iowa Public Radio with host Charity Nebbe

TPC Annual Report/Highlights 2021-2022

- Irvine Prairie highlighted, *Restoring a piece of the original Iowa landscape*
 1. 300 copies printed, many more distributed electronically as PDFs
 2. Cathy Irvine - Iowa Conservation Woman of the Year award highlighted
 3. Back cover featured a photo from Irvine Prairie

Miscellaneous

- Bench in memory of Larry Kotouc purchased and installed
- Please Clean Up After Your Dog sign added
- Several new Irvine photos have been added to Google maps
- Irvine Prairie Flyover 360 now has 200 views on YouTube
- Irvine Prairie Burn video added, now has 309 views on YouTube
- Irvine web page was updated with new photos, maps and expansion information
- 1174 address tested as updated address for Irvine Prairie

Social Media

Date	Facebook post subject	Reach	Engagement
April 25, 2022	Irvine Prairie burn, including drone footage	16,484	484
May 27, 2022	Seeding completed on original 77 acres	5,136	330
June 3, 2022	Union students assisting with transplanting	6,237	859
June 9, 2022	Summer visit promo with Hickory Hills tie-in	9,453	1,088
August 24 2022	Cathy receives 2022 Iowa Conservation Woman of the Year award	9,346	1,949
Jan. 26, 2023	Expansion plans announced	2,811	672

2022 Volunteers

- Burn volunteers — Celine Basham, Josie Flatgard, Kenneth Elgersma, Jared Moore and Benton County staff
- North Tama students
- Union High School students
- Duckie

The Tallgrass Prairie Center would like to acknowledge the significant contributions made to Irvine Prairie by AmeriCorps Service Members Bri Hull, Andrew Rust, Mallory Sage, Karlee Ostendorf and Will Kopp.



2023 Planning

Two events are scheduled for this calendar year. Planning is ongoing.

- Celebration of expansion gift is scheduled for June 9. TPC staff is currently working with the UNI Foundation to coordinate the event. Representatives of UNI and INHF are expected to attend.
- Music event featuring Kansas musician Ann Zimmerman is scheduled for July 29.