

PRAIRIE PLAINS LINK



Guadalupe Memorial Prairie / Sioux County Ranch; March 18, 2013.

Jeff Gustafson and Bill Whitney visited the ranch in mid-March to discuss the coming year with ranch lessees, Scott and Caitlin Schaefer. The dominant theme was the prevailing drought. The panhandle, like most of the Great Plains, is suffering through an extreme drought, which is devastating to grassland productivity.



New Face: Jameson Crumpler from Bowie, Texas, has joined the Prairie Plains staff as a temporary restoration and stewardship field assistant.

Jameson earned his Bachelor of Science degree in natural resource management with a range management concentration from Sul Ross State University, and an Associate of Applied Science in forest technology from Eastern Oklahoma State College. He enjoys seeking out prairies, conducting informal botanical surveys and educating landowners about prairies with their associated plants - and promotes prescribed burning as an essential natural lands management tool. Check out his blog site at healthylandethic.wordpress.com.

Photo: Jameson's first assignment was building new fencing at Griffith Prairie.

Wetland restoration: Three more plantings were completed in three counties (Greeley, Lancaster and Custer) totaling 87 acres. The Lancaster County site is a saline wetland, a unique and threatened type of wetland community. Eastern Nebraska saline wetlands of Salt Creek, Little Salt Creek and Rock Creek drainages once covered an estimated 20,000 acres. Fewer than 4,000 acres remain, and of these, many are highly degraded.

Monster in the house? No, it's just Sarah, Jeff and Mike with tractor and loader in the Curvette, measuring and moving grass seed that will be combined with forb mixes, all destined for the remainder of the 2013 restoration slate.

WRP in Greeley County



NEWSLETTER
March, 2013



Colorado State University tour, March 20th:

Sarah Bailey, Jeff Gustafson and Mike Bullerman led a group of about 20 CSU students on a tour of Griffith Prairie, the greenhouse and seed barn, and the Lincoln Creek and Leadership Center prairie restorations.

The class of wildlife students, instructed by Dr. Paul Doherty, Jr., spent their spring break traveling to sites of interest in the Black Hills of South Dakota, to the Platte in Nebraska to see Sandhill Cranes, and to Prairie Plains to learn about high diversity prairie restoration and conservation issues here. The group had a great time learning about the prairie restoration process and observed both recent and well established restorations. Thank you to Melissa Panella of the Nebraska Game & Parks Commission for setting up this tour day with us and others in the state.



Greener in the greenhouse:

At least the seedlings seem to know it's actually spring! Prairie violets (*Viola pedatifida*) (pictured), along with meadow violets (*Viola pratincola*) - both grown in support of the regal fritillary - are blooming. And with several thousand seedlings including 80+ different species to transplant from flats to cone-tainers, Sarah's been recruiting her co-workers to lend a hand.



Longtime devoted Bader Park hikers Tony Curtis (front, center) and Raymond Kusek (right) were among the dozen cold-hardy souls who took to the trail on March 2nd.

Next up: April 27th and May 4th Early bird Tours, 7:00 a.m.

The Charles L. Whitney Education

Center is approximately half completed. The next phase includes large contracted services to install plumbing (our first priority now), electrical and fire safety systems, heating and air conditioning, and insulation. Our immediate fundraising goal is \$250,000 toward substantial progress on these projects. The entire Center cost is estimated at around \$1 million.

Coming up this summer:

June 1 - Griffith Prairie Fun Run, 9:00 a.m.
June 7-8 Annual Sioux County Ranch Trek
June 15 - Bader Park Tour, 9:00 a.m.
June 17-20 and 24-27 - Big Bend SOAR
July 8-12 and July 15-19 - SOAR Aurora

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MISSION:

**Maintaining and restoring
Nebraska ecosystems -
Creating opportunities for
education, research,
stewardship and
community development.**

Link Editor & Layout
Jan Whitney

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**Charles L. Whitney
Education Center
Fund-raising Progress**

Goal: \$1,000,000				

**Raised
To
Date:
\$480,000**

Don't miss this: "Healing Plants of the Prairie" by botanist Gerry Steinauer in the April issue of *Nebraskaland*.