



Continuing progress on the Education Center; see next page for details.

Once again - another year gone by in a flash!

And time to take a look back at key events and accomplishments of 2012:

High Diversity Prairie & Wetland Restoration

- Planted 1,560 acres, working on 25 sites in 18 counties. To date, we have restored over 8,500 acres since 1979. In addition, we grew 1,770 seedlings in the greenhouse this year, including 80 species, transplanting to nine different sites.

Land Stewardship:

- Accomplished extensive weed tree clearing/cleanup at Olson Nature Preserve, including a successful volunteer work day on March 31st.
- Completed prescribed burns at Griffith Prairie, Bush Island, Ratzlaff Prairie, Bader Park and Lincoln Creek Prairie - all fit into narrow windows of opportunity weather-wise.
- Regular monitoring of all preserves, including thistle control.
- Continued progress on fence replacement at Griffith Prairie.

Education Programs:

- SOAR (record attendance), Bader Park tours (also record attendance), the Griffith Prairie Fun Run, Sioux County Ranch Weekend and various annual school outings continued to thrive.
- Began planning for a new program for youth that we hope to kick off in the spring of 2013.

Charles L. Whitney Education Center:

- Completion of septic, siding, screened porch windows and doors and patio concrete (see next page).

Platte River Corridor / Ribbons of Prairie:

- Established a new Platte corridor working group comprised of area people representing multiple interests in the river. The group is meeting monthly in Central City to collaborate on envisioning the future of the river corridor.
- A second proposal was submitted to the Nebraska Environmental Trust toward the purchase of the Sherman Ranch, and tours of the property for members and organization partners continued (see September *Link*).

Recognitions:

- Charles L. Whitney Outstanding Service to PPRI awards were presented to Mike Stewart, Bruce Ramsour, Ron Haden and Amy Wilson for their 20 (now 21) years of service to SOAR.
- David Vetter was recognized for six years service on the board of directors.
- We bid farewell to Prairie Plains VIPs Howard Juhl and Robert Gerloff (tributes in January and April newsletters).

Other:

- Held a successful fundraiser in Lincoln in January, raising \$8500.
- Staff participated in and/or presented at various workshops and conferences throughout the year.
- Thanks to a program through John Deere (see February *Link*), we have a tractor!



NEWSLETTER
November, 2012



Center Progress

Mild weather throughout most of November allowed for steady progress on the northeast corner (porch) of the barn, and completion of the concrete work on the east and north sides (thanks to Willis General Contracting). The porch doors and windows will be in by the end of December.

Work commences on bathrooms soon, along with interior wall framing.

Check it all out following the annual meeting on January 19th!

PRAIRIE PLAINS LINK
is a publication of

Prairie Plains

RESOURCE INSTITUTE

Prairie Plains Resource Institute is an educational land trust incorporated in 1980 as a non-profit, 501(c)(3) tax-exempt membership organization based in Aurora, Nebraska.

MISSION:

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

Link Editor & Layout
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Meanwhile, back in the Blue Barn, large piles of high diversity prairie and wetland seed mixes - each tailored to the particular soil conditions of a given site - have been prepared for the 2013 planting slate. Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow . . .

THANK YOU to volunteer
Alex Briner for several days
of work in the greenhouse!



A new working group has formed to envision future possibilities for the Platte River corridor from Grand Island to Columbus. Here, Merrick County Historical Museum president Bill Bolte points out a number of historical sites in the corridor during the November meeting at the Merrick Foundation office in Central City.



Northern Flicker by
Gerhard Assenmacher
photosbygerhard.com

Approaching Events

Saturday, December 15th:
Winter Bird Hike at Bader Park, 9:00 a.m.
Social following in Bader House.

Tuesday, January 1st, 2013
New Year's Day Hike at Griffith Prairie
1:00 p.m.

A great way to start the New Year!

Saturday, January 19th, 2013
Annual Meeting of Members
Bremer Center, Aurora

8:30 Social; 9:00 Meeting
RSVP for lunch to contactppri@hamilton.net
Afternoon tour of Education Center

Please note the enclosed message and return envelope for year-end contributions, and thanks in advance for your generosity! Also, consider Prairie Plains in your estate planning. Learn more about several options at www.prairieplains.org/donate.htm or call 402-694-5535.