

PRAIRIE PLAINS LINK



Happy New Year! The New Year's Day Hike at Gjerloff Prairie continues to grow. Over 150 people (and some four-legged friends) showed up to hike, chat and enjoy refreshments on a beautiful winter day on the prairie.



It is our promise to make the most of the generosity of those who invest in our mission. We are fortunate to do meaningful work with a community of people who share our love of the land and our dedication to all the positive things Nebraska's prairies and wetlands do now and for the future.



Our prairie restoration crew never slows down! Clockwise from top left: Sarah, Ethan and Mike show off the accumulated pile of paper tags created from seed collected in 2025; Appropriate species are piled to create our six seed mixes based on soil type and hydrology; The magic of adding in milkweed seed!; Mixed seed is barreled up, ready to be taken to the planting site; Modifications to our Ezee Flow spreaders prepare the implements for rough terrain; Ethan's first planting!!!; On a different site, Mike hand sows seed near the wetland edge, and; Ethan plants the drier area mechanically. Planting will continue well into late April/early May.



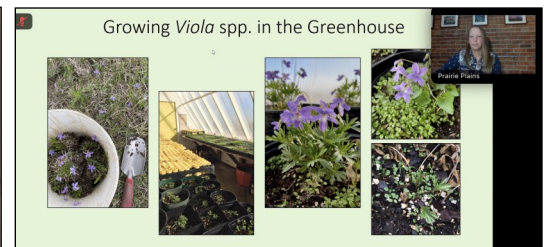
Greenhouse update - the Ground to Air Heat Transfer (GAHT®) system has been installed in the foundation of our new greenhouse. We're excited about this state-of-the-art engineering which will provide a highly efficient space. Dave Lewis, with KBL Construction of Central City, is our general contractor on the greenhouse and laid the tubing for the system (photo left), covered it with aggregate and packed it (photo middle) before pausing construction until spring. Next steps are to pour the concrete pad and assemble the structure. In the meantime, Sarah spent time in December and early January getting seed planted in flats in the existing greenhouse to allow necessary cold stratification prior to germination. And now seedlings are up and transplanting has started!



More sharing! More learning! Sarah Bailey and interns Emma Bullerman and Sarah Springer (photo left) represented Prairie Plains at the Nebraska Alliance for Conservation and Environmental Education (NACEE) conference in February. They participated in a mural project at Rowe Sanctuary (photo bottom left) and Sarah Bailey was a member of a panel discussion about



conservation education careers (photo below). In January, Sarah Bailey shared info about violets and fritillaries with the World Wildlife Fund (below right).



More cedars are going down at Sherman Ranch! (Aerial photo of target area bottom left.) Land Steward Jeff Gustafson is making great progress in year two of our three-year attack on trees on the east side of the property. While the primary culprit is eastern redcedar, there are also many weedy deciduous trees that need treated with herbicide after cutting (cedars don't need treated as they don't regrow after cutting). All that is to say that it's fussy, time-consuming work. Jeff will switch gears soon to begin mowing fire breaks in preparation for prescribed burns on Sherman and our other preserves, but will get back to cutting as time allows.



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