

## PRAIRIE PLAINS LINK



### A Message of Sincere Thanks

We are grateful. A combination of extremes faced us in 2021 and we end the year appreciating all that is possible when dedicated people rally around a common goal.

In early spring we became aware that we would be facing a financial challenge. The pandemic slowed our prairie restoration work, an important revenue stream that supports many of our other projects. We invited members and friends to consider making year-end donations early, to flip our budget cycle upside down and bridge the gap until we started planting prairies again in December. And we did it. **YOU did it!** A successful GO BIG GIVE campaign, partnered with the willingness of so many to chip in what they could, made a huge impact on our financial position. We're on solid ground again and our winter planting slate is filling up.

The Charles L. Whitney Education Center became a reality when it opened in June. The vision for the Center was created in 1980 in the founding documents of Prairie Plains. Construction began in 2006, and almost 15 years later we welcomed guests to celebrate the milestone achievement of its completion. Vital to the growth of our mission, the Center provides a place for people to meet and discuss and learn and share - about the land, about its people, about our future. And we did it. **YOU did it!**

Our summer education programs were back after a one-year break, and it was rewarding to be out on the prairie (and in the river) learning about what makes living here special. Kids discovering nature and history and art through hands-on experience is life changing. It's our goal to make these experiences available to more people. The Education Center makes that possible. **YOU make that possible!**

And none of this could happen without the land. Our eight preserves provide the space and opportunity for people to connect with the prairie. In 2021 we managed our properties with prescribed fire, grazing, tree clearing, thistle cutting and fence repair. We are dedicated to making our preserves better each year and to making them accessible to more people. Together we are doing it. **YOU are doing it!**

Relationships with the land and with people who share a passion for the land create strong bonds. The future of Prairie Plains is full of opportunities to restore more prairie, create more opportunities and make more connections. **THANK YOU** for your role in the success of this organization. **THANK YOU** for the contributions you have made to our mission, and **THANK YOU** for considering us if you're preparing to contribute as the year comes to a close.

We are humbled and honored to partner with you to accomplish great things - TOGETHER.

Best wishes for a healthy and happy holiday season,

*Amy Jones*

Executive Director, Prairie Plains Resource Institute





Sarah Bailey and Amy Jones (pictured above) spent a day in November on the prescribed burn crew at Indian Cave State Park near Nemaha, NE. Our relationships with our agency partners are a priority, so when the opportunity to help presented itself, we jumped at the chance. It was great to work with folks who have helped us with projects throughout the year, and useful to experience the difference between woodland fire and grassland fire.



Meanwhile, the restoration crew has been processing seed, maintaining equipment and creating maps in preparation for our prairie planting season. The final step before mobilizing is to mix the seed into 6 separate high-diversity mixes specific to soil type and hydrology. Pictured left, Mike Bullerman and Sarah Bailey work together creating the perfect recipes for each mix.

### Jones Receives Sponsorship from Upper Big Blue Natural Resources District

Prairie Plains Executive Director Amy Jones is the first recipient of the Nebraska Water Leaders Academy sponsorship from the Upper Big Blue Natural Resources District (NRD). The Academy provides learning opportunities for citizens focusing on cooperative approaches to solving the state's water issues, both of quantity and quality. Since 2009, cohorts of people from across the state have participated in the year-long program, seeking practical solutions to resource challenges.

The sponsorship through the NRD will cover 75 percent (\$1,500) of the cost of participation.

**THANK YOU** to the Upper Big Blue NRD for the opportunity to involve Prairie Plains in these important natural resource discussions!

PRAIRIE PLAINS LINK  
is a publication of



Connecting people and prairies  
since 1980.

#### Board of Directors:

Brad Bangs (Aurora)  
Wayne Mollhoff (Ashland)  
Brock Wyatt (Aurora)  
Jessica Piskorski (Ord)  
Dane Sutherland (Aurora)  
Anniece Friesen (Aurora)  
Mark Hammer (Wayne)  
Allison Speicher (Lincoln)

#### Staff:

Amy Jones, Executive Director  
Mike Bullerman, Restoration Ecologist  
and GIS Specialist  
Sarah Bailey, Greenhouse Manager  
and Naturalist Educator  
Jeff Gustafson, Land Steward  
Jared Sullivan, Restoration and  
Stewardship Assistant

Learn more and  
become a member:

[www.prairieplains.org](http://www.prairieplains.org)  
(and follow us on Facebook,  
Instagram and Twitter!)

#### Contact:

402-694-5535  
[contactppri@hamilton.net](mailto:contactppri@hamilton.net)  
1307 L St. Aurora NE 68818

You are invited to the  
2022 Prairie Plains Annual Meeting of  
Members

Saturday, January 15, 2022  
10 - 11 a.m. (CST)

This year's meeting will be conducted via  
**ZOOM.**

To participate, please go to  
[www.prairieplains.org/meeting](http://www.prairieplains.org/meeting).

We recommend signing in around 9:50 a.m.  
A brief business meeting will be followed by  
a slideshow of Prairie Plains photos highlighting  
2021 activities.