

Bluff Prairie & Oak Savanna Restoration



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Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program

Partners for Fish & Wildlife (PFW) Program



- ❧ Mission: To efficiently achieve voluntary habitat restoration on private lands, through financial and technical assistance, for the benefit of Federal Trust Species
- ❧ Statue: PUBLIC LAW 109-294 – OCT. 3, 2006 120 STAT. 1351: a.k.a – Partners for Fish and Wildlife Act (October 3, 2006); SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS up to \$75,000,000 (~50,000,000 Nationally).
- ❧ Provides cost share and technical assistance.
- ❧ Private lands = non-state/non-federal.
- ❧ Provides approximately 50% cost-share
- ❧ Minimum of 10 year agreement

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Ranking Factors:

- ❧ Improve habitat for “Federal Trust Species”
- ❧ Compliment activities on NWR
- ❧ Address species & habitat priorities identified by FWS, WDNR etc.
- ❧ Reduce fragmentation or serve as buffers for important conservation lands.
- ❧ Result in self-sustaining systems that are not dependent on artificial structures or inputs (ex. Bird houses or feeders).

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What is a Federal Trust Species?

- ❧ Migratory Birds
- ❧ Federally Threatened or Endangered Species
(candidates included)
- ❧ Interjurisdictional Fish
- ❧ Marine Mammals
- ❧ Species of international concern



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What types of projects?

- ❧ **Bluff Prairie Restoration**
- ❧ **Oak Savanna Restoration**
- ❧ **Conversion of old fields to native grasslands**
- ❧ **Wetland Restorations**
- ❧ **Stream Restorations**
- ❧ **Tree plantings to link existing high quality woodlands together**

Bluff Prairie



- ❧ Ranked Rare or Uncommon in WI, Very Rare Globally.
- ❧ Often occurs on South or West facing slopes
- ❧ Usually very steep
- ❧ Diverse mix of grasses, forbs, and shrubs.
- ❧ Part of Grassland – Oak Savanna – Oak Woodland Continuum
- ❧ Threatened by Cedar invasion
- ❧ **Fire Dependent**

Oak Savanna



- ❧ Ranked Critically Imperiled State and Globally.
- ❧ Simple description is a prairie with some big trees
- ❧ Trees range from 1 per acre to 50% canopy dominated by Oaks (usually Bur, White and Black) with some Hickory
- ❧ Diverse understory of grasses, sedges, forbs, and shrubs.
- ❧ Part of Grassland – Oak Savanna – Oak Woodland Continuum
- ❧ Requires recruitment of 1 tree per acre per 100 years
- ❧ **Fire Dependent**



Current Image

Light orange outlines represent cedar invasion areas



1938 Aerial Imagery

Note the mix of open and wooded areas.

This is after decades of fire suppression.

I like to look at the old photographs for a historical perspective.



An example of a degraded savanna

Old trees still present with heavy undergrowth. Look for cedar stands, pockets of native grasses and wildflowers, old open grown Oak and Hickory trees.

Restoration Techniques



- ❧ Mechanical Clearing
(Hydro-Ax, Fecon,
Chainsaws)
- ❧ Prescribed Burning
- ❧ Herbicide Suppression
- ❧ Planting natives (Plugs,
Seed, B&B, Container
Stock, Acorns)



Where does FWS fit in?



- ❧ Provide funding and technical assistance for projects
- ❧ PFW can work on MFL lands – consult your forester
- ❧ Aim for restoring the Prairie – Savanna – Woodland Continuum
- ❧ Utilize timber harvest to offset costs???
- ❧ Volunteer workdays???
- ❧ Burning???
- ❧ See PFW Brochure