



FNA News Sept/Oct 2011

Website: www.fermilabnaturalareas.org

Blog: fermilabnaturalareas.blogspot.com

Contact us at fermilabnaturalareas@gmail.com or 630-840-4845

Fermilab Natural Areas (FNA), is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit tax-exempt corporation formed in 2006:

* to study and restore Fermilab's unique combination of ecological communities

* to inform and enrich local residents' knowledge of Fermilab (FNAL), and

* to contribute to the preservation of global biodiversity.

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A Message from FNA President Rod Walton fermilabnaturalareas@gmail.com or 630-840-2565

Greetings! It's hard to believe, but summer is quickly giving way to fall, as evidenced by some of the features in this newsletter: wrap-ups from the weed crew, the farewell from Sioned (our 2011 Betz intern), and plans for this year's seed harvest on October 1 and 29. In addition to these autumnal harbingers, there are pieces on our recent interactions with Wild Ones, our colleagues at the Grassland Restoration Network workshop, and our new agreement with the Northeast Illinois Invasive Plant Partnership (NIIPP). These interactions are an important part of the FNA mission: to be active partners in the regional effort to preserve natural landscapes. Supporting those partnerships is the recently released Chicago Area "Stew-Map", a project sponsored mainly by the Center for Neighborhood Technology in Chicago. Fermilab Natural Areas is one of almost 300 stewardship groups identified & mapped by this project. The map can be seen at <http://stewmap.cnt.org/organization.php?id=2175>. Finally, we now have the ability to accept donations, memberships and merchandise orders [via our website](#) using credit cards. We hope that this development will make supporting FNA even easier than before!

FNA Calendar of Events



Sept 17 [Habitat restoration work day](#), 9 am to noon. Meet in the [Lederman Science Center parking lot](#), work until noon. Please check the web page at http://www.fnal.gov/pub/about/campus/ecology/prairie/habitat_restoration.html

Sept 26 Seed Processing, 1 pm to 3 pm. Meet at Lederman Science Center parking lot. We will organize the greenhouse and process last minute summer seeds before the first harvest.

Oct 1 Prairie Seed Harvest, 10 am to 2 pm. Main Ring or Interpretive Prairie, follow signs onsite. Picnic lunch provided. For details, see our article on page 2.

Oct 6 Fermilab [ELM Committee](#) meeting, Wilson Hall, One East, noon

Oct 10 Seed Processing, 1 pm to 3 pm. Meet at Lederman Science Center parking lot. We will process seeds collected at the Oct 1 prairie harvest.

Oct 15 [Habitat restoration work day](#), 9 am to noon. Meet in the [Lederman Science Center parking lot](#), work until noon. Please check the web page at http://www.fnal.gov/pub/about/campus/ecology/prairie/habitat_restoration.html

Oct 17 Seed Processing, 1 pm to 3 pm. Meet at Lederman Science Center parking lot. We will process seeds collected at the prairie harvest.

Oct 24 Seed Processing, 1 pm to 3 pm. Meet at Lederman Science Center parking lot.

Oct 29 Prairie Seed Harvest, 10 am to 2 pm. Main Ring or Interpretive Prairie, follow signs onsite. Picnic lunch provided. For details, see our article on page 2.

Nov 3 Fermilab [ELM Committee](#) meeting, Wilson Hall, One East, noon

Please watch your email or the [FNA Blog](#) for last-minute announcements of changes, or additional events.



The Fermilab Prairie Seed Harvest - Our Premier Event!

On Saturday October 1 and October 29, join us for the annual Fermilab Prairie Seed Harvests.

All ages and abilities are welcome, and greatly appreciated, to spend a day in the autumn [prairie at Fermilab](#), and help us collect the bulk of our seed for the year. This year the harvests will be held in the [Main Ring](#) prairie, where parking is available. Please watch for directional signs as you enter the Fermilab site.

On both Saturdays, harvesting is from 10 am until 2 pm, with a break for a hot dog lunch (for your comfort, porta-potties will be available). You don't have to be a plant expert to help us! Fermilab staff and volunteers will be there to show you what and where to collect. Please bring your own gloves, clippers, and containers such as paper bags (especially with handles) or buckets, if you have them. Weather-appropriate outdoor clothing is highly recommended.

This is a great social event to enjoy the outdoors and learn a bit about the prairie. We can't do it without you, so tell your friends and family. Please let us know if you are bringing a large group so we can be sure to accommodate everyone: email lootens@fnal.gov.

You may enter [Fermilab](#) from either the east (Batavia Rd) or west (Pine Street) gate, please [have photo ID ready](#). Call the Fermilab switchboard in case of bad weather, 630-840-3000. *Hope to see you there!*



Visit these web pages to get a taste of last year's seed harvest:

<http://fermilabnaturalareas.blogspot.com/2010/10/blustery-harvest.html>

<http://fermilabnaturalareas.blogspot.com/2010/11/seasons-end-sunny-blue-sky-harvest.html>

Here's the flyer to share (yes, the year is wrong, but the link is correct!):

http://www.fnal.gov/pub/about/campus/ecology/prairie/pdfs/Volunteer_Harvest_flier2010.pdf

The Summer Weed Crew Wrap-up; Kevin Sheehan & Shirley Xiao

As our last days of work have wound down, it is amazing to look back at this summer and the [things that we accomplished](#). Working with Roads and Grounds and being led by Ryan Campbell (Natural Resources Specialist) we went right to work to attack the many non-native species that have invaded the natural areas at Fermilab. In the wetlands we focused on extracting reed canary grass, purple loosestrife and *Phragmites*. We worked on ridding the woodlands of garlic mustard, buckthorn, honeysuckle and Japanese barberry. In the prairies, we spent the majority of our time keeping out crown vetch, birdsfoot trefoil, sweet clover, grey dogwood, wild parsnip and teasel. Using methods specific to each invasive species, whether boom spraying with a tractor, backpack spraying, spading, mowing, cutting or dabbing, we worked intensely this summer to control these numerous invasive plants. This summer we covered a total area of over 2500 acres — roughly 37% of Fermilab's total area (6800 acres). In much of this area, multiple treatments were necessary. It is rewarding to realize how much we were able to accomplish this year. We were able to see the more desirable plants returning and increasing diversity in the locations where we worked, and it made this summer a real success! Many thanks, again, to the Boeing Employee Community Fund for supporting FNA's summer invasives program.

Good-bye to our Betz intern, Sioned Sitkiewicz

Sioned began her term as the FNA 2011 Dr. Robert Betz intern on June 6th. In addition to enthusiastic field work, she authored FNA's [page on Facebook](#). Summer has flown by, and by mid-August our intrepid intern was preparing to go back to school. Sioned leaves us with the following thoughts:

“Before this internship, I would look out upon a prairie and see an ocean of solid green. However as time passed this summer, and I experienced collecting the seed of various plant species, sorting and recording what we collected, and botanizing in the field, the prairie transformed for me. It changed into a complex mosaic of vegetation, each piece with its own characteristics and a unique relationship to its surroundings. I had a blast with a group of amazing co-workers and volunteers: from seeing a rare plant or trading seed, to getting sweaty and covered in ticks. I have made remarkable memories this summer and have fallen in love with conserving our vanishing ecosystems.”



Hiking with the [Northern Kane County Wild Ones](#); Ryan Campbell, Fermilab

It was a beautiful, humid July evening when members from the local chapter of [Wild Ones](#) visited Fermilab. We spent quite a while talking about the founder of Fermilab's prairie project, Dr. Robert Betz, as we gazed over the oldest restoration. In the background was the 15-story Wilson Hall next to a hazy red sun. We talked about bison and parasitic plants and prairie grasses. Everyone was interested in the colors of the petals and the shapes of the leaves. As the sun got closer to the horizon, we walked through our remnant oak savanna where sunflowers and Joe Pye weeds grew. The last stop was to the seed processing facility in the village. Here guests admired the paintings of prairie plants on the wall, but even more so the paintings of their long roots on the floor! Darkness had fallen as we said goodnight. I smiled heading home. Here is a group of folks who live nearby, are passionate about protecting, restoring, enjoying, and yet we've never seen their faces before. Well, we hope to see them again within Fermilab's natural areas.

Enjoy more photos of the hike taken by the Northern Kane County Chapter by visiting their Facebook site: <http://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.246400055382893.60044.132895966733303&type=1>

[Grassland Restoration Network Workshop](#); Julie Allen, Fermilab

Ryan Campbell and I had the opportunity to attend the [Grassland Restoration Network Workshop](#) at Kankakee Sands in Morocco, Indiana at the end of July. The [Kankakee Sands](#) site is approximately 22,000 acres owned and operated by The Nature Conservancy (TNC). The event was well attended by other TNC site managers, and people from forest preserve districts, state agencies, and private land trusts, all of whom restore various types of grasslands around the Midwest. Kankakee Sands has several restoration projects with specific goals such as creating insect, bird, or amphibian habitat, and their practices and outcomes were our discussion topics. They use novel techniques like grazing cattle to simulate the tall grass-controlling function that was once supplied by bison, which makes for a win-win relationship between their project goals and a local grass-fed beef farmer. Attending the conference allowed us to tap into the relevant, experienced, and knowledgeable network of people who do what we are doing with Fermilab's natural areas. Lo and behold, we are all dealing with the same weeds, struggling with similar management issues, and have realized that all of us need to learn from one another about what works best. The workshop also offered plenty of inspiration by talking with and learning from those who have been restorationists for decades, the new-school ecologists, and the equally inspired interns.

NIIPP: An Important Partnership; Ryan Campbell, Fermilab

Fermilab Natural Areas is happy to announce that the board of directors has approved signatory partnership with NIIPP, the most progressive invasive species coordinating group in northeast Illinois. NIIPP ([Northeast Illinois Invasive Plant Partnership](#)) is, as stated in their website: "a cooperative weed management area (CWMA), a regional organization that brings together all interested landowners, land managers (private, city, county, state, and federal), non-profits, private entities, industry, special districts, and the public in the defined geographic boundaries of the [Chicago Wilderness](#) region for the purpose of coordinating and combining their resources, expertise, and activities for more efficient and effective management of invasive plant species across jurisdictional boundaries."

The NIIPP mission is "to prevent and control new plant invasions, control and manage current invasions, support informed management decisions, and raise public awareness concerning the threat posed by invasive plants. Our goal is to minimize the adverse impacts invasive plants have on our open lands and waters in northeast Illinois, especially on native habitats and their native plants and wildlife."

Fermilab Natural Areas is excited about this partnership which may lead to collaborative grant opportunities to help control such invasive plant species as crown vetch, spotted knapweed, and *Phragmites*.

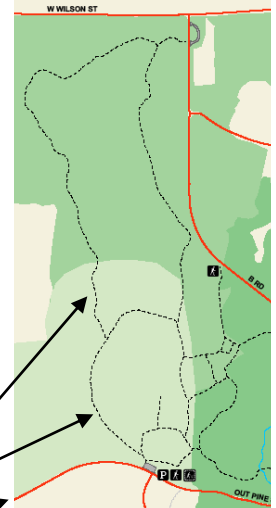


New Trails at the Interpretive Prairie; Kevin Sheehan & Ryan Campbell, Fermilab

As the [Interpretive prairie off of Pine Street](#) and the growing [Arbor Day savanna](#) continue to diversify and improve, new trails are being added to show off the ever changing natural areas. The Margaret Pearson Trail (inner loop) has allowed many to experience the richness of our restored tallgrass prairie. It also allows access to the winding Big Woods Trail for a more shaded hike. The outer prairie loop is best for hikers wishing to get a picturesque view from a hill. Brand new to our trail experience is the addition of the Savanna Oaks Trail. This trail leads through the Arbor Day site and allows one to encounter native trees, shrubs and prairie plants that will only become more vast as these plantings mature. Arbor Day activities have taken place at the northwest corner of the Fermilab site since 1994. Approximately 1200 trees and bushes have been planted in 142 acres connecting the Big Woods, east of the Interpretive Prairie, with remnant woodland at West Wilson Street and Kirk Road. This new trail will add over two miles onto the previous paths; moreover, it will add a new experience to anyone looking to step back into what the Prairie State once was.

Shown at right is a portion of the trail map created by Joe Pygott, Fermilab. For full map, see [FNA Blog](#).

NEW "Savanna Oaks" trail
 existing outer prairie loop
 outbound Pine Street



[For Sale by FNA Now on-line at http://www.fermilabnaturalareas.org/shop.html](http://www.fermilabnaturalareas.org/shop.html)

Perfect for changing seasons: FNA long-sleeved or short-sleeved t-shirts! Our logo is on the front, our website on the back. Short-sleeved tees: \$15, long-sleeved: \$18. Order yours by calling 630-840-4845.



FNA Rain Barrels!

FNA has turned once-used food barrels into rain barrels, and are now offering them to you, ready to use. FNA members' price is \$80, non-members \$90. Proceeds help FNA's efforts. Colors are usually black, brown, or terra cotta (shown), but please check with us. Our barrels have an overflow connection on top, spigot with hose connection on the bottom, and sturdy metal screen on top of the big hole in the lid. Lid and screen are removable for cleaning. Call now and get three free cement blocks to use as a stand! Don't delay, call today! 630-840-4845 or email fermilabnaturalareas@gmail.com.

Membership/Donations

<http://www.fermilabnaturalareas.org/membership.html> by U.S. Mail or online via PayPal

Help us enhance Fermilab's ecology. Members receive the FNA Newsletter via email, are invited to special events such as our anniversary picnic, and get a discount on rain barrel purchases.

FNA is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit charitable organization. All donations to FNA are tax deductible.

Donations can be made in memory or honor of a friend or loved one.

Fermilab employees can donate online via the [Employee Self Service website](#).

Benefactor	\$2,500 and up	Sponsor	\$100
Patron	\$1,000	Contributor	\$50
Supporter	\$500	Member	\$25
Donor	\$250	Student/Youth	\$15

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Donation \$ _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

Please mail your check or money order to:

Fermilab Natural Areas
 P.O. Box 500, MS 444
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