

## Natural Resources Management Activities

### DeKalb County Forest Preserve District

June and July 2018

In June we continue our weed work mostly the biennial weeds Sweet Clover and Wild Parsnip. Biennial weeds take two years to complete their lifecycle. The first year they tend to be a rosette or small plant and in the second year they will produce a flower to eventually produce seed and then die.

Our management techniques for biennial weeds is a bit different than how we handle perennial weeds. With the perennials we will use herbicide because they typically have a deep fibrous root that will come back every year unless killed, with the biennial weeds if we interrupt their lifecycle before they flower we can get control over several years without herbicides. We use mostly mechanical control for biennials. Here are a few photos of the equipment we use:



Brush Saws and Batwing Mower that we use for mowing down Biennial weeds.

Here is a photo of a prairie recently mowed for Sweet Clover. If you were to get close and look at the vegetation you would see the perennial prairie plants starting to re-sprout. Mowing will not affect them and they will bloom next growing season...



July is also when our seed season kicks in to high gear...

We will have a couple of plantings this late fall into winter and we have started collecting seed for those as well as for over seeding areas that need enhancement. So far we have collected a lot of sedges out of the seed propagation beds as well as the prairie and wetlands in the preserves. Spiderwort is one of the first forbs that we collect. Here is a pic of a prairie with spiderwort blooming at Wilkinson Marsh...



The investment that we made in the hoop house greenhouse and seed propagation beds at Afton has paid off nicely so far. We put in a fair amount of work weeding, watering, and transplanting and in return we have grown close to 30 flats (38 plants per flat) that have or will be planted in the preserves with probably 30 more maturing. We have also collected seeds from 8 different hard to find or hard to collect species of native plants, many of which we have collected 10 times more than we have in the past due to ease of collection and ability to monitor the seed for ripeness.

It has been an incredibly busy summer but our crew has been steadfast and dedicated to our mission. Our weed battles have been very positive and I feel that as a team we have met or exceeded our coverage of last year. With the help of our great volunteers, support from the maintenance crews, and great support from Terry we are progressing and becoming more efficient and effective. Thank you to the Forest Preserve Committee and the County Board as a whole for your continued support as well. As a team we continue to make great strides to provide the residents of DeKalb County with great beautiful spaces to enjoy nature and get away from the stresses of daily life.

~Josh Clark, Natural Resource Manager