

Urban Forestry-related News in the Midwest

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ILLINOIS

Village Accelerates Removal of Infected Ash Trees

[Village Accelerates Removal of Infected Ash Trees](#)

By RYAN TERRELL MySuburbanLife.com (IL), Aug. 19, 2014, terrell@shawmedia.com

WOODRIDGE – This fall, the Village of Woodridge will begin to remove the last batch of ash trees deemed unsalvageable due to the emerald ash borer.

The village is seeking bids for the removal of roughly 1,400 infected ash trees on village-owned property, which would bring the total number of ash trees on public property lost to the invasive bug to about 3,000. The bid process is part of an accelerated effort to remove the unsalvageable trees, according to Chris Bethel, director of Woodridge Public Works.



“We’ve condensed the timeline for removal because the drought of two years ago and the extreme cold this past winter really accelerated the decline [of the infected trees],” Bethel said. “So we recommended accelerating the removal as opposed to removing the trees over the next four years. That way we can focus on replacing the trees in years two through four.”

The remaining ash tree population on public property – “several hundred” – are either showing signs of resistance to the ash borer or are being treated with a chemical injection to fend off the bug, whose larvae feed on the tree's vascular system and deteriorate the tree.

Public works staff members are certified and licensed to administer the chemical injections, allowing the department to handle the treatment in-house as opposed to outsourcing.

About 50 white ash trees have been treated with the chemical. This month, the Woodridge Public Works Department began tying pink ribbons around the treated trees, indicating that the trees should not be touched or disturbed.

“So far the results [of the chemical treatment] have been positive,” Bethel said. “We’re seeing a decline in the deterioration of the trees.”

The village is expected to spend more than \$600,000 over the next five years for treatment and removal of ash trees.

“Right now we have \$150,000 budgeted for calendar years '15 and '16, \$160,000 for '17 and \$70,000 each in years '18 and '19. The expenditures for 2018 and 2019 are for replacement of the trees,” Bethel said, adding that the timing of those expenditures will soon change in adjustment to the more condensed timeline for removal of the trees.

While the village is expected to spend six figures addressing its ash tree population, treatment or removal of infected ash trees on private property falls to the property owner. Residents can get a “competitive price” for trimming or removal of their ash trees through past bids received by the village, Bethel said.

It's unclear how many ash trees are on private property across Woodridge, as the village does not track those numbers, Bethel said.

After removal, public works will resume replacement of the ash trees on public property. If a positive can be taken from the infestation, it's that the village's tree population will be further diversified as ash trees will be replaced with a “full canopy of tree” types, including various maples, oaks and elms.

Generally, replacement trees are planted one to two seasons after the removal, but that has been pushed back to two to three seasons as crews focus on removing the trees, officials said.

“The village has a list of approved parkway trees, and the ash tree has been removed from that list,” Bethel said. “That's so as new developments come in, the issue of the EAB doesn't continue.

“We really want to diversify the tree population across the community with high quality trees.”

INDIANA

ISU Students, Faculty, Staff Donate Time, Energy for Donaghy Day

[Day of Work](#)

By Sue Loughlin Tribune-Star (IN), Tuesday, August 19, 2014

Resident of Gary, Matthew Dickens has never before had an opportunity to help rid an area of an invasive plant species.

But on Monday, the Indiana State University freshmen spent about two hours removing honeysuckle from a Dobbs Park wooded area as part of the fall Donaghy Day of Service.

Students used tools called “extractigators” and “poppers.”

“It was challenging,” but not complicated, Dickens said. He joined about 50 other freshmen in the outdoor work. “It was fun,” he said. He’d be willing to do it again.

Another freshman, Emily Collins of Clarksville, has previously volunteered in her hometown by reading to children and, yes, removing invasive species. “It’s fun. I’m used to doing this,” she said.

The Donaghy Day program “gets us involved in the community more and gives us something to do” before classes start Wednesday, Collins said.

Nearly 1,800 freshmen volunteered at about 45 sites in Terre Haute, West Terre Haute, Marshall, Ill. and Clinton. Their presence was quite visible in Terre Haute, where they picked up trash downtown and in community parks and also assisted several agencies. Students wore white or blue Indiana State shirts.

The students learned first-hand about the university’s commitment to community engagement. They had to be up early to get to their sites, where they spent about two hours.

Returning students who have done the Donaghy Day of Service before served as team leaders at each site.

Trees, Shrubs, Bird Feeders for Sale

[Trees, shrubs, bird feeders for sale](#)

Palladium-Item (IN), August 17, 2014

The Wayne County Soil and Water Conservation District is again selling trees, shrubs and bird accessories during its annual fall fundraiser.

Proceeds from the event help fund the district's educational programs and also improve the environment.

A variety of trees and shrubs are available, along with cedar bird/animal nests and feeders. The last day to order items is Sept. 12.

A brochure and order forms are available at the SWCD office, 823 S. Round Barn Road, or online at www.waynecountyswcd.org.

For more information call (765) 966-0191, ext. 3 or email sheryl.brown@in.nacdnet.net or luanne.holeva@in.nacdnet.net.

MINNESOTA

Wind Storm Rips Through New Brighton

<http://minnesota.cbslocal.com/2014/08/18/wind-storm-rips-through-new-brighton/>

Kate Raddatz WCCO (MN), August 18, 2014 10:55 PM

MINNEAPOLIS (WCCO) – The storms that moved through the metro area Monday night were quick, but they caused a lot of damage in some areas.

In New Brighton, winds up to 50 miles per hour blew through. Trees were uprooted, leaving a large hole in the ground.

The public works director told WCCO he's never seen anything like this in his career here.

The New Brighton area was hit by a very quick wind storm, with winds reaching 50 miles per hour. When it was over, the people living here on Long Lake looked outside to see a pretty unusual sight.

Steve Danger was having a family dinner when a pop up wind storm came howling.

"I don't think I've seen winds come through like that in years. Couldn't even see past the deck. The rain was just so intense," Danger said. The storm caused significant damage. Trees were down blocking roads, but nothing compared to what Danger saw out his window.

"It pulled up the five foot diameter ring and basically opened that all up, opened the lake up," he said.

The top of a manhole leading to a sanitary city sewer pipe had been ripped off, as a strip of land had been torn away by uprooted trees.

"This is an unusual situation," Director of Public Works, Grant Wyffels, said. Wyffels says the major concern was the Long Lake water pouring into the pipe.

"They're sanding around the layer of the pipe and then they'll put a layer around that. And we'll leave it for the night and hopefully remains stable," Wyffels said.

Firefighters and public works both worked tirelessly to block off the hole.

After 23 years of living on the property, Danger's family will have a different view for their family dinners.

"Never anything like this. This is pretty bizarre," Danger said. Public works says there's still a lot of work left to do.

The immediate concern was to block off the hole. They'll be meeting with the Metropolitan Council Environmental Service Tuesday to come up with a more permanent clean-up process.

Nature Matters: White Pine Tree-union In Duluth

[Nature Matters White Pine Tree Union In Duluth](#)

KBJR, August 19, 2014

Duluth, MN - This is a family reunion of sorts. The thing that relates all these people are white pines. This stand of young trees can be found along Duluth's Brighton Beach.

It was planted by these young people in 2007 and 2008 when they were in elementary school.

It's an attempt to bring back the king of the forest.

"The white pine really is well suited for the heavier and slightly moister soils here.

Red pine aren't quite as well adapted so this really is the climax forest." said organizer Bob Olen. The white pine was nearly wiped out a hundred years ago by logging, forest fire and blister rust disease.

This tree-union lets the original planters see how much they and their trees have grown in seven years.

Sisters Sydney, Casey, Cami and Carrie Fischer were back to see the result of their handiwork. "It's kind of cool.

The tree is taller than me now which is cool because it was really small when I planted it." said Carrie Fischer.

Casey Fischer was only four when she planted her white pine. She still remembers the hard work of watering the seedlings.

"Well, I would only have a little plastic watering can when everyone else was carrying the big gallons." said Casey.

Seven years later, the trees are thriving due to the kids' work and six feet of anti-deer fencing.

"I'm extremely pleased and actually, the fact that the kids nurtured the trees, they really were instrumental in the success we're having." said Olen.

Sydney Fischer will try to keep her white pine successful in the years to come.

"Maybe, if I don't forget about it!" said Sydney.

Sydney is worried about forgetting her tree because some white pines in Wisconsin and Michigan are estimated to be 500 years old.

Bob Olen of the Saint Louis County Extension office says another stand of white pine is in the planning stages.

This time around, the planters will be from Marshall School in Duluth.

MISSOURI

Learn About Tree Health and Garden Pest Control Sept. 6

[Learn about tree health and garden pest control sept](#)

South County Mail (MO), Tuesday, August 19, 2014 9:28 pm

News release from The University of Missouri Extension Southwest Region News Service

OZARK, Mo. – Learn about keeping landscape trees healthy and safely managing pests in the garden at a free seminar from 1 to 4 p.m., Sept. 6, at the Nixa Community Center, 701 N. Taylor Way, Nixa.

The seminar is organized by the Christian County Master Gardeners and individuals can register for it by calling the University of Missouri Extension office in Ozark at (417) 581-3558.

Dean Alberty of Midwest Tree Healthcare Company will discuss “Healthy Trees.” He will explain how to save your favorite ash trees from the emerald ash borer and new tree diseases and pests appearing in Missouri woodlands.

“Some of the new pests are hitching rides through imported woods and from wooden crates from other parts of the world. These wood imports pose serious threats because they have no natural predators or controls in this country,” said Alberty, who has traveled extensively internationally to study the problem.

Becky Nicholas of Wickman’s Garden Village will present, “Safe and Effective Pest Controls in the Garden.” Her presentation will include organic, eco-friendly products and techniques for protecting plants against plant diseases, insects, birds and pesky raccoons and deer.

Nicholas is a landscape consultant, has written gardening articles for various publications and has taught at the Ozarks Technical Community College.

WISCONSIN

Committee to take up fee to fund Emerald Ash Borer fight on Wednesday

[Committee to take up fee to fund emerald ash borer](#)

By Steven Elbow Capital Times (WI), 081914

A Madison committee this week will take a look at a plan to assess a special charge to fund urban forestry costs, which are ballooning because of the emerald ash borer invasion.

Faced with state-imposed property tax caps, the city is struggling with how to fund the costs of the urban forestry program, which are expected to increase from the 2013, pre-ash borer amount of \$3.7 million to \$4.2 million in 2014 and \$5.9 million in 2015.

To get around the cap, an Alternative Revenue Work Group, tasked with finding ways to bring new streams of revenue for the city government, has recommended charging property owners about 73 cents for each linear foot of street frontage, which would amount to \$52.56 for a property with 72 feet bordering a city street.

The city's Board of Public Works will take up the proposal on Wednesday at 4:30 p.m. in Room 108 of the City-County Building, 210 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

While the workgroup is recommending the linear foot charge, other alternatives include charging property owners per street tree, per resident, by parcel or through their utility bill.

"I think we needed to put something forward for people to react to and to generate some discussion," said Ald. Steve King, a member of the work group. "I'm not committed to that as the only alternative."

Madison Mayor Paul Soglin has expressed reservations over the plan, citing the regressive nature of a property-based assessment.

King said if the council wants to get the measure in place for next year's budget, debate would have to be wrapped up by early fall.

"We put something out there for people to start with, but as always with our committee process they'll do their work and make it into a better proposal, or not," King said. "Or decide it's not the right thing."



Emerald ash borer larva make s-shaped tunnels when burrowing into ash trees, which eventually kills the tree.

3-phase Expansion Planned for Gottfried Prairie and Arboretum

[3-phase expansion planned Gottfried prairie arboretum](#)

Laurie Ritger Fon Du Lac Reporter (WI), August 19, 2014

An expansion project at Gottfried Prairie and Arboretum at UW-Fond du Lac is expected to add prairie and trails, an outdoor classroom and new education center to an area that has been captivating visitors with natural beauty since it was established in 1991.

Native plants that once grew at the site were re-established by a group of volunteers, providing a place for public enjoyment and education.

“Say you’re a business person and stressed at the end of the day. What’s better than to take a nice leisurely stroll with the wind blowing through your hair? Life is so fast. I feel like the 40 acres offers a bit of peace and quiet. You don’t hear the highway — you hear the birds and you hear the breeze,” Prairie Executive Director Tracy McDermott said.



(Photo: Doug Raflik/Action Reporter Media)

McDermott said it has been an exceptional year for the prairie and she encourages people to visit the area over the next few weeks.

Expansion

The three-pronged expansion plan was unveiled recently at its Prairie Fest. Estimates peg the overall cost at about \$250,000.

- The first phase will add six acres of prairie that currently is a grassy area just east of the parking lot. Biking and walking trails at the Prairie will have connecting paths to the Fond du Lac Bike Loop around the city.

“There are going to be prairie plants, but (also) wetland plants,” McDermott said. “There will be different grasses and sedges. A trail will lead through three different prairie environments at the Gottfried: dry, mesic and wet. The prairie are primarily grasses with forbs (flowering plants).

“The six additional acres will be different species with more variety, including tall grasses and sedges,” McDermott added.

She said replanting a prairie is a lot of work and takes years. Preparation includes removal of existing grass to reduce turf area.

- The second phase will add an outdoor classroom. It will be “very natural, unobtrusive,” McDermott said, and accommodate about 100 students. Plans call for a versatile site for musical performances, theater, a stage or lecture. The classroom is planned near the prairie’s pond.

“It’s a completely outside, outdoor classroom,” McDermott explained. “Picture the Buttermilk (Creek Park) amphitheater. It will be built in a bermed crescent shape, built in the rock with stone seating and grass seating.

A “dedication pathway” will connect the classroom to the parking lot, with brick pavers available for purchase. McDermott said the pavers will provide an affordable way to be part of something that will be used for many years.

- The third phase incorporates a new pavilion/educational center to be located off the parking lot. The small structure would be used for meetings and storage of field guides and tour materials.

Special place

Gottfried Prairie and Arboretum sits on land owned by Fond du Lac County that is home to UW-Fond du Lac.

Bradley Gottfried, a former dean of the college, recognized the benefit of dedicating natural areas. McDermott said the area was named after Gottfried because of his vision of environmental education at the campus and persistence in restoration of native prairie.

Prior to settlement, most of Fond du Lac County and an estimated 60 percent of Wisconsin was covered with prairie grasses. As the area developed into a farm community, much of the native prairie was tilled under, leaving only small remnants of the original plant life.

The prairie project began in 1991 with a goal of representing the original plant communities of Wisconsin in a small arboretum.

Volunteers have planted 42 acres of native prairie grasses and wildflowers, developed two wildlife ponds and planted 176 native trees and shrubs. Most of the wildflower seeds were collected from some of the last remaining original prairie sites in Fond du Lac County, as well as railroad right-of-ways, including at the Wild Goose Trail.

There’s an interpretive trail, six benches, two picnic tables and a kiosk along the bike trail with posters of plant species. A prairie pavilion also includes educational information.

Brian Kolstad, chair of the UW-Fond du Lac Arboretum Advisory Committee, has been involved with the prairie organization since 2011. “I’ve always wanted to protect the environmental aspect of our community and this is a great way to do that,” he said.

The prairie promotes biological diversity by enhancing habitat for insects, birds, and small and large mammals, Kolstad said. He is excited about the addition of a wet prairie that will be accessed with walking paths and a raised boardwalk.

“I go out there frequently to take pictures,” he said. “It’s a good place to see the changing seasons throughout the year.”

Dr. John Short, dean of UW-Fond du Lac, said it’s exciting to see expansion of a campus area that emphasizes the environment and ecological issues.

Short said the plans for an outdoor building that will allow for more classes, presentations and performances is a way to connect artists to science and public policy.

“I think this is an example of creative animated democracy in action,” he said. Short, who said he is fortunate to have an office near the prairie and arboretum, said it provides a perfect place to “walk and meditate and take a break.”

Promoting the environment

A nature-inspired artist, McDermott said she grew up in the country near Oakfield and has always been interested in nature and the environment.

She volunteered with the Gottfried for several years before the paid position of executive director became available. There are two other paid part-time employees: Connie Ramthun, education coordinator, and groundskeeper Julie Hellwig. Sally Scott volunteers as director of development.

Just as important are volunteers who keep the prairie healthy. McDermott said a lot of effort is made to keep invasive species out. Recently invasive species Common St. Johnswort, red clover and Curly Dock were pulled. Seeds may blow in the wind or be transported by birds, on shoes or on vehicles.

“It’s kind of a daunting task,” McDermott said. “With a prairie in the middle of the city there is stuff always trying to come in.” Sometimes it’s an aggressive native plant that needs to be kept in check. Rosin Weed leaches out toxins that kill plants around it and can overtake an area, she observed.

Efforts to maintain diverse plant species helps attract unique birds, insects and animals. McDermott said foxes and a pair of deer recently were seen at the prairie. Clay-colored sparrow, woodcocks, numerous finches and red-winged blackbirds are just a few of the interesting birds that have been spotted.

Getting involved

The ongoing efforts of the prairie and arboretum board include maintaining the prairie and providing educational opportunities for the community. Programs are presented monthly at UW-Fond du Lac and Prairie Fest is held every summer with presentations, tours and entertainment throughout the day.

Credit and non-credit courses about prairie restoration are offered by UW-Fond du Lac and Marian University. Friends of the Gottfried meet on-site Thursday mornings and work on maintenance and other tasks. More information about the Gottfried Prairie and Arboretum is available at gottfriedprairiearboretum.org

Contact Laurie Ritger at lritger@fdlreporter.com or (920) 907-7925; Twitter: @LaurieRitger

Discover more

More information about Gottfried Prairie and Arboretum is available at gottfriedprairiearboretum.org