



U.S. 45 Red Bison Project - A Habitat Reconstruction Collaboration

Right-of-Way As Habitat Working Group

May 3, 2017



Project –

Clear and restore an overgrown native prairie remnant located on right-of-way between U.S. 45 and Canadian National RR near Champaign



Challenges –

- Native Prairie remnant
- Threatened and endangered species present
- Location – narrow right-of-way between U.S. 45 and Canadian National RR
- Location – under Ameren transmission lines
- Location – urban, within the Village of Savoy and at the south west corner of the U of I Campus
- Managed by a student group from the U of I, Red Bison

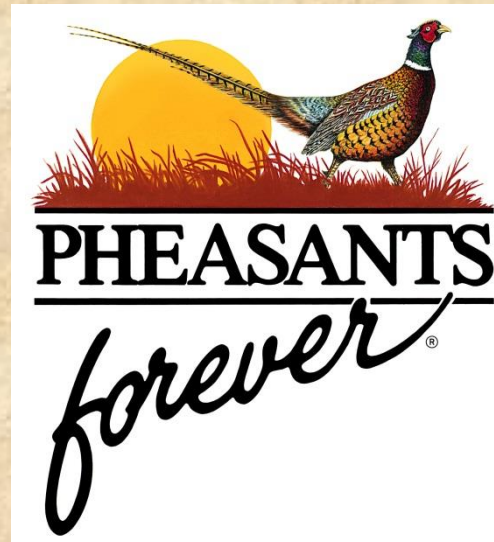
Results . . .



. . . The entire section was overtaken by sumac, pear, willow, bush honeysuckle, autumn olive and other woody invasives



Right-of-Way as Habitat Working Group:
Networking + Working Relationships + Common Goals =
Collaborative Restoration Project



Illinois Department of
Transportation

February 7, 2017

- Ameren – Provided labor and equipment to clear the brush
- IDOT – Closed the north bound driving lane of U. S. 45, provided permit and communications/press release
- Canadian National Railway – Provided a railroad flagger
- Pheasants Forever Champaign Chapter – will help restore and manage the section
- Illinois Natural History Survey – Will provide restoration support



Job Briefing

February 7, 2017



Press Coverage



Lessons Learned

- Clearly define the scope of work for the project with an understanding of who will be responsible for tasks
- Agencies / Companies have different safety rules, make sure all are clearly defined and understood by all
- Have a pre-project meeting several weeks ahead of the project with all groups that will be involved
- Develop a project directory with phone numbers / alternate numbers / email

Benefits of the Collaboration:

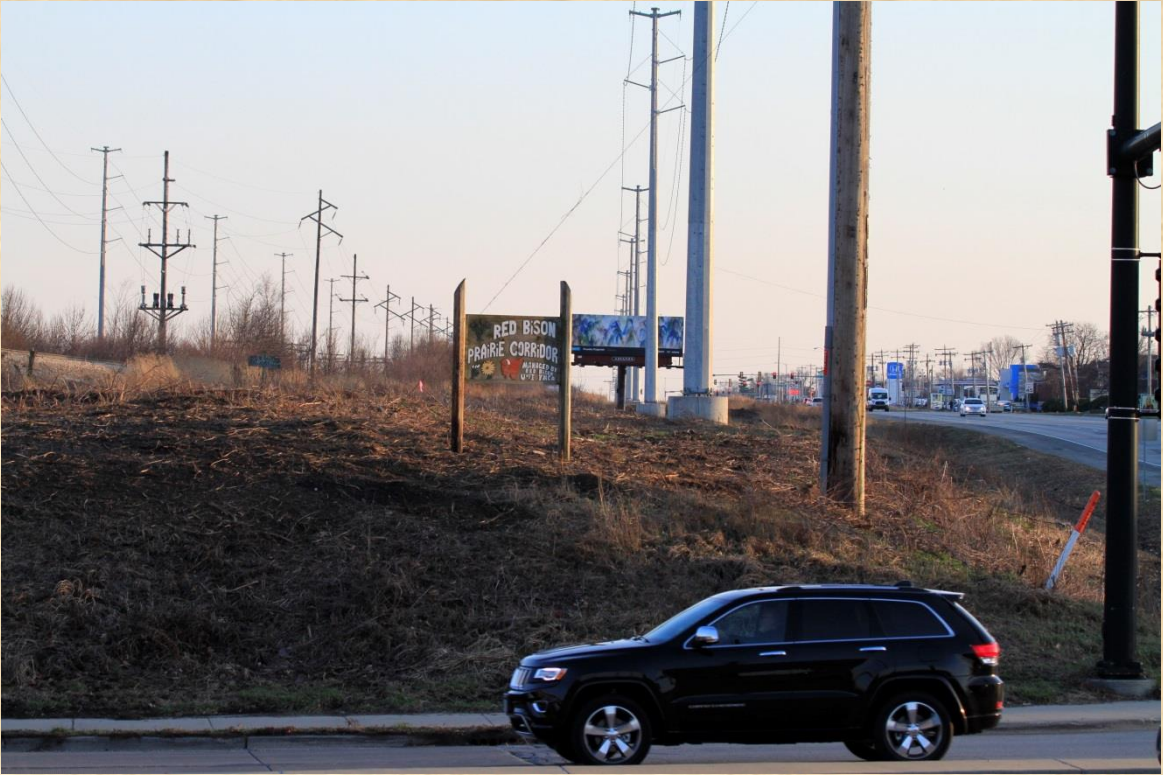
- Meeting and working with people from other companies or agencies often leads to better working relationships and a greater understanding of each others' operations
- Gaining an understanding of others' needs allows for brainstorming and future co-op projects
- Improves established working relationships / trust

Major Benefit:

Improved a highly visible, overgrown urban area by restoring the right-of-way to good habitat. There is a long-term maintenance plan for the site and a responsible entity for the maintenance. We were able to capitalize on the opportunity by inviting the media to educate the public and bring awareness to the struggles of pollinators, particularly the monarch, and the efforts of our organizations.

And . . .

- IDOT – Improved sight distance and safety concerns, improved drainage issues, cleared an overgrown area at little cost to the Department
- Ameren – Removed incompatible vegetation, improving visibility around tower bases and reducing future maintenance costs







Established pollinator plants



Next Steps/Upcoming Projects

- Building upon the success of the Red Bison Project, the partners have agreed to keep working together on ROW as opportunities arise.
 - Additional projects are in various stages of implementation
 - New partners
- Outreach efforts
 - Youth days, field days, new projects

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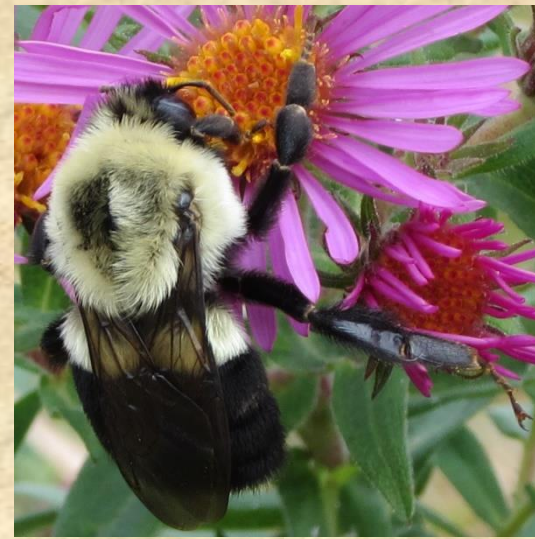
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Questions?

