



September 2020

Neighbors of Dusty Goldenrod Preserve:

This letter is to bring you up to date on what has, and what will, be happening at the Dusty Goldenrod Preserve bordered by Blair and Hawthorne roads.

2020 Happenings to Date

- A wooden bridge on the far east side of the property that had fallen into one of the streams was removed in early July. The bridge presented not only a possible hazard to children but caused some of the stream flow to be diverted around the fallen beams. The diversion accelerated the erosion of the stream bank. A healthy stream bank benefits the neighborhood by absorbing excess water when the stream banks overflow in heavy rain periods. This natural flooding prevents downstream erosion and filters unwanted elements out of the Euclid Creek system before it empties into Lake Erie.
- Removal of a number of invasive species was done all throughout the spring and early summer. These plants, garlic mustard, narrow leaf bittercress, and Canada thistle spread rapidly and thickly, out-competing the native plants in the preserve. When the native plants dwindle, the local insects that are vital for our gardens and flowers also start to disappear. While a significant dent was made in these invasive plants, a lot of future pulling will need to be done.
- Some fallen trees were moved to prevent ATVs from entering the preserve along the old gas line path that runs along the south side of the preserve. You may know that any disturbance of the soil provides a place for invasive plants to move right in.
- You may have seen or will see monthly water testing going on at 3 of the 5 streams that run through the preserve. The water is tested for PH, Conductivity, Oxygen content, Ammonia, and Phosphorous. Water testing is run under the direction of Cuyahoga Soil and Water District using Friends of the Euclid Creek as volunteers.

2020 What Is Planned

Dusty Goldenrod Preserve is a unique plant habitat due to the acidic soil that most likely was caused by removal of the top soil in the middle of the 20th century. The meadow area that comprises the center of the preserve is being forested by red maple trees and the non-native Austrian pine. While the eventual foresting of meadows is natural, it is felt that this unique plant habitat is worth preserving. Therefore in late October to mid-November you may hear saws cutting a number of the red maple trees and pines. You may have seen a number of these trees marked with yellow or red paint. The tree removal will be spread out over a number of years.

Some of the trees will have a ring cut around the trunk to effectively kill the tree, leaving a leafless tree standing. This snag (dead tree) will provide habitat for birds.

Some trees will be cut off at a height of 4 - 8 feet to allow for installation of blue bird boxes in early spring of 2021.

Items for Your Attention

- Trash, pop and water bottles, candy wrappers and the like are being left in the preserve along the gas line road and in the streams. It would be a great help if you could spread the word about the importance of picking up after ourselves so these items don't end up in our watershed.

- Caution! Be aware that **poison ivy** is present throughout the preserve, especially along the edges of the old gas line path. **Ticks** have also gotten onto our volunteers working in the preserve.

- A word about leaf and grass clippings. While seemingly harmless:

1. Native plants are killed and this provides a great location for invasive plants to take hold, especially the Canada thistle. If you have ever had Canada thistle in your lawn, you know that you don't want to help this plant out. Each flower can produce up to 1,500 seeds and one plant can colonize a 3 - 6 ft. diameter area in a year or two. Volunteers have spent many hours trying to keep up weeding thistle out.
2. Phosphorus from decomposed grass clippings and leaves washes into the five streams that flow through the preserve. This concentrated phosphorus eventually reaches Lake Erie possibly contributing to algae growth. For sure, agricultural runoff is the major source but we can all do our part to minimize the problem. Algae bloom in Lake Erie is a multi-billion dollar cost to the state of Ohio.
3. Lastly and least importantly, dumping in the preserve is illegal.



Hopefully you find this letter informative and helps you feel connected to the great natural asset located right here in Highland Heights. If you have questions about this letter contact Neil 216-337-0757.

For more information visit our website: www.euclidcreekwatershed.org/

Sincerely Yours,

Friends of Euclid Creek



Find out more about our watershed online at www.euclidcreekwatershed.org/