

Planting 24 – Northwest Hotchkiss Planting – Spring 1998

This area is part of land (owned by Nancy Hotchkiss) that is in the CRP. We are working with them to re-plant native prairie. Formerly the land had been row cropped until 1987 when it was planted to brome for the CRP.

We burned off the grass on March 22, 1998 on these approx. 30 acres. Then we waited for the brome grass and weeds to emerge and we sprayed Round Up which killed the brome, but several weeds had not emerged yet (mullein and common milkweed and morning glory). If we had it to do over we would have waited longer to let more weeds emerge before spraying.

We planted a rich mix of forbs and grasses from Genesis Nursery (see list in Hotchkiss Unit paper file) as well as little bluestem from Nachusa Grasslands. This was planted by hand in April of 1998 and raked in by tractor harrow.

The planting was mowed ____ times in the summer of 1998. The first time was to cut down on the common milkweed which was in abundance. Later lots of black eyed Susan bloomed and we didn't mow then, but it would have been a good time to mow, because it turned out that there were a lot of mullein (which we didn't notice the extent of until the spring of 1999).

We mowed in the early summer of 1999 to cut down a lot of the mullein and it seems to have worked. We noted many species growing or blooming in the summer of 1999 (see list in Hotchkiss file.) A blush of little bluestem was noted in the fall of 1999.

Unfortunately, Genesis Nursery sold us Echinacea purpurea instead of Ech. pallida. (The bag was marked Echinacea pallida.) So many of these emerged and bloomed in summer of 1999 and we "swept" over the field several times to pull and remove as many as possible. (Echinacea purpurea seems to be a more eastern and southern species and does not exist on the preserve nor in most surrounding counties and therefore we are at this time, not planting it on, or near, the preserve.)

We overseeded this planting on December 6, 1999 with seed purchased from Genesis in spring of 1999. This seed mix was all new species. We used a new seed blower, designed by John Schmadeke. In the two weeks following the overseeding it rained, snowed, and had several hard frosts.

More Echinacea purpurea was pulled that same week, that had flowered and gone to seed since our last sweep to pull it in the summer.

July 3, 2009 Update by Bill Kleiman

This planting has a many, many plants of the invasive Asian bushclover, Lespedeza daurica. It may have come in with the Genesis seed order. The overlap of where it shows up is quite tight with the planting 23, and it is at HLP where we spread that seed mix. But we won't know where

it came from in the end. Bushclovers are invasive and hard to control so we are trying to kill them. This June they were again abundant.

In June of 2008 we had Maplehurst spray 2-4-D on the entire Hotch 62 acres. This set back the clover but it was too late of an application for some weeds. It did not affect the asian bushclover, *Lespedeza daurica*.

Today, July 3, 2009, we sprayed 2 quarts per acre of Crossbow on the entire 62-acres. We hope to knock out the sweetclover and bushclover. About 8 days back I sprayed 1 ounce per gallon of Transline on about 12 acres along Lowden Road with bushclover as the target. The plants were not affected as of 8 days out. I either drove too fast for the tips or did not have enough herbicide.

We also had Genesis deliver to us seeds of *Echinacea purpurea*, which is not native to this region, when the order was for *E. pallida*. It was quite depressing to see those purple coneflowers coming up. We tried to spot spray them out but they were too numerous. They are in the Clear Creek planting too. This taught me the hard way that we need to harvest our own seed. Since this time we have a bigger summer crew who also works into fall and we have been harvesting our seed now for a decade.

I am not happy with the situation. We plan to manage it as a warm season and cool season grassland which will keep birds doing well.

- Bill Kleiman