

Planting 31 – Nichols Tract Grass Planting – Spring 1999

This land (120 acres) owned by the Nichols family was planted to Nachusa Grasslands grasses upon their request. The fields had been in soybeans and corn during the 1998 growing season. In the spring of 1999 their farmer (Loren Wolf) sprayed the field with Round Up. We then planted Little bluestem, Canada Rye, Indian grass, Big bluestem, and Switch grass (approximate order of abundance). We planted largely by hand, after trying a seed spreader which only worked some with the taller grasses (which had been combined and was finer) and it did not work with the little bluestem which is fluffier and had been mostly harvested with a seed stripper and hence had long chaff stems.

The farmer raked in the seed with a 12 foot Furst harrow. The farmer mowed once during the bolt of Foxtail grass (annual non-native). The family is paying the farmer to do this work and with such a large planting we elected to mow once. We did however, have the farmer spray 2-4D herbicide in the summer to cut down on the weed forbs.

Big bluestem and Indian grass were seen growing over top the foxtail grass in the Fall of 1999.