

DU PAGE COUNTY

TRAIL MAINTENANCE POLICY

SPRING 2008
IMPLEMENTATION STATUS REPORT

Prepared by
**DuPage County Department of Economic
Development and Planning**
for
DuPage County Division of Transportation

Robert J. Schillerstrom
DuPage County Board Chairman

(Transportation Committee review draft)

Approved DuPage County Trail Maintenance Task Force, May 20, 2008
Approved DuPage County Board Environmental Committee, June 3, 2008
Approved DuPage County Board Transportation Committee, -----

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DU PAGE COUNTY
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INTRODUCTION

The DuPage County Trail Maintenance Policy was approved by the DuPage County Board Environmental Committee on October 21, 2003 and by the DuPage County Board Transportation Committee on October 28, 2003. The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the work undertaken to date to implement this policy along areas which are under County maintenance (see discussion in Appendix A for areas which are not included along the Illinois Prairie Path (IPP) and Great Western Trail (GWT) in DuPage County).

Implementing this policy are primarily staff from the County's Division of Transportation (DuPDOT) or the Department of Economic Development and Planning. A second countywide agency that will assist with implementation of some actions is the DuPage County Forest Preserve District. Municipalities and park districts along the trail system are also assisting in implementing some actions. These include Elmhurst, Villa Park, Lombard, Glen Ellyn, Wheaton, Warrenville, Aurora, Naperville, Winfield, Carol Stream, Glendale Heights, West Chicago, and Wayne. Unincorporated areas under township jurisdiction may contribute to the effort as well.

Last, but not least, non-governmental entities such as bikeway and trail groups and other not-for-profit organizations also implement various actions. Some of these groups include:

- The Illinois Prairie Path not-for-profit corporation (IPPC)
- Bikeable Roads and Trails Supporters
- Boy Scouts of America
- St. Petronille School, Glen Ellyn

DEFINITION OF THE TRAIL ZONES

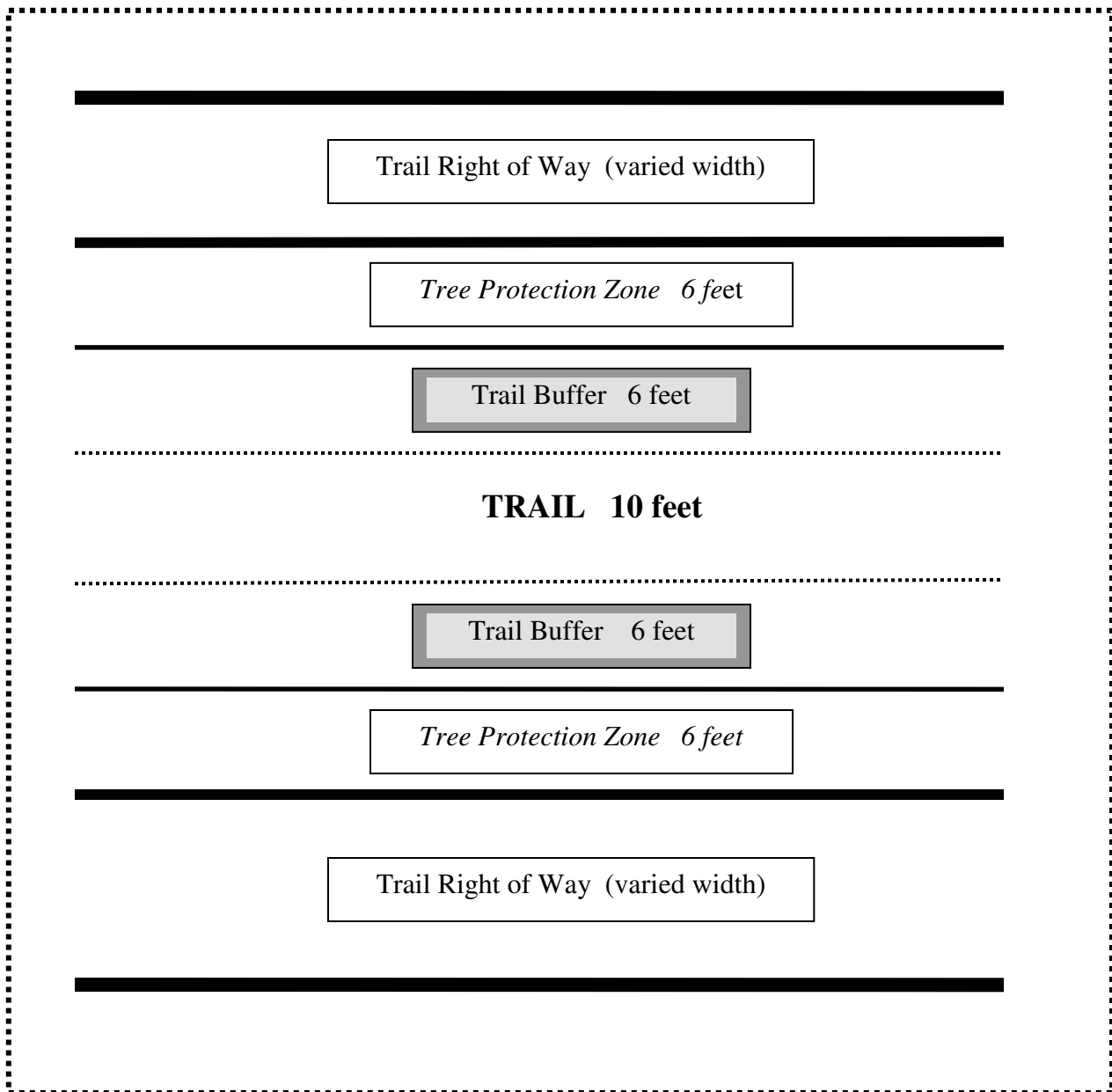
The recommendations approved in the policy regarding trail maintenance and vegetation are focused on four distinct zones along the trail system (see Diagram A). The first is the actual *trail* itself which is generally 10 feet in width and is composed of crushed limestone screenings for the vast majority of the system. The second area is the *trail buffer* which is a zone 6 feet in width immediately adjacent to each side of the trail. The third zone is the *tree protection zone* which is the 6 foot area immediately adjacent to the trail buffer on both sides of the trail. The fourth and final area is the balance of the *trail right-of-way* which is the remainder of County-owned property along the trail system. The County's trail right-of-way varies greatly in width across the entire system but typically averages approximately 66 feet.

In regards to the recommendations, careful review will reveal that some recommendations apply to all of these zones while some apply to selected zones only. Diagram A should be used to understand the scope of the recommended actions.

Diagram A

DuPage County Trail Maintenance Policy

Trail Zones



GOALS FOR TRAIL MAINTENANCE

The policy includes four primary goals for maintaining the trail system. Implementation of the recommendations is intended to be carried out in following priority order:

Goal 1: Provide a Safe Trail for All Users

Goal 2: Accommodate Multiple Uses and Users along the Trail System

Goal 3: Provide a Pleasing Trail Experience

Goal 4: Protect and Enhance the Natural Environment

RECOMMENDATIONS TO ACHIEVE MAINTENANCE GOALS

Listed below are the 31 recommendations followed by a description of what action has been undertaken to implement these recommendations with emphasis on those recommendations covering the last year.

Since the policy recommendations often work towards achieving more than one goal, they have been grouped by topic area. The four topic areas are listed in order of priority so as to best achieve the highest priority goals. All 31 recommendations are to be implemented in a cost-effective manner if funding is available and in ways that protect the County from liability exposure. In addition, it is recognized that implementation of the recommendations requires some flexibility in interpretation by County staff who are undertaking this work and as such, the recommendations provide general guidelines for implementation.

Trail Maintenance and Vegetation Clearing Recommendations

Recommendation 1

Maintain a safe surface for trail users including a sufficient and uniform width and proper drainage. The trail width will be maintained at the current 10' standard.

Implementation Action/Activities

DuPDOT Maintenance is undertaking its annual Spring trail inspection. Spot asphalt paving is planned this season through segments of DuPage Airport to prevent future washout of the trail. DuPDOT also responds to citizen and trail user reports of rutted trail areas and corrected all deficiencies found to date but there were very few of these complaints over the past year.

Path resurfacing work was completed this year in Carol Stream, Warrenville, Lombard, and Glen Ellyn on both the Prairie Path and the Great Western Trail.

Recommendation 2

Maintain a litter-free and vandalism-free trail (e.g., establish an Adopt-a-Trail Program)

Implementation Action/Activities

DuPDOT responded to vandalism reports by trail users and corrected all deficiencies found. The Illinois Prairie Path not-for-profit corporation also completed its annual Trail Clean Up on April 22 with approximately 8000 volunteers participating in this year's event which included the Illinois Prairie Path, the Great Western Trail and portions of the Southern DuPage County Regional Trail.

Staff is still hoping for a reinstatement of Sheriff Zaruba's SWAP program which helped in troubled locations along the path system in the past.

The Prairie Neighbor Program, discussed in Recommendation 24, will provide for residents to adopt specific segments of trail adjacent to their property under certain permitted conditions.

Recommendation 3

Request support from trail communities in adding recyclable collection containers along the system in appropriate areas

Implementation Action/Activities

Recycling containers have been installed in areas where most needed including Wheaton, Warrenville, Glen Ellyn, and Lombard. This may be expanded in the future as new needs arise.

Recommendation 4

Remove diseased trees to eliminate hazards and keep disease from spreading to other vegetation

Implementation Action/Activities

Less than a half-dozen Dutch Elm diseased trees were removed by DuPDOT Maintenance this year along the main stem (fewer trees than in years past).

There have been no signs of Emerald Ash Borer to date.

Recommendation 5

Maintain a trail buffer zone along the trail edges of 3' to a maximum of 6' to allow an area for trail users to run off if there are conflicts (equestrians, pedestrians, bicyclists) and allow room for people to stop if they need to for repairs, etc. (see Diagram A). The width of the buffer zone will vary depending on existing conditions along the trail (slope of shoulder, drainage ways) and existing mature healthy trees in the buffer zone. The width of the trail buffer zone at any specific location will be based on the judgment of the County maintenance staff but will not exceed a maximum of 6'.

The trail buffer zone will be a mowed sidepath in areas where equestrian usage is highest and this improvement is feasible. The trail buffer zone will be mowed monthly but will include larger, signature healthy trees that will be trimmed only. Monthly mowing was approved in order to accommodate equestrians who often ride along the side of the trail and provide a buffer area adequate for public safety (clear sight lines along the trail edges). Limitations in County mowing equipment also do not make it feasible to reduce the width of the buffer area beyond the recommended 3' to 6' width.

Dead and hazardous trees will be removed from the trail buffer zone.

Trees are allowed to grow over the trail system to create a tree canopy but will be trimmed to a height of 12 feet above the ground in order to allow maintenance vehicles to access the pathway and resurface the system, emergency vehicles to reach trail users when necessary, utility vehicles to access the system to repair storm damage, and equestrians to have safe clearance on the trails.

Implementation Action/Activities

Mowing has been completed in accordance with the above recommendation and will continue through the growing season. DuPDOT Maintenance removed very few diseased and hazardous trees this year.

We removed a significant number of fallen trees this past August after the microburst that passed through Winfield, Wheaton, Glen Ellyn and Lombard.

Routine trimming is underway with no complaints to date.

Recommendation 6

Maintain a tree protection zone of 6 feet in width adjacent to the trail buffer zone (see Diagram A). Maintenance in this area will include trimming of trees, tree branches and shrubs that are or will grow over the trail, are or will be within 12 feet above the ground, or will grow into the trail buffer area within in the next two years. A 6' width was recommended because of the annual rate of growth of trees and large shrubs found along the trails make this trimming width necessary to ensure safe passage on the trail.

Trees in the tree protection zone will be allowed to grow over the trail system to create a tree canopy but will be trimmed to a height of 12 feet above the ground in order to allow maintenance vehicles to access the pathway and resurface the system, emergency vehicles to reach trail users when necessary, utility vehicles to access the system to repair storm damage, and equestrians to have safe clearance on the trails.

Trees that are considered hazardous will be removed but all other trees, including dead or fallen trees, will remain and will be trimmed only as needed for safety of the trail users. Shrubs and brush will remain except in those areas targeted for European Buckthorn or other invasive species removal (see recommendation below under Habitat and Screening Improvement).

The County also passed a new ordinance providing penalties for removal of trees and vegetation along the trail system as a result of a problem with a developer in Lombard. The new ordinance should help to maintain the natural look of the trail system which is desired by trail users.

Implementation Action/Activities

DuPDOT Maintenance removed very few diseased and hazardous trees along the trails this year. However, a significant number of fallen trees were removed last year as a result of a major summer storm.

Recommendation 7

Maintain the trail right-of-way so that it is free from hazardous or diseased trees (see Diagram A). Dead or fallen trees will remain and will be trimmed only as needed for safety of the trail users. Shrubs and brush will remain except in those areas targeted for European Buckthorn or

other invasive species removal (see recommendation below under Habitat and Screening Improvement)

Implementation Action/Activities

DuPDOT Maintenance removed very few diseased and hazardous trees along the trail system this year.

The County also passed a new ordinance providing penalties for removal of trees and vegetation along the trail system as a result of a problem with a developer in Lombard. The new ordinance should help to maintain the natural look of the trail system which is desired by trail users.

Recommendation 8

Recognize that multi-purpose use of the trail system includes drainage and utility purposes

Implementation Action/Activities

DuPDOT Maintenance is working to correct a drainage problem near St. Stephen's Prairie along the Great Western Trail in Lombard. DuPDOT has also worked in partnership with the Public Works staff on drainage improvements in Wheaton, Warrenville, and West Chicago.

Recommendation 9

Provide annual training by a certified arborist to County maintenance personnel on species identification and tree and shrub disease detection (particularly common diseases such as Dutch Elm)

Implementation Action/Activities

Training was provided by Morton Arboretum for approximately late 2006. Due to the early onset of winter this past year, we were not able to get in the training in the Fall but are working on scheduling a training session for this year.

Recommendation 10

Consider adding rest stops or improving connections to existing facilities adjacent to the trail system

Implementation Action/Activities

No new trail connections were processed in 2007. Previously new trail connections were completed in 2005 in Warrenville; in 2006-2007 in Lombard (South Broadway), in Aurora (Fox Valley Park District/Ginger Woods Park), in Warrenville (Monarch Landing), in Winfield (Winfield Ridge neighborhood access), and in West Chicago Park District (Timber Trails subdivision park).

Recommendation 11

Provide a regular inspection program for trail bridges to make sure bridges are safe and can adequately handle trail traffic especially equestrians.

Implementation Action/Activities

DuPDOT is currently working to improve bridge structures along the system. A comprehensive evaluation of bridges along the trail system was completed by Patrick Engineering in 1998. Since that time, work has been underway to implement the recommended improvements. In

2002, bridge and culvert replacements were completed along the Great Western Trail and in 2004-2005 an \$850,000 bridge and culvert replacement program was completed along the Elgin Branch. Similar work along the Aurora Branch is nearing completion with \$1.2 million of improvements including a new West Branch DuPage River Bridge just east of Batavia Road in Warrenville.

The County has received a State IDNR grant for \$200,000 and a federal High Priority Project Grant of \$300,000 to fund replacement of the Illinois Prairie Path bridge over the East Branch of the DuPage River. The project is currently planned for bidding in Fall, 2008.

The County also received a \$960,000 High Priority Project grant to fund a new bridge for the IPP over the EJ&E railroad. Engineering is underway and construction is planned for 2009.

A \$1,250,000 drainage and water quality improvement project was also undertaken by the DuPage County Public Works Department along the Great Western Trail in Glendale Heights area near Bloomingdale Road in 2005.

Bridge replacement is also planned by the City of Wheaton for Volunteer Bridge in downtown Wheaton later this year.

Recommendation 12

Maintain close communication with ComEd on upcoming maintenance work and inform trail users of planned maintenance activities by utility companies

Implementation Action/Activities

ComEd has provided outstanding cooperation with County staff to keep the County informed on maintenance work. A system has been set up and regular email updates are provided by ComEd and this information is listed on the County's trail website under the "Trail Maintenance and Construction Activities" section. Maintenance trimming has been undertaken by ComEd along the entire County system this spring.

Additionally, new regulations from the federal level will allow ComEd to provide more extensive clearing of vegetation along major power lines. Additional detail of how this directive will be implemented is still being developed by ComEd.

Recommendation 13

Encourage reporting of maintenance problems by trail users to appropriate agencies and remedy problems within a reasonable time

Implementation Action/Activities

The public is using the email posted on the website to report problems along with the new signage installed by DuPDOT Maintenance in 2005 along the system. Complaints are forwarded to the appropriate agency.

In 2005, DuPDOT created a trail maintenance supervisor position to work directly with the County trail coordinator and assist with addressing maintenance concerns. This additional staff emphasis has greatly improved the turnaround time for correcting any reported problems.

The staff is still working on developing its own tracking system to better track complaints, response time and resolution.

Recommendation 14

Mark culvert crossings within the trail buffer where equestrians frequently use the system

Implementation Action/Activities

No action has been taken on this item and no complaints have been received by staff regarding this issue.

Roadway Crossing Safety Recommendations

Recommendation 15

Provide additional and aggressive clearing at roadway intersections to maintain safe sight lines for both motorists and trail users and ensure that traffic control signage is visible.

Implementation Action/Activities

DuPDOT Maintenance regularly inspects all roadway crossings to make sure safe sight lines are maintained at each intersection. Additional clearing work was done at railroad crossings in 2007 and staff is exploring further improvements at the railroad crossings where bridges are not planned.

In 2002-2003, the County upgraded all trail bollards with an improved design that is higher, painted safety yellow, and contains reflective decals.

Recommendation 16

Consider crossing improvements at major roadway and railroad crossings including the construction of refuge islands, bridges, underpasses at heavily traveled roadways without traffic signals.

Implementation Action/Activities

Staff and an engineering consultant are currently evaluating the possibility of improvements at several trail crossings as one component of a larger \$294,000 consulting engineering contract. A report by Teng and Associates summarizing guidelines for these improvements is being finalized by staff.

The County Trail System Improvement Plan includes two new trail bridges (the IPP Elgin Branch over the EJ&E Railroad and the IPP East Branch DuPage River bridge as mentioned above). The County plan also includes a new bridge for the Great Western Trail over the Union Pacific, Grace Street and St. Charles Road commonly called the Grace Street bridge. The Village of Lombard has received a grant to partially pay for construction of this bridge estimated to cost approximately \$2.1 million. The County has executed an intergovernmental agreement with the Village of Lombard to provide funding support of \$200,000 for the project. Bollinger Loch has a \$322,099 contract with Lombard to complete Phase 1 engineering and this first phase is expected to be completed this summer.

A \$1,000,000 bridge for the Illinois Prairie Path Aurora Branch crossing at Ferry Road was completed in 2004.

Some communities have also constructed crossing improvements such as Naperville's Diehl Road crossing and Lombard's IPP Main Street crossing. IDOT is also incorporating crossing improvements in its future Butterfield Road widening project. The County has recommended to IDOT a trail underpass at the Winfield Road crossing.

Recommendation 17

During construction projects, provide signage about construction alternative routes and detours marked with appropriate signage if feasible.

Implementation Action/Activities

The County has received excellent cooperation thus far from agencies in regards to signage and detours where feasible. Information on closings and construction is posted on the County website. Detours have been posted when available and have been well received by trail users.

Signage and Public Education Recommendations

Recommendation 18

Add signage educating users on multi-use trail rules (e.g., yielding, keeping right, trail etiquette, etc.) and safety

Implementation Action/Activities

County staff upgraded signage to new MUTCD standards along the entire system in 2006. Replacement of the brown "You are Here" signs has begun and is ahead of schedule for replacements, relocations and additional signs.

The County has also asked trail advocacy and support groups to assist in educating users on trail etiquette and rules through their publications. In 2005, TROD did an excellent article in its newsletter about etiquette and special considerations involving horses.

Recommendation 19

Add signage identifying trail and site locations and adjacent facilities (e.g., mile markers, municipal boundaries, trail parking locations, local parks, etc.)

Implementation Action/Activities

Additional signs have been added at regional trail crossings and some points of interest. Some communities have also added "welcome to" signage along the system. Additional improvements are under consideration.

Recommendation 20

Promote use of the trail system for commuters (e.g., mass transit centers, employment centers)

Implementation Action/Activities

This year, working with Chicagoland Bicycle Federation, the County is once again undertaking a Bike to Work Week promotional project to encourage bicycling by commuters to Metra stations. The program will take place at 10 stations this year June 9-13.

In 2006, the County received a \$200,000 CMAQ grant to add bicycle parking and is nearing completion of its Phase I report by Chicagoland Bicycle Federation who is serving as our consultant.

Recommendation 21

Develop a citizen safety watch program

Implementation Action/Activities

In 2004, Sheriff Zaruba created a new citizen trail watch program called STAR. S.T.A.R. volunteers are asked to be watchful while they are out enjoying the Prairie Path or Great Western Trail, assist trail users, and report any suspicious activity to police. At last count there were 137 volunteers participating in the program (applications for the program can be obtained by calling 955-0302).

Recommendation 22

Install signage to inform the public about vegetation removal and control efforts (e.g., “Be Back Soon” signage including posting plan details and website addresses for more information)

Implementation Action/Activities

Informational signage was installed by Wheaton Park District and other organizations are being encouraged to do the same particularly with prairie restoration efforts.

The County is using informational signage with our routine trail maintenance (tree trimming) to inform trail users of this work and providing a contact phone number at the office for anyone who is concerned and has questions for staff.

We have also received excellent cooperation from agencies maintaining areas adjacent to the path system and are adding to our website prairie burns and other maintenance activities undertaken by other agencies if the work is visible from the trail system.

Habitat and Screening Improvement Recommendations

Recommendation 23

Preserve a naturalistic look to the trail system providing a variety of viewsapes by maintaining vegetation that is colorful and variegated, screens adjacent land uses, provides wildlife habitat, and contains prairie, wetland and woodland remnants.

Implementation Action/Activities

No specific action has been taken on this activity.

Recommendation 24

Encourage volunteer efforts to provide for vegetation and tree replacement and replanting from a recommended plant list for replacement plantings that will have structure and form compatible with surrounding area needs

Implementation Action/Activities

The Prairie Neighbor Program is being developed to implement this recommendation. Action on the program is being considered by the County in separate action.

Recommendation 25

Identify target areas where removal of European Buckthorn and other similarly invasive species like Garlic Mustard can be undertaken with little impact on residential areas.

Implementation Action/Activities

Work to remove some invasive species has been undertaken by St. Stephen's Prairie Stewards (Milton Township Cemeteries Authority) along the Great Western Trail in Carol Stream and by the Villa Park Environmental Concerns Commission along the Great Western Trail in Villa Park.

The Village of Glen Ellyn also just completed an Arbor Day project with ComEd and St. Petronille's School which included the removal of invasive species on the path system between Prospect and Main Street in downtown Glen Ellyn.

Recommendation 26

Maintain a positive working relationship with Commonwealth Edison and work with them to survey areas for appropriate tree removal and replacement and explore options for vegetation management agreements

Implementation Action/Activities

Close coordination is occurring with ComEd on routine maintenance. In addition, staff is meeting with ComEd to determine if their new clearing requirements can help to meet this goal.

Recommendation 27

Explore establishing a cost-share program for screening non-residential areas from trail view including information on grant programs and funding sources that could help private landowners install plantings

Implementation Action/Activities

We have not yet identified any specific grant programs or funding sources for small private landowners.

Recommendation 28

Develop partnerships and encourage donations for beautification and trail improvements bearing in mind the need to follow the recommended plant list for plantings, spatially sequence new plantings, factor in plant loss when estimating the number of plantings needed, and varying the type of plants for increased biodiversity and interest.

Implementation Action/Activities

The new Trees for Trails program is intended to help meet this recommendation (see flyer distributed separately). The IPPc continues to install amenities and various improvements as part of its programming including water fountains (such as a new one in 2007 in Winfield) and benches.

Recommendation 29

Identify areas along the trail system with quality native plants

Implementation Action/Activities

No action to date on this recommendation.

Recommendation 30

Encourage private property owners along the trail system to extend natural areas onto their private property through increased public education and distribution of informational materials to assist property owners with such efforts.

Implementation Action/Activities

Stepping back a bit, the County is working to first get property owners not to extend uses from their yards and private property onto the trail right-of-way. Since June, 2005, an effort has been underway to remove any encroachments. An annual inspection to make sure no new encroachments have appeared will be done this summer.

The proposed Prairie Neighbor Program we are hoping will help meet this new objective including working in partnership with the Conservation Foundation's *Conservation@Home* program.

Recommendation 31

Working with community groups and volunteers, create an environmental education program to involve citizens in more meaningful ways in prairie restoration activities, public service opportunities, and environmental education

Implementation Action/Activities

No action as of yet on this item. The SCARCE program has supported efforts to inform environmental groups and educators of trail activities and projects through regular reports in its newsletter. However, no formal program has been developed to meet this recommendation.

CONCLUSION

While it was anticipated that implementation of these recommendations would occur over several years, particularly for those involving more extensive effort or capital projects, County staff feels sufficient progress is being made to implement the policy recommendations.

APPENDIX A

SCOPE OF COUNTY MAINTENANCE ALONG THE TRAIL SYSTEM

Not all of the approximately 51 miles of the Illinois Prairie Path and Great Western Trail in DuPage County are maintained by the DuPage County Division of Transportation. There are several areas where intergovernmental agreements or permits have been issued which give other agencies and organizations approval to manage and maintain vegetation and provide various improvements along the County Trail System (see map in Appendix A). The current agreements or permits which involve vegetation or trail surfacing include:

IPP Main Stem, Cook County Line to Illinois Route 83, Elmhurst
Elmhurst Park District (landscaping including prairie preservation work, parking, amenities, buildings and improvements)

IPP Main Stem and GWT entire length, Villa Park
Trail maintenance including plantings, trimming, routine surfacing and amenities

IPP Main Stem, Westmore to west of Highland along South Broadway
Village of Lombard (trees and other plantings, parking, lighting, path connections)

IPP Main Stem at Westmore, Lombard
Village of Lombard (landscape plantings)

IPP Main Stem entire length, Lombard
Village of Lombard (watermain/fountains, paving, signage, information kiosks, landscape planters at selected intersections)

GWT entire length, Lombard
Village of Lombard (watermain/fountains, paving, signage, information kiosks, landscape planters at selected intersections)

IPP Main Stem, Taylor Avenue to Montclair, Glen Ellyn
Village of Glen Ellyn (path lighting)

IPP Main Stem, Montclair to Park Boulevard, Glen Ellyn
Village of Glen Ellyn (landscaping, lighting, path and commuter parking lot improvements)

IPP Main Stem, Park Boulevard to Main Street, Glen Ellyn
Village of Glen Ellyn (landscaping and irrigation system)

IPP Main Stem at Prospect, Glen Ellyn
Village of Glen Ellyn (decorative fencing and paved trail)

IPP Main Stem, Montclair Avenue to Main Street, Glen Ellyn
Village of Glen Ellyn (commuter parking, trail, landscaping)

IPP Main Stem, Liberty Square Park, Wheaton
City of Wheaton (landscaping)

IPP Main Stem, West Street to Wheaton Avenue, Founders Park, Wheaton
City of Wheaton (sidewalk, landscape plantings)

IPP Main Stem, Main Street Wheaton to Cross Street, Wheaton
City of Wheaton (commuter parking, trail, landscaping and fencing)

IPP Aurora Branch, downtown at Batavia Road, Warrenville
City of Warrenville (landscape plantings)

IPP Main Stem, President Street (west and east at Hoffman Park) and Carlton; and IPP Elgin
Branch at GWT West Intersection and Nagel Court

The Illinois Prairie Path, Not-for-Profit Corporation (prairie restoration)
(The Illinois Prairie Path Corporation has also received separate permits for and maintains a variety of improvements and amenities along the trail system such as water fountains, mile markers, restrooms, trash containers, planting boxes, signs, fences, benches, information kiosks, etc. These amenities have been installed over the last few decades and are solely maintained by volunteers with this organization)

Connector paths-beginning in 2006, DuPage County began entering into agreements with local agencies for the construction and maintenance of connector paths to the trail system. To date, those include:

- City of Warrenville, Monarch Landing
- Fox Valley Park District, Ginger Woods Park
- Village of Winfield, Winfield Ridge neighborhood access
- West Chicago Park District, Timber Trails Park

Second, the Geneva Spur of the Illinois Prairie Path through West Chicago follows a route along City of West Chicago property and streets. These segments from Prince Crossing Road west to Reed-Keppler Park are not maintained by DuPage County but are maintained by the City of West Chicago.

Third, Commonwealth Edison owns property adjacent to the County Trail System which it maintains according to industry standards and State of Illinois regulations. The County has no regulatory authority over Commonwealth Edison regarding their maintenance practices but does expect their cooperation in respecting the natural values of the trail system. County staff coordinates closely with the company on matters that impact the County Trail System and has instituted a notification system regarding upcoming maintenance work. Although it may appear to trail users that this property is part of the County Trail System, in fact, it is not.

In addition, Commonwealth Edison holds a perpetual easement for maintenance of facilities over all the Illinois Prairie Path and over parts of the Great Western Trail. Again, the County does not regulate Commonwealth Edison's work within these easements. County staff estimates that approximately 37 miles of the trail system include Commonwealth Edison property or easements adjacent to the trails.

Nicor Gas Company also has allowed the Illinois Prairie Path Batavia Spur to be located on their easement north of Interstate 88. Similarly, this property is maintained by the utility company.

Lastly, the policy recognizes that not all remaining areas along the trail system will be covered under this policy. Special maintenance arrangements will be allowed for varied landscape treatments in selected areas. These special management areas include municipal downtowns, commercial business districts, wetland and marsh restoration areas and prairie restoration areas

Interested citizens may contact the DuPage County Department of Economic Development and Planning for the boundaries of these special management areas.