



# Dayton Bluffs Year Two Report

The Conservation Foundation and Friends of Dayton Bluffs

It's been a great two years of work at the Dayton Bluffs Preserve in Ottawa!

An amazing amount of work was completed on restoration of the woodlands and former farm fields, and general clean-up and public awareness of the property. **The volunteers with the Friends of Dayton Bluffs have been amazing!** And, a few nice amenities were also added so people can now access and enjoy the preserve.



Here is a quick overview from the beginning:

- 2013: Purchase of the property for approx. \$2 million, July 2013  
Held two site vision planning sessions with city officials and local stakeholders; held local fundraiser.
- 2014  
Started woodland restoration activities  
Started volunteer work days and public tours/open houses  
Held field trips for local groups and opened site for Morel Fest  
City of Ottawa approved annexation and lease agreements  
Planted 70 acres of farm fields into prairie  
Held FairmountSanrol work day with more than 500 employees  
Successfully obtained 3 to 1 challenge grant from Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation, raising more than \$31,000 total for restoration
- 2015  
Conducted first woodland burns on approx. 15 acres  
Cleaned up Native American burial mounds area  
Raised money and purchased Polaris Ranger utility vehicle  
Formally established Friends of Dayton Bluffs volunteer group  
Trained volunteers in pesticide and chainsaw safety, and prescribed burns  
Continued volunteer work days, woodland restoration and public tours/programs



## Two-Year Site Accomplishments

- Cleared invasive species from 45 acres of woodlands; planted 90 acres to prairie.
- Majority of invasive infested areas have been cut and treated.
- Cleared nearly 4 miles of woodland edge to open it up.
- Removed 2 tons of trash from ravines.
- Added the following amenities: 6 picnic tables, a tool shed, 100 loppers, small foot bridge over creek, entrance road and parking area, utility vehicle.
- Cleaned up the old Daniel's pioneer cemetery at north end of property.



## Volunteers and Public Support

- **Friends of the Dayton Bluffs** formally established to help with restoration and other cleanup activities tallying 3,500 hours.
- Approx. \$10,000 of in-kind services provided by area companies and professionals.
- FairmountSantról volunteer work day produced 2,000 hours of volunteer work values at \$27,000
- Nice article in *Starved Rock Country* magazine and coverage in several local media outlets
- The Pizzo Companies adopted a 15 acre oak woodland for restoration.



## Funding

- Initial acquisition funding provided by Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation, Grand Victoria Foundation and the Hamill Family Foundation- approx. \$2 million
- More than \$200,000 has been raised additionally in donations, grants and pledges so far for restoration and clean up activity.
- Nearly \$150,000 has been spent on restoration, clean up and related activity.

## A Big Thank You to our Friends and Partners!

- Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation
- Grand Victoria Foundation
- Hamill Family Foundation
- US Fish & Wildlife Service
- City of Ottawa, especially Mayor Bob Eschbach and councilmen Dan Aussem and James Less
- The Pizzo Companies
- Christopher B. Burke Engineering
- Bedrock Earthscapes
- Operating Engineers Local 150
- Illinois Valley Contractors Association
- Ruiz Construction
- Etscheid, Duttlinger & Associates, Inc.
- Grand Rapids Excavating
- Universal Paving & Excavating
- D Construction
- FairmountSantról/Wedron Silica
- Jerry Halterman and Dan Reynolds
- Tom Heimsoth and Heritage Harbor
- Ottawa Visitors Center and Julie Johnson
- LaSalle County Master Naturalists
- Marcia Nelson, great neighbor and friend
- *Starved Rock Country* magazine
- Iowa and Minnesota Conservation Corps
- V3 Environmental Consultants
- All of our wonderful volunteers and donors

