

**August 2016.** Maintenance and safety checks of buildings and grounds, seasonal mowing, firewood cutting splitting and stacking, storm clean-up, shelter house and toilet cleaning, litter pick-up and disposal, road grading, trail maintenance, equipment maintenance, scheduling shelter rentals and collecting shelter and camping fees, drinking water sampling . Shelter houses and Lodge are used every weekend by scouts, families and other groups. Natural Resource Center Educational Staff teaching school groups at Russell Woods and making classroom visits. PDRMA Risk Management and Loss Control review and preserve safety in progress for 2016 compliance.

Sycamore High School and Big 12 Conference Cross Country race events at Afton Forest Preserve. Afton will be the site for the 2016 Big 12 Conference Regional on October 22nd



## August 2016- Southern Preserves & Natural Resource Mgmt. Completed Project List-

Josh Clark

### Maintenance

1. Coordinated Eagle Scout Project at Shabbona Forest Preserve. Shabbona and Waterman Scouts set up 2 “picnic areas” in the open field. At each area scouts planted 2 trees, installed new grills and 2 new picnic tables. The scouts also removed the old information kiosk and installed a new kiosk in a better location. Overall the project was very beneficial.
2. Tree service removed two dead oaks from the park areas at Shabbona and cleared overhanging branches from the entrance road.
3. Repairs were made to the south walking bridge at Afton. Several boards were deteriorated and needed replaced.
4. A new park information sign was installed at Sannauk FP.
5. Began preparing Afton for the annual Sycamore High School cross country meets. We trimmed back several of the trails that the course follows in order to make them more accommodating to the runners.
6. Continued cleanup of park and maintenance areas at Afton. This was started last year as an ongoing project as time allows.
7. “ Gary and Joan Hanson ” donated bench was installed at a overlook spot on the east side of the northern Afton wetland. Very nice view. *\*See photo below*

### Natural Resources

1. Beavers have returned to Afton. Daily checks and removals of dams. We remove the dams in order to keep the water levels in the wetland banks at the proper levels.
2. Planting of remaining native plant plugs.
3. Seed collection throughout the district.
4. Continue to work on the future plant propagation garden at Afton. In the fall we plan to clear more area and begin constructing propagation beds.
5. Sprayed areas for weeds that were mowed earlier in the season.





*Gary and Joan Hanson donated bench at Afton overlooking prairie and wetlands*



## Projects August-September 2016

**Bill Prain and northern forest preserve staff**

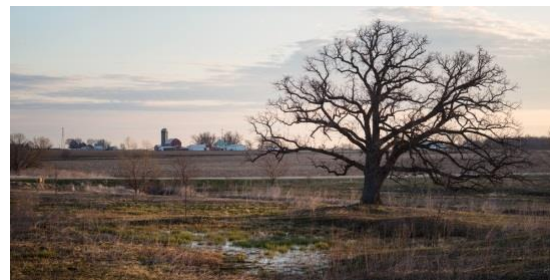
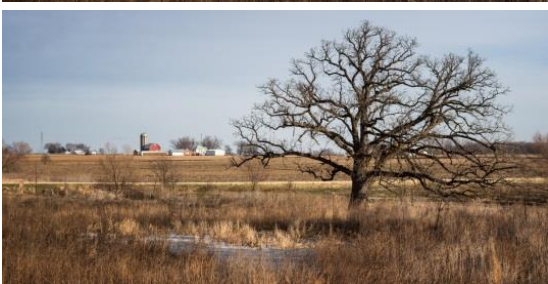
- Restore well jacks for southern preserves and backups**
- Storm and deadfall removal**
- Supervise electrical repairs at Resource Center**
- work on winter shelter house firewood supply**
- demolish outhouse roof and concrete repairs at Russell Woods**
- Mowing / Trimming**
- Road and trail repairs and grading at Russell**
- Tree and shrub trimming**
- Equipment, material and consumable support for Sycamore Forest Preserve and Russell Woods staff**
- Administrative Priorities as called for**
- Safety investigation reporting and training**
- Water well activation and water safety testing**

*Next month the Fall colors return..... Photo of road through Russell Woods*





Local photographer Tom Robbins captures the same view throughout the year at Prairie Oaks Forest Preserve



*More of local photographer Tom Robbins photos of forest preserve birds*

The Eastern Meadowlark is found in the prairies and grasslands and the Yellow Throat Warbler along brushy areas and fencerows





The Greater Yellowlegs, Belted Kishfisher and Green Winged Teal live near wetlands and along rivers and streams





The Northern Oriole, Eastern Towhee and Northern Flicker are found in forests





## Prairie Moon at Afton



The Northwest Suburban Astronomers use Afton and Potawatomi Woods on many weekends throughout the year to view the night skies. One of the members took this photo of the full moon over the Afton Prairie.



**Potawatomi Woods picnic area and prairie from above,**



**South Branch Prairie late summer bloom and 1835 Miller-Ellwood Cabin**

