

**State-Line Serpentine Barrens Management Planning Meeting
02/09/13**

Meeting Notes/Next Steps

In Attendance:

- BSA Camp Horseshoe: Ray Hayden & Tom Murphy
- BoF: Rick Hartlieb
- Chester County Parks & Recreation: Jay Gregg, Bryan Lightner
- Elk Township: Pal Duborrow
- Friends of the State-Line Serpentine Barrens: Henry Whitesel, Mike Bertram, Kent Wagner, Bob Gray, David Ross & Anna Hull
- Special guests: Dr. Jessica Schedlbauer from WCU; Don Roten from GHHFC; Kyle Quillin
- TNC: Molly Anderson and Deb Landau

1. After introductions and applause for the volunteers who have continued with the great efforts of restoration activities at the serpentine barrens, Mike Bertram provided a background of restoration work at the State-Line Serpentine Barrens sites over the past decade or so. The three restoration techniques include cut/drag, scrape and fire.
2. Goat Hill – Henry Whitesel led the discussion on past, current and future needs of both BoF and TNC's lands at Goat Hill.
 - a. On map, the opening designated as "h" needs to be cleared, while leaving a few trees to create the desired savannah like habitat
 - b. A discussion about greenbriar ensued which Ray Hayden provided insight that he has had success with controlling it by hitting it three times with a brush mower; it was also recommended to use Pathfinder – Garlon 4A Ultra
 - c. The powerline that cuts through Goat Hill was then discussed as PECO had done a great job of clearing it the year before and we should monitor the area for greenbriar moving forward
 - d. We then discussed the southern tip of TNC's lands at Goat Hill which is overrun with autumn olive and needs to be addressed
 - e. An ATV is needed to haul equipment to the various openings throughout Goat Hill that need to be maintained. BoF may be able to provide this to the Friends Group
 - f. Trail discussion included investigating the potential for new trail along creek section as well as the "Bertram" extension; this could be a great BSA project for National Trails Day
 - g. There is a meeting taking place on the 1st of March to discuss the future monitoring needs at Goat Hill and other grassland areas
 - h. Rick reported on behalf of BoF that the boundary of the western section of the preserve has been cleared, sprayed and painted and is now clearly marked; BoF would be interested in figuring out a way to have a bigger loop coming off of the Rose Trail that could potentially connect to the BSA camp but there may be some issues with inholding landowners; there is also a lot of autumn olive along the creek bottom and an ATV could be utilized to apply herbicide to manage it; BoF has done a great job at improving neighbor relationships and now have 4-5 points of access from these neighboring lands; BoF also needs to discuss with PECO with fixing access road
 - i. Discussion then began on the potential for a connector trail between Goat Hill and Nottingham Park; we would have to discuss with various landowners, particularly HERR as well as PennDoT as the route would have to include some roads

3. Dr. Jessica Schedlbauer's Research, Department of Biology, West Chester University
 - a. Jessica shared her research at several serpentine barrens sites over the past 1 ½ years
 - i. CO₂ Exchange – compared burned and unburned sites and found that the carbon cycle is similar between the two; there is twice as much organic matter in the top 5 cm of soil in burned areas than non-burned areas
 - ii. Plant water relations- regarding water and greenbriar, serpentine areas do just fine in terms of water potential; the grasslands are not water limited in the serpentine barrens; in regards to greenbriar vs. little blue stem; the native warm season grasses do better unless greenbriar starts to shade out the grasses

4. Nottingham County Park – Jay Gregg led the discussion on recent activity at needs for the Park
 - a. There are 3 new areas/units that will be added for management
 - b. Cutting and dragging still needs to take place in areas G, E and B as the organic matter needs to be removed from these areas
 - c. The canopy across the park needs to be opened
 - d. Prescribed fire will only be used in the park in grasslands openings as a maintenance technique; there will be no more fire in areas overrun with greenbriar
 - e. There is a need for a location to dispose the many trunks leftover from the last prescribed fire as well as from other management workdays and asked if they might be able to use TNC's adjacent "pond" property; Rick Hartlieb suggested Jay reach out to the MD or DE company that BoF uses that will come out and grind them up for mulch
 - f. The park would like to begin extending the savannah management areas, including mechanical removal on the Blue Trail, as well as incorporating firebreaks into the management unit designations as well
 - g. It appears that deer are actually browsing on recently cut greenbriar and if it is cut low enough, they will eat the roots as well so to encourage this, the park will be providing less hunting permits in the park in efforts to support a larger deer herd

5. Pilot – Deb Landau provided update
 - a. TNC-MD has had success with maintaining the larger grassland areas at Pilot over the past several years with prescribed and more burns are planned for the future
 - b. Deb will coordinate activities at Pilot with Henry so they can be included in future planning of the Friends Group activities

6. New Texas – Henry Whitesel provided an update about this site
 - a. The goal at this site is to maintain the current grassland openings
 - b. There is lots of Indian grass throughout the openings on the east site, there is also a lot of sumac at this site as well
 - c. Access on the northern section is a big issue and without being able to get to that section of the property easily makes things more difficult to manage those openings
 - d. Opening on the western edge of the property is getting worse and may be passed the point of management
 - e. Ownership of this property is now in the hands of the Hannum daughters and the family expressed that they are not interested in selling the development rights but it might be a good time to reach out to them regarding this issue but it must be handled gently and in coordination with Henry
 - f. The question was asked if these Hannums are any relations to the Hannums of Unionville
 - g. The family is open to the Friends Group hosting outreach hikes as well as to the potential for management activities including scraping certain areas

7. Chrome – Molly Anderson and Pal Duborow led the discussion with help from Henry Whitesel and Mike Bertram
 - a. We discussed the ATV issue at Upper Chrome and it seems as though ATVs were accessing the property off of Reisler Road, Pal has been in contact with Bobby Reisler, notified him of the issue and now that Bobby is working on the farm full time, he will be on the look out
 - i. We need to get a clear delineation of the boundary on that section of the preserve but it appears a lot of the traffic is off the township's property
 - b. The northern grassland openings at Upper Chrome need to be located and maintained
 - c. The township was able to secure an easement on the Robbins property adjacent to the western section of Upper Chrome, there is a trail that loops from the restored/scraped opening area across the road from the parking lot
 - d. We will be opening up the parking lot at Upper Chrome to have an entrance and exit off of Barren Road as well as adding lighting to curtail illegal activities
 - e. At Lower Chrome, we need to clear the greenbriar from the fence row and continue to clear and maintain the openings on the Barren Road side
 - i. This could be another job for the Deloitte Impact Day (scheduled for June 7th this year)
 - f. There is a potential BSA project to build bridge over creek to connect the Barren Road side of Lower Chrome to the State Road/Reisler Road side

8. AmeriCorps – Molly led the discussion
 - a. Molly provided a brief background about AmeriCorps to open discussion about hosting a team to help out with the serpentine management needs later this summer
 - b. A team consists of 8 members who provide their own travel and meals and we just need to provide housing and a great project to work on
 - c. To host a team during the Round #4 timeframe (Aug 6-Sept 19), the Concept Form is due March 8th with the full application due April 12th
 - d. Molly/TNC would handle applications, etc. and we would just need local support to direct activities and provide site supervision

Next Steps/Needs:

- ATV to haul equipment throughout Goat Hill – BoF
- GPS all grassland openings on all properties – Friends Group/TNC intern?
- Provide Rose Trail Shape Files to TNC – Rick
- Better maps for Friends Group to Use – Molly/TNC Intern
- Find out when lower opening on TNC's property was scraped – Molly
- Follow up with Ray Hayden/Tom Murphy about "Bertram Extension project for National Trails Day on 06/06/13 – Molly
- Ask about using TNC's adjacent "pond" property to haul and/or burn leftover trunks – Molly
- Discuss a plan for potential easement on Hannum Property – Molly/TNC with Henry's coordination
- Find out if Hannums are any relation to the Hannums from Unionville – David
- Organize project for Deloitte Impact Day – Molly & Henry
- Reach out to Ray Hayden/Tom Murphy regarding bridge project at Lower Chrome – Molly
- Approach Ray Hayden regarding the potential to provide housing for an AmeriCorps Team – Molly
- Take vote on hosting AmeriCorps team this year or wait until next year – Friends Group

Needs of the Friends Group:

- Vice President and Treasurer positions are vacant and need to be filled
- More tree pullers
- Volunteer/Intern to organize Serpentine Barrens archives