

## **RESTORATION OF CEDAR BEND SAVANNA**

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*Abstract:* Cedar Bend Savanna is a 55 acre degraded sand savanna located in the north section of the Black Hawk Park Complex in Cedar Falls, Iowa. Historically, this area within the Cedar River floodplain was open canopy woodland and savanna dominated by black and bur oak. Euro-American settlement and agricultural practices altered the natural disturbances that maintained the open canopy, which resulted in natural succession to a more closed canopy. Geographic Information System analysis of aerial photos shows that as of the 1930's the canopy cover was 38% and has closed to 95%. Cattle grazing until 1985 and volunteer efforts over the years have allowed 5% of the area to remain open for prairie species to persist. Species of particular interest are *Amorpha canescens*, *Anemone cylindrica*, *Delphinium carolinianum*, *Gentiana puberulenta*, and *Pulsatilla patens*. To coordinate the restoration efforts of various volunteer groups and facilitate continued restoration by the Black Hawk County Conservation Board, I have created a land management plan that sets forth goals and objectives and a schedule of tasks to attain them. Scientific literature review and personal communications with restoration professionals have guided the selection of restoration techniques. Throughout the 2010 summer, I am implementing the management plan for Cedar Bend Savanna with the support of Black Hawk County Conservation Board and the labor of volunteers. To ensure that the restoration will be carried out in a manner that does not do harm to the remnant, I am establishing test plots for various restoration conditions and photo monitoring to document the restoration results.