

CONSERVATION IN ACTION

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 3

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2014 Sustainable Living Expo

Hosted this year on October 25, 2014, the Sustainable Living Expo is a daylong event featuring workshops, activities, and presentations by specialists from the community who generously donate their time to inform the public on a variety of topics related to small scale agriculture, local foods, renewable resources, alternative energy, and emergency preparedness. Hosted at the Dixon Springs Agricultural Center, in Simpson IL, this event is free to the public. The children's area, with games and activities, makes the Expo a fun day for the whole family. We hope to see you there! For more information call (618) 944-1736 or check out the webpage at slexpo.org

Upcoming Regional Events

September

13—Butterfly Roundup (Crab Orchard Wildlife Preserve)

20—[Green Earth Volunteer Workday](#)

October

10—[Wild Weekend](#) (Cache River Wetlands Center)

18—[Wetland Wild Eatables](#) (Cache River Wetlands Center)

20—[Green Earth Volunteer Workday](#)

25—[Garden of the Gods Hike](#) (Shawnee Sierra Club)

25—Sustainable Living Expo (Dixon Springs Agricultural Center)

November

15—[Winter Plant ID](#) (Cache River Wetlands Center)

December

4—[Holiday Open House](#) (Cypress Creek Refuge Center)

TBA—[Winter Bird Count](#) (Cypress Creek Refuge Center)

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT:

US FOREST COST SHARE

Hidden Springs Ranger Station

Beginning in 2009, the US Forest Service Cost Share project was begun by eight several local agencies and community organizations, to establish native plantings to encourage pollinator insects and birds and educate the public about pollinator importance.

Cooperators included the US Forest Service, Shawnee RC&D, Shawnee Audubon Society, Shawnee Group of the Sierra Club, Southern Illinois Audubon Society, Southern Illinois University Restoration Club, Vienna High School, and the Anna-Jonesboro Garden Club.

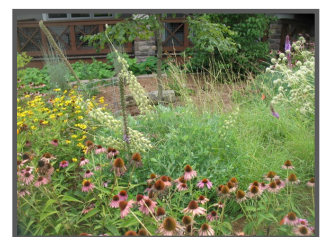
The Cost Share brought \$48,000 to the local economy, in the form of wages and supplies purchased from area businesses.

The project encompassed plantings at the Hidden Springs Ranger Station, in Vienna, IL and at four area campgrounds throughout Southern Illinois and all of the planting areas are publicly accessible.

Volunteers throughout Southern Illinois contributed their time and talent to weed, plant, mulch, and collect seeds, while professionals from the US Forest Service supplied their expertise and project management.

The project was completed on July 31, 2014 and the results are breathtaking. An area previously covered in invasive species and scrub brush, has been remade into an example of successful native planting. Congratulations to all the Cooperators on your success!

Photos (Clockwise from top): Woodland Walk garden using reclaimed wood, Echinacea and Native Daisies (2), spring planting in the Island Garden, a reclaimed space in the midst of a parking area.

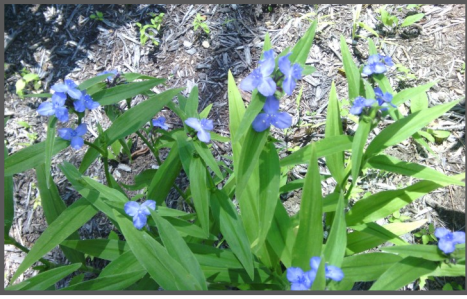


U.S. FOREST SERVICE
Caring for the land and serving people

United States Department of Agriculture

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT (Continued)

Additional Photos



Want to Get Involved?

Shawnee RC&D is looking for dedicated professionals and enthusiastic community members to join our Council. Meetings are held four times per year in Marion, IL. Council members are responsible for helping find new projects or conservation opportunities, networking with community and government leaders to accomplish conservation goals, and informing others about the work we do. For more information about joining our council, or to submit a project or grant idea, please contact: Tabitha Ayres, Executive Director, (618) 944-1736, or email info@shawneercd.org.

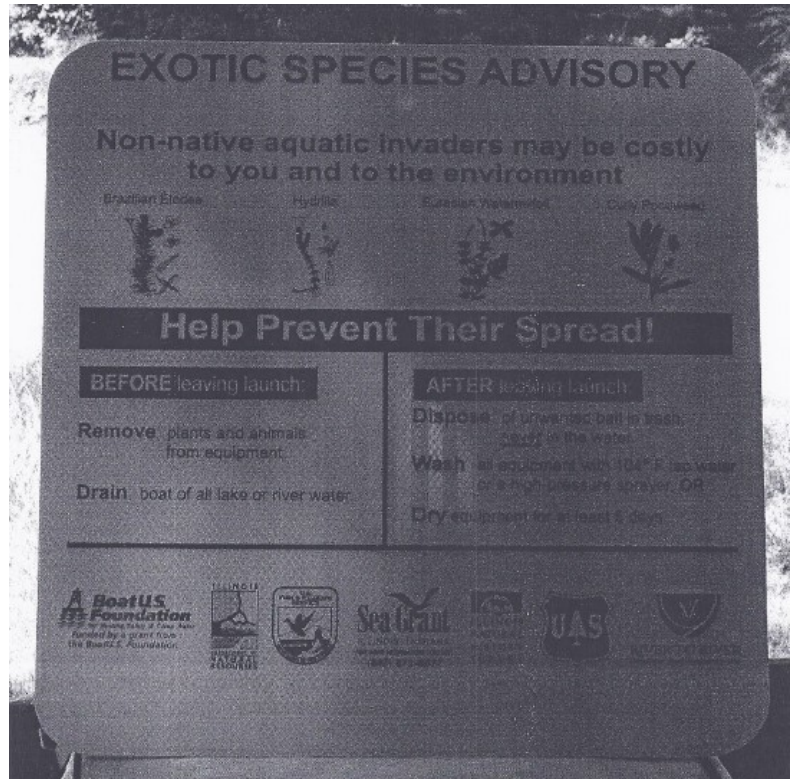
PROJECTS FROM THE PAST...

...Invasive Aquatic Plants—Educational Signs

In March of 2008, Shawnee RC&D was awarded a project grant from Boat U.S. Foundation to educate boaters about common aquatic invasive species.

The River to River Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA), carried out this project through the RC&D, and worked closely with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant to design boat ramp signs and place them at high-traffic areas.

The signs produced highlighted four invasive plant species of concern to southern Illinois (Hydrilla, Brazilian elodea, Eurasian watermilfoil, and curly pondweed) and recommended methods to clean equipment.



The purpose of these signs was to present the threat of aquatic invasive species and their potential to be spread by boats and trailers. The ultimate goal was to motivate boaters to inspect and remove all plant material from their equipment before moving to another body of water. Steps were recommended such as cleaning boat and trailer, emptying water from bilge and livewells, and not dumping bait.

A total of 73 signs were ordered, which allowed signs to be placed at all of the then present boat ramps in Southern Illinois. The signs were, and are, an important part of the strategic plan and educational campaign of the River to River CWMA and Shawnee RC&D to improve water quality and reduce the spread of invasive aquatic species.

We appreciate the support of Boat U.S. Foundation, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, and the many volunteers and organizations who helped us make this project a long-lasting benefit to the local community.

