

Lakeshore Nature Preserve Guiding Principles

Adopted March 24, 2004; Revised June 7, 2005

Those responsible for managing and caring for the Lakeshore Nature Preserve should seek to develop policies and guidelines for the stewardship of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve that protect and interpret the biological and cultural resources of the landscape in conjunction with the UW-Madison's educational mission. Three primary goals should guide this endeavor:

- Preserve, restore, and interpret natural plant and animal communities in conjunction with UW-Madison's educational mission;
- Protect signature landscapes and views that are vital to defining the University campus and the city of Madison;
- Establish management priorities that maximize educational benefits while minimizing the impacts of educational use.

The underlying principles of ecology and conservation biology lead to the following important planning and management objectives for the Lakeshore Nature Preserve:

- Preservation and restoration of ecological communities historically present and appropriate to the site
- Creation of large blocks of contiguous natural landscape
- Planning for appropriate transitions along edges
- Maintenance of contiguous areas of like use to minimize conflicts
- Consideration of land beyond the borders of the Preserve
- Maintenance and creation of corridors and linkages to natural communities
- Attention to biodiversity within each community type
- Control of invasive species
- Monitoring and record keeping to assure effective management

The Lakeshore Nature Preserve should be a showcase for rethinking a city's relationship to the natural systems in which it is embedded to make human and non-human communities more mutually supportive and sustainable.

The Preserve should be interpreted so that visitors will better understand the history of these lands, their human uses, and the changing natural communities that have existed here over time.

The Preserve should provide a retreat where people can contemplate their past, present, and future place in the larger web of life.

The Preserve should offer access to wild, non-human nature for the campus community.

Infrastructure elements in the Lakeshore Nature Preserve should:

- Be designed to protect the natural and cultural resources of the Preserve.
- Be designed to protect the safety of users.
- Minimize adverse physical, biological, and aesthetic impacts.
- Serve multiple uses whenever possible.
- Support the biological diversity that is fundamental to the educational value of the Preserve.
- Be sustainable and “environmentally friendly.”

Management techniques should as much as possible mimic natural processes.

Artificial structures should be kept to a minimum, blending in space, form, and color with the natural setting.

Disturbance and compaction of the soil should be minimized to discourage invasive vegetation and erosion.

Trails should provide appropriate access while minimizing fragmentation of biological communities.

Motorized traffic, noisy machinery, and oversized equipment should be kept to a minimum.

Infrastructure should be designed to minimize required maintenance in accordance with the previous guiding principles

In determining the ecological community appropriate to a site, the existing vegetation as well as historical and pre-European data should be considered.

Major changes in community physiognomy (e.g., forest to grassland) will be undertaken only after careful consideration and stakeholder input.

Planning recommendations should only be implemented after careful study and on-site evaluation; all design and management should be adaptive, evolving in an iterative way to accommodate new knowledge and data.