|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Building a Program for Prairie Restoration Expertise at SBG** |
| 2009 | GA DNR asks SBG Conservation team to champion prairies – “critical need” - 2005 SWAP GA. |
| 2009 | SBG Conservation team researching species, locating wild sites, seed collecting in wild sites. |
| 2010 | Conservation team moves into old hort complex, pace to farm prairie plants – 70 hours seed cleaning. |
| 2011 | SBG has full time Conservation Horticulturist – growing prairie plants, testing horticulture protocols. |
| 2011 | May, 2011 SBG team plants Farm Rows “iPlot” at SBG for increasing native wildflowers and grasses. |
| 2011 | Forest Service takes notice of SBG work, Forest Service Supervisor’s Office contract to increaseseeds . |
| 2011 | Fall, 2011 SBG team collects from wild sites 96 seed lots representing 64 species. 90 hours cleaning seeds by hand. In the 96 seed lots SBG team identified 70 species for prairie restoration study. |
| 2011 | Fall, 2011 SBG team collects five 60-pound bags of seeds from SBG iPlot – more trials, more testing. |
| 2012 | Spring, 2012 UGA Hort Farm – 3 70-foot rows planted to farm prairie plants. |
| 2012 | 70 collections of Georgia seeds collected from wild, from SBG Center, from wild. 30 hours seed collecting. 160 hours of seed cleaning by hand and by machine. More horticulture trails. |
| 2013 | List for Forest Service refined to 32 prairie species, good performers, pollinator hits. More increase. |
| 2013 | Elaine Nash Prairie Plot named, protected at SBG. SBG working with 70 select species, increase. |
| 2014 | Management kicks into high gear, 460+ invasive thistle crowns popped, tree removal, spot spraying. |
| 2014 | June, 2014, Federal Mandate signed, nicknamed the “Bee Protective,” directed public lands to return native plants to the land to support pollinators (bees, butterflies, wasps, flies). |
| 2015 | Two years restoration research begins, expert interviews, training workshops in other states. Applying research to Georgia red clay soils, weed pressures. **\***A first for GA Piedmont! |
| 2015 | Planting techniques - returned 31+ species to Elaine Prairie Plot – seeds and plugs. |
| 2015 | Forest Service seeds planted, eight seed mixes from 25 species, mixed on site for soil, height, slope. |
| 2016 | Over 100 stems natural milkweed at SBG – Milkweed Meadow – strategic mowing regime. |
| 2016 | Prairie planting study, worst case scenario, compacted clays, Bermuda Grass, cotton terraces. 10,000 plugs, local seeds, grown at SBG. 25 prairie matrix species. 88 hours planting, trained professionals. |
| 2016 | IMLS-funded activities initiated; powerline sprayed with glyphosate, followed by mowing at intervals and spot-spraying of invasive and aggressive native species |
| 2016 | 8,000 plugs of prairie species (raised in SBG nursery) planted out in previously sprayed area |
| 2016 | Existing medium-quality grassland mowed monthly during growing season to discourage weedy species from setting seeds |
| 2017 | Medium-quality grassland spot-sprayed with glyphosate and seeded with locally-collected seed of desirable prairie species (practice continued in subsequent years) |
| 2017 | IMLS-funded five young professionals at the Mimsie Lanier Center, serving as Research Technicians, to treat non-native invasive plants Nepalese Brown-top and Johnson Grass. Heather Alley reports 95% of invasive species eradicated from the Mimsie Lanier Center for Native Plant Studies.  |
| 2017 | Vegetation sampling initiated in upper two acres of powerline |
| 2017 | Zebra Butterfly and Sedge Wren – indicators of biodiversity appear in SBG prairie restoration plot. |
| 2017 | SBG recognized for expertise. Invited speaker to Southeastern Grasslands Initiative Summit. |
| 2019 | Georgia Power and WCS grant activities commenced |
| 2019 | Sprayed Fescue, Bermuda, and other non-native, invasive grasses with grass-specific herbicide (Imazapic); Cut and sprayed non-native and undesirable woody species on margins of project area; Spot sprayed non-native and undesirable forb species |
| 2019 | Scarified soil with disk harrow and made initial seeding of Little Bluestem Grass and Broom-sedge Grass in March. Subsequent seeding of these species took place in June and July. |
| 2019 | Seed collection from native prairie wildflowers was conducted throughout the late summer and fall; Learning by Leading students (see below under Communications) spread a portion of the seed in the project area in November, after fall rains began, |
| 2019 | Because of the drought, the focus shifted to planting warm-season grass plugs and sowing prairie wildflower seeds, which took place in late October and November as fall rains began. |
| 2019 | Temporary signage restricting access and explaining the project were installed near the perimeter of restricted area. |
| 2019 | Conducted monthly monitoring of project area and surrounding buffer areas for invasive species. Numerous woody invasive species, such as Chinese Privet, Autumn and Thorny Olives, and Gray Nicker, were cut at ground level and treated with 50% glyphosate. Low-concentrations of a grass-specific herbicide (sethoxydim at 0.25%) were applied to patches of Japanese Stilt-Grass (*Microstegium vimineum*). Very low concentration glyphosate (0.19%) were applied to Perilla Mint (*Perilla frutescens*). Low-dose applications ensure that non-target plants are not killed. |
| 2019 | Weekly or bi-monthly walkovers of the project site were conducted to monitor the progress of invasive species eradication and the success of grass seeding and grass plug-planting. |
| 2019 | Beginning in May and continuing through the summer, straw of Broomsedge and seed of Little Bluestem grasses was spread repeatedly over portions of the ROW. |
| 2019 | Learning by Leading SciCon students plant 25 wildflowers, five species grown at the Mimsie Center into Mid-Grade prairie, west site of ROW. |
| 2020 | Broomsedge (40%), Little Bluestem (30%), Indian Grass straw (30%) + 21,000 plugs of various native grass species spread and installed on site. |
| 2020 | Warm-season grasses starting to dominate the hillside. Many positive reactions from garden visitors who can see the habitat change towards Piedmont Prairie. Heather and her team of Learning by Leading (LxL) students planted a first set of 500 native wildflowers to bolster diversity of site. |
| 2021 | Plugs of *Chasmanthium sessiliflorum* installed in shady areas of power line. |
| 2021 | Lower power line restoration area mowed in April – strategic mowing targeted for the transition from winter to spring. Best to mow half one week and half another, to allow wildlife to adjust, but sometime weather dictates mowing plans. |
|  |  |
|  |  |