

Prairie Moraine County Park Restoration

Frequently Asked Questions

Updated Jan 2022

What guides the work being done at the park?

The restoration work is guided by the [Prairie Moraine County Park Master Plan](#) (PDF) adopted in 2002, and the [Prairie Moraine County Park Vegetation Management Plan](#) (PDF) adopted in 2019. The Vegetation Management Plan was created in order provide a more in depth summary and goals of the restoration work being done at the park, which was not outlined in the master plan. Both plans included a public input process.

What invasive species are in the park and what are their impacts?

Invasive species at the park include honeysuckle, buckthorn, wild parsnip, poison ivy, and pokeweed. When invasive species are introduced to an area, they can spread quickly and take over, choking out native species. This can destroy animal habitat and food sources, impact pollinator populations, cause increased erosion, and decrease the land's ability to soak up and infiltrate water. Prairie Moraine is a large 160-acre park so making sure it contains healthy, functioning ecosystems is important for the health of the landscape and watershed. Some of the invasive species, such as poison ivy and wild parsnip, can also have adverse impacts on people. To learn more, visit the [Invasive Species Management](#) webpage.

How are invasive species being controlled?

There are three primary methods used to remove invasive species from the park. Typically, a combination of cutting, prescribed fire, mowing, herbicide, and seeding provides the most successful and longest lasting benefits. To learn more about each of the methods we use to control invasives, visit the [Invasive Species Management](#) webpage.

When are chemicals used to treat invasives? Herbicides are used as a last result but are sometimes necessary to manage invasive and noxious species. Integrating other management techniques such as mowing, pulling, or controlled burning reduces the amount of herbicides needed. Out of an abundance of caution, dog exercise areas are closed when herbicides are applied. When used, herbicides are applied directly to cut stumps by trained staff and volunteers.

Dry time varies depending on the weather and may take up to an hour but typically occurs within minutes. Once dry, potential exposure is minimal and treated areas can be entered without personal protective equipment (PPE).

Signs are posted in areas where chemicals have been applied to notify the public. To learn more about each of the methods we use to control invasives, visit the [Invasive Species Management](#) webpage. **The**

The [Prairie Moraine County Park Vegetation Management Plan](#) includes a map of Target Vegetation Community Types (Figure 1) within the park. What are the approximate percentages of each target vegetation community type once the restoration is complete?

Our goal for approximate vegetation community percentages within **the entire Prairie Moraine County Park** (160 acres) are as follows:

- Dry Prairie 31%
- Oak Woodland 31%
- Oak Opening 19%
- Park Expansion 7%
- Maintained Use Area 5% (e.g., mowed areas, parking lots, etc)
- Memorial Forest 3%
- Cool Season Grass 3%
- Orchard 1%

The goal for the approximate vegetation community percentages within only the **fenced, off-leash dog park** section of the park (79 acres) are as follows:

- Dry Prairie 35%
- Oak Woodland 18%
- Oak Opening 32%
- Maintained Use Area 6% (e.g., mowed areas, parking lots, etc)
- Memorial Forest 3%
- Cool Season Grass 6%