

Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act

FINAL Project Report Template

*Indicates required content

***Project Title:** Wetland Restoration and Openland Enhancement at French Creek Wildlife Area

***Project Sponsor:** Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

***FWS Agreement Number:** 30181-A-G010

***Principal Investigator(s):** Sara Kehrli

***Report Author(s):** Sara Kehrli

***Date Submitted:** 09-19-11

Study Objectives: *List study objectives here as indicated in the project proposal.*

This project aimed to restore 38 acres of grassland from a degraded cool season grassland field that had little plant diversity and was being invaded by spotted knapweed. Approximately 3 acres of open-water hemi marsh was also created in an area that was degraded wet prairie/mesic prairie type wetlands.

Description of Tasks: *List each project task and provide a description of activities pursued to complete each task*

The wetland work was slow to be started due to the very wet conditions in the summer of 2010. Two attempts were made to dig scrapes/do berm work. The second attempt, made in November, completed a lot of the heavy equipment work on the wetland part of the project. The berm was built up and seeded down, and the spillway was completed. However, some finishing touches were still needed on the west side of the berm as it again became too wet to finish the project before snow fell. The west end of the berm was completed in June 2011 and was seeded down. The work on the uplands is ongoing. The project area was burned in November 2010. It was sprayed with a mix of 2,4-D and Round-Up in May 2011 to kill upcoming cool season grasses. The field was interseeded with a broadcast seeder in June with warm season grasses and forbs where spotted knapweed is not present. Where spotted knapweed thick (about 11 acres), straight warm season grasses were planted, due to the herbicide work that will need to be completed there in the future. Spot treatment of spotted knapweed occurred in July 2011 and the field was partially mowed in August 2011.

Major findings and accomplishments: *Include data represented in graphical format and appendices, as necessary. Where applicable include # of acres restored, # of stream miles reconnected, # of barriers removed and/or other metrics related to the completed work.*

Approximately 3 acres of emergent marsh wetland were created with the removal of two old culverts and building the berm of the old township road higher. 38 acres of uplands were sprayed to kill cool season grasses, then replanted with native warm season grasses. In this 38

acres, 27 was also planted with a diverse forb mix. We probably sprayed the cool season grasses a tad too late – we did not get complete kill of the brome season grasses in this field. However, we were pleasantly surprised to find that the 2,4-D/Round-Up mixture killed most of the spotted knapweed that must have just been emerging. A full broadcast spray that was intended for July 2011 to kill spotted knapweed with Milestone was not needed. Spot spraying with Milestone where the 2,4-D/Round-Up mixture missed was effective. Mowing this field after it was planted was not effective. Most of the annuals that came in were fairly short, and the mower could not open enough to effectively get sunlight to reach the soil.

Management implications of your work:

With further maintenance, this field will be a nice addition of almost 40 acres of native warm season prairie plants. This now completes a conversion of about 100 acres that was formerly degraded grasslands to high quality, naturally diverse prairie plantings. This should improve both nesting opportunities and brood rearing in these areas. The wetland restoration will provide some water in the area in which waterfowl can raise their young.

Additional restoration work needed and/or areas for future research:

This field will need to be burned in the near future. Also, we will need to continue spot spraying spotted knapweed in the grassland field as the seed bank can last about 10 years.

List of presentations delivered and outreach activities:

None. The county Conservation Congress chair was informed of the grassland burn in November 2010 and the reasoning for burning it.

***Include relevant pictures or images associated with the project:** *Please submit pictures as separate electronic image files. These can be emailed, mailed on a disc, etc. The images will be used to assist in describing the GLFWRA accomplishments and outcomes and may appear in any number of factsheets or reports (when images are used, appropriate photo credit will be noted).*

If no pictures are available, please let us know why.

See attached email.

Geographic region project occurred in or effects: *If appropriate, please include a County, State, Latitude and Longitude (in decimal degrees) for the project site(s).*

Midwest Region – Lake Michigan basin. Wisconsin, Columbia County, -89.347512, 43.637432

***List of reports and peer-reviewed papers completed or in-progress:** *Please attach copies of all completed reports and papers related to this work. Also, please remember to acknowledge funding support from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service through the Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act in publications, reports, presentations etc. that result from this work.*

Mid-project report is attached to email.

