

St. Feriole Island Tree Summary



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INTRODUCTION

Discussion of the forestry resource on St. Feriole Island appear in several documents prepared by Bluestem Forestry Consulting, Inc. These documents include: *City of Prairie du Chien Tree Planting Plan*, *City of Prairie du Chien Urban Forestry Plan and Tree Inventory Summary* and the *City of Prairie du Chien Emerald Ash Borer Readiness Plan*. The Island received a tree inventory during the summer of 2011 and an analysis of available planting sites was prepared based on the tree inventory. This is a summary of the findings, unique aspects and plans for the future of trees on St. Feriole Island.

TREE PLANTING RECOMMENDATIONS

St. Feriole has 520 potential planting sites identified. After consultation with park volunteers and city staff, different planting approaches were determined for different use areas in the park.

It was determined that areas with existing trees should be planted as trees are removed on a tree-for-tree basis. If one tree is removed in a particular block, one tree should be planted in the same block to replace it. The stocking in most areas of the park is appropriate and these areas merely need to be maintained to retain around the same number of trees.

Because the park is used for large-venue events such as festivals and concerts, a pattern suitable for parking and camping has been developed for the northern-most blocks that are largely devoid of trees. Open space is desired for various reasons and is a vital component to this and most parks. Open space has been left on the Island to assure a variety of recreational opportunities. The goal is not to eliminate open space, it is to carefully and thoughtfully plant trees that will provide the most benefit to users and the environment. Planting site spacing was varied to allow for car parking (based on current transportation standards) or RV parking. Car parking rows total 70', allowing tree planting in the middle. RV parking/other camping rows total 150' allowing for tree planting in the middle. The goal is to provide shade cover for users while protecting trees from injury from cars/campers while providing ample growing space. Each tree was spaced at 50' distance from other trees to allow a large tree to be planted.

The area maintained as a garden should continue to be planted as specimen/historical trees are donated. A number of trees were recommended for removal in this area and presents an opportunity to plant a wide variety of all sized and shaped trees. In fact, this area already functions as a mini-arboretum and can easily accommodate other unique trees.

ISLAND VOLUNTEERS

St. Feriole enjoys an outstanding volunteer crew, led by Tom & Cathie Nelson. They have initiated a unique tree planting plan to commemorate important visitors to Prairie du Chien such as Joyce Kilmer and Henry David Thoreau. For example, a weeping willow grows near Thoreau's Walden Pond. A weeping willow has been planted on the island to commemorate Thoreau's visit to Prairie du Chien.

Additional tree planting concepts might include: an edible tree fruit/nut garden, trees of historic importance to Native Americans from the region, Presidential tree plantings (planting the state tree of each president) and seedlings derived from locally historic or large trees.

POOR SPECIES ON ISLAND

There are 141 Siberian elm on the island. This species of tree is undesirable for a number of reasons including its weak wood that results in increased maintenance, high seeding rate and it is not a particularly attractive tree. Additionally, many Siberian elm on the Island are over-mature and declining resulting in high risk situations for park users. This tree species should be removed from the Island over the next 10-20 and replanted with higher-quality species.