

8. GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTIVITIES

Fairmount Park System

Natural Lands Restoration

Master Plan

The restoration list describes specific activities that are recommended at various sites in the park. In addition to these, a number of other activities are recommended. These relate to overall operations in the park, particularly those involving management of the borders between the designed and natural lands. Some of these are outside the direct purview of NLREEP and should be implemented in cooperation with other groups.

Damage to natural lands by unauthorized vehicles (cars, ATVs and motorcycles) and trash dumping are major problems. Control, which likely requires passive blocking of access points, patrolling and/or enforcement of regulations, is necessary for park integrity.

- Trail issues are to be addressed in trail master plans, so these were not compiled as part of this plan. Trail problems have major affects on vegetation, erosion and stream channels, and improvement of the trail system should be integrated with restoration. In particular, gullying, compaction and erosion on trails along slopes, widening and trampling of flood plain vegetation, and damage to streamside vegetation, are pervasive problems evident in much of the park. Inadequate trail siting or design is exacerbated by motorized vehicle use.
- Much of the flat areas at the tops of slopes are mowed, for landscaped fields, ballfields, etc. These are often mowed up to the slope, leading to slope erosion and gullying. A narrow band of taller vegetation (e.g., taller grass) and/or small berms could decrease this problem. Berms could also be useful where sidewalks or roads extend close to the edges of slopes.
- Plantings in landscaped areas are often a source of invasion by these plants into the natural areas. Greater use of native plants and avoidance of particularly invasive species, such as Norway maple, is recommended.
- Decrease in the frequency of mowing can maintain taller grass and other vegetation, which increases water retention and provides better habitat. Implementation in places where this does not interfere with other uses is recommended. However, monitoring to ensure that sites are not colonized by invasive plants should also be done.
- Exotic species such as mile-a-minute occur in landscaped areas and natural lands. Mile-a-minute is still patchy in occurrence and may be controlled. Occurrence of the species should be monitored throughout the parks.
- Dumping of large quantities of logs, leaves and other horticultural waste is damaging and should be controlled. However, logs can be used in woods to increase soil fungus, decrease surface runoff, provide animal habitat and restrict access. Mulch can be used in restoration planting to improve soil and decrease unwanted plants. Methods of making these materials available for restoration can improve restoration and reduce storage needs for these materials.
- Parking needs for use of the designed and natural lands should be addressed. Low availability of parking in some areas encourages parking on lawns, which compacts soil and destroys grass and other vegetation.