



Working to protect the Mississippi River  
and its watershed in the Twin Cities area.

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## Ole Olson Park Habitat Improvement and Natural Resource Management

**Project Overview:** Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR) is working with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) to improve the ecological health of Ole Olson Park, located on the Mississippi River at 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue North. The goal of this project is to enhance the natural resource value of this park over time through continual site-based restoration. Project activities will commence in late summer of 2015, and include extensive soil remediation, removal of woody invasive trees, and restoration of the site's slope to a dry savanna. FMR will also engage community volunteers in the establishment of a demonstration prairie garden. Specific activities are listed below. Project activities **will not affect plans for new bike or walking paths**. The plans for this project are in line with the Above the Falls and RiverFirst planning efforts to add viable habitat along the River.



**Why Ole Olson Park?:** Ole Olson Park is an important site on the Mississippi River with riverfront access. Its location in the Mississippi River corridor is ideal for native plantings, which not only provide habitat for pollinators, beneficial insects, and migratory birds, but also improve water quality by allowing water to infiltrate through the plants and soil that filter out pollutants. Additionally, habitat restoration on site will help add beauty to the park once native plant communities are established.

**Why Dry Savanna?:** Although once prevalent in the Twin Cities area, savanna ecosystems have become increasingly rare since European settlement began in Minnesota. Dry savanna is a specific type of oak savanna that has very sandy soils and is composed of herbaceous plants, with a few trees and shrubs, that are accustomed to being disturbed by fire. These plants thrive in low nutrient soils, and are adapted to drought conditions. The planting will look like a prairie to most, with plenty of grasses, sedges and a variety of prairie forbs and wildflowers; very pleasing to the eye!



**Ways to get involved:** FMR will hold a volunteer event in October 2015 to plant the planned demonstration prairie. More volunteer opportunities will be available in the coming years, mostly tending and adding to the planting and potentially expanding the restoration area. (To receive event notices, contact FMR Outreach & Volunteer Coordinator sue rich, srich@fmr.org, 651-222-2193 x14.)

**Project Activities Timeline:**

- Summer/Fall 2015
  - Removing exotic and invasive trees and shrubs
  - Controlling exotic herbaceous plants
  - Soil compaction alleviation and seedbed preparation
  - Seeding the site with native seed
  - Installing Demonstration Prairie Garden
- 2016
  - Maintain site via volunteer tending and contractor efforts
  - Retreatment and removal of exotic plant and tree re-sprouting
- 2017
  - Maintain site via volunteer tending and contractor efforts
  - Prairie burn



For more information on this project, please contact FMR staff at 651-222-2193 or via email at one of the addresses below:

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