

# Habitat Restoration: *Service-Learning Project*

**Description** – Participate in natural areas habitat restoration. Activities may include cutting brush, pulling weeds, or collecting seeds, depending on the season and weather. We will locate a stewardship site near you and connect you with the Site Steward. Tools, gloves, and training are provided. (**Group Size:** Up to 25; **Time of year:** October thru March, mostly Saturdays; **Duration:** 2-3 hours)

## Pre-visit Preparation

- Review** this entire document and **plan** your trip with stewards and Teen Service-Learning Project Coordinator. These steps are intended to highlight important talking points, but please add your own stories and anecdotes to personalize the experience for your group.
- Discuss** trip preparation information with students and chaperones. Refer to Teen Service-Learning blog ([www.FPDCCteens.blogspot.com](http://www.FPDCCteens.blogspot.com)) *Get Ready for Service -Buckthorn Facts; Poison Ivy ID; USDA Plant Database; Invasive Species Guide; Common Native Plants.*
- Copy** and hand out *Be Prepared to Get Outside, Get Active, and Give Back* to participants before the trip.
- Bring** paper, markers, etc. for students to write thank-you notes to workday leaders at the end of the trip.
- Locate** your site on a map and obtain directions to the site to share with the bus driver.
- Encourage** students to:
  - **Visit the Forest Preserve District website** ([www.fpdcc.com](http://www.fpdcc.com)) and learn about the **history** (<http://fpdcc.com/about/history>) and **mission** (<http://fpdcc.com/about/mission-vision>) of the FPDCC.
  - **Visit the Teen Service-Learning blog** ([FPDCCteens.blogspot.com](http://www.FPDCCteens.blogspot.com)) to obtain resources and see what other groups are doing (Ex. *Get Ready for Service*).
  - **Research the Preserve site** your group is visiting and find it on a map.
  - **Research non-native, invasive species** (Ex. European buckthorn) and learn how these invasive species affect native IL habitats.

## Participate in a Habitat Restoration workday

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### Introduction

1. **Locate** your starting point (typically a grove) at the Preserve site.
2. **Coordinate** with the bus driver on pick up time and exchange cell phone numbers.
3. **Know your location** in case of an emergency and communicate it to all chaperones. Cross-streets or an address will help authorities find your group quickly.
4. **Gather** participants at your meeting place in a circle, shoulder-to-shoulder. Ask for their **attention** and praise the listeners until you get everyone's attention. **Welcome** them to the site and remind them that they are there to complete a service activity, Habitat Restoration, and to get outside and enjoy nature. Set a few **rules** for having a safe and enjoyable day. (Ex. Stay with the group and listen when the leaders are giving instructions.)
5. **Listen carefully** to the Site Steward's introduction to the site, instructions for work, and safety information given. **Remember**, teachers and chaperones are the group managers during the field trip. Be sure students are respectfully listening and following directions and safety measures.
6. **Review** safety information and workday duration, meeting place, and boundaries.
7. **Take a hike** on a nearby trail or around the grove after your workday.

**Reflection** – Discuss your experiences.

1. Was the workday what you expected? Was there anything you didn't expect?
2. How did your actions affect the community? Wildlife? Individual participants?
3. What is the importance of the resource being improved?
4. How can we take what we learned from the experience and continue to affect change?
5. If you had to describe your Forest Preserve experience in one word, what would it be?
6. What would you post on Facebook about your experience today?
7. If you were going to text your best friend about your experience today, what would you say?
8. **Write thank-you notes** to the Site Stewards and volunteers. Take the opportunity to reflect on your experiences in the Preserves.

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## Continuation Ideas

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**Take it one step further** and inspire others to get involved in Habitat Restoration.

1. **Submit** reflections, photos, and/or videos to the Teen Service-Learning blog. Email submissions to the Teen Service-Learning Project Coordinator ([cassie.hatzfeld@cookcountyil.gov](mailto:cassie.hatzfeld@cookcountyil.gov)).
  - **Write.** Tell us about your volunteer experience. Get creative! Write a news article, poem, quote, or give details about your photos. Here are some topics to write about: Where and when did you volunteer? Was this your first visit to a Forest Preserve? What did you do? What was the coolest thing you experienced? What did you expect to find in the Preserves? What did you find? Did anything surprise you?
  - **Take photos.** Show the landscape or the smallest thing you can find. Snap a shot of something hidden or something that was hard to miss. Can you find one thing that represents your site or your service-learning experience?
  - **Share videos.** Submit footage of your workday or interview participants about their experiences in the Preserves.
2. **Spread the word** about the Forest Preserves and Habitat Restoration. Encourage friends and family to get involved in other service opportunities to help the local environment.

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## CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS – IL State Learning Standards

State goal	Description
<b>Science</b>	
12.B.4a	Compare physical, ecological, and behavioral factors that influence interactions and interdependence of organisms.
12.B.5a	Analyze and explain biodiversity issues and the causes and effects of extinction.
13.A.4a	Estimate and suggest ways to reduce the degree of risk involved in science activities.
<b>Social Science: Social Systems</b>	
18.B.4	Analyze various forms of institutions (e.g. educational, military, charitable, and governmental).
<b>Social Science: Geography</b>	
17.A.5	Demonstrate how maps, other geographic instruments and technologies are used to solve spatial problems (e.g. land use, ecological concerns).
17.C.5a	Compare resource management methods and policies in different regions of the world.
17.C.5b	Describe the impact of human migrations and increased urbanization on ecosystems.
<b>Social Science: Political Systems</b>	
14.C.4	Describe the meaning of participatory citizenship (e.g. volunteerism, voting) at all levels of government and society in the United States.
<b>Mathematics</b>	
7.C.4b	Interpret scale drawings and models using maps and blue prints.
<b>Social Emotional Learning Standards</b>	
1B.4b	Analyze how positive adult role models and support systems contribute to school and life success.
1B.5b	Evaluate how developing interests and filling useful roles support school and life success.
1C.4b	Apply strategies to overcome obstacles to goal achievement.
2A.4a	Analyze similarities and differences between one's own and other's perspectives.
2A.4b	Use conversation skills to understand others' feelings and perspectives.
2B.5b	Evaluate how advocacy for the rights of others contributions to the common good.
3C.5a	Work cooperatively with others to plan, implement, and evaluate a project to meet an identified school need.
3C.4b	Plan, implement, and evaluate one's participation in a group effort to contribute to one's local community.