

Bluestem Prairie Open Space Management Plan
Community Workshop
December 8, 2105

Discussion Comments and Questions by Issue Category

Do you have any questions about any of the preliminary management strategies presented and discussed tonight? Is anything missing that you believe is important to include? Do you have any comments about any of the strategies?

Vegetation Management

- Can you compare the amount of noxious weeds today to several years ago? Have they increased dramatically? Are they in new areas?

Wildlife Management/Structures and Infrastructure

- Is there going to be a more active Management Plan in place for the prairie dog population? Palmer Land Trust is asking for the Management Plan to speak to this issue and have an action plan, not just monitoring.
- Does Palmer Land Trust have a specific prairie dog management plan?
- Check for owls in the barn-like structure.
- Why remove the windmill – is it dangerous? Is it a good raptor roosting post?
- What is being done now for the burrowing owls and mountain plovers? The plan says “additional” – are there active surveys? Aiken Audubon Society would love for the City and ERO to consider their volunteer help for surveys/tracking/bird counts.

Visitor Use

- Do you think the trail in the master plan could be in the “weedy area” in the northwest corner?
- The parking lot does attract hanging out and undesirable activities.

Other – City staff asked participants “Should the City encourage increased use?”

- The perception is that it is not well-used.
- Maybe connecting the trail to the neighborhood areas might increase use.
- Very few people in the open space.
- A loop trail would be more likely to draw hikers.
- Seems underused.
- Have seen people with dogs leave when they see the signs.
- Weeds are a big concern.
- More nearby development will increase use and people may want to walk their dogs there.
- What drove the no-dogs policy?