

# Ecological Restoration Trail Brochure

1. North Field - In 1994 this field was burned and then disked and harrowed repeatedly to eliminate the weedy non-native species. In the spring of 2005 the field was hand seeded. Unfortunately there was no rain for the rest of that summer so many of the wildflowers in the mix did not germinate. We will be establishing an arboretum of native trees and shrubs here over the next few years. South Field - Tree seeds were sown in beds sequentially since 2005. We will be expanding our wildflower seed rows here over the next few years.
2. Keegan's Prairie is the oldest prairie on the farm. The hill is blow sand and of little use to agriculture so we pulled out of production in 1997 and hand seeded our 1st prairie. We choose to seed prairie here because a few prairie remnant species were found along the uncultivated ridge (Sand Dropseed & Round Headed Bushclover). This ridge originally extended to the Scots Pine ridge to the east. Because of our success we seeded the remaining field up to the road in 2001 – River's Prairie. The east side of this field was seeded into test plots of native prairie grasses (Big Bluestem & Indian Grass). Climb to the top of the hill to see a view of the farm. The management strategy is essentially a prescribed burn in the spring.  
Prairie plants do not show much aboveground growth after the first year. Most of their energy goes into establishing extensive root systems that enables them to survive drought.
3. In 1996, we prepared this 4.5-acre former agricultural field for reforestation. The forest opening and adjacent Carolinian ravine complex is part of a larger mixed upland lowland forest of approximately 100 acres. Our objective was to increase interior forest habitat and to expand upon the buffer zone along Honey Creek, which flows into Big Creek just south of our property. We divided the field into 9 plots as an experiment. Using a randomized block design we planted 3 plots with a mixture of climax and pioneer species, 3 plots with pioneer species (prairie and sumac) and 3 plots were left alone. We planted a combination of deciduous and coniferous Carolinian tree and shrub species.
4. This young forest was logged heavily 20-25years ago and the trees are all small. However, this has allowed a wide variety of spring ephemeral wildflowers to grow and they put on an amazing show in the spring.
5. In the spring of 2000, our reforestation efforts were expanded further to include a 3 acre field adjoining the 4.5 acre field already planted as well as a 1 acre field at the back of the farm on a steeper hill that slopes to the stream. These areas were planted by volunteers on Earth Day and on the May 24 Society for Ecological Restoration Weekend.  
Over the years, we have divided the fields and planted 8-10 foot wide windbreaks.  
In 2005 we add a 1 acre pit and mound demonstration planting to the front of the property and an additional 7 acres will be planted into forest to increase forest interior and buffering.
6. This bush is the largest and oldest block of Carolinian forest on the farm (24 acres). It was logged around 25 years ago. Keep an eye out for Carolinian species – Tulip Tree, Sassafras, Black Cherry. The hemlock here is a good sign that the forest has been here for a long time since hemlock seed need shade to germinate.
7. Since 1997, we have been restoring this dammed pond that runs along the back of the farm. We have used burning, planting and seeding to enhance the resulting stream. This part of Honey Creek is now a healthy coldwater stream with natural depth, pools and curvature.
8. Originally the pond was 3 acres and we removed a three-foot section of standpipe and reduced the size of the pond by half. In 2002, we lowered the dam completely. We are working with MNR, DFO and the Conservation Authority with the goal of removing or modifying the earthen dam to allow for fish passage.
9. From 2003 to 2005, 17.5 acres in the backfields were planted and seeded for seed production. In 2001, we planted a 1-acre strip along the edge of the pond and southern section of Honey Creek to increase the buffer zone.

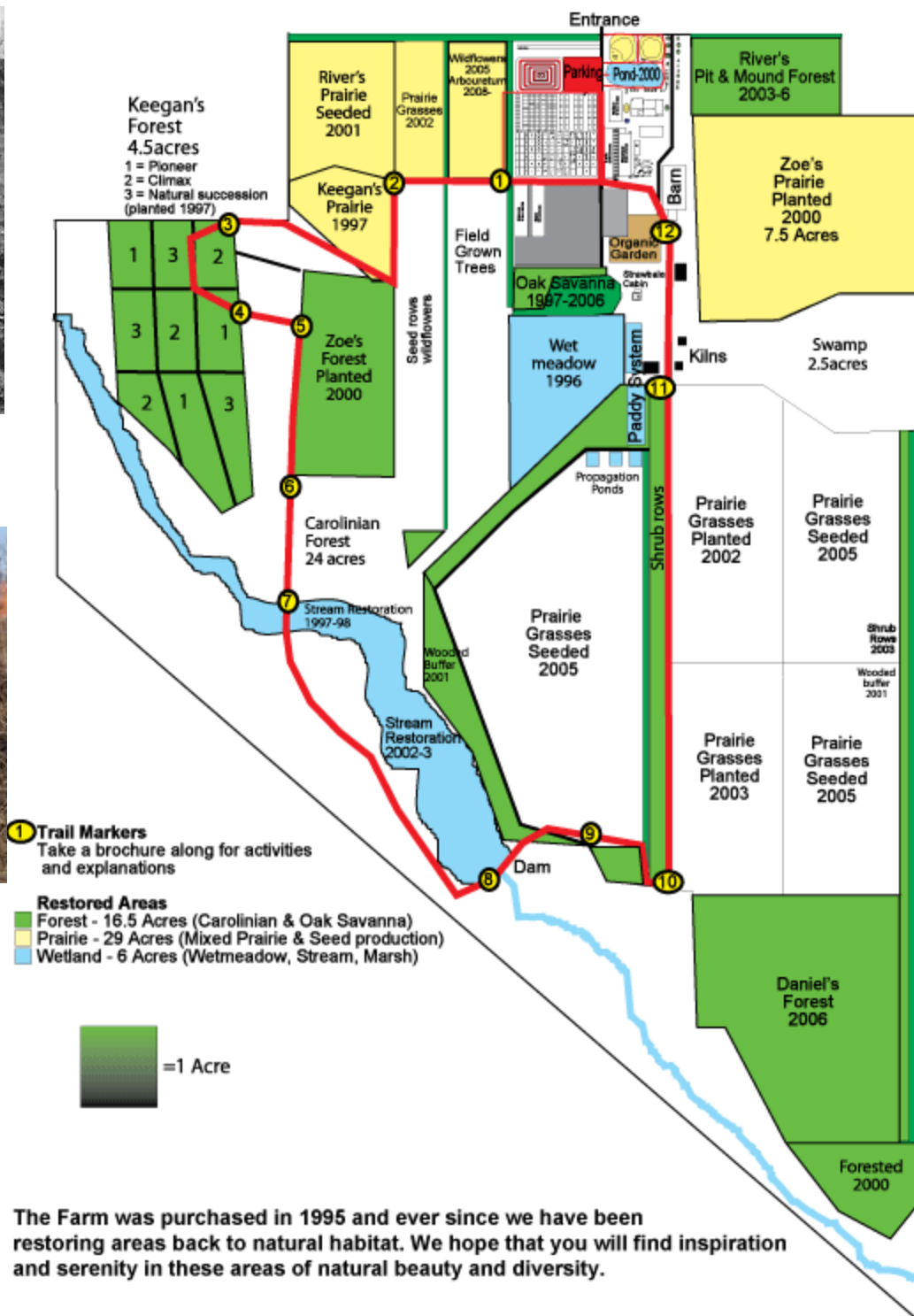
10. Shrub rows were established in 2000 to supply cuttings for bioengineering project like stream bank stabilization. To the south the 7 acres of Daniel's Forest was planted in 2006 to sequester carbon and add more forest to the farm.
11. Since 1995, we have been reclaiming this 2 acre wet meadow from cultivation. Over the years we have burned to remove Scots Pine that had invaded and to reduce competition from shrubs. Each year we also seed the field with left over seed from the previous year.  
The field is undulating with wet and drier areas. After a burn the field quickly greens up and over the season many species offer a display of vivid colour and texture. We get lots of seed from this diverse habitat.  
You can get a good view of the southern half of the farm from the viewing stand.
12. After the success of our first prairie planting, we seeded Zoë's Prairie in 2000, a 6.5-acre field on the east side of the farm behind the barn.



**Seeding Tallgrass Prairie**



**Burning Tallgrass Prairie**



The Farm was purchased in 1995 and ever since we have been restoring areas back to natural habitat. We hope that you will find inspiration and serenity in these areas of natural beauty and diversity.

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