

Caring for the Amaolo Nature Sanctuary Restoration Update June 2011

On Tuesday, June 21, 2011 the ecological restoration of the 7 acre abandoned field at the Amaolo Nature Sanctuary began. Four staff and a tractor from St. Williams Ecology Centre & Nursery spent the day planting nuts from trees and seeds from understory plants. A diversity of nuts and seeds were planted to increase the success of the project. The nuts are planted first and then a different machine goes back over the site to plant the other seeds and to further tamp down the nuts. The seeds are separated into 'fluffy' seeds (eg. big bluestem) and 'hard' seeds (eg. brown-eyed susan). The 'hard' seeds are mixed with millet which is baked in ovens at St. Williams. The 1% of the millet that might grow will die this winter and helps to provide even coverage of the seed throughout the field.



Nuts from native trees



Planting nuts during pass #1



'Hard' seed mixed with millet



'Fluffy' seed



Planting seeds during pass #2

We were fortunate with the weather as the planting was followed by several days of rain which will help to kickstart the seeds. We should start seeing tree seedlings in 3 weeks and the other plants will grow throughout the season. Growth will be monitored over the next few years. The planting will be supplemented with native plants grown from seed in classrooms this spring. In order to control the invasive grasses that are adjacent to the field, a border of white pine seedlings was planted around the edge of the field. The seedlings will form a fence, protecting the field from the invasive grasses.



White pine border

We are looking forward to monitoring the growth of the plants and trees and to seeing an increase in wildlife using this newly created habitat.

We thank TD Friends of the Environment, Shell Environmental Fund, Home Depot Canada Foundation, Hamilton-Wentworth Stewardship Council, Canadian Fish and Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program.