

## **MIDDLE ROCK RIVER CONSERVATION PARTNERS MISSION STATEMENT:**

Citizens working together to protect and steward habitat for species in greatest need of conservation within the MRCP boundaries.

### **Objectives:**

- Encourage and conduct conservation stewardship, especially prescribed fire and weed/invasive species management.
- Build strong relationships between partners that will benefit natural resources and encourage personal growth and support for participants
- Protect sites of significance through purchase & short term or long-term ownership.

### **MRCP PRINCIPLE OF ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION AND MANAGEMENT:**

Repeated, consistent and effective best management practices at the highest quality sites with the greatest levels of protection.

### **ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES:**

Either a "Committee" or "Commission" as described in the Bylaws will, on an annual or more frequent basis, recommended to the Board for approval, prioritized schedules for (1) stewardship days, (2) prescribed burns and (3) allocation of financial resources for contracting stewardship.

The recommendations to the Board and the decisions by the Board will be based on the site and proposed project's merits including:

1. The proposed project site is located within the MRCP boundaries.
2. The proposed project site meets or exceeds a Grade C evaluation of the Illinois Natural Area Inventory. If an INAI grade for a tract proves difficult, a botanist may be hired to do an assessment.
3. The proposed project is permanently protected\* which is defined as being either an INPC NP, INPC LWR, permanent Wetland Reserve Program, or a permanent easement with a non-profit. Ownership by a government agency or NGO will be considered permanently protected, but to a lesser degree than a site protected by the prior designations.
4. The proposed project is consistent with the MRCP Principles of Ecological Restoration and Management.

NOTE: Privately owned sites without permanent protection will have the lowest priority for resources, but can be considered in unique circumstances. Resources allocated to such situations will be limited to a small portion of the group's total resources. In each such case, public benefits that justify such allocation will be identified and recorded in the recommendation to the Board.

### **LAND PROTECTION:**

In special circumstances, MRCP may protect high quality sites through purchase; in the sites may subsequently be transferred to others or stewardship and protection, or may be held by MRCP long term.

**Middle Rock Conservation Partners Mission Statement as modified and APPROVED by Board of Directors May 23, 2017**