

December 2019 News Update



On behalf of the Friends of Pope Farm Conservancy, we wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season! Be sure to watch for our printed news magazine in the mail in January 2020. It's full of stunning photos and insightful articles about PFC's past and present, plus a list of our goals and public talks in the coming year.

Gift Memberships Now Available!

When you give a gift membership, your friend or family member will be welcomed into the conservancy's community of dedicated individuals committed to enhancing the educational opportunities at Pope Farm Conservancy, preserving the balance of its wildlife habitat and historical features, and protecting its scenic landscapes and tranquility for the enjoyment of the public.



As a FOPFC member, the gift recipient will receive:

- A personalized card announcing your special gift, delivered via USPS
- Monthly email updates on the Conservancy
- Updates on upcoming events, public talks/tours, and volunteer opportunities
- Our semi-annual printed magazine, filled with stunning photos, as well as informative and insightful articles about PFC's history, educational programs, and its many plants and animals

To give a gift membership, please visit our website. (add'l instructions on next page)

To give a gift membership:

- Complete the Online Membership Form: <https://www.popefarmconservancy.org/membership> Be sure to select 'Gift membership' under 'Membership Type'. Online payment is fast and secure.
- Download the gift membership form here: https://www.popefarmconservancy.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/FOPFC_Gift_Membership_Form.pdf and mail it to FOPFC, 10333 Blackhawk Rd, Middleton, WI 53562. Don't forget to send a check (payable to Friends of Pope Farm Conservancy).

Questions/Comments? Please contact Lee at info@popefarmconservancy.org.

Upcoming FOPFC Meetings

Looking for ways to volunteer and give back to your community?

This is a great time of year to get involved in the FOPFC, as we have begun the exciting task of planning for the 2020 season. We invite you to attend the following meetings to observe, to offer your viewpoints, or to join one of our committees.

Events Team Meeting

When: Tuesday, December 10th, 2019, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

Where: 951 Cricket Lane, Madison, WI

Discussion topics: The Events Team will be finalizing arrangements for the 2020 season, and working on dates and speakers. We welcome you to join this group of creative people who work hard and have fun planning and hosting events. If you'd like to help plan the talks/tours for 2020, please come to the meeting on December 10th. If you can't make the meeting but have suggestions for additional events, please send your ideas via email to Martha Zydowsky (mzydowsky@charter.net) prior to the meeting.

Education Team Meeting

When: Tuesday, January 14th, 2020, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Where: Middleton Community Church, 645 Schewe Rd, Middleton, WI 53592

Discussion topics: The Education Team will continue work on the "History of the Land" interactive tour project and review additional stories from descendants of the land that is now Pope Farm Conservancy. We will also begin work on the "History of Agriculture and the Environment" at Pope Farm Conservancy. Finally, we will discuss the process we will use on lesson plan ideas for the Middleton Cross Plains Area School District. If you would like to get involved but cannot attend the meeting, please email Doug Piper (dlpiper0413@gmail.com).

What's New at PFC?

Pope Farm Elementary School taking shape



Photo: Janie Starzewski

According to Bill Eberhardt, building projects manager at the Middleton Cross Plains Area School District, the last pour has been completed, the roof is going on, the exterior shell is being applied, and workers are starting to put the windows in. The work is about 2 weeks ahead of schedule. The school is slated to open in the fall of 2020.

Pope Farm Conservancy to Receive \$105,000 Grant

By Jim Bolitho

Dane County recently approved \$105,000 of funding to the Town of Middleton for repairs to the iconic erosion ravine below the CCC spillway. The ravine (pictured below) sustained major damage during the record rainfall in August 2018 when heavy runoff eroded back slopes and threatened the stability of the mowed trails on each side of the gully. It is anticipated that repairs will be made in 2020.

In the interim, the town has undertaken measures to minimize further damage. Left unchecked, the back slopes would be expected to erode further.

Right: Significant mudslides occurred along the eastern banks of the ravine in August 2018.



Screened Trail to be Repaired in Spring 2020

The screened trail that runs along the stone fence has had serious erosion problems for the last several years. The town plans on repairing the trail for the 2020 summer season.

Photo: Barbara Esser



Winter Activities & Parking



For a truly wonderful winter experience, head out to Pope Farm Conservancy where the crisp air and beautiful trails await you. The conservancy is open from sunrise to sunset all year-round. It's a great place to enjoy hiking, snow shoeing, cross country skiing and sledding (weather permitting).

Please be advised that the Blackhawk Parking lot off Blackhawk Road is closed during winter months. We recommend parking in the lower parking area off Old Sauk Road.

Question of the Month

Question: Why fix the flood damage in the ravine?

Answer: The record rainfall in August of 2018 caused incredible damage everywhere. At the ravine location there was approximately 14” of rainfall. The water flowed so hard that it eroded the sides of the ravine, and caused extensive damage. The ravine itself is a prairie restoration project and significant damage was done to the prairie plants that went down with the mudslide. The long-term risk is that if the erosion continues, it would eventually begin eroding to the east and to the west. The result would be continuing damage to the Blackhawk Prairie and destruction to the trails surrounding the ravine. Eventually the damage could destroy significant areas of the Conservancy and the surrounding property.



Above: East side of the ravine at PFC. Mudslides occurred in other areas in the ravine, as well

In 1938, the Civilian Conservation Corps built the spillway to stop erosion of the hillside. As can be seen in the photo below, water was actually coming in from the sides of the ravine. It has been estimated that the water was eroding these waterways an average of 6 feet per year. Of course, the erosion in 1938 was more established than the recent erosion damage, but it shows what can happen if the problem is not addressed.



Above: 1938 photo of CCC construction of spillway. Note the erosion taking place at the sides of the spillway.

The grant to fix this problem next year is much needed and will help preserve the land for future generations. A huge thank you to the Town of Middleton, and Dane County is in order.

Friend of the Month

Thank you, Martha Zydowsky!

Martha Zydowsky is everywhere with the Friends of Pope Farm Conservancy. Martha is on the FOPFC board of directors and is the chair of the Events Team. We appreciate her input and enthusiasm. From Sunflower Days, to volunteer appreciation gatherings, Martha has been at the forefront of our volunteer efforts. She contributes photos, articles, and is willing to step forward to make things run smoothly at FOPFC. Her passion and positive personality have made a difference at Pope Farm Conservancy. **Thank you, Martha!**

FOPFC Logo Merchandise Now Available!

The Friends of Pope Farm Conservancy has a new online store with apparel and merchandise! Thanks to Bonfire.com, we are now selling a number of products with our unique logo printed on them. Products include t-shirts for all ages, sweatshirts, hats, tote bags, and mugs. When you place an order, your items will be printed and shipped directly to you or a friend.

A portion of every sale will go directly to the FOPFC to help us preserve and protect the Conservancy and provide educational opportunities for all ages. Visit our online store today at <https://www.bonfire.com/store/fopfc/>



If you have any questions or suggestions for additional items, please contact janie@popefarmconservancy.org.

Photos of the Month

Every season is full of beauty at Pope Farm Conservancy. We hope you'll enjoy these winter photos from years past. We'd love to see more winter photos at Pope Farm Conservancy! Email your pictures to janie@popefarmconservancy.org or share on our Facebook page.



Photo by Lori Renee Photography



Photo by Janie Starzewski

Year-End Annual Appeal

As the year comes to a close, we'd like to take this opportunity to thank our members, donors, and dedicated volunteers for all their support and hard work this year. In 2019, your generous support helped the Friends to:

- Offer 10 educational public talks/tours for all ages
- Collect, process, and plant prairie seeds to improve the quality and diversity of the prairies at Pope Farm Conservancy
- Coordinate volunteer efforts to help control invasive species in the Conservancy
- Maintain the Sugar Maple stand in the Conservancy for the Town of Middleton and the grass areas along the recessional moraine for the Town of Middleton
- Install several Burr Oak trees along the stone fence
- Administer the self-guided tour program
- Educate 4th-grade students about Native Americans, food, and survival as part of annual fall field trip
- Start developing educational assistance for the new Pope Farm Elementary School
- Begin developing a new video series about "The History of the Land"
- Begin promotion of the German Immigration interactive menu to the public
- Host a volunteer appreciation event
- Tag over 200 monarch butterflies to track them through their migration to Mexico

We have so many exciting goals and activities planned for 2020!

Please consider making an additional year-end gift today to help us provide educational opportunities for all ages and preserve an important natural resource in our community.

[Donate online](#) or mail a check (payable to Friends of Pope Farm Conservancy) to FOPFC, 10333 Blackhawk Road, Middleton, WI 53562.

Whether you choose to become a member, make a donation, or volunteer your time, your contribution to the Friends of Pope Farm Conservancy will make a difference!

Thank you for your generosity and continued support!

Renew Your Membership

You can now renew your membership online at <https://www.popefarmconservancy.org/membership>.

Or you can renew by mail. Send us your [membership form](#) and a check (payable to Friends of Pope Farm Conservancy) to: FOPFC, 10333 Blackhawk Road, Middleton, WI 53562.

If you have already renewed your membership, THANK YOU! We hope you enjoy being a part of our community. For questions regarding your membership, please send an email to info@popefarmconservancy.org.

Connect with FOPFC online

Website: <https://www.popefarmconservancy.org>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/FriendsOfPopeFarmConservancy>

Flickr: <https://www.flickr.com/groups/fopfc-photos>

**Thank you for supporting the Friends of Pope Farm Conservancy!
Our journey is ongoing, and YOU are part of it!**

