Rita Fredrick

July 31,1942.

Report on Agency house Area.

Aldo Leopold.

At the request of Mr. Spohn and Mrs. Montgomery, a brief inspection of this area was made on July 23.

Animals. I cannot muster much enthsiasm for any further development as a bird or mammal refuge.

The area supports pheasants, deer, and quail in summer, but the only brush for wintering quail has a north exposure, and hence would have no winter value. The south-facing canal bank would winter quail if allowed to become brushy, but the canal authorities would probably object. There might be a good chance ofor attracting prairie chickens but for the power-line, which would certainly be a death-trap for this species. Pheasants and deer hardly need any encouragement.

Hence, I conclude that the present closed status as a refuge is about all that can or should be done for animals.

Upland Plants. In plants, on the other hand, I see very attractive opportunities on the upland behind the house, to and including the woods. This upland was undoubtedly prairie in Mrs. Kinzie's day, andprairie would be the most appropriate setting now.

My reasons for asserting that this upland was prairie, rather than woods, at the time of first settlement are as follows:

1. The woods contain numerous relic species of prairie origin: bluestem, Leptoloma, lead plant, flowering spurge, lupine, coreopsis, puccoon, spiderwor Anemone cylindrica, prairie clover, Baptisia, Lespedeza, and Liatrus scariosa.

2. The oaks in the woods are 80 years old, i.e., came up after the cessation of prairie fires. (On the other hand, the presence of a few red maples and white-oaks indicates that there always was an "eyebrow" of woods along the marsh.)

3. "Waubun" speaks of a wide-open view.

4. The Kinzies would not have planted elms if original oaks had been availab

The chances for restoring prairie flora to the upland are exceptionally good because:

1. The soil is sandy, hence does not make too dense a sod of bluegrass, quack, or other exotic grasses.

2. Quack patches are scarce. Quack is the worst competitor of native plants.

3. There are few rocks to interfere with cultivation.

4. The marsh, road, and canal constitute a complete firebreak should it be necessary, at the right season, to burn for encouraging prairie plantings as against grass.

5. Native stocks of over a dozen species are already present in the woods.

My suggestion is to make prairie plantings aroung the house and let them creep out "on their own steam". Thesize of the planting could be fitted to the available funds.

Technigues for planting some 30-40 prairie species have been worked out on the University Arboretum.

The next step is to ask Professor John Curtis, Arboretum Director of Plant Research, and John Catenhusen, Arboretum Biologist, to look at the property, and to make plans and estimates if they are willing. Plans should include provision for periodice inspection and guidance by a prairie expert like Curtis or Catenhusen. All this might be of doubtful feasibility, but for Superintendent English, who has both knowledge and enthusiasm in this field.

Marsh Plants. The marsh, insofar as I was able to cover it, is too badly deteriorated to offer any prospect of restoration. Itwas ditched, then evidently pastured to a bluegrass stage, then burned to the nettle stage, and has now recovered to the goldenrod stage, I found no plants worth mentioning. The best thing is to protect it and let it recover as best it can.

copies Mrs. Montgomery
Mrs. Johnson
Mr. Spohn
Mr. English
Mr. Curtis + Mr. Catenhusen

August , 1942.

Suggestions for a Planting at the Indian Agency House

by John Catenhusen, Arboretum Biologist, Madison, Wis.

Originally the vegetation of the region was prairie and oak opening as indicated by the relics of that vegetation and by historical accounts; it would therefor be apropos and even desirable from an aesthetic standpoint to restore that original vegetation.

Recommendations:

1. Mow a pathway around the entire field and along the crest of the hill. This pathway should be at least ten feet wide so that it may function as a fire break as well.

2. Burn the field to allow a natural revegetation by the prairie plants

3. Plant by transplants and seed plots along the pathway the various prairie plants obtainable in the region.

4. Hire a laborer to do this work and have him contact the Arboretum biologist for instructions.

5. Allow the woods to remain as it is for the time being.

6. Plantings on a larger scale will be recommended by the Arboretum technicians in about a year when they will have perfected certain techniques now being applied in the development of the Arboretum prairie.

Copy of a letter to Mrs. Montgomery written Aug. 26, 1942 by Aldo Leopold.

"Above is Catenhusen's report on the Agency property.

He agrees with me that the chance for reestablishing a prairie are very good, but he says in effect that he can only act as technical advisor to the actual operations, and cannot supervise or execute them. In other words, he has his hands full on the Arboretum.

"The gist of the report is in item 4. To get started this year your organzation must employ a laborer who can do the work on the ground. This would include gathering seed, moving plants, mowing fire lanes. The laborer should have a car so that he could come down to the Arboretum occasionally for instruction. We can donate an occasional trip by Catenhusen to look over the work. Later on, should a more elaborate operation be undertaken, we might have to set up some special provision for Arboretum expense. The seed and plants needed are by and large available within five miles of the area. Your man would first have to learn what the plants are. We can tell him when seed is ripe, and to an extent at least, where it is obtainable nearby. Many seeds ripen during September.

"If you or Mr. English can spot such a man, I will be glad to help you plan further details."

"With best regards,

"Aldo Leopold."

copy mrs. Johnson