

Habitat Crews (Mid-June through Mid-Sept 2026 Summary):

Since we have not met during the summer, this is a summary of the major Habitat activities, projects, fundraising, equipment, and volunteer efforts from mid-June through mid-Sept.

Habitat Restoration:

- Completed clearing Buckthorn and deadfall around Summerstage, Tail-End, and Magic Carpet Ride; will plant prairie grass to the north of Summerstage (purchased from Good Oak)
- Removed many dead trees (ash) and trees that fell on the trails
- Two-Tier/Ice Age Trail Project: Major progress was made this summer clearing invasive vegetation around the campsite and along the Ice Age Trail. Map on page 3 shows the areas already completed and the remaining work.
- Michael Neimon and a few buckthorn busters focused on herbiciding areas that were recently cleared and/or to fight-back invasive regrowth:
 - Buckthorn Re-growth; Autumn Olive
 - Crown Vetch and Knapweed
 - Black Locust
 - Invasive Pompas Grass and Phragmites
- Cleaned out Nemahbin Spring (twice); rocks in the pool need to be removed next
- Weed-whacked under and around all memorial benches
- Work has started on Fright Hike: Unloading the barn props, clearing trails
- Helped with Lupo pond-depth measurements for new accessible pier
- Manned a station for the Governor's Workday; clearing buckthorn on IAT (south of Summerstage); the next week we planted another 100+ Oak trees on west side and in the Prairie south of Butterfly Garden
- Added 20 more wire fences to protect young oak trees on west side; moved another dozen fences that were added in the past 2 years to new trees needing help
- Cleared the Evergreen Parking lot of dangerous trees that were hanging (and falling) on the lot
- 2027 Cherish Wisconsin Outdoors Fund: applied for \$26,000 grant (would commit us to \$5,800 cash)

UTVs:

1. Purchased a **2026 Polaris Ranger Crew 1000 six-seat UTV** for \$18,600, negotiated down from \$22,000. More than \$1,000 was contributed directly by Buckthorn Buster volunteers. We will request \$3,000 from the Friends of Lapham Peak General Fund toward the purchase. The UTV is already seeing significant use by Habitat, DNR, and park events, even snowmaking to clear trees
2. Performed all the annual maintenance on the 4 Habitat focused UTVs (plus did the same for Michael Neimon's UTV as a thank you to him lending his UTV to us while we were short and during our repairs)
 - a. 1999 Kawasaki **Mule** continues to work, most of the time
 - b. 2017 John Deere **Gator** 385M (3-seater, with winch)
 - c. 2019 John Deere 590M S4 aka, the **Bus** (4-seater)
 - d. 2026 Polaris **Ranger** (6-seater, with winch)
3. Spent \$3,500 on UTVs this summer (filters, oil, flat tires, head gasket, transmission etc.)



Planting Oaks near VonHaden Sweetheart Bench

Fundraising:

Events, sales, firewood donations, and individual donations have helped fund the purchase of herbicide, controlled burns, and equipment

- Feel the Burn:
 - Thanks to Kris' work for the **2026 Feel the Burn** run/walk, we will receive about **\$900**
- Firewood Donations:
 - Since our **Firewood** Operations began in January 2023, **\$12,500** has been donated for firewood! **\$5,300** so far this fiscal year
- Merchandise Sales:
 - This fiscal year, we've sold \$15,400 of Habitat **Merch** in the front office, and that will be about **\$6,000** in profits for Habitat (thanks to Mary and the other Rangers for making this possible)
- Fright Hike
 - Thanks to our event coordinator, and many, many volunteers and volunteer hours, the 2025 **Fright Hike** yielded about **\$11,000** for this fiscal year for Habitat

Volunteering & Statistics:

2025-26 Fiscal Yr:	Volunteer Hours	Piles Removed	Firewood Bins Used	Firewood Donations	IAT Hours Donated	Merch Sold
Oct 2025	1,030	113	100	\$ 657	0	\$ 3,220
Nov 2025	740	51	91	\$ 725	257	\$ 1,498
Dec 2025	646	114	53	\$ 747	134	\$ 2,467
Jan 2026	657	129	69	\$ 408	109	\$ 1,220
Feb 2026	698	98	140	\$ 1,040	192	\$ 1,352
Mar 2026	879	75	71	\$ 383	286	\$ 811
Apr 2026	876	62	60	\$ 488	285	\$ 847
May 2026	967	140	22	\$ 173	173	\$ 948
June 2026	584	76	75	\$ 416	8	\$ 741
Jul 2026	599	113	21	\$ 109	162	\$ 1,014
Aug 2026	602	80	21	\$ 150	222	\$ 1,243
Sept 2026*	774	20	52	\$ 135	428	\$ 695

*Sept 2026 has only partial numbers



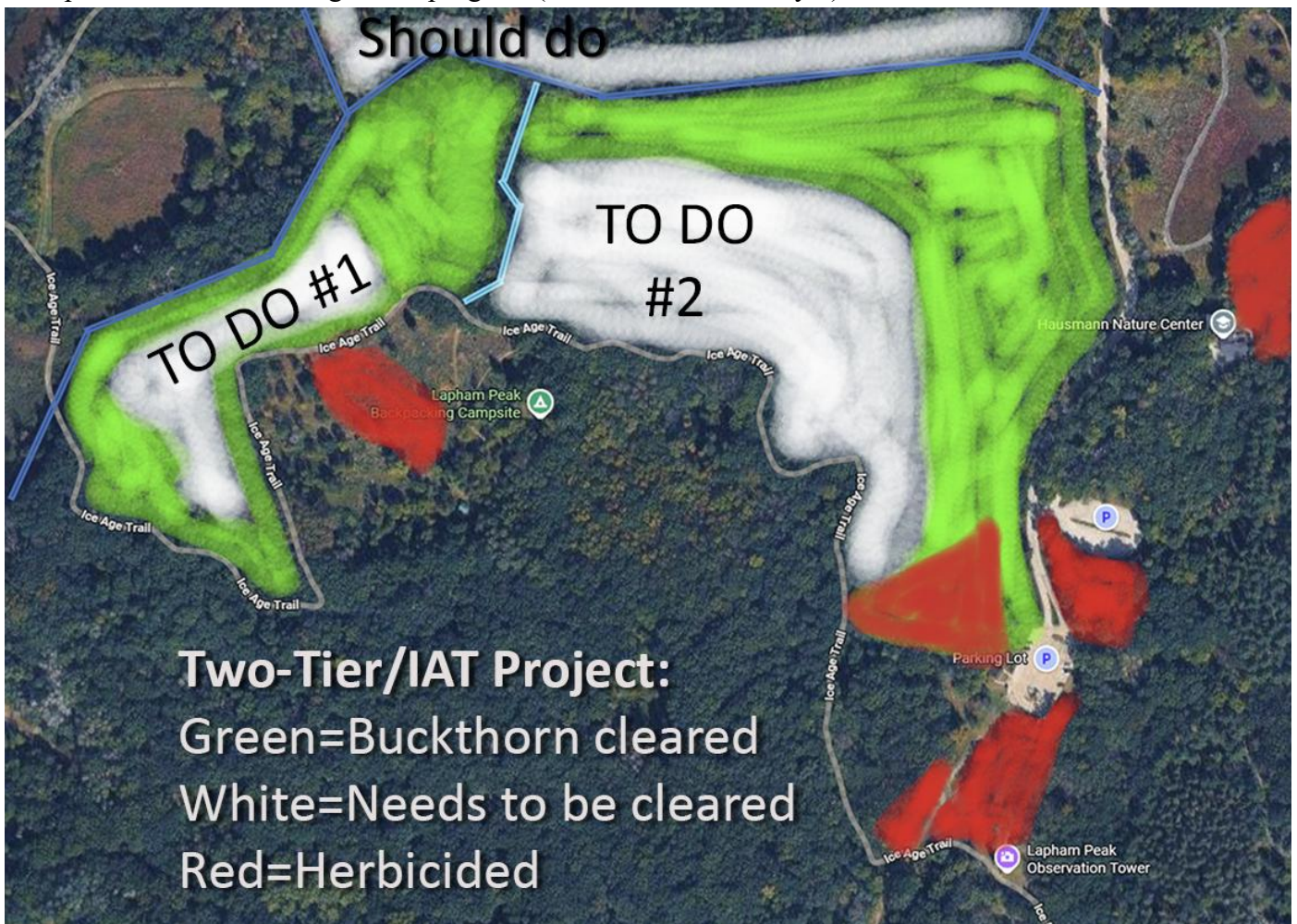
Cleared areas by Summerstage/Tail-End, Magic Carpet Ride. Measuring Lupo Pond depth for Accessible Pier Project with John McCarthy



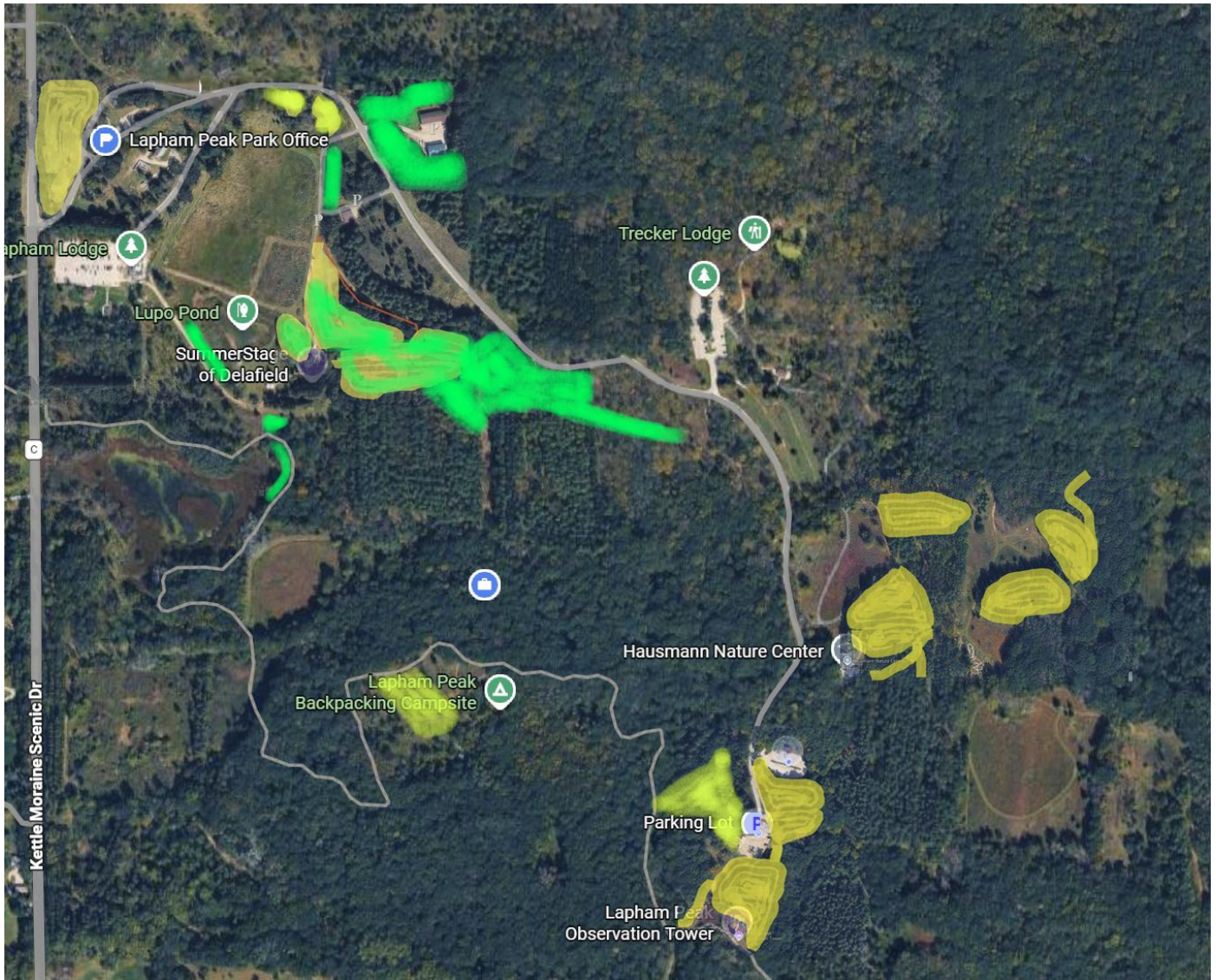
Some of the crew who worked around SummerStage (clearing, not acting)



Campsite, Two-Tier, Ice Age Trail progress (and work to be done yet)



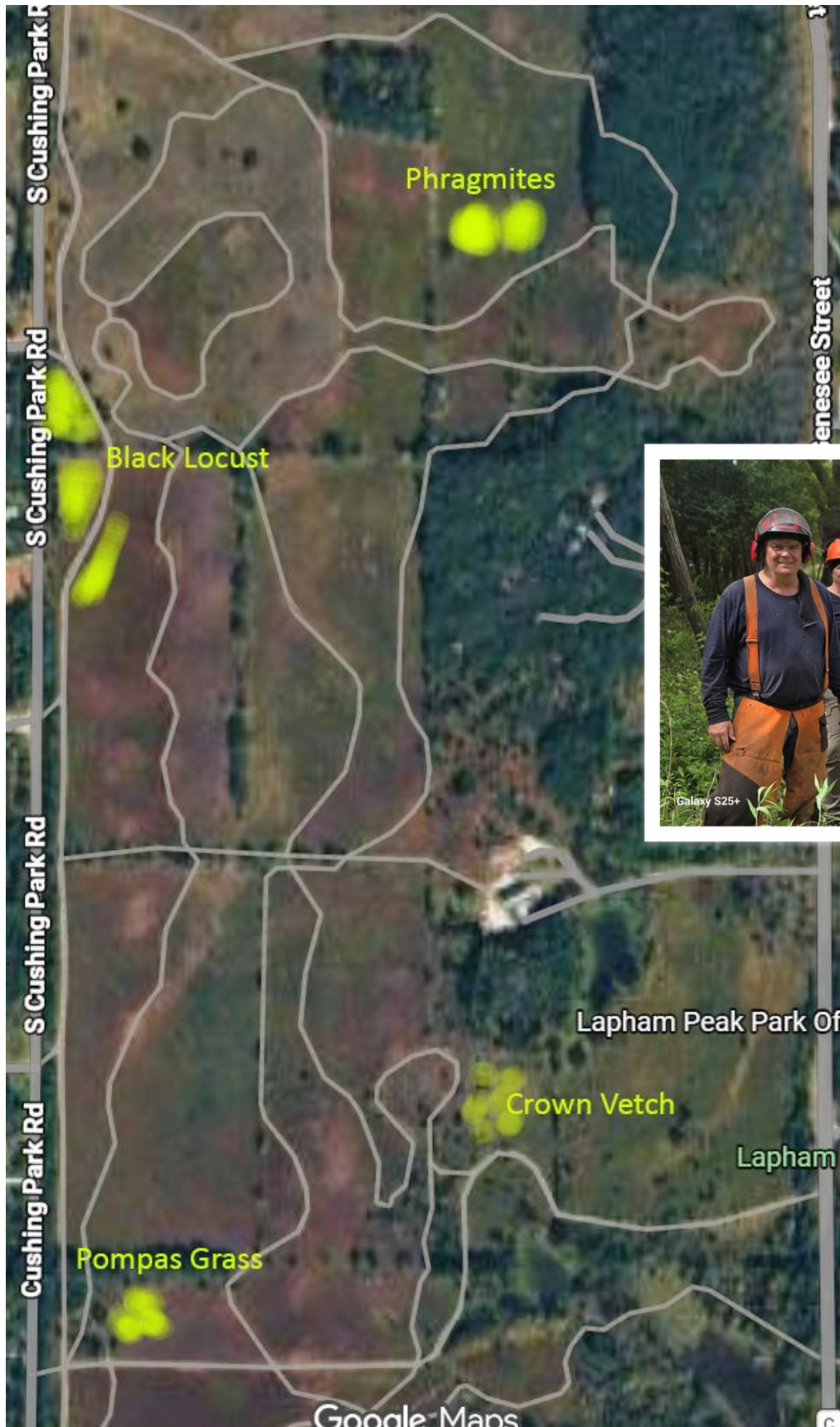
East side Herbiciding efforts to fight back invasives, especially where we have already cleared; this helps to maintain the areas. Fire will be used again in the Fall and Spring



Magic Carpet Ride area after invasive species clearing and prescribed fire preparation



East side Herbiciding (also some mowing of the invasive Phragmites & Pompas grasses);
trying to keep the prairies as prairies!



Some of the Weekend
Crew; with Leader Mike
Neimon on the left (he
does 90% of our
herbiciding!)



Motion

Buckthorn Busters request that the Board make a motion, such as the following:

To approve a \$3,000 contribution from the Friends of Lapham Peak General Fund toward the previously completed \$18,600 purchase of a new six-seat Polaris Ranger Crew 1000 on July 1, 2026. More than \$1,000 has been donated toward the purchase by individual Buckthorn Busters. Habitat funded the remainder of the purchase. Because the vehicle is being used for Friends of Lapham Peak events and activities, a contribution from the General Fund is requested.

Work is in progress to donate the UTV to the State. Mike Ring is working on this and has all of the purchase information.