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City of Duluth - Parks and Recreation

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DATE: 5/4/2023

SUBJECT: Controlled burns to take place in three pollinator meadows at Hartley Park and along Waabizheshikana: The Marten Trail at Spring Street

BY: Kelli Latuska, Public Information Officer

Controlled burns to take place in three pollinator meadows at Hartley Park and along Waabizheshikana: The Marten Trail at Spring Street

[DULUTH, MN] Today, the City of Duluth will be executing controlled burns to manage three small pollinator meadows owned and managed by the City. These are established pollinator meadows located along the Old Hartley Road and Soapbox Knoll in Hartley Park, and at the western end of Waabizheshikana: The Marten Trail near 94 Spring Street.

Controlled burns, also known as prescribed burns or prescribed fire, is a land management strategy that uses the controlled application of fire to support healthy ecosystems. In this case, the goal of the burn is to reduce undesirable and invasive plants in these meadows, such as purple loosestrife and buckthorn, and encourage the re-growth and vitality of native perennials and grasses, such as little bluestem and black-eyed susan.

The prescribed burn contractor has determined that the conditions are favorable today for the burns to take place; criteria were set forth in a burn plan prepared by the contractor and approved by the Duluth Fire Marshal to ensure safety in these controlled burn exercises.

The City of Duluth has made, and continues to make, efforts to provide habitat for pollinators as development, pesticides and other circumstances negatively impact their populations. Wildflower meadows such as those found in Hartley and along Waabizheshikana provide habitat, nesting sites and food for myriad species of bees, moths and butterflies. Private homeowners can help these animals by planting native flowers and grasses on their own property, such as milkweed or native wildflower seed mixes.

An informational presentation about the controlled burns was provided to the

Natural Resources Commission on April 5, 2023 with opportunities for questions and comments. For more information about the City's Prescribed Burns Pilot Project, please contact Kate Kubiak, City of Duluth Natural Resources Coordinator, at (218) 580-9150 or kkubiak@duluthmn.gov.

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