

STATEMENTS OF POLICIES AND GUIDELINES FOR A MAINTENANCE PLAN FOR BURIAL MOUNDS IN MADISON PARKS

AUTHORIZATION

The Madison Board of Park Commissioners is the approving authority for determining the appropriateness and acceptance of a maintenance plan for Burial Mounds in Madison Parks. The Parks Division has received direction from representatives of the Ho-Chunk Nation as to the proper maintenance of individual mound systems and incorporated the information into this policy. The policy is intended to clearly outline a maintenance plan for the Burial Mounds located in the Madison Parks system. It provides procedures and guidelines to assure that the mounds are treated with the utmost respect and responsibly managed in a manner that protects the integrity of the mounds at all times.

DEFINITIONS: Protection of earth works and burial markers are protected by Wisconsin State Statute 157.70. It stipulates that there may be no disturbance of the burial mound or within the legal buffer of 10 feet from the perimeter. Madison Parks maintains a buffer of no soil disturbance of 20 feet total from the mound perimeter.

Burial Mounds in Madison Parks:

- Conservation Parks: Elvehjem Sanctuary, Cherokee Marsh North Unit, Edna Taylor
- General Parks: Hudson, Burrows, Vilas, Bear Mound
- Edgewood Park and Pleasure Drive

PROCEDURE

1. Burial mounds will be inspected on a regular basis
2. Prescribed management plans will be established for individual mounds based on site conditions to manage vegetative material.
3. Established trees growing on and surrounding mounds will be inspected regularly and managed to prevent damage to the mounds.
4. Regular maintenance will ensure proper air flow and prevent establishment of plant material that may threaten the integrity of the mound.
5. No signage, trails or other obstructions will be placed within 20 feet of the base of the mound.
6. If a mound is ever disturbed, staff will follow outlined protocol regarding soil disturbance from tree limbs (cut flush and remove brush) and animals (remove and fill hole by hand with soil). Outreach to Burial Sites Preservation staff as needed.

GUIDELINES FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF MADISON PARKS BURIAL MOUNDS

1. Mound inspection:
 - a) Visual inspection of the mounds when doing routine mowing in the surrounding parkland, approximately every 2 weeks.
 - b) Inspect for downed limbs or any damage to the mounds and report back to the Supervisor if any damages are noted.
 - c) Inspect for animal burrows. Remove animals from area, replace soil into the hole and compress by hand.

2. Manage invasive species to prevent degradation of the mounds and to promote establishment of native plants:
 - a) Conduct prescribed burns on an annual/semi-annual basis on all burial mounds according to individual mound plans.
 - b) Hand cutting and removal of any woody growth and weeds, treat directly with an herbicide as needed.
 - c) Introduce native forbs and grasses as seeds by hand only.
 - d) Ensure that there is no soil disturbance.
3. Tree care:
 - a) Assess tree health on and with driplines within mound area on a regular basis.
 - b) Trim and thin out deadwood in trees in close proximity to the mounds in order to prevent limbs dropping and allow more sunlight to promote healthy turf growth.
 - c) Remove all established trees growing on or within the buffer area footprint of the mounds that are 14 inches in diameter at breast height or (dbh) or less by hand and treat with an herbicide.
 - d) Remove dying or severely damaged trees proactively before they uproot and disturb the integrity of the mound.
 - e) Cut stumps flush with the ground, grubbing is never allowed.
 - f) Care will be taken to avoid dropping large limbs on the mound which could cause damage to the mound surface.
 - g) Remove trees that endanger the mounds during the latter winter months only when the ground is frozen and there's plenty of frost and snow cover to protect them.
 - h) No heavy equipment is allowed within the mounds and its buffer area.
4. Mowing operations performed according to restoration plans for individual mound systems:
 - a) Bi-monthly mowing will be done with a walk behind brush type mower set high to prevent scalping of the ground and to limit woody plant growth. This will reduce soil compaction and disruption.
 - b) The vegetation on the mound will be allowed to grow taller than managed turf areas, to discourage human foot traffic.
5. Trails maintenance:
 - a) Document sites where trails and sidewalks are in conflict due to proximity with the preservation of the mounds with pictures and written documentation to be kept in the Parks PA Common folder under Burial Mound Maintenance.
 - b) Move existing trails 20 feet away from the mounds.
 - c) Work with the Burial Sites Preservation staff in the Wisconsin Historical Society to comply with State statutes.
 - d) Install educational signage with a cultural component to redirect foot traffic at trail heads in order to redirect foot traffic.
6. Signs within the 20 foot buffer zone will be removed.
 - a) The WI State Historical Society will assist to determine if the mound site has been cataloged and will need to be considered if a request to disturb permit is required.
 - b) A State qualified Archeologist must be on site for sign removals and other soil disturbance activities in conformance of Wisc. Stat. 157.70.