

“32” indicates the geographical area of Texas referred to as the “Blackland Prairie”

PROJECT PLAN FOR CREATING A STRIP OF BLACKLAND PRAIRIE AT THE GARLAND COMMUNITY GARDEN

PROJECT TITLE: “BLACKLAND PRAIRIE”

PURPOSE OF THIS DEMONSTRATION PROJECT: to educate the public on the geographical and environmental history of the land on which the 57 square miles of Garland, Texas now is located. Our geographical area is part of what is known as the “Blackland Prairie.” This area covers an area of 19,400 square miles and runs roughly 300 miles from the Red River in North Texas to San Antonio in the south.

By 1900, the Blackland Prairie was mostly under cultivation, being recognized as one of the foremost cotton producing regions of the world. Many grand old Victorian homes in the cities and towns still exist as reminders of the fortunes made in those times. Cultivation was a catastrophic disruption of the prairie ecosystem.

Location in Garland Community Garden: Space running about three feet from and alongside first two beds of 2015 Winding Garden row nearest the Children’s Garden (four feet wide 30 feet long). This one will be easy because, other than pulling up the grass/weeds growing there now, we will not have to prepare the soil in any way. We will just sow the seeds and keep it moist until the prairie is established.

STEP ONE: March 2

Obtain approval from the members to order one packet of Blackland Prairie Mix from Native American Seed

http://www.seedsource.com/catalog/detail.asp?product_id=2800

D-Paks are the smallest seed packets for sale. Each pack is designed to cover 200 square feet. 4 x 30 plot would be 120 square feet. Thus we need one packet. Over seeding will ensure good results.

Each D-Pak is \$9—thus a total of \$9 is needed for the seed.

STEP TWO: March 2

Order the seed. \$9

STEP THREE: Create related signage.

- \$15

STEP FOUR:

Clear the space, make cardboard and mulch border and put up signage.

STEP FIVE:

Plant the seed.

Total Estimated Cost: \$40

\$9 seed

\$15 Mulch around the perimeter of bed [Note: we will need to lay down a two-foot wide cardboard border around the edge of this bed and put some mulch on top of the cardboard to prevent Bermuda grass runners from invading the bed.]

\$15 for signage

Note: The Blackland Prairie seed mix contains the following seeds. I notice that in addition to native grasses, it includes quite a few flowers that are typically planted in butterfly gardens today.

Contains:

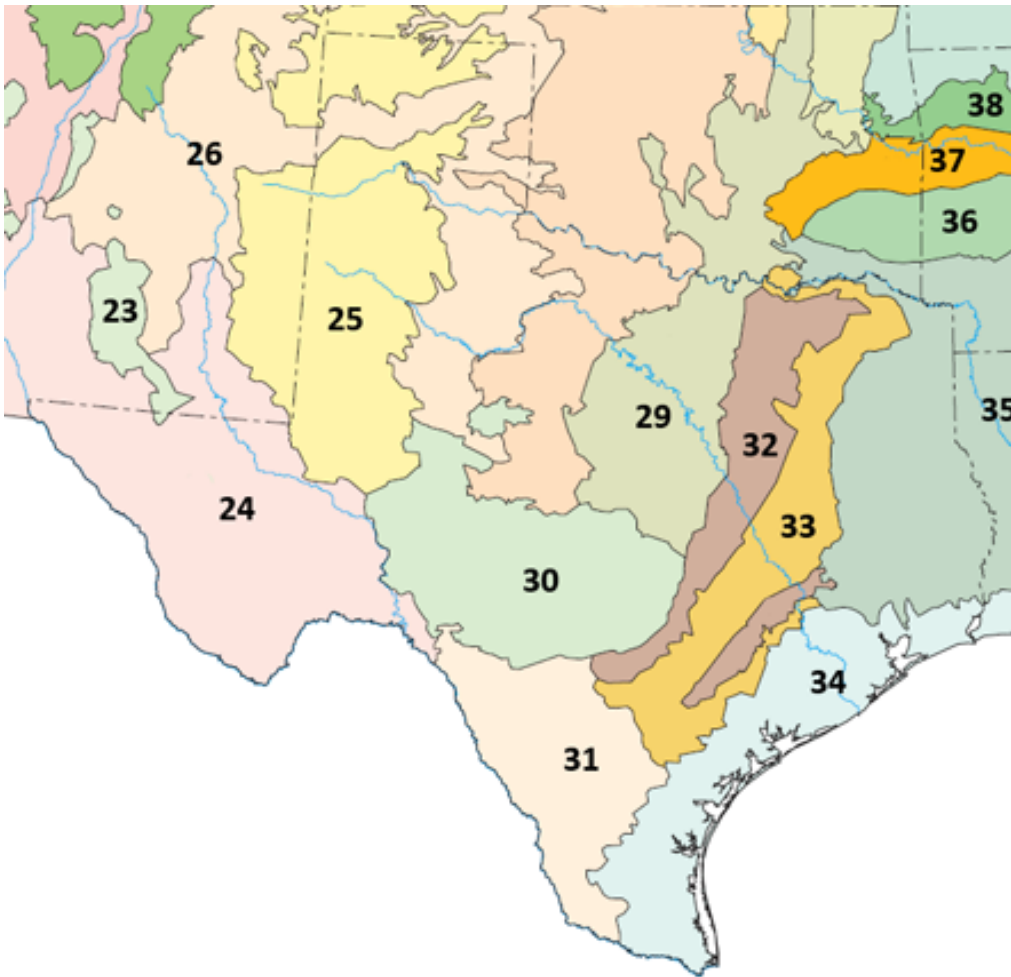
[American Basketflower](#)

[Annual Winecup](#)

[Big Bluestem](#)

[Black-eyed Susan](#)
[Buffalograss](#)
[Butterflyweed](#)
[Cane Bluestem](#)
[Clasping Coneflower](#)
[Croton](#)
[Cutleaf Daisy](#)
[Eastern Gamagrass](#)
[Foxglove](#)
[Gayfeather](#)
[Illinois Bundleflower](#)
[Indian Blanket](#)
[Indiangrass](#)
[Lemon Mint](#)
[Little Bluestem](#)
[Maximilian Sunflower](#)
[Partridge Pea](#)
[Pink Evening Primrose](#)
[Pitcher Sage](#)
[Prairie Agalinis](#)
[Plains Coreopsis](#)
[Purple Prairie Clover](#)
[Purpletop](#)
[Prairie Verbena](#)
[Prairie Wildrye](#)
[Rattlesnake Master](#)
[Showy Milkweed](#)
[Sideoats Grama](#)
[Spiderwort](#)
[Standing Cypress](#)
[Switchgrass](#)
[Tall Goldenrod](#)
[Texas Cupgrass](#)
[Texas Yellow Star](#)
[White Tridens](#)
[Winecup](#)
[Common Milkweed](#)
[Swamp Milkweed](#)

Following two pages are front/back of proposed signage.



Blackland Prairie

(32)

The Blackland Prairie is an ecoregion of Texas in which Garland and much of the DFW area is included. It extends southwesterly from the Red River on the north to San Antonio on the south. The cultivation of cotton in this area, combined with urbanization resulted in a catastrophic disruption of this prairie ecosystem.

The North American prairie is one of the most endangered ecosystems on earth. The grasslands of North America began to form about 20 million years ago, but in some areas such as the Blackland Prairie, up to 99 percent of the prairie has been destroyed (in just the last 125-150 years).

The Prairie Garden--A Small Sample of What Once Was

This small, 4 feet by 30 feet patch represents what the Blackland Prairie, an area of 19,400 square miles, once looked like. A prairie is a particular type of grassland.

Some folks in our area, like Michael McDowell of Plano, have turned their entire yards into a prairie garden. Indeed! Michael is an inspiration as to how beautiful a prairie garden can be. Visit his website at <http://planobluestem.blogspot.com> and you'll get a picture of just how beautiful "going native" can be.

In our prairie garden we have planted over 41 different kinds of grasses and native flowers in this plot. Not surprising, many of these plants support the life cycles of pollinators such as the butterfly.

See how many different plants you can identify in this small area. Take photos, but please don't pick.

*The prairie sings to me in the forenoon and I know in the night I rest easy
in the prairie arms, on the prairie heart . . . from "Prairie" by Carl
Sandburg*



Sideoats Gramma – Texas State Grass

Texas designated sideoats grama as the official state grass in 1971. Sideoats grama is a native species of prairie grass found on rocky hillsides and dry, open grassland. "Side-oats" refers to the small oat-like seeds that hang down uniformly on one side of the seed stem. Sideoats grama prairie grass is a nutritious food for foraging wildlife and livestock. The bright purple and orange flowers of sideoats grama give it a special grace and beauty.

NOTE: We might consider planting some of this somewhere down at the garden. What do you think?

Sideoats Gramma is one of the seed that will be in our Blackland Prairie mix that we purchase from Native American Seed. However, they don't appear to sell it as a separate plant.

http://www.seedsource.com/catalog/detail.asp?product_id=2800