

Plano Prairie Remnant in Danger

You are receiving this message because we think you may have an interest in current plans to develop a section of Oak Point Park and Nature Preserve in Plano. Plano City Council has already signed contracts with Live Nation, the music festival promoters, to run a two day city sponsored music festival each May. The festival will be held at Oak Point. The issue at hand is exactly where the several concert venues will be located within Oak Point Park and Nature Preserve.

One of the proposed sites is a portion of the preserve that is a very good quality native prairie remnant. Remnants of this quality are rare and becoming scarcer each year. Less than one tenth of one percent of the original Blackland Prairie acreage remains in good unspoiled condition today. The native plant community on this site in Plano is well established with an unusually high number of native plant species, indicating it has not been heavily grazed or plowed for many years. Very few sites like this one remain unspoiled. Because of the location and abundant wildflowers and other vegetation on the site, it is also a highly desirable nesting area for songbirds, and a migration stopover for many species. Painted Buntings, Bluebirds, Dickcissels, Scissor-tailed Flycatchers, Towhees, Harris's Sparrows, Ruby-throated Hummingbirds and many other birds have been seen using the area and in some cases nesting. Butterflies are also abundant on the site. Proposed plans for the area may involve significant site changes including grading, scraping, filling, other surface modifications, mowing and insecticide treatment. Many of the plant species will be lost if significant soil movement occurs, and the native plant community present is unlikely to ever recover fully from significant site changes. Most of Oak Point Park is very different from this small site, and the official vegetation survey the city has to work with has specifically identified it as the area most worth preserving.

If you are interested in ensuring this portion of the park is protected as habitat for prairie species, both plant and animal, and as an example of our rapidly disappearing natural heritage, please consider attending one of the two meetings the city has scheduled for public input. The scheduled meeting times are October 15th and October 17th, from 5-7 pm in the Pavilion near the restrooms and lake at Oak Point Park. Oak Point Park is located at 5901 Los Rios Blvd., East of Jupiter Rd. See the map of the proposed concert site on the back of this page.

If you cannot attend one of the two meetings please contact the City Parks Director, Amy Fortenberry, to make your thoughts known. Use email or be prepared to leave a brief polite message if your call is not answered. Her contact information is: amyf@plano.gov and (972) 941-7254

Map of Oak Point Prairie Remnant

