

SOME OBSERVATIONS OF LONG-TERM PRAIRIE PLANT SUCCESSION AND STRUCTURE AT THE U.W. ARBORETUM

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Abstract: In 1969, a design was used in the U.W. Arboretum to gain insights into some aspects of plant competition in the early stages of prairie establishment. The design and methods included recording exact counts and locations of closely-spaced prairie plants. After 22 years, the site has demonstrated much promise as a methodology that can provide considerable insight into long-term prairie plant successional and structural tendencies. The results of 2008 observations (39 years later), were not available at the time of this writing. Results seen so far include documentation of the slow competition elimination of many species that are theoretically out of place based on Curtis' (1959) soil moisture modality.