



FDC Enterprises Inc.

Success Stories from the Field December 2009

At FDC Enterprises, we believe successful conservation is a result of successful partnerships comprised of landowners, government agencies and private enterprise. Our new "Success Stories from the Field" series is intended to share with others some of the special projects we have been involved in throughout the United States, in hopes of inspiring similar efforts elsewhere.

Since 2002, FDC Enterprises has successfully established over 109,000 acres of native grass across 18 states. Through encouragement from our partners to bring additional necessary services, we have recently expanded our business services to include chemical and mechanical control of exotic/invasive weed and/or woody vegetation species. To learn more about FDC Enterprises, please visit our website at www.fdcenterprises.com

City of Marshall, Michigan receives the BASF 'Project Habitat Award':

The Calhoun Conservation District in southern Michigan has long been a local leader for conservation assistance. Such was the case when they were approached by a local volunteer group hoping to restore a City-owned farm that had been set aside to serve as a community park. Like most small towns, "the City simply did not have the resources or expertise to move forward" noted Dave Phaner, a local resident who formed the volunteer group. Gregg Strand, who worked for the Conservation District at the time, developed the initial conservation plan and proposed several funding opportunities to the volunteer group for establishing native grasses, including USDA and the US Fish & Wildlife Service. Tom Eitniewski, Partners Program biologist with the USFWS, immediately offered support for the project. Strand noted "Once we had explored these opportunities and identified funding to help with this project, the next step was to include a professional installation company." Strand added "With a public park that would attract a lot of local resident attention, I knew that the project could not wait 3-5 years for typical results or risk a failed planting. After consultation, FDC Enterprises was the obvious choice". Eitniewski offered, "Projects like these are great opportunities for USFWS to forge new partnerships. Having worked with FDC Enterprises as well as the Conservation District on previous restorations, I knew all of the pieces were in place for a very successful project." The City, working with USDA, then enrolled the 88 acres into CRP, securing the additional funding it would take to establish and maintain this public resource.



Precision planting methods, premium seed, and attention to detail resulted in a healthy stand of native grasses after only one growing season.

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Brooks Nature Area
60 days post plant

Using precision custom drills and herbicide equipment, along with the expertise of STAR Seed to provide the best seed varieties for this site, FDCE converted the City-owned farm into a diverse habitat of native grasses. By the end of the first growing season, grasses had fully established with seed heads over 6 feet. Dwayne Cowgill, Marshall's Mayor, says that "without the breadth of partner support, along with the success of the restoration, our community would never have had this unique resource for our citizens to enjoy."

With help from FDC Enterprises, the City of Marshall submitted an application for and received the coveted BASF 'Project Habitat Award'. This honor goes to local groups and/or companies who exhibit exceptional environmental responsibility in local restoration efforts. FDC Enterprises is a QVM (Quality Vegetation Management) Certified company, one of 48 companies worldwide awarded this special status and is the only native grass installation company in this elite group. Aside from environmental responsibility, the award spotlights projects that exhibit strong partner support. This project had all of these requirements.



Representatives from the Calhoun SWCD, US Fish & Wildlife Service, City of Marshall and FDC Enterprises stand beside the coveted BASF 'Project Habitat Award'

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The ultimate success of the project and the unique partnership that was formed has been a highlight for FDC Enterprises. "We always strive to be better than we were last year," said Fred Circle, president and owner of FDC Enterprises, "and it is projects and partnerships like these that let us know we are headed in the right direction." *Gregg Strand has since joined the FDCE Team, leading FDCE's Contract Services and Special Projects.*

If you have any questions regarding this project, or if you would like to learn more about FDC Enterprises, you can visit our website at www.fdcenterprises.com or call Gregg Strand at (866)-270-4833

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