Virtual Tour of Potawatomi Prairie

Sun, February 12h

Online (YouTube)

This event began with the introduction of the Youth Circle for Mother Earth project, it explained how it aims to create and support a cross-cultural network of young indigenous and non-indigenous environmental leaders, so they become lifelong ambassadors for nature and conversation. It followed with a few polls to get to know more about the people joining the virtual tour. After all the polls were done, Montana, our tour guide introduced herself letting everyone know she would be the one giving us a quick virtual tour of one of the tall grass prairie habitats found on Walpole Island First Nation. After her introduction, she gave us a bit of a background on the Bkejwanong territory. I learned Bkejwanong means where the waters divide and is an unceded territory, home to Ojibwe, Potawatomi, and Odawa people who also make up the three-fires confederacy. Another fact about this territory that I did not know before was that they are the largest freshwater delta in the world made up of six islands. That concluded the quick background and began the tour of the prairie. It is said that when one enters, they are most likely stepping on provincially or nationally rare species. Furthermore, a topic that has been brought up multiple times during the course as well as past events is the immense value indigenous people place in the land. Once again, at this event I was able to see that. One of the first things that are done when visitors are brought in is to have them connect with the land. Even though this was a virtual event, they still had us stop, look around, and appreciate the land using sight and sound. Then we were taught some of the threats that the prairie have faced like not enough water or invasive plants brought from the outside. One of the solutions that Indigenous people have come up with are the periodic burns to keep away woody and weedy plants. I learned the importance of the land, and the tactics that Indigenous people use to maintain it for our present and future generations.