Edition #9 February 2024

>>> NEWAYGO COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL COALITION <<<

NCEC NEWS

The Environmental Resource Hub for Newaygo County

Supporting the beauty and sustainability of the Newaygo County environment through Information, Education, and Advocacy.

Wild Ones Formation & Winter Sow

On Saturday, Jan. 27th, the NCEC hosted a Winter Native Plant Seed Sowing event to get our native seeds started for Spring! Thank you to those who came and shared ideas, questions, tips, and tricks when planting native seeds. We had a great turnout of 20+ native plant enthusiasts.

After a quick demonstration on how to cut and puncture the jugs, participants enthusiastically helped each other to create the perfect, cold weather-loving greenhouses for our little seeds. The NCEC provided extra jugs, soil, and seeds. Some of the local native seeds shared were Milkweed, Big Bluestem Grass, Brown-eyed Susan, Black-eyed Susan, Coreopsis, Butterfly Weed, and many more. The NCEC gave a wonderful presentation showing how this method can create strong seedlings that can be transplanted down the road as well as explained some of the science behind why native seeds need cold weather to help with germination. Without this process, known as cold stratification, the success rate is much lower.

Learn More about Wild Ones>>>

WILD ONES®

Additionally, the NCEC led the discussion regarding interest in starting a local chapter of Wild Ones. It was a great networking opportunity to gauge commitment from the community and brainstorm the next steps. During the presentation, attendees learned about the national level of the Wild Ones group, their mission, and what having a local chapter or "seedling" would involve.

The NCEC established a "core" group of individuals who are committed to continuing efforts for the group's evolution. The engagement was wonderful, and a follow-up survey was sent to those "core" individuals to gain suggestions for a local chapter name as well as identify any specific roles individuals may be interested in within Wild Ones. The goal is to establish a chapter name and communicate with the national group for our "seedling."

Join Our Efforts

Healthy Habitats on Private and Public Lands: Waters, Forests, Meadows and native eco-systems

Join Our Efforts

Sally, NCEC Founder, talks about what it takes to start up a local Wild Ones Seedling group.

After Katie's presentation, participants created winter greenhouses to take home.

HELPING LOCAL RESTAURANTS
SAVE MONEY WHILE HELPING THE ENVIRONMENT

Restaurant Survey – help save money and support our environment!

Over the past few months, NCEC has assembled a 3R Team dedicated to finding good solutions to landfill overuse and recycling underuse in our region.

One of the first projects chosen is to learn how NCEC may be able to help our local restaurants save money while also helping to support a healthy environment.
The 3R Team has created a survey that asks our restaurants what barriers they face regarding using environmentally friendly supplies (such as compostable take-out containers) and recycling. Our Team will contact our local restaurants and invite them to participate in the survey.

Our goal is to find out what the common environmental challenges are that our restaurants face. We then hope to find solutions that will be effective, user-friendly, and cost-comparable to their current supplies and practices.

Attention Teachers! Your students can help with this Project….

In addition to the 3R Team, one of our Newaygo School District High Schools has joined in to participate with the Restaurant Survey. The Grant High School Science Club students, led by teacher Megan Cruzan, are eager to meet with Grant's restaurant owners to help with this project.

NCEC invites any of our local schools, classes, clubs, and youth organizations to join us in this project. It is a great way to involve students in a project that includes meeting with community businesses face-to-face and learning about the survey process. The students will learn about researching solutions as well.

If your school or club is interested in participating in this important project, please contact the 3R Team Chair, Susie Hall, via buzz@nc-ec.org.

Newaygo Restaurants-Take the Survey!

Calling all Newaygo County Restaurant owners! We would love to have you participate in this project that we hope can help you save money on the supplies that you use while also helping our environment. We know this can be challenging to do, and we want to support you in your efforts. Contact us so we can set up the Survey interview with you. Email your interest at buzz@nc-ec.org.

Keep up to date on the 3R Team's work and the many other projects and programs brought to you by NCEC. View the calendar, sign up for E-news, and read past news at www.nc-ec.org. Follow us on Facebook and Instagram!

NCEC 3R Team

3Rs: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Click to Volunteer with the NCEC

Join the 3R Team!

Do you have a passion, interest or experience in the practices of Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle?

We would love to have you join our Team! We could use your help with brainstorming, creating projects, or helping with research. Email us at buzz@nc-ec.org.

Up Coming 3R Projects

The 3R Team is also working on these future projects:
* Boat Shrink Wrap Recycling Spring Campaign – we have hundreds of plastic-wrapped boats in Newaygo County!
* Plastic Bags Everywhere! Can we cut down on their use?
* Textiles are in our landfill.

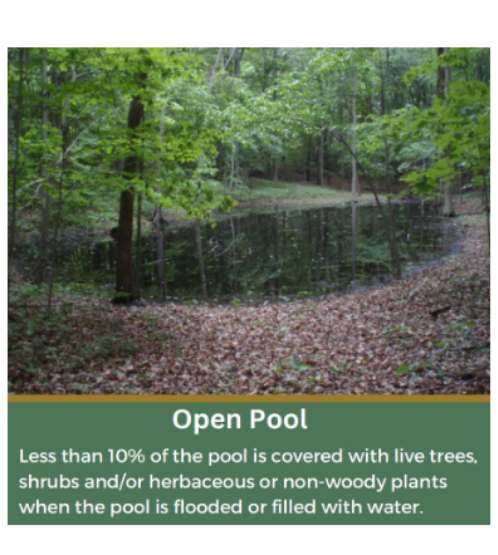
Let's find some options!

Environmental Ally Spotlight

What Are Vernal Pools Any How? And What is the MNFI?

Read More>>>

The Vernal Pool Patrol, organized by the Michigan Natural Features Inventory (Michigan State University – Extension), is among one of the first statewide vernal pool monitoring programs in the country. The program's ongoing success is due to the hardworking and dedicated community scientists who are fueled by a passion for nature and want to help protect unique places in Michigan. The Vernal Pool Patrol is also part of a larger effort called the Michigan Vernal Pools Partnership, which is comprised of a team of dedicated educators, researchers, naturalists, and volunteers who strive to advance vernal pool research and conservation across Michigan.


Open Pool
Less than 10% of the pool is covered with live trees, shrubs and/or herbaceous or non-woody plants when the pool is flooded or filled with water.

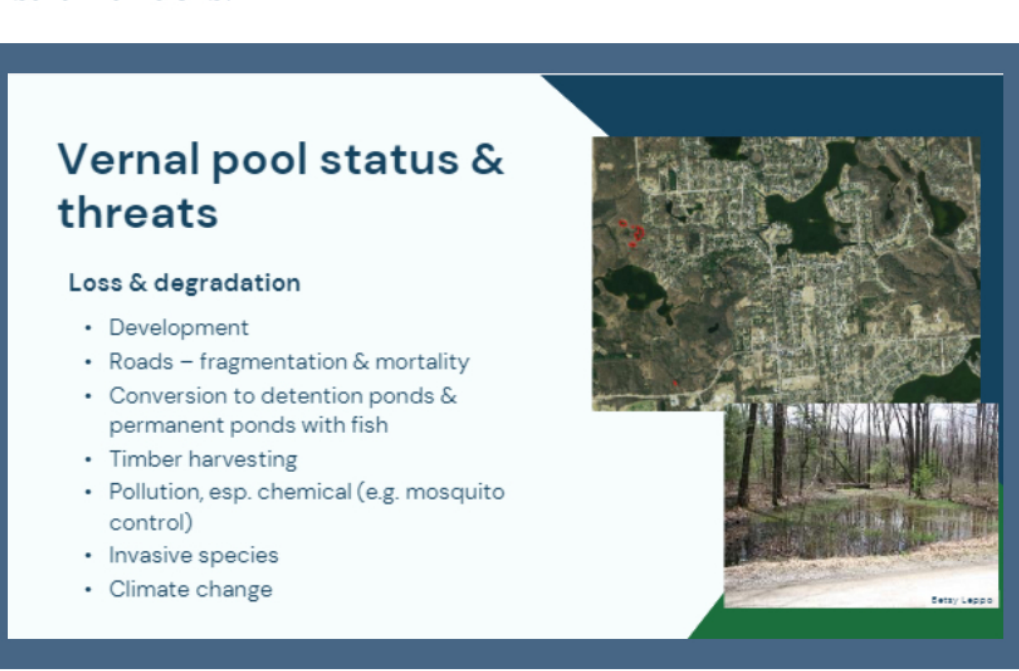
Vernal Pool Definition:

Vernal pools, also known as ephemeral pools, autumnal pools, and temporary woodland ponds, typically fill with water in the autumn or winter due to rainfall and rising groundwater and remain ponded through the spring and into summer.

*Under current water protection laws, vernal pools are not protected.

Vernal Pools Are Important to Our Ecosystem>>>

Vernal pools are naturally occurring, small, temporarily flooded wetlands found in shallow depressions across the landscape. Vernal pools are often called the coral reefs of the forest as they are hosts to incredible biodiversity! Vernal pools can occur in various ecosystems around the world but are primarily found in forested ecosystems across Michigan. These pools are isolated and do not have continuous connections with other large bodies of water, such as lakes, rivers, or streams. Due to isolation, vernal pools lack fish and, therefore, are advantageous breeding grounds for many amphibian and invertebrate species. Evidence of breeding by a group of specific species, known as 'indicators', helps identify if a vernal pool is present. In Michigan, these indicator species include Fairy shrimp, Wood frogs, Spotted salamanders, and Blue-spotted salamanders.


Vernal pool status & threats

Loss & degradation

- Development
- Roads – fragmentation & mortality
- Conversion to detention ponds & permanent ponds with fish
- Timber harvesting
- Pollution, esp. chemical (e.g. mosquito control)
- Invasive species
- Climate change

Up Coming NCEC Events

Learn More about Newaygo County's Vernal Pool Patrol>>>

Join us for our FIRST Newaygo County Vernal Pool Patrol Training. 02/06/24, 4:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m. @ the Brooks Township Hall, Newaygo, MI
The Vernal Pool Patrol, organized by the Michigan Natural Features Inventory, is one of the pioneering statewide vernal pool monitoring programs in the country. This program owes its success to the dedicated community scientists who are passionate about nature and committed to preserving Michigan's unique ecosystems. As part of the larger Michigan Vernal Pools Partnership, the Vernal Pool Patrol aims to advance vernal pool research and conservation across the state.

NCEC is the VPP for Newaygo County. At this training, you will learn how to identify and report to the MNFI Newaygo County's woodland vernal pools as you go out on your spring hikes. Part 2 of the training will take place on April 2nd, and will be boots in the woods for hands-on identification practice.

Click to Register

Discover Nature's Bounty: Foraging Adventures in Newaygo County!
WITH KATIE CLARK

Read Post On Foraging IN Newaygo County>>>

Newaygo County resident and foraging enthusiast is presenting at True North Community Friend's Program, 2/14/24 @ 11:00 am - 12:00 pm.
At this month's True North Community Friends event, retired teacher and lifelong learner Katie has become immersed in the world of foraging over the past few years. Both with book, Internet research, and hands-on learning, she's gone from novice to fairly knowledgeable about foraging in Newaygo County and native plant use. Come to this 40-minute presentation with a question/answer time after. (No registration necessary).

To learn more info on the Ture North Community Friends Program: https://www.truenorthservices.org/connect/

Preserving Native Environments of Newaygo County
Join us for the 1st
Prescribed Burns Training
Creating a Newaygo County Team

Learn More about Prescribed Burning>>>

Prescribed Burn Training on March 9th, 2024, 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. @ Brooks Township Hall
This is a 4-hour class by Michigan Nature Association (MNA) Stuart Goldman, who will lead the prescribed burns at the MNA's Sanctuaries and Nature Areas. Lunch will be provided. The class is free. The NCEC hopes to get a Newaygo County prescribed burn Cadre to help with the much-needed burns for our nature sanctuaries, preserves, and areas, as well as for our private landowners who want to restore their land to native landscapes.

Click to Register

Newaygo County Environmental Events, Activities, Education, & Awareness

Keep Informed & Get Involved

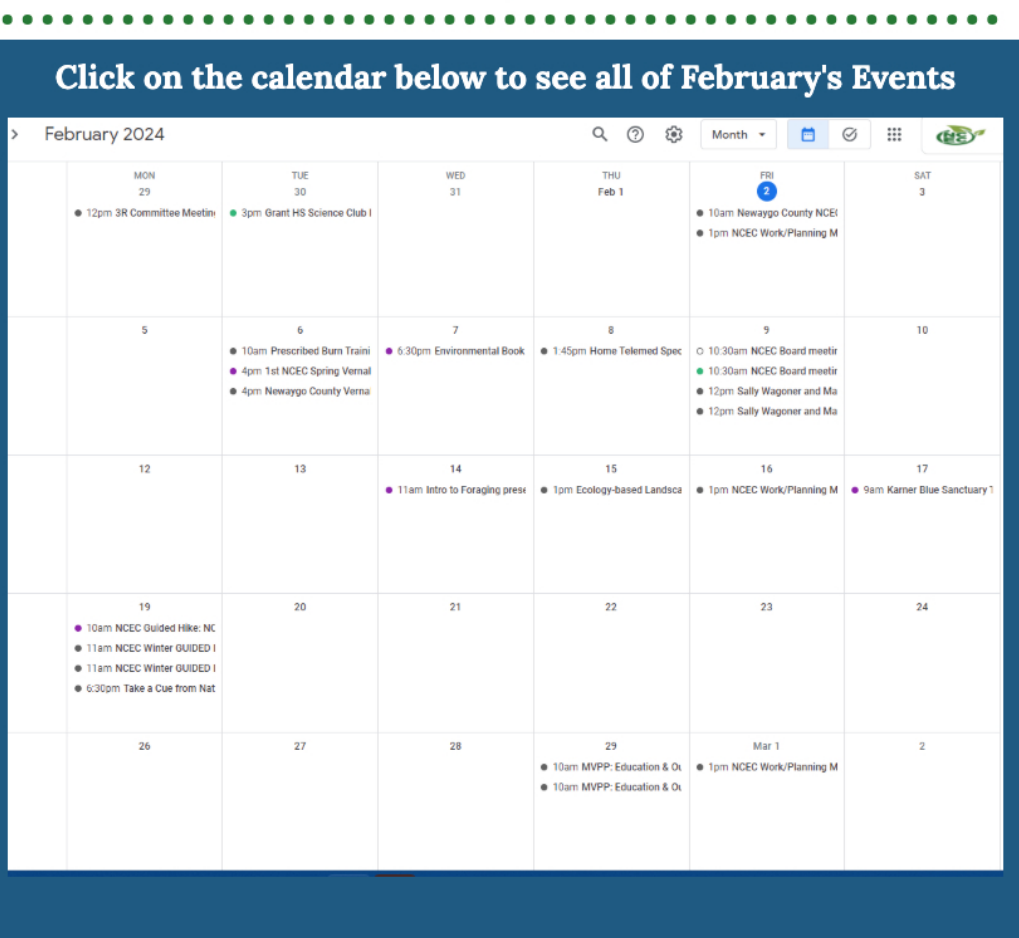
How Can We Get Our Environmental Event Amplified by NCEC?

We will gladly add your organization's environment-related activity to our Calendar, and promote it on our Social Media. Complete the below form to add an event to our calendar which we will also share on our social media.

Need volunteers for a special event? Let us know! We will inform our community through social media and E-news!

Fill out this Event Form via our website.

Click on the calendar below to see all of February's Events

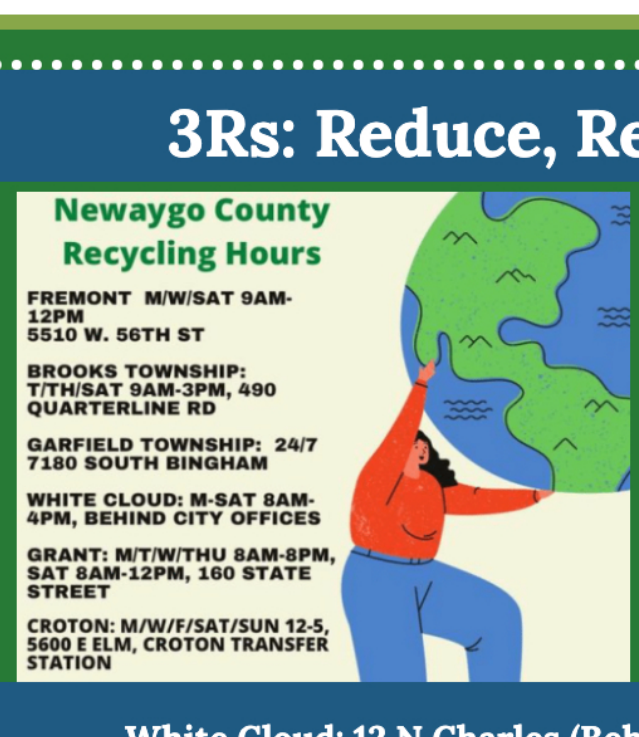


Click on the individual event to get more details.

If you know of events that deal with any of our 4 environmental focus areas, please, fill out the event form or email us the specifics at buzz@ne-ec.org

Click to Fill Out NCEC Event Form to Submit to our Calendar

3Rs: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle


Newaygo County Recycling Hours

FREMONT M/W/SAT 9AM-12PM
5510 W. 56TH ST

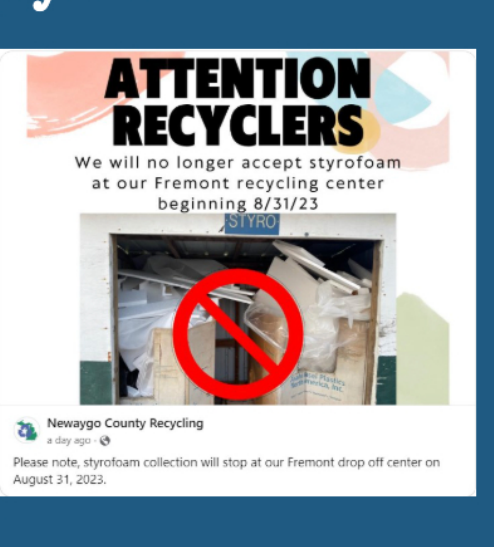
BROOKS TOWNSHIP: T/TH/SAT 9AM-3PM, 490 QUARTERLINE RD

GARFIELD TOWNSHIP: 24/7
7180 SOUTH BINGHAM

WHITE CLOUD: M-SAT 8AM-4PM, BEHIND CITY OFFICES

GRANT: M/T/W/THU 8AM-8PM, SAT 8AM-12PM, 160 STATE STREET

CROTON: M/W/F/SAT/SUN 12-5, 5600 E ELM, CROTON TRANSFER STATION


ATTENTION RECYCLERS

We will no longer accept styrofoam at our Fremont recycling center beginning 8/31/23

Newaygo County Recycling

Please note, styrofoam collection will stop at our Fremont drop off center on August 31, 2023.

White Cloud: 12 N Charles (Behind City Office) M-Sat 8-4
Fremont: 5510 W 56th St. currently open 24/7
Grant: 160 State St. M-Th 8-8 Sat 8-Noon
Newaygo (Brooks): 490 Quarterline Rd. T/Th/Sat 9-3
Newaygo (Garfield): 7180 Bingham Open 24/7

A note from Newaygo County Recycling via their Facebook Page:
Just an update on the 24/7 schedule: Fremont has been successful so far. We have also been leaving the White Cloud site open 24/7 based on whether conditions, and there have been no issues. As a community, we are doing a great job!

- For frequently asked questions, visit the EPA website by clicking HERE.
- Tires- learn about tire collection day HERE.
- Household hazardous waste- Such as TVs, batteries, lightbulbs, etc. Learn more about what materials are accepted on household hazardous waste collection days HERE.
- More information on these events can be found in the Board of Public Works.

Healthy Habitats

I speak for the trees,
for the trees have no tongues
- Dr. Seuss,
The Lorax

>>> WMEAC Monthly Virtual Book Club: 02/07/24, 6:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m. via ZOOM

>>> 1st NCEC Spring Vernal Pool Patrol Training, 02/06/24, 4:00 p.m. -6:00 p.m.

>>> Karner Blue Nature Sanctuary TLC Work Day w/MNA 02/10/24, 9:00 a.m. -1:00 p.m.

>>> Intro to Foraging Presentation, 02/14/24, 11:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m.

>>> Ecology-based Landscape Practice: A 7-Part Virtual Intensive Course (paid registration required)

>>> Coolbough Nature Area TLC Work Day with MNA 02/17/24, 9:00 a.m. -1:00 p.m

Nature's calling; will you answer?

Join Our Efforts

How Can I Get Involved?

1. Share our website, posts, and E-news with Newaygo Community members and Organizations.

2. Join an NCEC Team! Bring your skills and knowledge to the NCEC.

Current NCEC Teams to join: 3R, Prescribe Burn, Michigan Green Schools, Vernal Pool Patrol, Native Plant Enthusiasts (or help to create a team that fits your environmental passion.)

3. Would you like to get involved in the nuts and bolts of our organization? Contact us about attending our bi-monthly work sessions or apply to be on our NCEC Board.

4. Donate!

Environmental Allies are people, organizations, and departments who are actively doing the work of environmental education, promotion, protection, and recreation in the Newaygo County region.

Your organization can join the list of Environmental Allies by clicking here: Environmental Ally Application.

NCEC will promote your organization, events, activities and volunteer needs! Click here if you'd like to add an event that you would like us to promote: Environmental Ally Events Submission Form.

Support our Efforts

Donate

NCEC is a small but mighty 501c3 non-profit organization! We depend on your tax-deductible donations to continue our work, and to help us grow with our Newaygo County Environment needs.

Stay Connected

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