Edition # 25 July 2025

NEWAYGO COUNTY
ENVIRONMENTAL COALITION

NCEC NEWS

The Environmental Resource Hub for Newaygo County

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

July NCEC and Ally Events

NCEC at the Baldwin Farmers Market

Wednesday 7/2
3-6pm

Pure Markette
830 N. Michigan Avenue,
Baldwin, MI, 49304

Come visit the NCEC booth, support local farmers, and enjoy delicious local produce.

Market Info

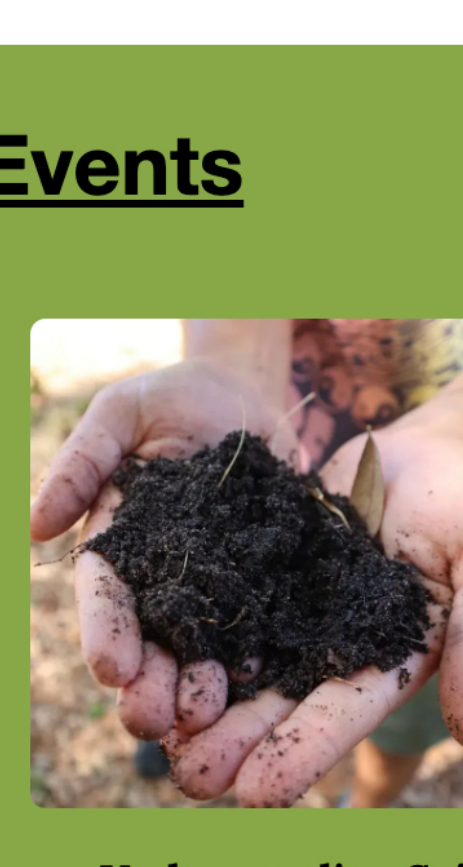
Moth Sheeting Night

Friday 7/11
9am - 11pm

McDuffee Creek Nature Preserve
11510 N Walnut Ave, Bitely, MI 49309

Help catch, view, and photograph the moths of our area!

Register



Understanding Soil Health

Friday 7/11
2pm - 4:30pm

Wittenbach Agri Science Center
11715 Vergennes St SE, Lowell, MI 49331

A panel discussion on best practices + optional greenhouse tour.

Register

July Habitat Workdays

Come help give some loving care to our Newaygo County endangered Karner Blue Butterfly
Check out our TLC Work Days.
&

Karner Blue Sanctuary

Saturday 7/19
Thursday 7/24
9am - 12pm

Parking near 6891 Spruce Ave

We will be pulling spotted knapweed. Bring water, long pants and gloves. Updates on **Facebook**.

Coolbaugh

Tuesday 7/8
Sunday, 7/27
9am - 12pm

Parking on 58th St. just West of Outaway Dr.

We will be pulling spotted knapweed. Bring water, long pants and gloves. Updates on **Facebook**.

Mosquito Menace? Fight Back Smart, Not Hard

written by: Mary Morgan

Ahh...The rain is such a relief from a dry June. Flowers are blooming, the forest is greener and the dust on the road has settled. Except, now the mosquitos hatch! And with the mosquitos, ideas for an article for the NC-EC newsletter. This month we are highlighting insect events and information.

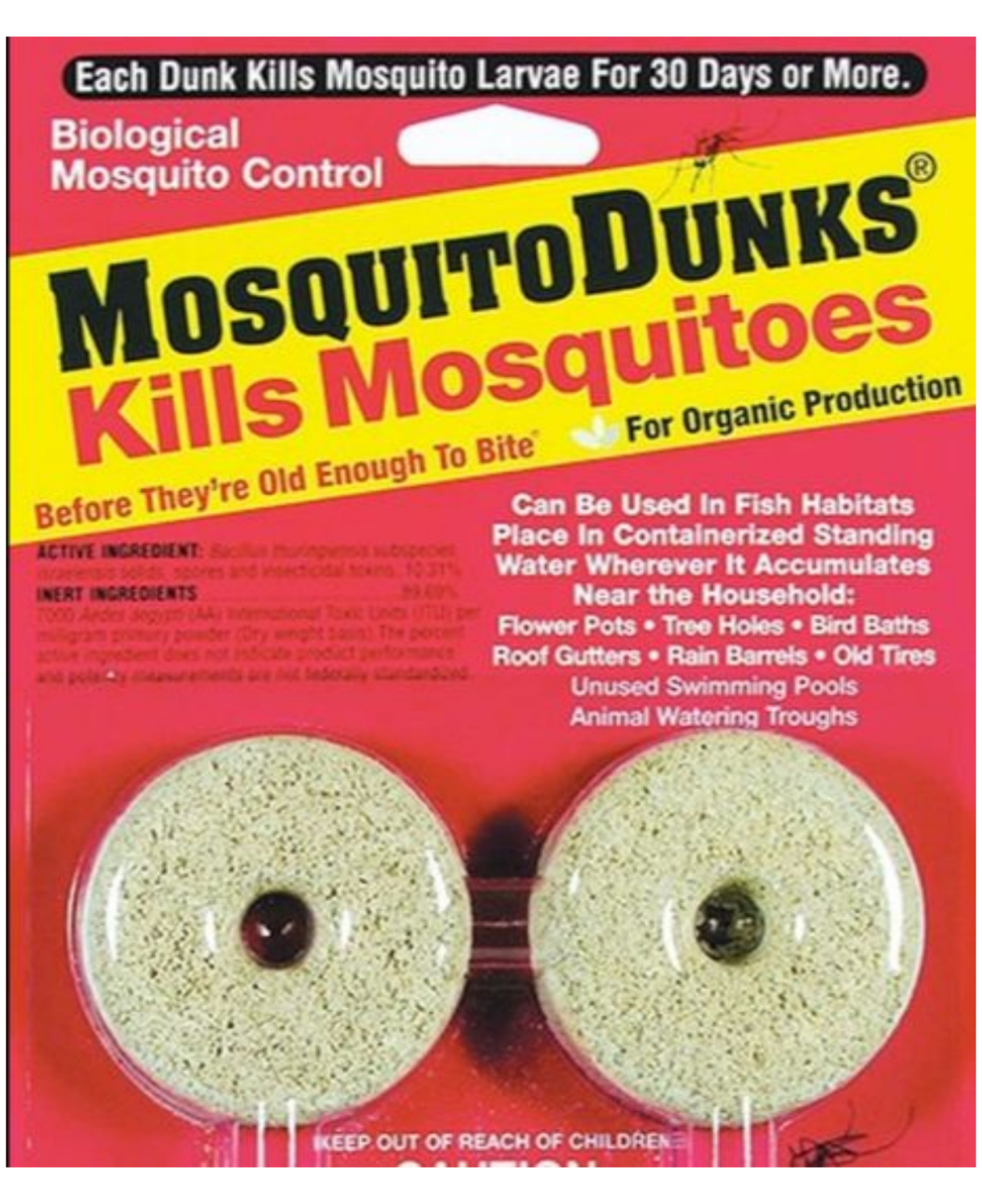
I don't know much about insects in general. Simply that their place is outside my home. I tolerate a few spiders at home, whose appetites help to reduce the insect population inside. However, we still host hundreds of conifer seed bugs, lady bird beetles and a few stink bugs. Since these insects are all quite slow and generally benign we have a gentle eradication method: gather them up and toss them out the door. But what really gets my goat, are mosquitos in the house. Buzzing in my ears. Feasting on me at night. Spreading disease like EEE and West Nile virus. Ugh!

Gentle eradication has no place in my strategy for mosquitos. I'm not a fan of pesticides. They can be toxic to me too. They have unintended consequences for the good bugs. They can cause a mess. They can be expensive. And on the small scale of my yard, pesticides are not worth it. I'm not afraid to resort to violence and rejoice when I slap the blood suckers on me, but that only takes down a few.

To start, lets cover the basics of mosquito control:

Do not keep standing water on your property. That means emptying random pails, cans and buckets of water before the mosquitos lay their eggs in them.

In water features, bird baths or rain barrels, use a biological control such as Mosquito Dunks, which consists of the bacteria Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis (Bti). Bti is generally considered safe for humans, according to the CDC and the EPA. It is a naturally occurring bacterium that is used to control mosquito larvae and is not known to be harmful to humans, pets, or other non-target organisms.

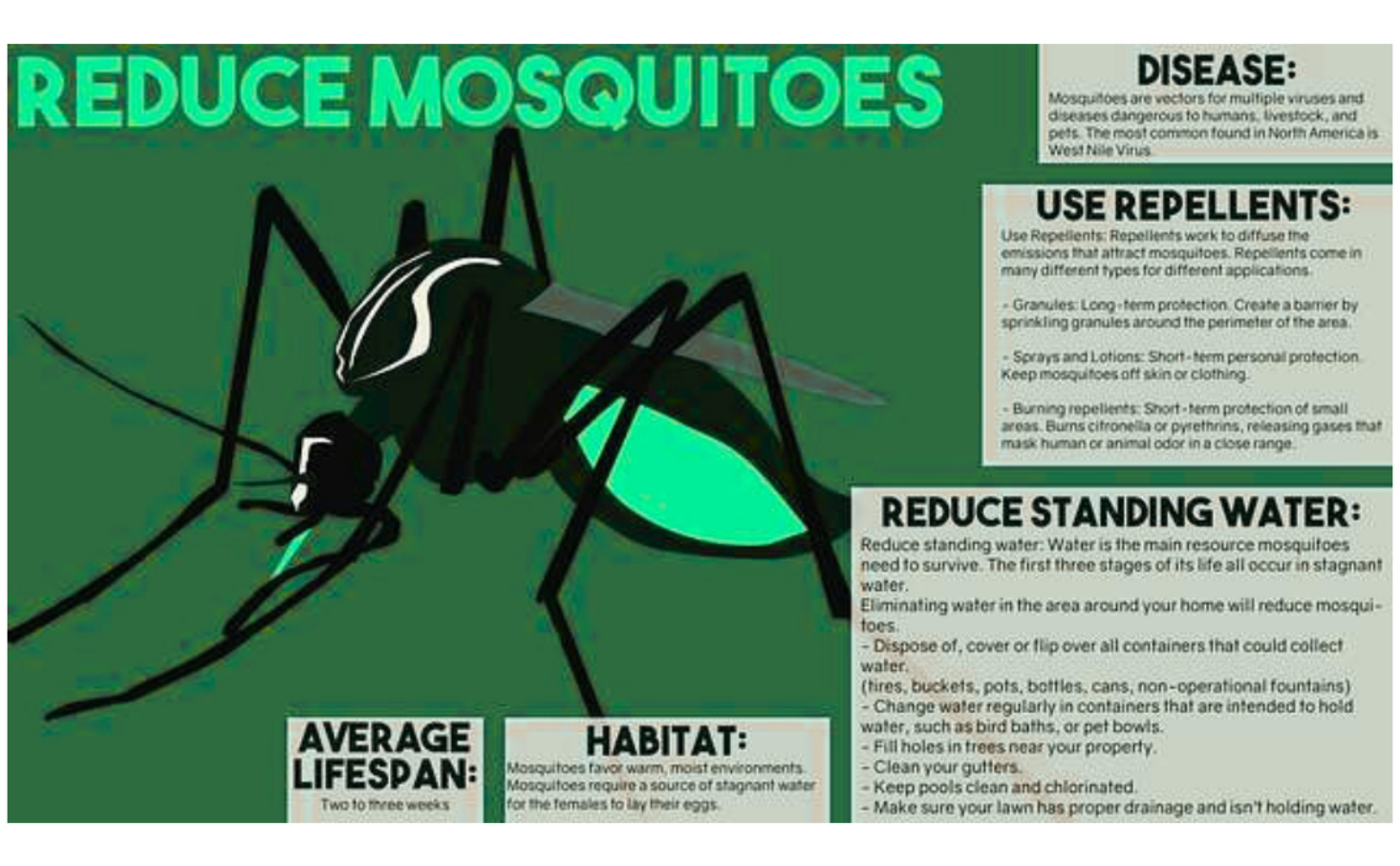

Each Dunk Kills Mosquito Larvae For 30 Days or More.
Biological Mosquito Control
MOSQUITO DUNKS®
Kills Mosquitoes
Before They're Old Enough To Bite
For Organic Production
Can Be Used In Fish Habitats
Place In Containerized Standing Water Wherever It Accumulates Near the Household:
Flower Pots • Tree Holes • Bird Baths
Roof Gutters • Rain Barrels • Old Tires
Unused Swimming Pools
Animal Watering Troughs
ACTIVE INGREDIENT:
INERT INGREDIENTS
KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN

Wear DEET, up to 30% when spending time in the great outdoors to repel mosquitos (and it repels ticks too, bonus.) Follow the package instructions. You don't need more than 30% for standard outside activities. Higher concentrations can have nasty side effects. And be sure to wash the DEET off after you return inside.

A hood of fine netting over your hat is great to keep the mosquitos at bay. Why has no one invented an umbrella with 5 feet of fine netting hanging down from it, to protect you from those pests everywhere you go?

Here's a good resource for preventing mosquito bites. And another resource breaking down methods that are effective and many that are not. This list will save you money!

If these methods are too mundane for you, let me tell you about a new practice in mosquito control that has shown some promise recently. In Hawaii, honey-creeper birds have seen a drastic fall in population thanks, in part, to a disease transmitted to them by mosquitos. Local scientists are releasing sterile male mosquitos by drone to interfere with reproduction of the mosquitos and reduce infection of the honey-creepers. Read more about this innovative approach.


REDUCE MOSQUITOES
DISEASE:
Mosquitoes are vectors for multiple viruses and diseases dangerous to humans, livestock, and pets. The most common found in North America is West Nile Virus.
USE REPELLENTS:
Use Repellents: Repellents work to diffuse the emissions that attract mosquitoes. Repellents come in many different types for different applications.
- Granules: Long-term protection. Create a barrier by sprinkling granules around the perimeter of the area.
- Sprays and Lotions: Short-term personal protection. Keep mosquitoes off skin or clothing.
- Burning repellents: Short-term protection of small areas. Burns citronella or pyrethrins, releasing gases that mask human or animal odor in a close range.
REDUCE STANDING WATER:
Reduce standing water: Water is the main resource mosquitoes need to survive. The first three stages of its life all occur in stagnant water.
Eliminating water in the area around your home will reduce mosquitoes.
- Dispose of, cover or flip over all containers that could collect water.
(tires, buckets, pots, bottles, cans, non-operational fountains)
- Change water regularly in containers that are intended to hold water, such as bird baths, or pet bowls.
- Fill holes in trees near your property.
- Clean your gutters.
- Keep pools clean and chlorinated.
- Make sure your lawn has proper drainage and isn't holding water.
AVERAGE LIFESPAN:
Two to three weeks
HABITAT:
Mosquitoes favor warm, moist environments. Mosquitoes require a source of stagnant water for the females to lay their eggs.

Like most things in nature, mosquito control works best when combined with holistic, regenerative ecosystem practices. **Conserve water usage** to prevent standing water that provides the perfect environment for mosquitos to reproduce. **Create habitats** to welcome those natural predators, like bat houses, and cover for birds, and pollinator gardens.

Practices like these promote diverse plant life, and more diverse plant life attracts natural mosquito predators, like dragonflies, bats and birds. These predators are your friends. Mosquitos are on their menu, but not their only food. They also ingest other insects that are harmful to local crops and flora.

A final tenet of regenerative methods is the **judicious use of chemicals**. Eliminating broad spectrum pesticides is key. These chemicals will harm the beneficial insects and natural predators of mosquitos. **Chose natural solutions or targeted insecticides to minimize harming the good guys.** The bottom line is minimize the amount of unnatural intervention in your yard and maximize the natural diversity of plants and animals and they will do the work for you.

Reducing the mosquito count is good, but total elimination is not the goal. A mosquito free home is my goal, but in the interest of a balanced approach I refer you to this short article.

Mosquitos are part of our ecosystem. The bats and dragonflies on our property help out with minimizing mosquito numbers. Around my house mosquitos don't get the welcome mat!

State of the Streams - Newaygo

written by: Amanda Paige

In late April and again in May, enthusiastic teams of citizen-scientists armed with nets, buckets, trays, and jars waded into Brooks and Penoyer Creeks in Newaygo. They collected leaf packs, rocks, sand, scraps of wood, and aquatic plants into their buckets. Once on shore, their haul was emptied into trays where they poured over wriggling and crawling creatures, excitedly asking "is this a stick or a caddis?"

These volunteers are part of the Muskegon River Watershed Assembly MiCorps Volunteer Stream Monitoring Program, affectionately dubbed the "Stream Team." Motivations for being part of the Stream Team vary. For some, it started as a way to connect with their grandchildren and with nature. For others, it's a chance to apply their knowledge and skills. Regardless of the reason they choose to join, MRWA is grateful they do because in Newaygo alone, they monitor five sections of streams (2 in Brooks Creek and three in Penoyer) twice per year. These twice-annual checkups help understand the state of the streams that feed into the Muskegon River, measure the effectiveness of ecosystem restoration projects, and engage the public about the ecosystems that rely on the river.

Good news for Newaygo, Brooks, and Penoyer creeks are in very good to excellent condition, although the effects of impoundments and sedimentation are evident in the individual scores. "It's a testament to the residents and City that they scored so well. The diversity in Brooks is amazing, especially considering it's smack in the middle of a city," says Amanda Paige, watershed engagement specialist for MRWA. Past data for the state of the streams can be found on the MiCorps Website

The spring sampling season is winding down, but if you would like to join the Stream Team for fun and learning during the summer, and sampling in the Fall, contact MRWA Watershed Engagement Specialist Amanda at amanda@mrwa.org or (231) 591-2332 for details. No experience is necessary!

Thank you to the DTE Energy Foundation and Michigan Clean Water Corps (MiCorps) for supporting the spring 2025 Stream Teams!

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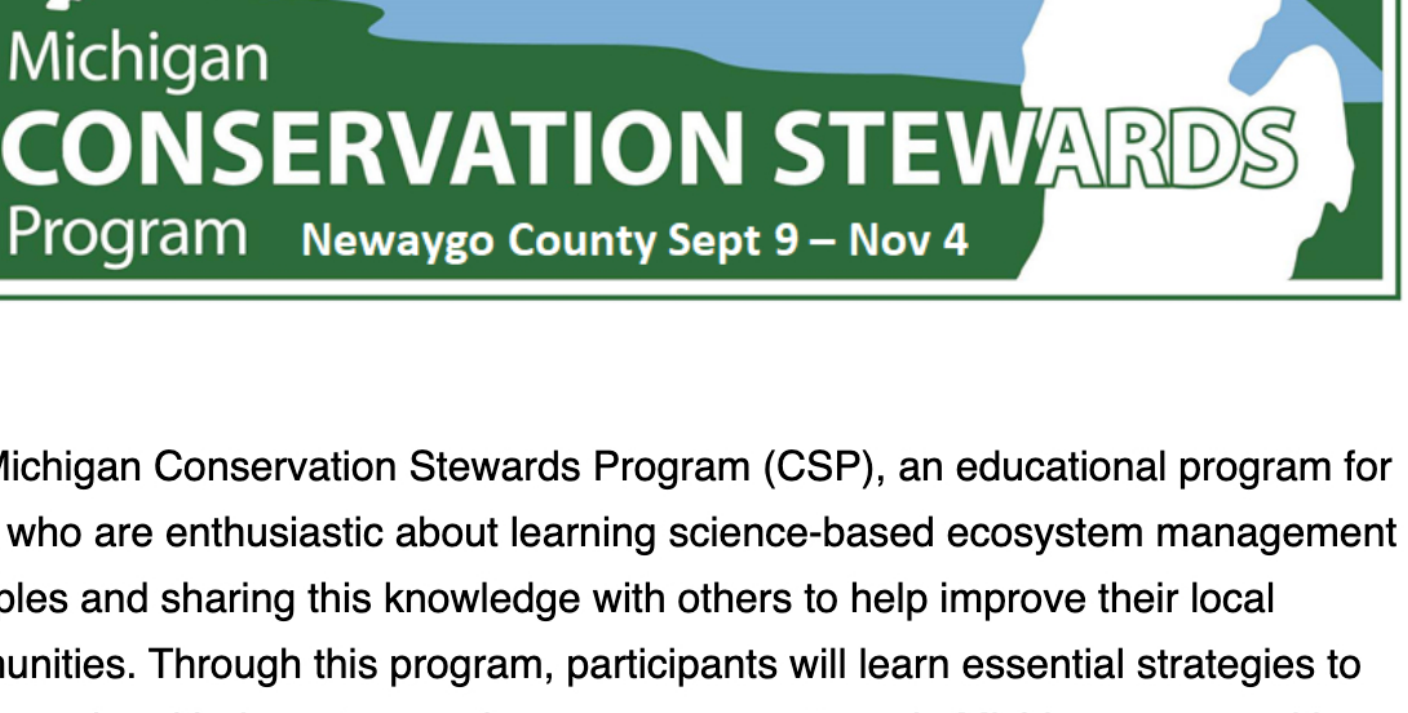
MSU Conservation Stewards Registration Now Open!



The Michigan Conservation Stewards Program (CSP), an educational program for those who are enthusiastic about learning science-based ecosystem management principles and sharing this knowledge with others to help improve their local communities. Through this program, participants will learn essential strategies to understand and help restore and conserve ecosystems in Michigan communities.

The Newaygo County cohort will host their weekly classes on Tuesday nights from Sept. 9 to Nov. 4, 2025 at locations throughout Newaygo County.

This program is a great way to learn more about the ecosystems in our area and connect with other people who share a passion for our environment.

More Information and Registration

What Else Can I Do?

This is our home. Help us protect our shared environment.

1. **Share our website, posts, E-news with Newaygo Community members and Organizations.**
2. **Join a Team! about invasive species, native landscapes, and restoration opportunities.**
3. **Get involved with Environmental Advocacy.**
4. **Bring your skills and knowledge to NCEC.**
5. **Donate!**

Contact NCEC

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 the button below to submit your event.

Ally Event Form

Your Support Makes A Difference

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.

Donate

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