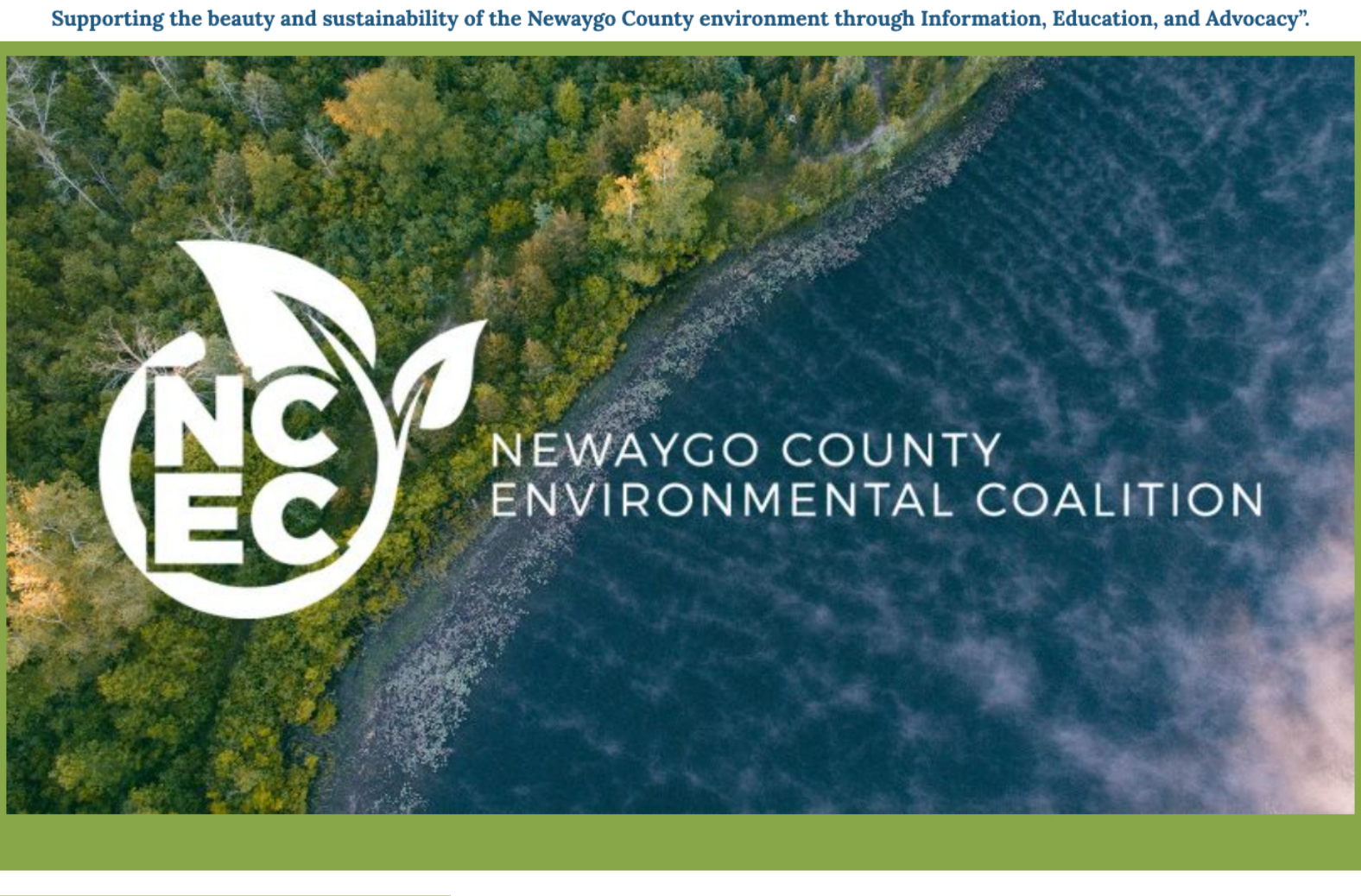
Edition #4 September 2023

>>> 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".



Rooted In The Land: Embracing The Power Of Native Plants

By Katie Clark

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By planting native species in our yards, we can provide essential habitat, food sources, and shelter for native birds, insects, and other wildlife. The world is losing an alarming rate of habitat loss due to urbanization which negatively affects the biodiversity and health of our ecosystem.

Many look to Newaygo County as a haven for forests, fields, and natural water features. While that is very true, this beautiful environment needs to be protected from ongoing development that is endangering the native ecosystem. This is true throughout the world. We at NCEC believe that preserving and restoring native plant ecosystems has become a crucial endeavor, even more here because we have so much to protect in Newaygo County.

Growing a Sustainable Legacy: Newaygo County Native Plant Proponents Unite for a Greener Future

By Katie Clark

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In a promising display of community engagement, the first gathering of native plant enthusiasts took place at The Bunker of the Water's Edge Golf Course in Fremont. Hosted by Big Bluestem Farm and the Newaygo County Environmental Coalition (NCEC), the event brought together experienced native plant gardeners, large area installers, and insect pollinator experts to share knowledge and answer questions. With a diverse range of attendees, all sharing a common goal of creating native plant habitats, the gathering marked the beginning of a movement to restore the earth, one household at a time.

1st Meeting of Newaygo County Native Plant Enthusiasts
BIG BLUESTEM FARM & NCEC & Symon Cronk
Forester & Native Plant Installation Contractor

Environmental Ally Spotlight

Michigan Nature Association
People. Land. Legacy.

Michigan Nature Association

What started as a small bird study group transformed into a state-wide land conservation organization.

In 1951, Bertha A. Daubendiek and a few of her friends started a group to study birds. The group started out with a mission to protect ecological diversity and to educate people about Michigan's diverse wildlife. This mission was revised over time as the organization expanded its ideology to accommodate land acquisition and conservation.

MNA has been very active in Newaygo County, helping to preserve over 273 acres of wilderness through the development of nature sanctuaries.

Brooks Oak Pine Barrens Nature Sanctuary: The 40-acre Brooks Oak Pine Barrens Nature Sanctuary was purchased in 2019 with funding from a Karner blue butterfly mitigation grant awarded to MNA by The Conservation Fund and with the approval of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. The natural communities found at Brooks Nature Sanctuary range from dry sand prairie to dry-mesic forest with the central 18 acres containing sparsely scattered trees being more indicative of a southern short-grass savanna community. The sanctuary occurs in an area that has been identified as a sub-population management unit for the Karner Blue Butterfly by the Huron-Manistee National Forest and this landscape is also utilized by numerous other rare savanna-oriented species.

Karner Blue Nature Sanctuary: The Karner Blue Nature Sanctuary is home to more than 100 different plant and animal species. Red oak, white oak, and white pine are the dominant trees in the barrens. Stunning yellow prickly pear cactus blooms throughout the prairies, along with wild blue lupine, puccoon, and doited horsemint.This 95-acre sanctuary is made of a combination of sand prairie, oak-pine barrens, rich conifer swamp, tamarack swamp, northern fen, oak-pine barrens, and emergent wetlands.

Newaygo Prairie Nature Sanctuary: This sanctuary is located at 5600-5998 S Poplar Ave, Newaygo, MI. It is a 110-acre prairie sanctuary that was purchased by the Michigan Nature Association in 1969. The sanctuary is composed of oak and pine barrens and is home to many high-quality natural features in need of protection.

Read More>>>

The purpose of the Michigan Nature Association (MNA) is to acquire, protect and maintain natural areas that contain examples of Michigan endangered and threatened flora, fauna, and other components of the natural environment, including habitat for fish, wildlife and plants of the state of Michigan and to carry on a program of natural history study and conservation education.

Prescribed Burn Training with the MNA:
To further the cause of prescribed burns in Newaygo County, the Newaygo County Environmental Coalition, in collaboration with the Michigan Nature Association and Big Bluestem Farm, will be offering the first Newaygo County prescribed burn training this fall. The objective is to form a trained group of volunteers who can perform prescribed burns under the guidance of specialists. This initiative aims to maintain existing nature preserves and assist homeowners in developing native landscaping on their properties.

> MNA is dedicated to permanently protecting land that provides critical habitat for rare, threatened and endangered species and natural communities.

Needed: Volunteers for

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

Rekindling the Flame: The Crucial Role of Prescribed Burns in Restoring and Maintaining Newaygo County's Native Ecosystems

Written by Katie Clark

Benefits of Prescribed Burns:

1. Nutrient Recycling: Prescribed burns help recycle nutrients tied up in old plant growth, allowing for the rejuvenation of the ecosystem.

2. Vegetation Control: By controlling woody plants and herbaceous weeds, prescribed burns create space for native grasses and wildflowers to thrive. This improves the overall quality of forage and increases plant growth.

3. Fire Risk Reduction: By reducing the accumulation of flammable materials, prescribed burns help mitigate the risk of large wildfires. This is particularly important in areas where human settlements interface with natural habitats.

4. Wildlife Habitat Improvement: Prescribed burns play a vital role in improving wildlife habitat. For example, brushlands can be invigorated and maintained with fire to benefit species such as bluebirds and sharp-tailed grouse. Burning old fields also controls saplings and woody vegetation, creating favorable nesting habitats for various wildlife species. Additionally, forest openings can be manipulated with burns to benefit more than 150 wildlife species.

5. Native Species Promotion: Prescribed burns can be used to promote the growth of fire-dependent trees, such as Jackpine, and increase populations of threatened and endangered species. They also help reduce the dominance of invasive and noxious weeds.

Preserving Native Environments of Newaygo County
michigan nature association
Join us for the 1st
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Read the full article on Prescribe Burns &/OR Sign-up for our 1st Upcoming Training.

Newaygo County Environmental Events, Activities, Education, & Awareness

Keep Informed & Get Involved

How Can We Get Our Environmental Event Amplified by NCEC?

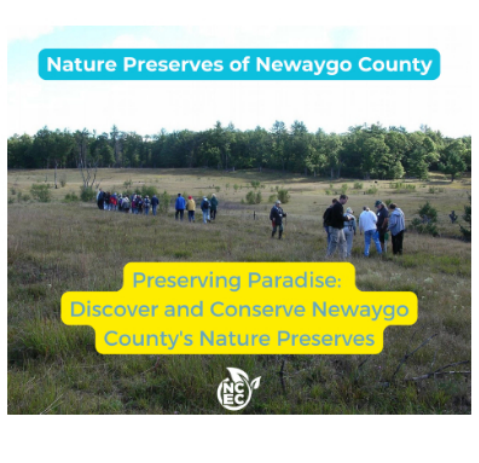
We will gladly add your organization's environment-related activity to our Calendar, and promote it on our Social Media. Complete the below form to add an event to our calendar which we will also share on our social media.

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.

Event Form

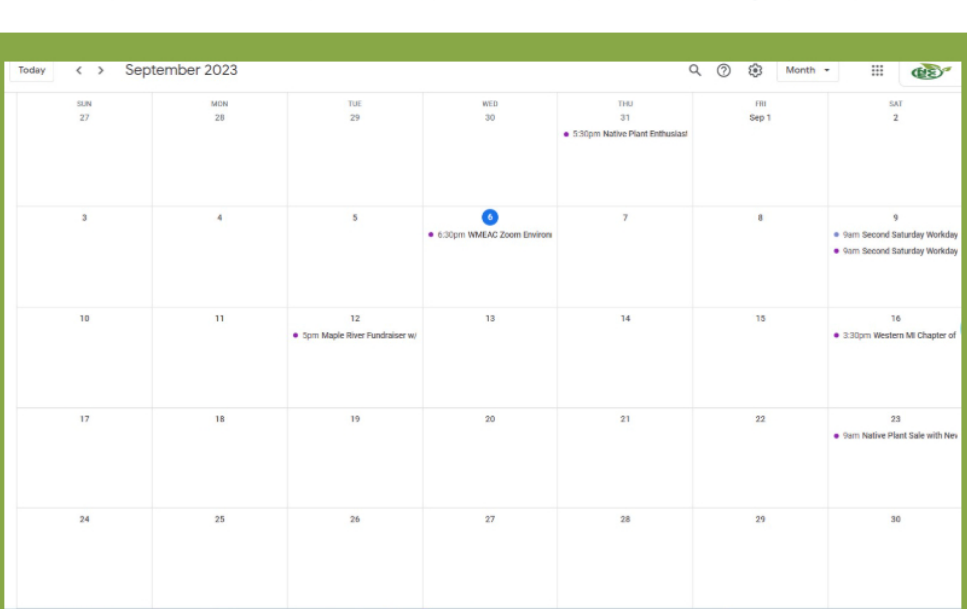
> "Children are born naturalists. They explore the world with all of their senses, experiment in the environment, and communicate their discoveries to those around them."
> -The Audubon Nature Preschool


Nature Preserves of Newaygo County
Preserving Paradise:
Discover and Conserve Newaygo County's Nature Preserves

Newaygo County is home to several nature preserves that are not only beautiful but also house unique ecological resources. These preserves are vital for protecting the natural habitats and species found within them. Learn how you can enjoy these unique environments as well as how you can get involved with supporting these special places.

Continue Reading Full Post

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


Today < > September 2023 Month

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
27	28	29	30	31 5:30pm Native Plant Enthusiast	Sep 1	2
3	4	5	6 6:30pm WMEAC Zoom Environ	7	8	9 9am Second Saturday Workday 9am Second Saturday Workday
10	11	12 5pm Maple River Fundraiser w/	13	14	15	16 3:30pm Western MI Chapter of
17	18	19	20	21	22	23 9am Native Plant Sale with Nev
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

Click on the individual event to get more details.

Youth & Young Adult Environmental Advocates

>>>NCT-Western MI Chapter Group Hike & Annual Meeting (children are welcome) 9/16/23 -3:30pm to 6:30pm

Click the image below to read more about Ensley Nature Preserve, a great place to spend the day with your family.

Visting Ensley Nature Preserve

By Lindy Colombini

"What a perfect day for a long drive in the country! Is that an old church turned into an ice cream shop? Do I have enough gas? Where in the county am I?!?"

These were just a few of the thoughts that were going through my mind while driving to the Ensley Township Nature Preserve from Fremont for the first time. I suspect it would have been a shorter drive if I had started closer. And no, I did not have enough gas. Finding the preserve was easy with visible signs and a large parking lot. The play area for the children looked incredibly exciting, reminding me of play areas I explored as a child, yet also new with a high lookout and slide! I can't wait to bring the kids back to explore.

My friend and I took the longest path, 0.93 miles, around the outer edge of the preserve, enjoying every minute of it. We met only one other woman along the way. A quick chat informed us that she walks the paths regularly. There were viewing benches and platforms with a nice little pond. I loved seeing the variety of plants and flowers growing along the path including Ghost Pipe, Showy Tick-Trefoil, and a variety of beautiful mushrooms.

I'm definitely taking the family back for a fun day hike and checking out that ice cream place on the way!

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

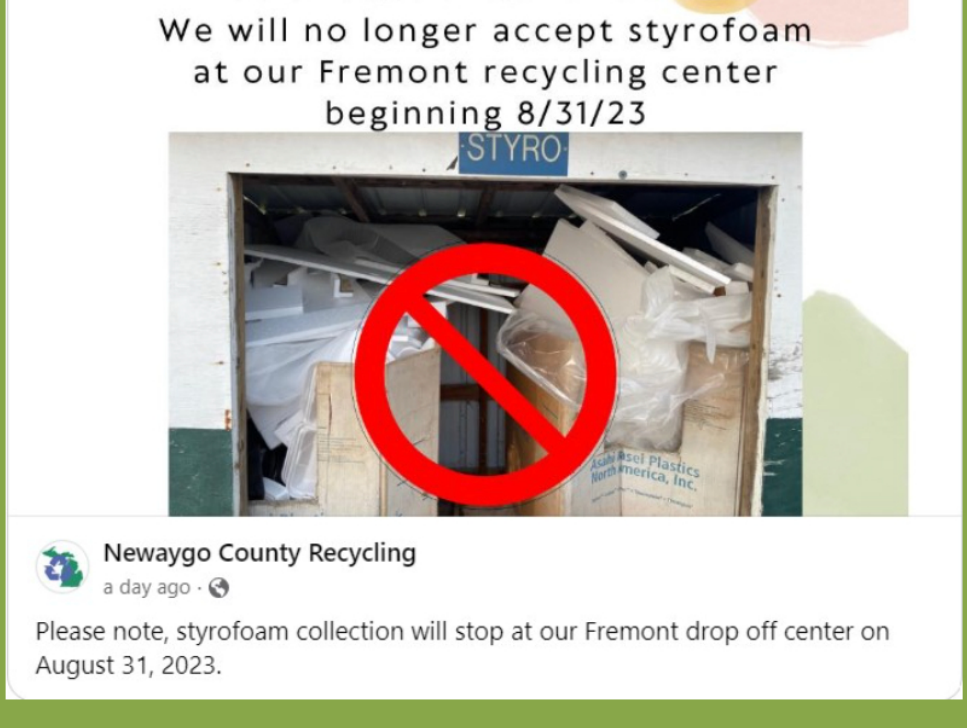
LOBO: Love Our Beautiful Outdoors

>>>McDuffee Creek Work Day (click to sign up) 9/9/23-9am to noon

>>>NCT Western Chapter Hike and Annual Gathering 9/16/23, 3:30pm to 6:30pm

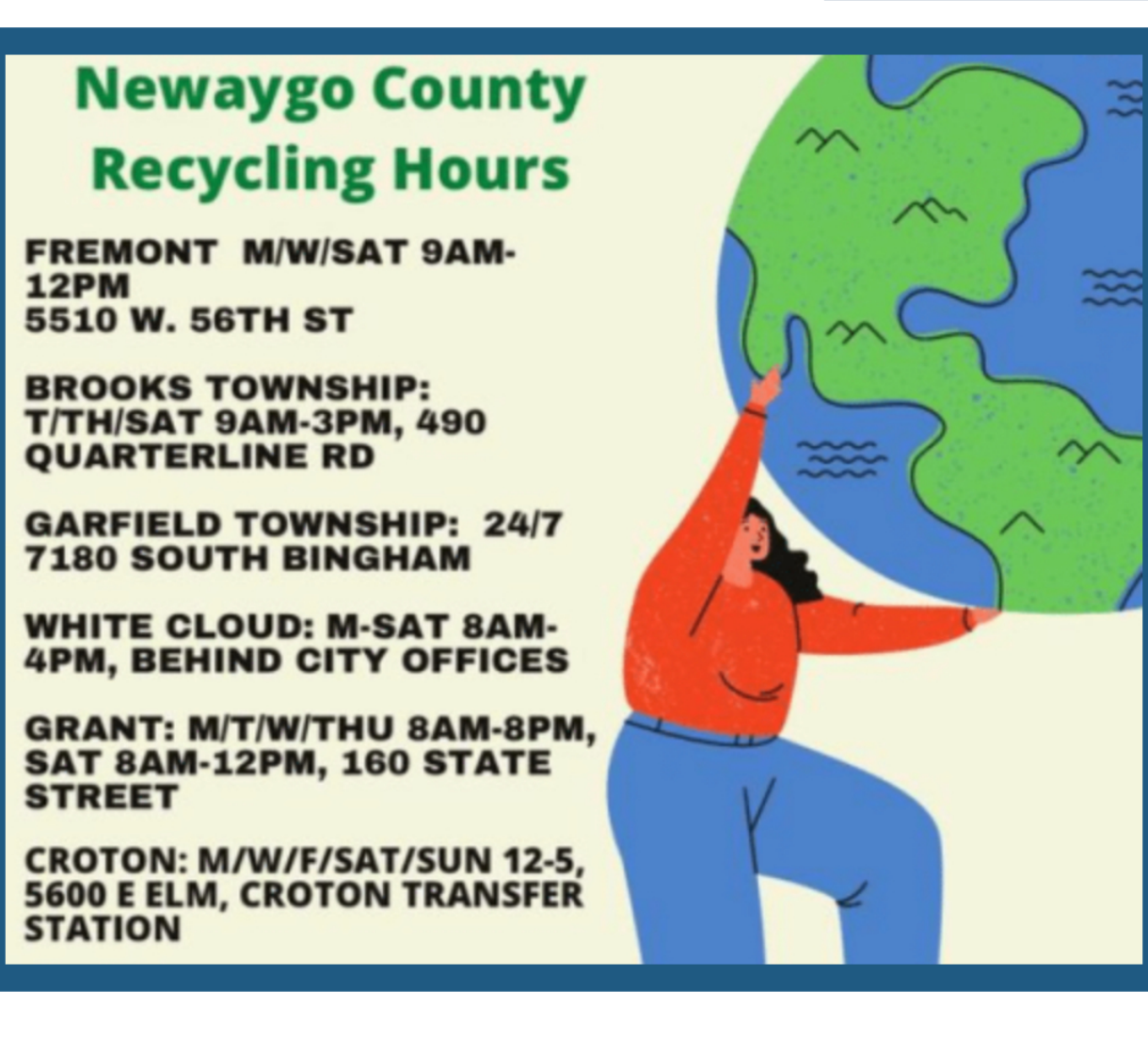
I speak for the trees,
for the trees have no tongues
- Dr. Seuss,
The Lorax

3Rs: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle


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

Newaygo County Recycling
a day ago
Please note, styrofoam collection will stop at our Fremont drop off center on August 31, 2023.

> Taking care of environment is not an obligation – Our environment is our life.


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

Healthy Habitats

>>>Maple River Fundraiser, 9/12/23, 5-7pm

>>Fall Native Plant Sale 9/23/23, 9am to 1pm

> "Look deep into nature, and then you will understand everything better."
> -Albert Einstein

Environmental Resources

Of Newaygo County and Nearby

How Can I Get Involved?

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!

Check out our book review on *Nature's Best Hope* (Creating HOMEGROWN NATIONAL PARK)
*Contact NCEC if you would like to start an environmental book club with this book or look into creating your own Homegrown National Park.

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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Our mailing address is:

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can or