



CITY OF ANN ARBOR 2007-2012 PARK MAINTENANCE AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS MILLAGE

NATURAL AREA PRESERVATION (NAP): WHAT IS NATURAL AREA PRESERVATION?



NAP's mission is to protect and restore Ann Arbor's natural areas, and to foster an environmental ethic among its citizens. NAP staff and volunteers do this by conducting a wide range of ecological stewardship activities to restore the native plant and animal communities throughout the Ann Arbor parks system's 1200 acres of natural areas. Stewardship activities are prioritized by ecological health assessments of individual sites, their context within the parks system, and volunteer interest.

ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION/ACCESS TO NATURE

Ecological restoration includes: invasive plants and animals; reintroducing natural processes, such as fire, that benefit native plants and animals; improving habitat for wildlife; controlling non-native. Access to Nature is facilitated by a network of hiking and mountain biking trails throughout Ann Arbor's natural areas.



Burn at Furstenberg.

Remnant Native Plant Communities

Annual management of remnant plant communities and control invasive plant species on 500 acres of natural areas in 70 different city parks and nature areas, including Barton, Bird Hills, Black Pond Woods, Cedar Bend, Dolph, Furstenberg, Gallup, Marshall, Mary Beth Doyle, Miller, and Scarlett-Mitchell.

Historic Ecological Processes

Manage two controlled burn crews to reintroduce fire to 100+ acres of park natural areas annually, taking special precautions to minimize impacts to fire-sensitive species.

Resilience and Ecosystem Services

Installation and maintenance of rain gardens for treatment of storm water; including Argo, Belize, Bird Hills, Buhr Park, Doyle, Hunt, and Veterans Memorial Park.

Access to Nature

Construction and maintenance of 36 miles of footpaths, trails, bridges, and boardwalks that allow park users to immerse themselves in nature just minutes from their home.

**MILLAGE REVENUE FUNDS PARK
MAINTENANCE PROJECTS AND
IMPROVEMENTS THROUGHOUT THE CITY
OF ANN ARBOR PARKS SYSTEM**



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BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT/MONITORING:

How healthy are our city natural areas? This question is answered by the biological monitoring performed by NAP staff and the volunteers they train. Knowing how and when wildlife species use the parks helps us manage those sites in ways that benefit wildlife. A few examples:

Breeding Bird Survey

The parks are home to a multitude of birds and bird-watchers. Bird surveys influence land-management practices (such as mowing) to create more attractive habitat for birds. Bird surveys have documented the return of Eastern Bluebirds to Gallup, Furstenberg, Kuebler-Langford, Barton, and other parks where nesting boxes were installed.

Dolph Nature Area is widely recognized as one of the area's premier stop-over locations for migrating songbirds (including a Kirtland's Warbler – one of the rarest birds in the world).

Botanical Survey

Over 1100 species of plants have been documented growing in Ann Arbor's parks, including 20 that are State-listed as Endangered, Threatened, or Special Concern in Michigan. These rare native plants benefit from NAP's ecological stewardship activities.

Reptile and Amphibian Surveys

NAP Volunteers have documented that Ann Arbor parks are home to at least 34 species of Reptiles and Amphibians, including four that are State-listed. A new project for 2012, NAP's turtle habitat creation, is one example of how we are managing parks to benefit these wildlife species. Nesting turtles have specific requirements for where they lay their eggs.

NAP staff and volunteers are creating such habitat at Mallett's Creek and Huron Parkway Nature Areas to benefit the turtle species that live in these parks.



Frog survey.

VOLUNTEER OUTREACH/TRAINING:

Volunteers are essential for fostering the strong environmental ethic which our community values. Volunteer programming welcomes all interested volunteers from elementary schools to colleges or professional groups to retired residents. Anyone with an interest in learning through service is met with open arms.

Stewardship Workdays

Coordinated over 500 public and private stewardship workdays, with 8,500 individual volunteers contributing over 44,100 volunteer hours towards natural area stewardship.

Park Stewards

Recruited, trained, and coordinated 75 park stewards to care for 35 natural areas.

Inventory Volunteers

Annually train and coordinate volunteers in five ecological monitoring programs: Breeding Bird Survey; Salamander Survey; Mud-Puppy Survey, Frog and Toad Survey; and Long-Term Photo-Monitoring Program.



Kids planting at Redwood Park.