



AGENDA
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday March 12, 2025 6:00 pm
Township Service Center
2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court, Okemos MI

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
2. PUBLIC COMMENT
3. APPROVE AGENDA
 - A. March 12, 2025
4. APPROVE MINUTES
 - A. January 8, 2025
5. COMMUNICATIONS
 - A. Review of Board Member Expectations
 - B. New Parks and Recreation Department Administrative Assistant, Hannah Pachucki
6. DISCUSSION ITEMS
 - A. Parcels for Acquisition Consideration
 - A. Parcel A: 5273 Meridian Rd, Parcel #: 33-02-02-13-200-070
 - I. April Site Visit
 - B. Parcel B: Hamilton Rd, Parcel #: 33-02-02-21-179-008
 - C. Parcel C: MUCC Update
 - B. Acquisition Prioritization
 - A. Part 1: Current Land Preservation inventory & management efforts
7. REPORTS
 - A. STAFF REPORT: Stewardship Coordinator, Emma Campbell
 - a. MCC 2024 Annual Corps Rapport
 - b. MCC February & March Stewardship Calendar
 - B. ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION REPORT: Commissioner Yu Man Lee
 - C. PARK COMMISSION REPORT: Commissioner Mark Stephens
8. PUBLIC COMMENT
9. OTHER MATTERS AND BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS
10. ANNOUNCEMENTS
 - A. Next Land Preservation Advisory Board Meeting: Wednesday, April 9, 2025 at 6 pm at The Township Service Center, 2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court, Okemos, Michigan 48864.
11. ADJOURNMENT

Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Meridian Township Land Preservation Advisory Board by contacting: Director Courtney Wisinski, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864 or 517.853.4600 - Ten Day Notice is Required.

Meeting Location: 2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court, Haslett, MI 48840

Providing a safe and welcoming, sustainable prime community.



A PRIME COMMUNITY
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CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Township Service Center
2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court | Haslett, MI
Wednesday, January 8, 2025, 6 PM

PRESENT: Board Members: Jamie Hiller, Steve Thomas, Kris Parnell, Kathy Fay, Yu Man Lee.
ABSENT: Mark Stephens.
STAFF: Emma Campbell, Stewardship Coordinator
TOWNSHIP: Township Clerk, Angela Demas

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Hiller called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

- a. Nicholas Holzward
 - i. A local community member who is interested in hearing what the Land Preservation Advisory Board does and how they operate.
- b. Wayne Beyeau
 - i. 5273 Meridian Rd., Okemos MI
 - ii. A resident who is recommending their currently owned parcel to the Land Preservation Advisory Board for acquisition. Mr. Beyeau has provided documents with information about the parcel and will stay for Discussion Item 7A to answer any questions board members may have.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

- a. January 8, 2025

Board member Lee moved to approve the January 8, 2025 Agenda to place on file. Board member Parnell seconded.

Voice vote: Unanimous

4. APPROVE MINUTES

- a. November 13, 2024

Board Member Parnell makes a motion to place the November 13, 2024 minutes on file. Board Member Stephens seconded.

Voice vote: Unanimous

5. COMMUNICATIONS

- a. None.

6. ACTION ITEMS

Minutes – Land Preservation Advisory Board

January 8, 2025

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- a. 2025 Meeting Resolution
 - i. see Exhibit A

Board member Stephens moved to amend the Meeting Resolution to adjust June 11 to June 12, 2025. Kathy Fay seconded.

Roll call:

Ayes: Jamie Hiller, Steve Thomas, Yu Man Lee, Kathy Fay, Kris Parnell, Angela Demas.

Nays: None.

Board member Parnell moved to approve the amended Meeting Resolution and place on file. Fay seconded.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Jamie Hiller, Steve Thomas, Yu Man Lee, Kathy Fay, Kris Parnell, Angela Demas.

Nays: None.

- b. 2025 Election of Officers
 - i. See Exhibit B

7. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a. Parcels for Acquisition Consideration
 - i. Parcel A: 5273 Meridian Rd, Parcel #: 33-02-02-13-200-070
 - 1. Board advises staff to do a site visit prior to the March 12 meeting to get an initial sense of the ecological value of the recommended parcel.
 - 2. Mr. Beyeau gives a brief summary of the property, which is 8.89 acres and mostly open area. It is surrounded by an Ingham County drain on two sides, partitioning it from nearby neighbors. It has almost direct connectivity to North Meridian Road Park to the south. The board and staff have written permission from Mr. Beyeau to enter the property for a site visit. He wishes this land to be preserved and views it as a beneficial addition to our Land Preservation Program.
 - ii. Parcel B: Hamilton Rd, Parcel #: 33-02-02-21-179-008
 - 1. Vacant parcel currently for sale directly adjacent and adjoining Mandenberg Woods Preserve. Parcel is 1.94 acres and is listed for \$94,000 on Zillow.
 - 2. It may have an aggressive invasive species that Chair Hiller and Commissioner Stephens observed during the acquisition of Mandenberg Preserve. It is a yellow spring flower. Staff will investigate.
 - 3. Board advises staff will check out the property as much as possible and get back to the board before a letter of interest is sent.
 - iii. Parcel C: MUCC Update
 - 1. Real estate agent received the Board's letter of interest and staff advised on the Land Preservation Program acquisition process. They will pass this on to the owners and return the application if there is interest.

Minutes – Land Preservation Advisory Board

January 8, 2025

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- b. Acquisition Prioritization
 - i. All board members will be participating in a discussion throughout 2025, which will outline the prioritization process for any future land preserve acquisitions as we move forward with a land management focus for all current and future preserves.
 - ii. Staff will bring more information to the March meeting.

8. REPORTS

- a. STAFF REPORT: Stewardship Coordinator, Emma Campbell
 - i. Update on current preservation projects and issues
 - 1. Financial Statement
 - a. Reserve fund (218) is not accessible to the board
 - b. Land Acquisition Fund (217) is accessible to the board for acquisition
 - c. Land Preservation Millage (217) is accessible to staff for management activities and staff salaries
 - ii. 2025 Land Preservation Program Goals
 - 1. See Exhibit C
 - iii. MCC January Stewardship Calendar
 - b. ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION REPORT: Commissioner Yu Man Lee
 - i. The EC is currently working on updating the Greenspace Plan for the Township
 - ii. Commissioner Lee suggests that the Land Preservation Advisory Board plan to assist EC on developing the updates and recommendations for the plan.
 - c. PARK COMMISSION REPORT: Commissioner Mark Stephens
 - i. Commissioner Stephens provides an update from the meeting of the Lake Lansing Advisory Board; the drain office did widen and open up the culverts at Pike Crossing and Lake Lansing to allow for easier navigation for fish like pike.

9. PUBLIC COMMENT

- a. None.

10. OTHER MATTERS AND BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS

- a. Township Clerk Angela Demas would like to announce that Timothy Dempsey will be starting on January 27th, 2025 as the new Township Manager.
- b. Clerk Demas communicates to the board that the Ingham County Drain Office will be utilizing the Inter Urban Wetland Preserve as one of the options that was discussed at the November 2024 meeting.

11. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. Next Land Preservation Advisory Board Meeting: Wednesday, March 12, 2025 at 6 pm at the Township Service Center, 2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court, Okemos, Michigan 48864.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Board member Fay moves to adjourn the meeting. Board member Parnell seconded.

Chair Hiller adjourned the meeting at 8:28 pm.

Exhibit A



**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
RESOLUTION TO DESIGNATE
2025 LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING RESOLUTION**

At a regular meeting of the Land Preservation Advisory Board of the Charter Township of Meridian, Ingham County, Michigan, held at the Meridian Service Center, in said Township on the 8th day of January 2025 at 6:00 pm, Local Time.

PRESENT:

ABSENT:

The following resolution supported by Chair Jamie Hiller:

WHEREAS, the Land Preservation Advisory Board desires to announce the time, date, and place of all meetings of the Land Preservation Advisory Board; and

WHEREAS, the Land Preservation Advisory Board deems the 2025 regular meeting schedule sufficient to uphold the Township Board's Policies and Procedures, and advancement toward the Board's Global Ends; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN, INGHAM COUNTY, MICHIGAN, THAT THE LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD ADOPTS ITS REGULAR 2025 MEETING SCHEDULE AS FOLLOWS:

<u>Date</u>		
January 8	Regular Meeting	6 pm
March 12	Regular Meeting	6 pm
April 9	Regular Meeting	6 pm
June 11	Regular Meeting	6 pm
August 13	Regular Meeting	6 pm
September 10	Regular Meeting	6 pm
October 8	Regular Meeting	6 pm
November 12	Regular Meeting	6 pm

1. The Land Preservation Advisory Board has set a schedule to meet on the second Wednesday of the month. No meeting will be held for the month of February, May, July and December, unless one is called by the chairperson.
2. Each of the above meetings shall be held at the specified time in the lunch room of the Meridian Service Center, 2100 Gaylord C. Smith Ct., Haslett, Michigan, (517) 853-4000; with the exception of the joint meeting of the boards and commission which is held in the Town Hall Room, Meridian Municipal Building, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos; unless changed and noticed in accordance with MCL 15.265

3. Special meetings of the Land Preservation Advisory Board may be called pursuant to the statute thereto appertaining.
4. Regular meetings may be canceled, recessed or postponed by members of the Land Preservation Advisory Board pursuant to the statute thereto appertaining.
5. A summary of this resolution stating date, place, and time shall be posted in the Meridian Municipal Building within ten (10) days after the first regularly scheduled meeting of the year in accordance with the MCL 15.265

ADOPTED: Board Member Parnell moved to approve the amended meeting calendar for 2025.
Board Member Fay seconded.

YEAS:

NAYS:

The resolution passed

STATE OF MICHIGAN)
) ss:
COUNTY OF INGHAM)

I, the undersigned, the duly qualified Chairperson of the Land Preservation Advisory Board of the Charter Township of Meridian, Ingham County, Michigan, DO HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of a resolution adopted at a regular meeting of the Land Preservation Advisory Board held on the day of January 8th, 2025.

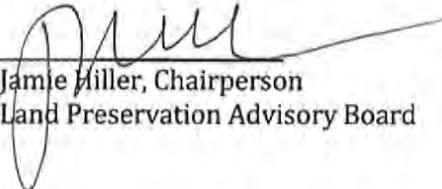

Jamie Miller, Chairperson
Land Preservation Advisory Board

Exhibit B



To: Land Preservation Advisory Board Members
From: Emma Campbell, Land Stewardship Coordinator
Date: January 8, 2025
Re: Election of Officers for 2025

The current Chair/Vice Chair opens floor for nominations of Chair:

- a. A commissioner nominates a member of the Commission.
- b. Another Commissioner seconds the nomination.
- c. The nominee either accepts or declines nomination.
- d. The Chair asks if there are any other nominations, and if there are, then steps a, b and c are repeated.
- e. Once all nominations are offered, the Chair closes the floor to nominations (or a Commissioner can move to close the floor to nominations) and the Chair takes a roll call vote.

The current Chair/Vice Chair opens the floor for nominations of Vice Chair:

- a. A commissioner nominates a member of the Commission.
- b. Another Commissioner seconds the nomination.
- c. The nominee either accepts or declines nomination.
- d. The Chair asks if there are any other nominations, and if there are, then steps a, b and c are repeated.
- e. Once all nominations are offered, the Chair closes the floor to nominations (or a Commissioner can move to close the floor to nominations) and the Chair takes a roll call vote.



To: Land Preservation Advisory Board Members
From: Emma Campbell, Land Stewardship Coordinator
Date: January 8, 2025
Re: Election of Officers for 2025

Chair opens the floor for nominations for **Chair**.

BOARD MEMBER KRIS PARNELL MOVED, TO NOMINATE JAMIE HILLER AS CHAIR.
BOARD MEMBER KATHY FAY SECONDED.

Board member Hiller accepted the nomination.

Hearing no other nominations, Chair closed the floor to nominations for Chair.

Roll Call Vote:

AYES: Steve Thomas, Yu Man Lee, Kris Parnell, Kathy Fay, Angela Demas, Jamie Hiller (abstained).

NAYS: None.

Chair opens the floor for nominations for **Vice Chair**.

BOARD MEMBER KATHY FAY MOVED, TO NOMINATE STEVE THOMAS AS VICE CHAIR.
BOARD MEMBER KRIS PARNELL SECONDED.

Board member Steve Thomas accepted the nomination.

Hearing no other nominations, Chair closed the floor to nominations for Vice Chair.

Roll Call Vote:

AYES: Jamie Hiller, Yu Man Lee, Kris Parnell, Kathy Fay, Angela Demas, Steve Thomas (abstained).

NAYS: None.

Exhibit C

Meridian Township

2025 Land Preservation Program Goals



Stewardship Objectives & Management Goals

Implementing land management on an ecosystem level to address the overall environmental health of the Township. Management of priority areas will improve ecosystem health, community health, as well as environmental outreach and education. Program goals are expanding to include homeowner stewardship of nearby wetlands and private property landscaping.

1. Invasive Species Identification, Removal, & Monitoring; Continued expansion of contractual management

- a. **Priority species:** a species focus in necessary when setting management priorities. The following species are difficult to eradicate once established, and spread at a fast rate.
 - i. Woody Species: Oriental bittersweet, common/glossy buckthorn, autumn olive, Japanese barberry
 - ii. Herbaceous Species: Japanese knotweed, phragmites, reed canary grass, Japanese hedge parsley,
 - iii. Other species such as honeysuckles, dame's rocket and garlic mustard are managed mostly during MCC workdays in areas of high quality and diverse native plant species present
- b. **Priority contractual management (current & future):**
 - i. Pike Crossing Preserve cut-leaf teasel management & potential seeding/planting
 - ii. Black locust at Davis Foster Preserve (currently being managed)
 - iii. Phragmites at Ted Black Woods, Glacial Ridge Preserve, Inter-Urban Wetlands Preserve, and Davis Foster Preserve
 1. Continue to identify additional sites and working on a phragmites outreach program to partner with homeowners for more extensive Township management
 2. Japanese & Giant Knotweed treatment at Ponderosa Preserve (managed by staff in 2024)
 - a. Ted Black Woods stands are managed by staff
 - b. Identified at Pike Crossing Preserve and managed by staff in 2024
 3. Invasive management at Ted Black Woods; there are a myriad of new & aggressive invasive plant species invading the Grand River side of this park.

- iv. Spot spraying invasive species at preserves (larger tracts of area that need management, but staff has limited time to get to)
 - c. **Preserves currently undergoing active invasive species management include:** Red Cedar Glen, Lake Lansing North, Foster-Crouse, Towar Woods, Pike Crossing, Heron Creek, Serafine, Sower Woods Preserve, Tihart, Cornell Wetlands, Forest Grove, Northridge, Ponderosa, Okemos Road, Inter-Urban Wetland, Davis Foster, & Sumbal.
 - d. **Parks currently undergoing active invasive species management:** Nancy Moore, Central Park, Hartrick, Red Cedar Natural Area, Legg, Harris Nature Center, Eastgate, Forest Hills, Ted Black Woods, Hillbrook, Sander Farm, Red Cedar Natural Area, Brattin Woods.
- 2. Continue Individualized Management Plans for Preserves**
 - a. Master stewardship and management plans exist for the Township to tackle management issues as a whole, as well as management plans for individualized invasive species
 - b. Preserves that receive the most management and have high ecological value will be prioritized first
 - c. Once priority preserves are finalized, the rest of the preserves will receive a plan based on the information currently gathered about the area
 - d. This process will continue into 2026, and plans will continue to be updated as more information is acquired
- 3. Continue Land Preservation Signage & Boundary Marker Replacement**
 - a. A signage assessment, needs, and management schedule were updated in 2024. Needs from assessment will continue to be addressed into 2026
 - b. Update degraded boundary markers and install in areas where encroachment is an issue (i.e. Towner Wetland Preserve)
 - c. Replace boundary markers at priority preserves, those that receive encroachment from neighbors
 - d. Continue installation of educational & trail signage
- 4. Planting a Native Meridian Program**
 - a. Continue expansion of native plant program and habitat restoration at parks, preserves, and private property
 - b. Seed sowing for wetland buffer enhancement on private property assessed by Stewardship staff for Township residents
- 5. Michigan State University Collaboration**
 - a. Continue partnerships with MSU Fisheries and Wildlife Department research teams, Fisheries and Wildlife Club prairie restoration and seed exchange, macroinvertebrate and turtle research
 - b. Participate in the Glassen Scholars program as a host site for student candidates
- 6. Land preservation program website and social media campaigns**
 - a. Add an educational campaign for no dumping leaves in fall, as well as other yard waste
 - i. Feature on website and post to social media sites

2024 Land Preservation & Stewardship Annual Report
Emma Campbell, Land Stewardship Coordinator

Deer Management – 14th Year

The Parks and Recreation Department placed and managed 67 hunters on 1,600 acres of parks and land preserves (43 properties) during the 2024 Deer Management Archery Program, as well as, on 29 private properties. The total deer harvested by Township archers was 147. The Meridian Township Police Department culled 153 deer from January 13th to February 3rd, for a total of 300 deer for the 2024-25' management season.

Land Preservation Program

- Rule signage stating rules and citing the land preservation ordinance were installed in land preserves at trailheads and property lines. The purpose of these signs is to increase awareness and accessibility of these areas.
 - New hanging name plates were installed at all land preserves with fully updated signage, with seven preserves receiving a new, more geographically accurate name.
- An 8' X 10' Greenhouse was installed at the Township Service Center to facilitate germination of native seeds as well as to improve the care of native transplants for habitat restoration efforts.
- An 8' X 20' storage shed was installed at the Township Service Center for the improved organization of equipment, tools and supplies used for stewardship staff and volunteer efforts.
- For the first time ever, three part-time staff positions were filled to aid the Stewardship Coordinator and carry out land management activities, such as managing invasive species
- In Fall of 2024 contractors from Wildtype began managing 1.52 acres of priority invasive black locust tree species at Davis Foster Preserve.
- In partnership with the Environmental Commission, new Wetland Ordinance and Wetland Educational signage has been designed for installation in special areas of our public lands.
- Spring/summer floristic surveys completed for the first time to gather more data to guide more specific land management practices.

Volunteer and Meridian Conservation Corps (MCC) Accomplishments

- The Meridian Conservation Corps consists of 346 community volunteers who work under the leadership of Stewardship Coordinator, Emma Campbell and conduct valuable work to improve our natural environment in Township parks and preserves.
- The MCC logged 632.5 hours in 2024. 55 Meridian Conservation Corps Stewardship Workday and Educational Events were successfully completed.
- These events include invasive species removal, native planting and seed sowing, native seed collection, trash cleanup, and education on wetlands and local flora and fauna.
- The Meridian Conservation Corps partnered with MI Waterways Stewards for a community wide Red Cedar River Cleanup, collaborating with East Lansing to remove trash from over a mile corridor of the Red Cedar between Meridian and East Lansing. 2024 marked the start of invasive species education and removal as part of this annual event.

Prescribed Burn Management

A prescribed burn was successfully completed on 17 acres of Davis Foster Preserve, Burn Unit 1, in the spring of 2024. Prescribed burns are part of the Township's land management goals to enhance local biodiversity of native plants that are fire dependent.

Wetland Education and Restoration Program

The goal of this program is to expand the community's knowledge of ecosystem services that wetlands provide, as well as, Township ordinances and state regulations for wetland protection. In 2024 staff worked to identify areas of greatest need at Township wetland sites. These sites have been assessed for the following; invasive species management, floristic inventories, native seed collection, native plantings, and educational signage and fencing installation. Staff completed inventory reports for interested Township residents to help restore wetland buffers on private property. All these practices are a collective restoration effort to ensure the preservation of wetlands in Meridian Township.

LPAB members 2024

Jamie Hiller | Chair
Steve Thomas | Vice Chair
Kathy Fay | Resident Member
Kris Parnell | Resident Member
Yu Man Lee | Environmental Commission Liaison
Mark Stephens | Park Commission Liaison
James McCurtis | Township Trustee

LPAB members 2025

Jamie Hiller | Chair
Steve Thomas | Vice Chair
Kathy Fay | Resident Member
Kris Parnell | Resident Member
Yu Man Lee | Environmental Commission Liaison
Mark Stephens | Park Commission Liaison
Angela Demas | Township Trustee

2024/25 Staff

Lucy Breda | Assistant Stewardship Coordinator
Rachel Mickey | Stewardship Field Assistant
Jennifer Soria | Stewardship Field Assistant (ended work in January of 2025)

Item 6.A.A

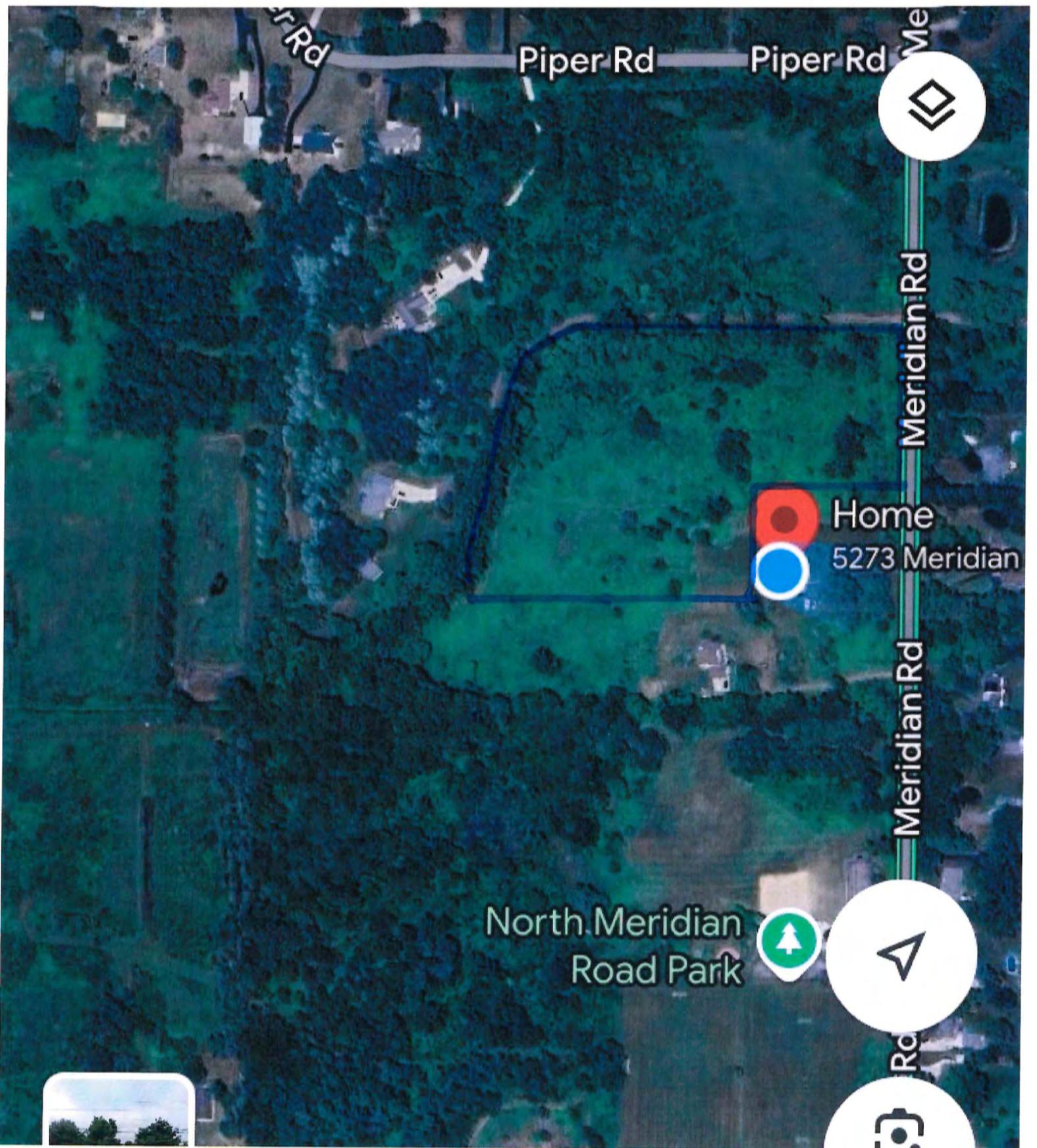


To: Land Preservation Advisory Board Members
From: Emma Campbell, Stewardship Coordinator
Date: March 12, 2025
Re: Parcel A: 5273 Meridian Rd, Parcel #: 33-02-02-13-200-070

Mr. Wayne Beyeau (landowner of Parcel A) attended the November 13, 2024 Land Preservation Advisory Board (LPAB) meeting and gave public comment recommending a parcel in their ownership for purchase by the Land Preservation Advisory Board. After a later discussion about the property, the LPAB advised staff to do a site visit prior to the March 12 meeting to get an initial sense of the ecological value of the recommended parcel. Initial findings will be brought to the March 12, 2025 meeting before proceeding forward in the land acquisition process. If the LPAB decides to move to the next step, a site visit for ecological screening will be scheduled for April 2025.

Mr. Beyeau provided a brief summary of the property and associated documents, which includes the following information:

1. The parcel is a total of 8.89 acres and mostly open area, with little tree canopy except for the property borders.
2. It is surrounded by an Ingham County drain on two sides, partitioning it from nearby neighbors.
3. It has almost direct connectivity to North Meridian Road Park to the south.
4. Mr. Beyeau completed and signed an application for the Land Preservation Acquisition Recommendation, giving the board and staff written permission to enter the property for a site visit.
5. The property owners wish their land to be preserved and views it as a beneficial addition to the Township's Land Preservation Program. They included a map of Priority Conservation Corridors in Meridian Township to illustrate that the parcel would give continuous flow to priority ecological corridors on the eastern border of the Township.
6. A report from the initial site visit by staff on January 22, 2025 is included in the March 12 meeting packet.



Piper Rd

Piper Rd

Meridian Rd

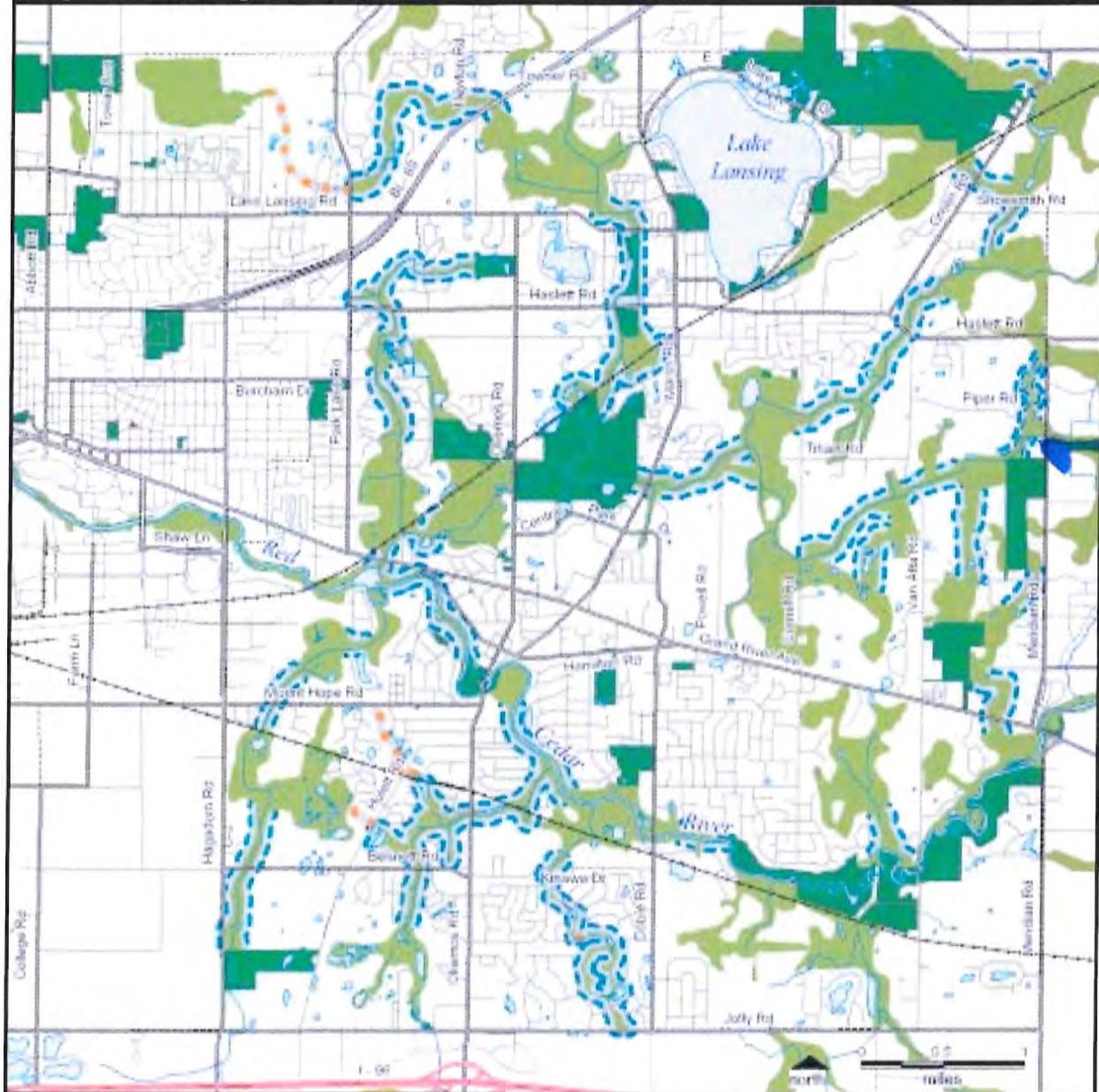
Meridian Rd

North Meridian
Road Park

Home
5273 Meridian



Fig. 4s. Fragile Links



Legend

- Restoration Opportunities
- - - - Highlights Fragile Links
- Priority Conservation Corridors
- Parks and Open Space

Fragile Links include areas where the Priority Conservation Corridors are exceptionally narrow or fragmented. The Fragile Links in Figure 4s have been identified using a landscape ecology approach to looking at the spatial patterns of the network as a whole. Links within the PCCs were highlighted where the greenspace network could quickly breakdown if these connected areas of greenspace were to disappear. The protection of these areas is critical to maintaining the overall functionality of the greenspace system.

Restoration Opportunities are areas where a Priority Conservation Corridor could be established in the future through restoration activities.



Site visit report | 1/22/25

Parcel A: 5273 Meridian Rd, Parcel #: 33-02-02-13-200-070

Flora and fauna identified at site

- Dogwood shrubs; *Cornus sericea* (red osier), *Cornus foemina* (gray dogwood)



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- *Solidago altissima* (tall goldenrod), *Solidago canadensis* (Canada goldenrod)



○

- Cottonwood trees coming in from succession
- *Elaeagnus umbellata* (Invasive autumn olive); not very dense, but where it grows, shrubs are mature and quite large. Very manageable on this property.



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- *Rhamnus cathartica* (common buckthorn); same as the autumn olive and even less established than the autumn olive. A few large shrubs/trees, but not much regeneration and not very dense.



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- *Hypericum prolificum* (shrubby St. Johns Wort); 99% positive on this idea, 3 carpels are present on the seed heads. Populated in high numbers throughout all open areas of the parcel. Good population established.



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View facing the 2 acres containing the house and looking toward the highest point of the property. Property is about 60% open with remaining areas being covered with wetland shrubs such as dogwood and a scattering of invasive shrubs. The open areas are dotted with conifers, most of which appear to be non-native.



- Western property edge. This is one of two property lines that include neighbors. This western edge, as well as the northern boundary are separated from the adjacent parcels by an Ingham County Drain



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- Small patches of AO and CB at the western boundary line of the property



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- Quercus rubra (red oak) regeneration; large trees line property edges, some small saplings regenerating nearby as well as 10-15 foot trees sporadically



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- Treeline of N. Meridian Road Park



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- One very small patch of Invasive bittersweet sapling



- Potential vernal pool. This area is a low spot and has temporary water intermittently. Spring time frogs are heard from this area.



- A convenient trail for passive recreation and staff accessibility has been created throughout the parcel. No other areas have been actively mowed or managed with mowing



Item 6.A.B



To: Land Preservation Advisory Board Members
From: Emma Campbell, Stewardship Coordinator
Date: March 12, 2025
Re: Parcel B: Hamilton Rd, Parcel #: 33-02-02-21-179-008

This parcel was reported to staff by several residents as a potentially high interest parcel for incorporation into the Land Preservation Program. The property lies directly NW of the Township property, Mandenberg Preserve. Staff was advised by the Land Preservation Advisory Board (LPAB) to gather initial information from the site to bring to the March 12, 2025 board meeting.

Staff provided a brief summary of the property, which includes the following information:

1. Parcel B is a vacant parcel currently for sale directly adjacent and adjoining Mandenberg Woods Preserve. Parcel B is 1.94 acres and is listed for \$94,000 on Zillow.
2. Parcel B may have an aggressive invasive species that Chair Hiller and Commissioner Stephens observed during the acquisition of Mandenberg Preserve. It is a yellow spring flower. Staff was advised to investigate this observation. A resident called and provided information on the plant, which has been determined as non-native aggressive, winter aconite (*Eranthis hyemalis*).
3. The Board advised staff to provide initial information on the property and report findings at the March 12th board meeting.





CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN LAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM

LAND PRESERVATION ACQUISITION & STEWARDSHIP RECORD
UPDATED JULY 2024

Land Preserves: 25

Acquisitions: 45

Acres of Current Land Preserves: 980 acres

- The original goal of the program set in 2000 was to acquire 600 acres, or 10% of identified available land; the Land Preservation Program is currently at 17%

Total acquisition costs = \$9,559,708

***Please see in Preserve Bios Document for full descriptions of parcels**

Land Preserves

1. Davis-Foster Preserve

- Location: East and west sides of Van Atta Road approximately ¼ mile south of Tihart Road
- Area: 108.90 acres (2 parcels)
- Year Acquired: 2006
- Purchase Price: \$1,650,000
- Description: Former farm; riparian and lowland hardwoods, shrub-scrub and emergent wetlands, and savannah grasslands and woodlands (active management areas)
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
 - Restoration of grasslands funded in part by U.S. Department of Agriculture Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)
 - Regular maintenance of the grassland through prescribed ecological burns and targeted invasive species treatments
 - Staff management of invasive phragmites in remnant wetland along Van Atta Road 2021
 - Contractual management of invasive phragmites in the same area since 2022
 - Contractual management of invasive black locust will commence in fall of 2024-2025 season
 - Native seed collection from remnant seedbank locations as well as seeded areas
 - Seed Sowing and transplanting native species in remnant wetlands as well as seeded grassland area
 - Seeds and transplants are all collected from remnant native seedbank areas. Transplants are grown from seed collected by MCC staff and volunteers and given to local native nurseries to grow for planting back into preserves.
 - Prescribed Burn Program (Burn Unit maps are outlined in the Davis Foster Preserve management Plan)
 - April 2012, 14 acres on East side of Van Atta Rd, Unit 3 on Burn Map
 - Spring 2014, 14 acres on East side of Van Atta Rd, Burn Unit 3, and 5.5 acres on West side of Van Atta Rd., Burn Unit 4
 - March 2016, 17 acres on East side of Van Atta Rd., Burn Unit 2
 - October 2016, 17 acres on East side of Van Atta Rd., Burn Unit 1
 - March 2019, 14 acres on East side of Van Atta Rd., Burn Unit 3. The burn jumped a fire break and also burned almost all of Burn Unit 2.

Land Preservation Advisory Board Agenda Item 6.B.A.

- April 2021, 4.5 acres of remnant wetland on East side of Van Atta Rd.
- April 2023, 4.5 acres on of remnant wetland on East side Van Atta Rd.
- April 2024, 17 acres on East side of Van Atta Road, Burn Unit 1

2. Foster-Crouse Preserve

- Location: North side of Newman Road approximately 1 mile north of Grand River Avenue and ¼ mile west of Meridian Road
- Area: 18.08 acres
- Year Acquired: 2002
- Purchase Price: Donation
- Description: Mixed deciduous upland and lowland forest and emergent wetlands
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
 - Trail maintenance to widen trails and manage invasive species trailside.
 - Priority invasive species removal; black swallow-wort, Asiatic bittersweet
 - Black swallow-wort was identified at the site in fall of 2024

3. Hubbel Preserve

- Location: Okemos Road approximately ½ mile north of Grand River Avenue and north of railroad crossing
- Area: 57.66 acres
- Year Acquired: 2003
- Purchase Price: Donation
- Description: Mixed deciduous lowland forest and shrub-scrub upland

4. Kuzma Preserve

- Location: East side of Carleton Street north of Haslett Road and south of railroad crossing
- Area: 0.32 acres
- Year Acquired: 2003
- Purchase Price: Donation
- Description: Pond

5. Lake Lansing North Preserve

- Location: Southern additions to Ingham County Lake Lansing North Park
- Area: 120 acres (3 parcels)
- Year Acquired: 2010
- Purchase Price: \$675,000 (Township contribution toward DNRE Grant Purchase, approx. \$1.2 million)
- Description: Mixed deciduous upland and lowland forest and forested wetlands
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
 - Prescribed burn on forest floor to encourage spring ephemerals and oaks and discourage invasive species from growing; recent burns in fall of 2021 & 2023
 - Installation of 4 deer exclosures to monitor seedling survival
 - Invasive species removal of autumn olive, Japanese barberry and other invasive shrubs
 - Native seed collection from remnant seedbank locations
 - Seed Sowing and transplanting native species throughout preserve
 - Seeds and transplants are all collected from remnant native seedbank areas. Transplants are grown from seed collected by MCC staff and volunteers and given to local native nurseries to grow for planting back into preserves.

Land Preservation Advisory Board Agenda Item 6.B.A.

6. Newman Equities Preserve

- Location: Central Park Drive adjacent to the MSU Credit Union
- Area: 13.41 acres
- Year Acquired: 2004
- Purchase Price: Donation
- Description: Shrub-scrub wetland and mixed deciduous upland
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
 - Trash pickup since 2021; a large volume of trash blows into this area from surrounding businesses

7. Towar Woods

- Location: Northwest corner of Meridian Township along the northern boundary of the Tower Neighborhood and the western boundary of Walnut Hills Country Club
- Area: 124.8 acres (10 parcels)
- Year Acquired: 2004 through 2008
- Purchase Price: TOTAL \$2,351,561:
 - Ranes 11.26 ac. \$300,000 (2006)
 - Ranes 15 ac. \$300,000 (2006)
 - Van Acker 9.2 ac. \$180,000 (2004)
 - Van Acker 9.42 ac. \$180,000 (2004)
 - DNR 3.16 ac. \$4,261 (2002)
 - Whitcomb 3.91 ac. \$19,000 (2008)
 - DNR 8.06 ac. \$300 (2004)
 - East Lansing Schools 24 ac. \$118,000 (2007)
 - Walnut Hills 14.72 ac. \$625,000 (2005)
 - Walnut Hills 25 ac. \$625,000 (2005)
 - Mitroka Addition 1 ac. Donation (2017)
- Description: Mixed deciduous forested wetlands
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
 - Goal is to reforest the eastern part of the preserve with native hardwood species and contain spread of invasive Buckthorn
 - Planted 2,000 red pines and 1,000 white pines in the preserve
 - Planted hundreds of native hardwood trees protected with Blue-X tubes & fencing enclosures
 - 300 planted in 2019
 - 200 planted in 2020
 - 200 planted in 2022
 - Installed a deer exclosure and planted 20-30 native hardwood trees within it
 - Invasive management:
 - 6 total acres of professional shrub clearing (mostly invasive shrubs)
 - Regular herbicide treatments of Buckthorn, Honeysuckle, and Autumn Olive for past 9 years throughout the entire preserve focusing on the eastern portion
 - Contractual brush hogging of common buckthorn on 12 acres of native tree plantation area
 - 2022 & 2024

8. Pike Crossing Preserve

- Location: West side of Carleton Street north of Haslett Road and south of railroad crossing
- Area: 5.5 acres (2 parcels)
- Year Acquired: 2010
- Purchase Price: \$25,000 + \$2,507 (winter tax bill) = \$27,507

Land Preservation Advisory Board Agenda Item 6.B.A.

- Description: Old field
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
 - Chemical and mechanical management of Japanese knotweed and teasel

9. Okemos Road Preserve

- Location: Okemos Road approximately ½ mile north of Grand River Avenue and south of railroad crossing
- Area: 60.22 acres (2 parcels)
- Year Acquired: 2005
- Purchase Price: Partial Donation, \$80,000
- Description: Mixed shrub-scrub and deciduous woodlands, old field, and forested wetlands
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
 - Removal of common buckthorn, amur honeysuckle, Asiatic bittersweet and autumn olive from wetland mitigation area, and in higher quality woodland areas
 - Vernal Pool monitoring by volunteers
 - Trash removal from College Apartments entrance with boy scout group in 2022 (20 tires removed, and over 3,000 pounds of trash)

10. Sower Woods Preserve

- Location: North and south of Sower Boulevard west of Okemos Road
- Area: 17.97 (5 parcels)
- Year Acquired: 2005 through 2008
- Purchase Price: TOTAL \$240,242:
 - 5.43 ac. \$231,000 (2005)
 - 1.36 ac. \$4,261 (2002)
 - 5.166 ac. \$4,261 (2002)
 - 4.038 ac. \$720 (2008)
 - 1.77 ac. \$4,261 (2002)
- Description: Moist upland hardwood forest and lowland mixed hardwoods
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
 - Neighborhood volunteers routinely remove small invasive species by hand and plant native species in their place
 - Once a year since 2021 the Meridian Conservation Corps removes herbaceous invasive plants in the spring, and sows native seeds in the fall

11. Cornell Wetland Preserve

- Location: Southwest corner of Tihart Road and Cornell Road
- Area: 21.26 acres
- Year Acquired: 2006
- Purchase Price: \$206,000
- Description: Mixed shrub-scrub and forested wetlands
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
 - Large trash removal from wetland; 27 tires, over 4,000 pounds of trash
 - Native seed collection from remnant seed collection sites
 - Shrubby invasive removal from upland area on Cornell Road
 - Management of purple loosestrife and phragmites in ditch along Tihart Road

12. Heron Creek & Serafine Preserve

- Location: North of Bennett Road at the eastern boundaries of Champion Woods and Heron Creek neighborhoods and eastern boundary of College Fields Country Club
- Area: 91 acres (4 parcels)

Land Preservation Advisory Board Agenda Item 6.B.A.

- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
 - 2024-25 season will include:
 - Removing large dumping piles of yard waste from preserve entrance at the end of Wilder Court
 - Installing a boundary fence and rule signage at the same entrance
 - Letters to go out to neighbors notifying them of planned stewardship work and reminder of preserve ordinances
 - Managing purple loosestrife in wetland area

16. Inter-Urban Wetland Preserve

- Location: Haslett Road, ¼ mile west of Marsh Road
- Area: 24.78 acres (2 parcels)
- Year Acquired: 2003-2004
- Purchase Price: TOTAL= \$93,000 [13.36 ac. (\$50,000); 11.38 ac. (\$43,000)]
- Description: Scrub-shrub, emergent, and forested wetlands
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
 - Native seed collection from middle wetland area
 - Removal of trash from middle wetland area
 - 2024-25 removal of common and glossy buckthorn from bridge over wetland – increase visibility in that area, and begin restoring area around remnant native wetland plants
 - Contractual management of invasive phragmites since 2023 off the Inter-Urban trail

17. Red Cedar River East Preserve

- HOWE (original preserve area)
 - Location: Southwest corner of Grand River Avenue – Meridian Road junction
 - Area: 9.14 acres (2 parcels)
 - Year Acquired: 2010
 - Purchase Price: \$92,000
 - Description: Riparian hardwood forest
- **Wangler addition**
 - Location: Southwest of Grand River Avenue – Meridian Road junction
 - Area: 13.30 acres
 - Year Acquired: 2011
 - Purchase Price: \$13,106.89 (tax- reverted property from Ingham County Land Bank)
 - Description: Adjacent to Red Cedar River, wooded, wetland, floodplains

18. Glacial Ridge (Whitehills) Preserve

- Location: Adjacent to Whitehills Lake subdivision at Whitehills Lake Drive and Fenwick Court
- Area: 25 acres
- Year Acquired: 2010
- Purchase Price: \$400,000
- Description: Mixed hardwood forest and shrub-scrub
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
 - Planting of White Oak trees
 - Contractual management of invasive phragmites from wetland located off Mereford Court since 2021
 - Cutting of invasive phragmites thatch in fall/winter of 2023-24 for neighborhood visibility

19. Forest Grove (White M-78) Preserve

- Location: on the east side of Old M-78 (Saginaw Street), and the west side of Newton Road, north of Lake Lansing Road, and south of Towner Road.
- Area: 20.4 acres
- Year Acquired: 2011
- Purchase Price: \$425,000
- Description: Heavily wooded and much of the property is wetland
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
 - Remnant native plant inventory as a native seed collection site for Planting a Native Meridian program

20. Tank Wetland Preserve

- Location: near Carlton and Lake Drive
- Area: 2.51 acres
- Year Acquired: 2016
- Purchase Price: Donation
- Description: 100% wetland

21. Tihart Preserve (Linn)

- Location: Tihart Rd.
- Area: 90 acres
- Year Acquired: 2018
- Purchase Price: \$600,000
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
 - Mechanical & chemical management of invasive species such as autumn olive, invasive honeysuckle species, Asiatic bittersweet, reed canary grass, field thistle and bull thistle
 - Chemical management of purple loosestrife and invasive phragmites in the ditch along Tihart Road since 2022
 - Native seed sowing and transplanting in front 'farm field' area since 2021.
 - Seeds and transplants are all collected from remnant native seedbank areas. Transplants are grown from seed collected by MCC staff and volunteers and given to local native nurseries to grow for planting back into preserves.
 - Contractual brush hogging in front 5 acres of 'farm field' planting area in spring of 2024. Goal was to open up more sunlight for seeded areas.

22. Mandenberg Woods

- Location: Hamilton Rd. Okemos
- Area: 4 acres
- Year Acquired: 2018
- Purchase Price: \$63,000
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
 - Native plant inventory and preliminary survey of trash sites completed in spring of 2024
 - Planned trash removal and invasive management will begin in 2025

23. Ponderosa

- 92 acres

Land Preservation Advisory Board Agenda Item 6.B.A.

- Purchase Price: \$485,100 (because we received a \$514,900 MNRTF grant) – Total land value was 1.2 million
- Year Acquired: 2018
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
 - Management of Japanese Knotweed stand
 - Staff has chemically managed the stand since 2022
 - Trail maintenance has been completed since 2021 by MSU students and MCC volunteers, removing invasives such as autumn olive that are crowding the trail
 - Invasive species management in the oak/hickory woodlands
 - 2 vernal pools were identified in 2024 and will be monitored in the 2025 season

24. Nemoke Preserve

- 12 acres
- Year Acquired: 2018
- Purchase price: \$3,547

25. Cornell-Sweetwood Preserve

- 2.97 acres (mostly wetland)
- Year Acquired: 2023
- Purchase Price: \$62,000
- Still implementing boundary markers and preserve signage

Item 7.A.a.b



To: Land Preservation Advisory Board Members
From: Emma Campbell, Stewardship Coordinator
Date: March 12, 2025
Re: March 2025 Stewardship Staff Report

Staff provides a brief summary of land preserve updates:

1. The 2024 Annual Corps Report was released in mid-February, and is included in the March 12th meeting packet. This annual publication from the Stewardship Coordinator is created to highlight the accomplishments of the Meridian Conservation Corps (MCC) and Land Preservation Program.
2. Meridian Township's Deer Management Program concluded on February 3rd, 2025 with a total harvest of 300 white-tailed deer and the donation of over 7,400 pounds of venison locally.
3. Two prescribed burns are planned for the spring 2025 season. Two burn units making up about 15 acres at Davis Foster Preserve will be burned by David Borneman LLC. One burn unit made up of about 5 acres at Red Cedar Glen Preserve will be burned by Stantec Consulting Michigan, Inc.
 - a. Letters of notification were sent this week to neighboring residents to alert them and provide information (letters are included in the meeting packet).
4. Staff will be presenting at the Ohio River Valley Invasive Species Conference hosted by the Midwest Invasive Plant Network, from March 19th through March 20th in Burlington, KY.
 - a. The presentation is called, *Community Conservation: Turning Intention into Action with the Meridian Conservation Corps*. This talk will focus on the creation of the MCC and its many efforts.
5. The March 2025 Stewardship Calendar is included in the meeting packet. Work will focus around native seeding, the last of invasive shrub cutting, litter cleanup, and vernal pool monitoring.
 - a. Management of Lesser Celandine (*Ficaria verna*) will most likely begin the week of March 10th, 2025. This invasive plant is a high priority and is currently being managed at Ted Black Woods Park and Ottawa Hills Park.

2024

THE CORPS RAPPOR

Meridian Conservation Corps Annual Report



MANAGING THE LAND AS A COMMUNITY

A note from Meridian Township's Land Stewardship Coordinator, Emma Campbell

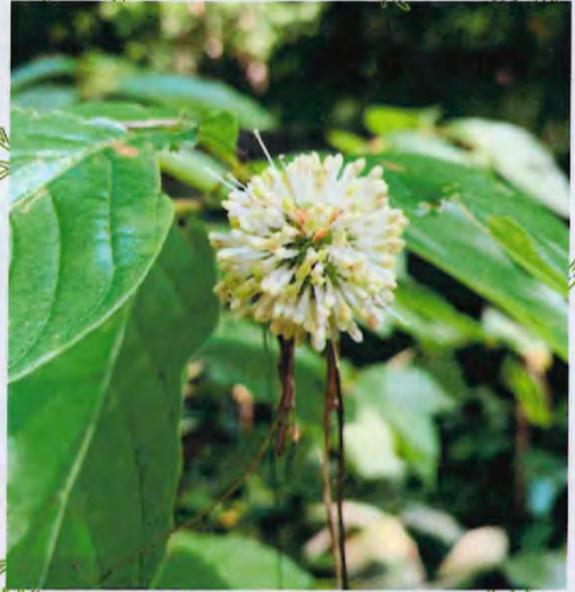
What does it mean to manage land? How does one full-timer & 3 part-time staff tackle stewardship for 1,700 acres? Even with a healthy budget, we don't reach all our desired annual goals. Year end reporting is a time to reflect & be grateful for all we have accomplished. But, as I sift through the year, I can't stop myself from thinking of what more we could have done. Perhaps we could have managed our time more efficiently, or utilized different tools & equipment. Did we get enough fire on the ground to nurture disappearing lineages of native species? Don't forget to map that phragmites you saw on your way home from work today. What about that Riparian Buffer Program we wanted to develop last year? As I drive around my office which is the entire Township, my to-do list gets longer, and I feel the urgency grow greater. Can what I'm doing, really be enough? Also, why am I so hard on myself? I am but one person. Is this how everyone feels? Quite often these chaotic thoughts & emotions swirl through my head. But, as I pull up to an MCC workday, these feelings become smaller & smaller, soon disappearing into a smile. I could be having the worst day, and once I get on that trail with my volunteers, I see the passion & caring that gets to be my world in that moment. Each little seed, every transplant, and all the invasive stems pulled & cut, it all means so much! Community & conservation are an inspiring concept we get to practice every week. You should be so proud for showing up when you do! You not only sustain our corner of the world, but my sanity too. You are turning intention into action every time you come out. Thank you cool conservation cats, you truly are what makes the world go round!



STEWARDSHIP SUCCESS

2024 Stewardship at a Glance

- 659 HOURS OF STEWARDSHIP COMPLETED IN THE TOWNSHIP
- 348 CORPS MEMBERS WITH 71 NEW SIGNUPS IN 2024
- 45 STEWARDSHIP WORKDAYS
- 10 EDUCATIONAL EVENTS
- 17 VERIFIED VERNAL POOLS
- 12 COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS & OPPORTUNITIES
- 1 SUCCESSFUL PRESCRIBED BURN
- 105 SPECIES OF NATIVE PLANTS ETHICALLY COLLECTED
- 3 NEW ADDITIONS TO THE STEWARDSHIP STAFF
 - Jennifer Soria, Lucy Breda, Rachel Mickey



INVASIVE SPECIES STRIKE TEAM



Pull, cut, dab, and restore!

- 18 WORKDAYS DEVOTED TO INVASIVE REMOVAL
- 23 DIFFERENT SPECIES REMOVED AND MANAGED
- 10 HERBACEOUS INVASIVES:
 - Dame's rocket, garlic mustard, Japanese hedge parsley, Japanese Knotweed, purple loosestrife, phragmites, reed canary grass, lesser celandine, yellow rocket & sweet clover
- 13 WOODY INVASIVES:
 - invasive bittersweet, honeysuckle (4 species), autumn olive, common & glossy buckthorn, multiflora rose, Japanese barberry European privet, black locust, & tree of heaven
 - Wildtype Ecological Services began management on a priority stand of mature black locust at Davis Foster Preserve this fall.
- 12 PRESERVES & 14 PARKS MANAGED FOR INVASIVE SPECIES
- GOLDEN BAMBOO & CUT-LEAF TEASEL WERE IDENTIFIED FOR FUTURE MANAGEMENT

(BELOW) VOLUNTEERS SCOUT ALL THE TRAILS OF RED CEDAR GLEN FOR JAPANESE HEDGE PARSLEY. MAKE SURE TO KEEP THIS AGGRESSIVE PEST OUT OF YOUR GARDEN!



(BELOW) STAFF WORKED HARD THIS SUMMER MANAGING PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE, AN INVADER OF WETLANDS, LIKE DAVIS FOSTER.



(BELOW) LESSER CELANDINE CAN CARPET ENTIRE FLOODPLAINS. ITS AGGRESSION PROMPTED THE FORMATION OF THE MI LESSER CELANDINE COALITION, WHICH WE ARE A PROUD PARTNER OF.



INVASIVE SPECIES STRIKE TEAM

cut, dab, and restore!



(LEFT) THIS FALL TIHART WORKDAY WAS ONE FOR THE BOOKS! WE FINALLY GOT TO START REMOVING HONEYSUCKLE ALONG THE PROPERTY LINE. NEED A GOOD WORKOUT? WE KNOW ONE!

(BELOW) GARLIC MUSTARD IS A PAIN IN OUR SIDES, BUT IT IS EDIBLE & DELICIOUS. JACOB MADE YUMMY PESTO WITH THIS BUNCH!



(BELOW) MANY BUCKETS OF MUSTARDS WERE REMOVED FROM HARRIS AT OUR EARTHDAY EVENT. THANK YOU STYKA FAMILY!



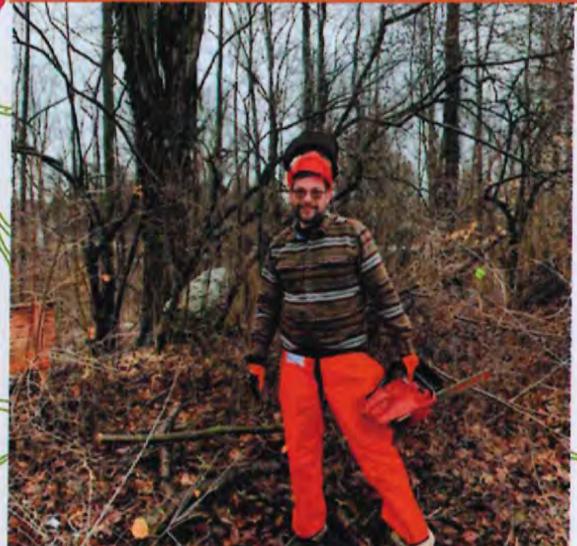
(LEFT) REMOVING INVASIVES FROM A WETLAND BUFFER IN LLNP ALWAYS MAKES THE MCC SMILE!



(BELOW) ANDREW HAS REALLY HELPED US OUT THIS YEAR, BRINGING HIS OWN CHAIN SAW & CUTTING LARGE TREES & SHRUBS FOR US!



(LEFT) SPRING REMOVAL OF MUSTARDS AT LEGG PARK LED US TO A NICE POPULATION OF WOODLAND PHLOX. AND OF COURSE THIS CREW KICKED BUTT! AMY, BRUCE & JASON ARE SPRING PULL VETERANS!



PLANTING A NATIVE MERIDIAN

Collect, sort & plant!

- 12 WORKDAYS DEVOTED TO NATIVE SEED SOWING & PLANTING
- Transplants & seeds are lovingly collected by MCC volunteers & staff from remnant populations in our parks & preserves
 - Keeping the genetic diversity as local as possible means the highest benefit for pollinators
- 18 NATURAL AREAS RECEIVED NATIVE TRANSPLANTS & SEEDS SOWN
- 12 DIFFERENT SPECIES & 456 TRANSPLANTS INSTALLED:
 - A mix of New Jersey Tea, butterfly weed, smooth blue aster, rattlesnake hawkweed, bristly greenbrier, wintergreen, winterberry, early & showy goldenrod, Robin's plantain, bladdernut, & American plum
- 42 SPECIES WERE SOWN FOR WINTER, THE REMAINING SEEDS WILL BE GROWN INTO TRANSPLANTS OR SOWN NEXT SEASON

(BELOW) MATT, PLANTS SHOWY GOLDENROD IN DAVIS FOSTER. LOOK FOR THE TALL YELLOW SPIKES IN LATE SUMMER



(BELOW) A SMOOTH BLUE ASTER PLANTED LAST YEAR AT RED CEDAR GLEN PRESERVE GRACES US WITH ITS BEAUTIFUL HUES



(BELOW) JASON SACRIFICES THE WARMTH OF HIS GLOVE TO MINDFULLY SOW SEEDS ON A BITTER COLD DAY IN TIHART PRESERVE



PLANTING A NATIVE MERIDIAN

Collect, sort & plant!

- 3 WORKDAYS DEVOTED TO NATIVE SEED COLLECTION
- 5 WORKDAYS DEVOTED TO SEED PROCESSING
- 105 DIFFERNT NATIVE SPECIES COLLECTED FROM PARKS & PRESERVES
- THIS WAS A RECORD YEAR FOR AMOUNT OF SEED COLLECTED, AS WELL AS SPECIES DIVERSITY
- FOR THE FIRST TIME VOLUNTEERS & STAFF GOT ALL SEED PROCESSING WRAPPED UP BY THE END OF 24'
 - Yay for seed sorting parties!

(BELOW) VOLUNTEERS ARE SHOWN HOW TO IDENTIFY & ETHICALLY COLLECT SEEDS



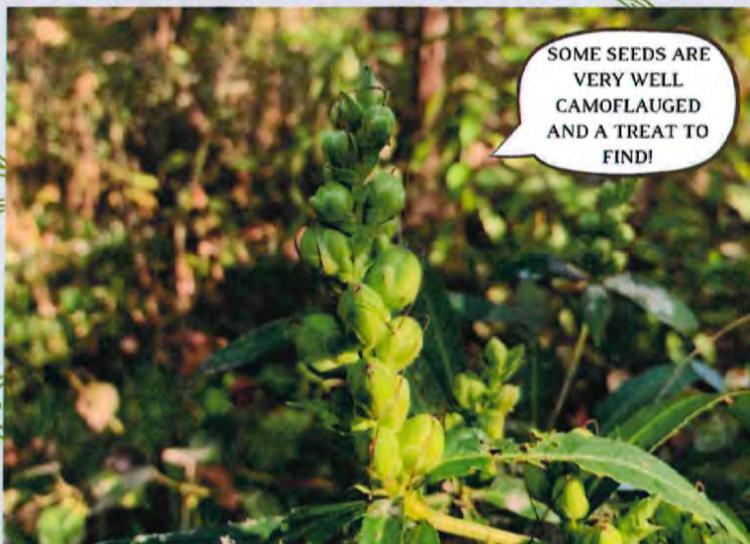
(BELOW) STAFF FOUND A ROBUST REMNANT STAND OF BLUE VERVAIN!



(BELOW) VOLUNTEERS & STAFF GET SOME WONDER & WHIMSY FROM STEVE THOMAS EXPLAINING THE LIFE OF A SEED FROM START TO FINISH. NATURE IS NEAT!



SOME SEEDS ARE VERY WELL CAMOFLAUGED AND A TREAT TO FIND!



WEEKDAY WARRIORS & CLEAN UP CREW

Digging trash out of wetlands is what we do!



- 4 WORKDAYS DEVOTED TO REMOVING TRASH FROM PRESERVES, PARKS AND ROADWAYS
- AN ESTIMATED 1,000 POUNDS OF TRASH REMOVED
- 10 TIRES, HUB CAPS, CAR PARTS, PLASTIC LITTER, TAKE OUT WASTE, & CARDBOARD BOXES
 - Favorite piece of trash found: a flat-screen tv
- WEEKDAY WARRIORS ARE DEDICATED TO MORE THAN JUST TRASH CLEANUP
 - This year they planted native species, collected & processed seeds, removed invasive species, and cleaned up trash!
- THE WEEKDAY WARRIORS ARE GROWING MOVEMENT, OUR WORKDAY NUMBERS HAVE DOUBLED IN 2024
- SPECIAL SHOUTOUT TO MATTHEW EDMONDS FOR PICKING UP LITTER IN THE TOWNSHIP WEEKLY & REPORTING PROBLEM AREAS

THANK
YOU

(BELOW) VOLUNTEERS HAVE FUN PICKING TRASH OUT OF NANCY MOORE WETLAND



(BELOW) BRUCE PLANTS WINTERBERRY SHRUBS IN THE WETLAND BUFFER AT HILLBROOK PARK



(BELOW) TIRES, TVS & TAIL LIGHTS! THEY TOSS IT, WE FIND IT.

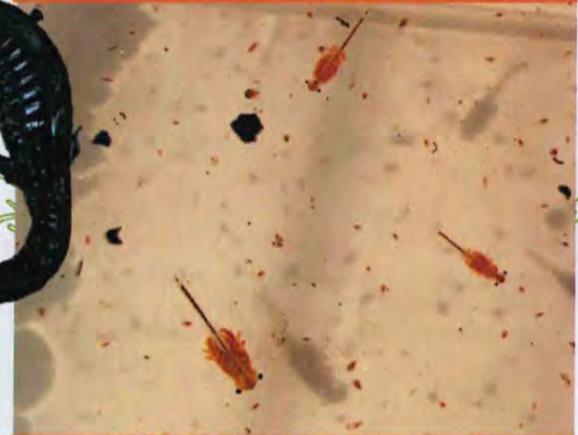


VERNAL POOL PATROL

A citizen science program working to protect our smallest wetlands!

- Volunteers complete a statewide training program & monitor vernal pools 3 times a year to gather vital data that helps protect these valuable wetlands
- Species like fairy shrimp & blue-spotted salamanders depend on these temporary pools for their life cycles
- **17 VERIFIED VERNAL POOLS IN THE TOWNSHIP**
 - Thank you to MCC volunteers, Bertha Bullen, Jim Kruse, Bruce Peffers, Susan Andrews, Barbara Scott, Sam Diehl, & Elizabeth Fedorchuk for contributing data!
- **THERE ARE OVER 140 UNVERIFIED POOLS IN THE TOWNSHIP**
 - Want to help out? Visit the MI Vernal Pools Partnership at mivernalpools.com to find out more, or stay tuned for more information in March!

(BELOW) FAIRY SHRIMP THRIVE IN VERNAL POOLS SINCE THE WATER INTERMITTENTLY DRIES UP & KEEPS PREDATORY FISH OUT.



(BELOW) FAIRY SHRIMP & OTHER MACROINVERTEBRATES DRAW EYES DOWN & INTO A MAGICAL MICROSCOSM



(BELOW) ETHERAL STAR FLOWER IS FOUND NEAR VERNAL POOLS IN LAKE LANSING NORTH.



Michigan
Vernal Pools
Partnership

(LEFT)
FINGERNAIL
CLAMS ARE
ALWAYS A FUN
FIND! IF YOU SEE
THESE IN DRY,
LOW AREAS OF
THE WOODS,
YOU MAY HAVE
FOUND A
VERNAL POOL IN
THE OFF SEASON!



PRESCRIBED BURN PROGRAM

Restoring native ecosystems with fire!



- 17 ACRES WAS SUCCESSFULLY BURNED THIS YEAR
- DAVIS FOSTER PRESERVE RECEIVED A BEAUTIFUL BURN ON ITS MOST NORTHERN UNIT
- EVENING CONDITIONS WERE PERFECT FOR THIS FINICKY AREA. WOODCOCK DANCED & FROGS SANG IN THE BACKGROUND
- DAVID BORNEMAN LLC & HIS CREW CONDUCTED A SAFE & EFFECTIVE BURN
 - They burn private parcels too, including several in the Township!

PRESERVES THAT ARE CONSISTENTLY BURNED SHOW THE MOST PLANT DIVERSITY

- Research shows that prescribed fire simulates historic conditions & increases species diversity. we are conducting floristic surveys to track this!

(BELOW) THIS BURN OCCURED NEAR EVENING WHEN CONDITIONS WERE THE MOST STABLE. IT WAS A BEAUTIFUL NIGHT!



(BELOW) DAVID BORNEMAN'S CREW DID AN INCREDIBLE JOB BUILDING A SLOW FIRE THAT GREW INTO A HEALTHY (& SAFE) ROAR.



(BELOW) STAFF WALKED POST-BURN DAVIS FOSTER TO LOOK FOR ANY WILDLIFE MORTALITY. WE FOUND THIS LITTLE GARTER SNAKE!



(LEFT) STAFF CONDUCTED FLORISTIC SURVEYS AT 4 PLOTS WITHIN DAVIS FOSTER. WE ARE LOOKING TO QUANTIFY THE FLORAL DIVERSITY THAT WE KNOW FIRE CAN BRING TO A NATURAL AREA.



EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS



We can't have hard work without a little fun!

- 8 TRAILSIDE ECOLOGY WALKS
- 1 FANTASTIC FUNGI HIKE WITH MSU'S DEPARTMENT OF PLANT, SOIL & MICROBIAL SCIENCES
- FISHING DERBY
MACROINVERTEBRATE EXPLORATION
- These educational hikes are not just about learning new plants, insects, wildlife & fungi. They are meant to spur natural curiosity & relax your mind with the sights, sounds and smells of the outdoors. Nature is neat & very good for our mental & physical health!

(BELOW) STAFF SPEND TIME AT THE HISTORICAL VILLAGE FISHING DERBY TEACHING VISITORS ABOUT MACROINVERTEBRATES & THEIR IMPORTANCE TO WATER QUALITY



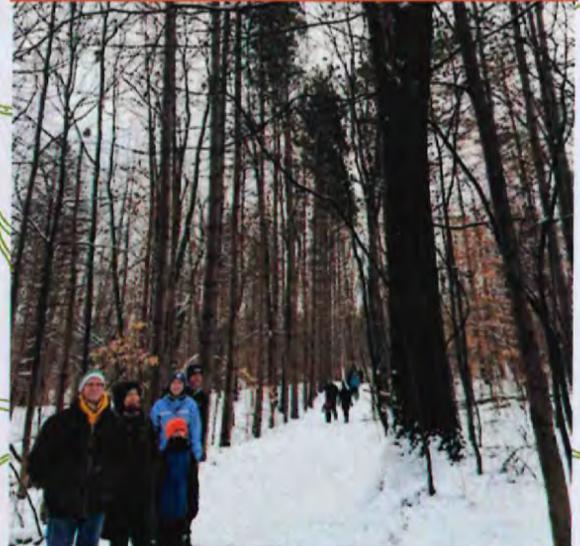
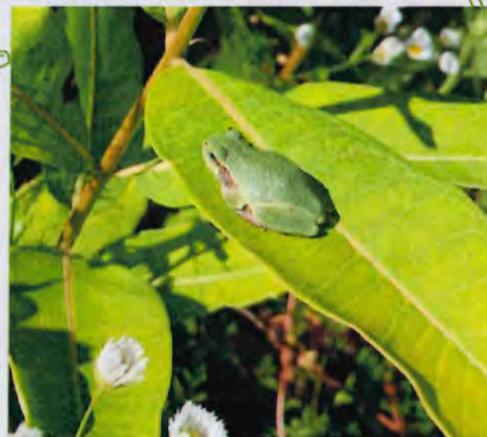
(BELOW) ARTIST CONK MUSHROOMS ARE ALWAYS A LOVELY FIND. WE GAWKED AT A WHOLE TREE FULL OF THEM.



(BELOW) THIS YEAR FOR THE WINTER SOLSTICE WE DID A SUNRISE HIKE. IT WAS SO BEAUTIFUL, WE WILL CERTAINLY REPEAT THIS ONE!



(ABOVE) MSU STUDENTS LEAD A BEAUTIFUL & VERY INFORMATIVE FUNGI WALK. IT WAS A GREAT TURNOUT! (RIGHT) WHEN WE LOOK CLOSER, WE MAY JUST SEE A LITTLE TREE FROG SITTING HAPPILY ON A MILKWEED LEAF. STOP FOR THE SMALL THINGS!



STEWARDSHIP COLLAB

Connect, Learn, and Conserve!!

• MICHIGAN WATERWAYS STEWARDS

- 2024 was our second year working with MI Waterways Stewards on their Red Cedar River Cleanup & Stewardship with Delta Sigma Phi, MSU Landscaping & Grounds, & East Lansing.

• CHIPPEWA MIDDLE SCHOOL

- Every year, Matt Prinz brings his middle school students to Hartrick Park to remove invasive species & pick up trash

• INDEPENDENT BANK OF OKEMOS

- Staff from this local branch came out and worked very hard for 4 hours removing dense autumn olive at Davis Foster Preserve
- If that wasn't enough, they kindly donated \$5,000 to Township efforts! How amazing!

• MSU DEPARTMENT OF FISHERIES & WILDLIFE

- Department of Fisheries & Wildlife Deer Targeted Anti-Tick Project is in its second year. This project will provide important data on our white-tailed deer & tick population in Meridian

• MI LESSER CELANDINE COALITION

- A collaborative of conservation districts, CISMA's, parks departments, & more that are coordinating species surveys & targeted strikes along the Grand River. If you see it, report it on the Michigan Invasive Species Invasive Network (MISIN).

• MERIDIAN UTILITY CREWS

- Partnering with stewardship staff, the utility crew has reduced mowing in several areas, such as our native plant buffers in Central Park South!

(BELOW) 160 VOLUNTEERS CAME OUT! FOR THE FIRST TIME THIS YEAR WE FOCUSED ON INVASIVE SPECIES STEWARDSHIP & CHOPPED SHRUBS.



(BELOW) INDEPENDENT BANK STAFF ABSOLUTELY KICKED INVASIVE SHRUB BUTT ON THIS VERY CHILLY, BUT BEAUTIFUL MORNING!



(BELOW) OUR PARKS UTILITY CREW REDUCED MOWING IN THIS AREA & INSTALLED A LOVELY FENCE FOR MCC ESTABLISHED NATIVE BUFFERS!





VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

The MCC is literally made up of the most amazing humans ever, showing up in rain, snow & shine. These two volunteers go even further, devoting every other Saturday & more to conserving our natural areas. Invasive shrubs run & hide when they see these two coming with saws & loppers in hand! They have both planted hundreds of native plants, and collected hundreds more seeds! We could not be luckier to have these dedicated stewards as part of our community. Thank you Bruce & Jason!!

BRUCE PEFFERS

MCC VOLUNTEER SINCE 2020

- Bruce Peffers retired from an engineering position, with an educational background in fisheries. Since retiring, Bruce became active in Township activities including the Green Dialogues, Green Team, Green Burial Committee, Vernal Pool Patrol, the Corridor Improvement Authority, as well as participating in weekly Meridian Conservation Corps stewardship activities. What Bruce likes best about being part of the MCC is that he has become so familiar with all the Townships natural areas and gets to contribute to their preservation. His favorite park is Legg Park and his favorite stewardship activity is winter-time invasive plant removal.



JASON HANFLIK

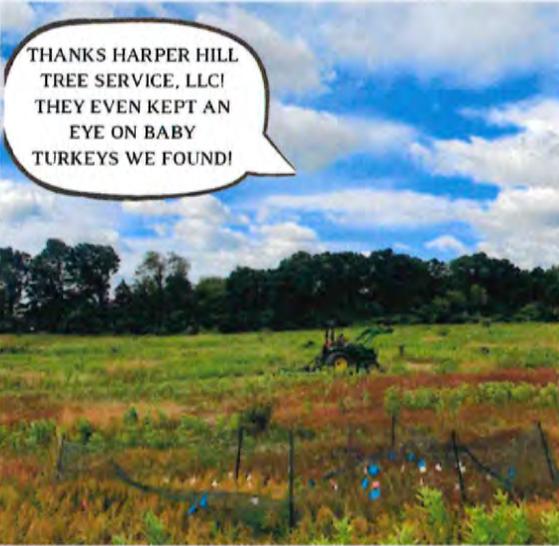
MCC VOLUNTEER SINCE 2023

- Jason Hanflik has lived in Meridian Township for 10 years. He works as a Financial Institutions Examiner for the Department of Insurance and Financial Services at the State of Michigan. He first learned about the MCC through the Township newsletter and learning more about removing invasive species. Jason said his, "zeal for MCC stems from my parents, particularly my mother. She instilled in me a commitment to protecting our environment and the joy of watching things grow. I look forward to getting up on Saturday mornings and helping with the MCC projects that are benefitting our community."



STAFF BEHIND THE SCENES

*Our Stewardship Team is small, but mighty!
Here are some of our favorite moments from the field!*



THANKS HARPER HILL TREE SERVICE, LLC! THEY EVEN KEPT AN EYE ON BABY TURKEYS WE FOUND!

(RIGHT) 4.5 ACRES WAS MOWED AT TIHART PRESERVE TO OPEN UP MORE SUNLIGHT FOR OUR NATIVE PLANTINGD BUBS IN THIS AREA. WE ARE SEEING MORE GROWING EACH YEAR!

(BELOW) WE LOVE GETTING THE OPPORTUNITY TO SAVE TURTLES FROM THE ROADWAY. THIS SNAPPER REQUIRED A 30-GALLON TOTE!



(BELOW) WE FOUND THIS LITTLE ONE STRANDED IN THE MIDDLE OF CENTRAL PARK DRIVE. WE TOOK IT TO THE SAFETY OF A WATERFOWL REHABILITATOR!



(LEFT) THIS WAS A RECORD YEAR FOR CULVERS ROOT! IT SHOT UP IN PLACES WE HAVE NEVER SEEN IT BEFORE. WE HYPOTHESIZED THAT THE INCREASED RAINFALL HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH IT.



(BELOW) AUTUMN OLIVE DECIDED TO STRIKE BACK! AFTER A DAY OF HACKING THESE SHRUBS, A STUMP POPPED OUR TRUCK TIRE.

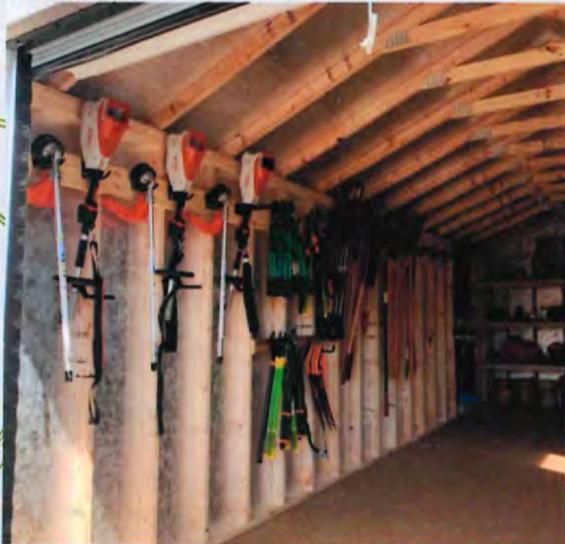


(LEFT) OUR CREW WORKS HARD DURING THE GROWING SEASON TO COVER AS MUCH LAND AS POSSIBLE TO MANAGE DIFFICULT INVASIVE SPECIES SUCH AS JAPANESE KNOTWEED & PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE.



STAFF BEHIND THE SCENES

*Our Stewardship Team is small, but mighty!
Here are some of our favorite moments from
the field!*



(RIGHT) OUR ORGANIZATION WAS GREATLY IMPROVED THIS YEAR WITH THE PURCHASE OF A 10'X20' SHED. OUR STEWARDSHIP SHED HAS EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO MANAGE THE LAND!

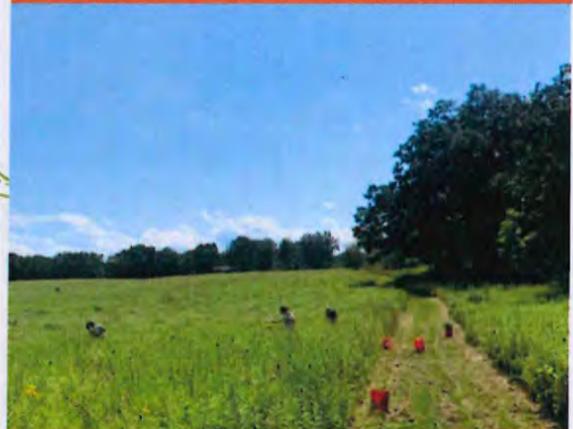
(BELOW) AFTER DISCOVERING A NEAT LITTLE AREA IN HARTRICK PARK, WE ALSO FOUND A VERY DISTINGUISHED & OLD ARTIST CONK FUNGI



(BELOW) STAFF WORKED SEVERAL DAYS TO PICK JAPANESE HEDGE PARSLEY FROM SOME LOVELY NATIVE AREAS IN DAVIS FOSTER.



(LEFT) IN ADDITION TO A STEWARDSHIP SHED, WE ALSO GOT AN 8'X20' GREENHOUSE! THIS HELPED KEEP OUR NATIVE PLANTS HAPPY & WE ARE EVEN GROWING PLANTS FOR THE 2025 SEASON!



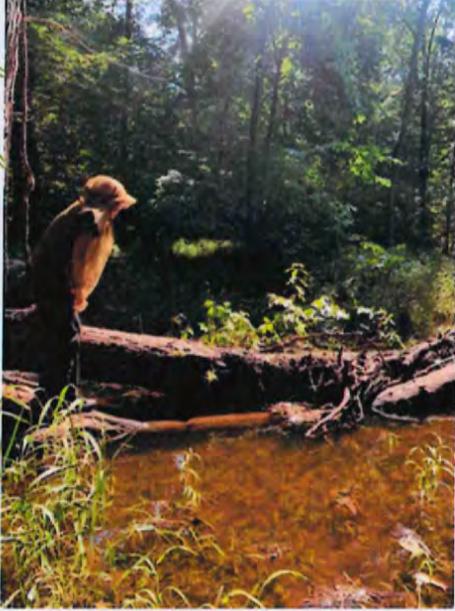
(BELOW) WE COULD NOT RESIST FROM GETTING THIS PHOTO OP OF A VERY SUCCESSFUL & SAFE BURN AT DAVIS FOSTER THIS PAST SPRING.



(LEFT) THE VOLUNTEER THANKQUET IS OFFICIALLY BACK & HERE TO STAY! THIS VOLUNTEER MEET & GREET IS SO INSPIRING, ALL THE HELPERS IN ONE ROOM TO GET THE THANKS THEY DESERVE!



FAVORITE PHOTOS OF 2024



FAVORITE PHOTOS OF 2024





Meridian Township
5151 Marsh Road
Okemos, MI 48864

P 517.853.4000
F 517.853.4096

Township Board:

Scott Hendrickson
Township Supervisor

Angela Demas
Township Clerk

Phil Deschaine
Township Treasurer

Kathy Ann Sundland
Township Trustee

Marna Wilson
Township Trustee

Peter Trezise
Township Trustee

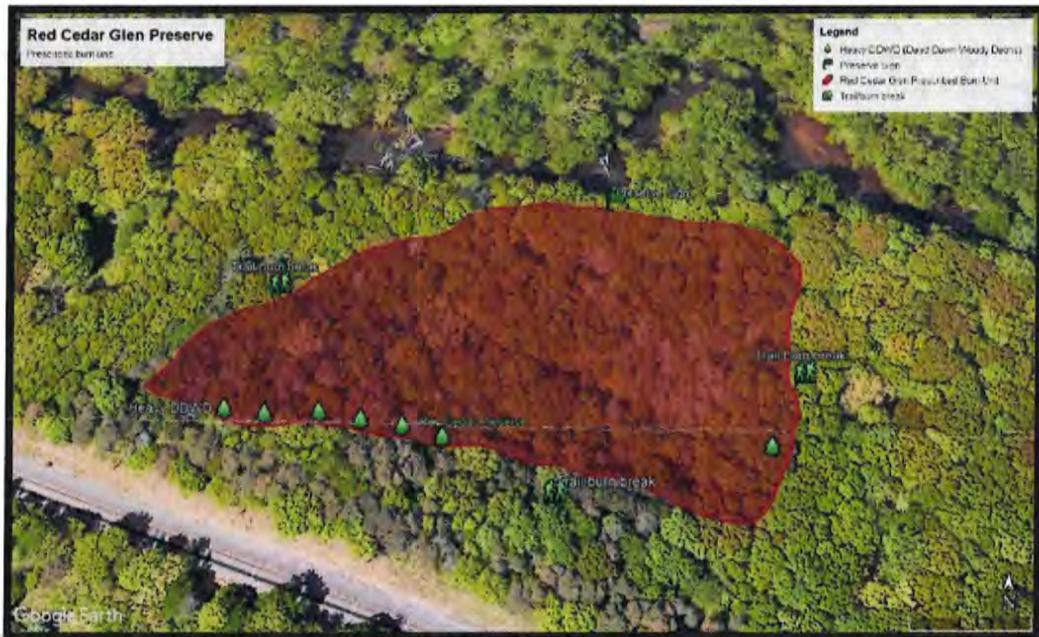
Nickolas Lentz
Township Trustee

Tim Dempsey
Township Manager

March 4, 2025

Dear Township Resident:

The purpose of this letter is to inform you of our plans to conduct a prescribed ecological burn planned for this winter/spring on the Township-owned Red Cedar Glen Land Preserve, located at the end of Sylvan Glen Road, Okemos MI 48864. More specifically, the burn will be conducted on a 4.7 acre plot that is encompassed by the trail system at the west end of the preserve (please see map below). The goals of this burn are to stimulate herbaceous vegetation to provide better habitat for insects as we expand stewardship in this area, which currently entails invasive species removal and native plantings of woodland flora. Increasing sunlight into the woodland understory improves growing conditions for native woodland flowers. An ideal fire would top kill many of the small maple, ash, and aspen saplings, as well as shrubs and vines that dominate the ground layer in this forest. The burn will be taking place between now and April 23rd if conditions are favorable. If conditions are not favorable, the burn will commence in the fall of 2025. **Conditions must meet the parameters included in our burn plan in order to proceed with any prescribed burn. There will be no exception for this, and the burn will have to be postponed until next season to ensure the safest burn.**



(Above) Aerial map of Red Cedar Glen Preserve burn unit, in red.

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)



The burn in spring of 2023 at this exact site went as planned, and was a low, cool burn of about 75% of the area. We do hope for a hotter burn this year, and know that burn conditions will improve as we manage the area with controlled fire. If this year's burn goes as planned, a year to two year break will be taken in the burn cycle. Once it reaches a manageable level, the burn will take place every four to six years. Spring ephemeral flowers that are out at this time may take damage, but will come back next season. Many species are not yet sprouted and will bloom after the burn. Sites regenerate with vegetation quickly after prescribed burning, generally 2-3 weeks post burn.

This burn will be safe and carefully controlled by trained personnel with Stantec Consulting Michigan Inc. The Meridian Township Fire Department will be on site to provide aid, if needed.

“Why Burn?” Fire was a regular and frequent component of our landscape here in southern Michigan. Many of our local ecosystems such as prairies, dry oak-hickory woodlands and certain wetlands burned frequently. The fire stimulated many of the plant species to grow more vigorously and discouraged others who were not adapted to the heat from the fire.

Today, many non-native plant species have invaded our natural fire-adapted ecosystems, decreasing the diversity of native plants and animals. By bringing fire back to these sites we encourage the competitive advantage that native species have evolved with and restore the site to its former ecological health.

The prescribed burn is safe. The burn is done in cooperation and approval of the local fire department, which has issued a permit for this burn to be conducted. The company performing the burn has outlined the weather conditions, personnel, equipment, and other parameters needed for the burn to be conducted safely. Prior to burning, “burn breaks” will be created around the area to be burned to help control the fire. The burn is done in a slow and deliberate manner, with safety equipment on hand to monitor and control its spread. The burn will also be conducted in such a manner as to minimize the amount of smoke produced and to direct any smoke away from smoke-sensitive areas as much as possible. **Due to the burn being weather-dependent, it is impossible to predict exactly when it will occur, though if conditions are favorable we will notify homeowners 1-2 days prior to the burn over social media, on our website, and through the constant contact email list.**

If you have any questions, concerns, or if you have any special needs that require you to be notified by phone on the day of the burn, you may contact me at 517-853-4614 or, ecampbell@meridian.mi.us.

Sincerely,

Emma Campbell
Land Stewardship Coordinator
Meridian Township Parks and Recreation



Meridian Township
5151 Marsh Road
Okemos, MI 48864

P 517.853.4000
F 517.853.4096

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Nickolas Lentz
Township Trustee

Tim Dempsey
Township Manager

March 4, 2025

Dear Township Resident:

The purpose of this letter is to inform you of our plans to conduct a prescribed ecological burn planned for this spring on the Township-owned Davis-Foster Land Preserve, located at 5120 Van Atta Road, Okemos, MI 48864. More specifically, the burn will be conducted on two burn units shown in figure 1. The 4.5 acre plot along Van Atta Road includes a wetland on its western end with a stand of invasive phragmites currently being managed by staff. The 10.4 acre plot runs alongside the 4.5 acre unit with a mowed burn break encircling the entire unit. The goals of this burn are to support a diversity of wetland and grassland wildflowers at Davis-Foster and to boost their seed production. An additional goal is to boost regeneration of beneficial oak species present at the site. Oaks are a fire dependent species and require prescribed burns for their survival. The burn will be taking place between now and April 23rd if conditions are favorable. If conditions are not favorable this spring, the burn will commence in the spring of 2026 and be completed by April 23rd, 2026. **Conditions must meet the parameters included in our burn plan in order to proceed. There will be no exception for this, and the burn will have to be postponed until next season to ensure the safest burn.**

Fig. 1 Aerial of Davis Foster 4.5 and 10.4 acre burn unit





This site has been burned frequently in the past and mowed burn breaks are maintained in the warm season. Burn units were created to reduce the acreage burned per season in order to preserve nesting sites for grassland birds found in the area. Burns are conducted at Davis Foster almost yearly with some exceptions. Burn breaks are maintained at this site, year round, to ensure a safer burn. Expect vegetation to be burned back completely, regenerating within 2-3 weeks post burn.

This burn will be safe and carefully controlled by trained personnel with David Borneman, LLC. The Meridian Township Fire Department will be on site to provide aid, if needed.

“Why Burn?” Fire was a regular and frequent component of our landscape here in southern Michigan. Many of our local ecosystems such as prairies, dry oak-hickory woodlands and certain wetlands historically burned frequently. The fire stimulated many of the plant species to grow more vigorously and discouraged others who were not adapted to the heat from the fire. Today, many non-native plant species have invaded our natural fire-adapted ecosystems, decreasing the diversity of native plants and animals. By bringing fire back to these sites we encourage the competitive advantage that native species have evolved with and restore the site to its former ecological health.

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If you have any questions, concerns, or if you have any special needs that require you to be notified by phone on the day of the burn, you may contact me at **517-853-4614** or, **ecampbell@meridian.mi.us**.

Sincerely,

Emma Campbell
Land Stewardship Coordinator
Meridian Township Parks and Recreation



MARCH

CONNECT
LEARN
CONSERVE



STEWARDSHIP SATURDAYS | 9:30 AM - 12 PM

These workdays occur every other Saturday year round.

- March 8th, Lake Lansing North Preserve (1000 Wild Ginger Trail). Native seed sowing & invasive shrub cutting
- March 22nd, Hartrick Park (3685 Hulett Rd., Okemos), Scouting & Bagging Invasive mustard plants

VERNAL POOL PATROL VIRTUAL TRAINING SERIES

- If you are interested in learning about vernal pools & potentially volunteering to monitor them, consider attending this three part virtual training. We will host a follow up field training on March 29th | 10 am - 12 pm | Location TBD

WEEKDAY WARRIORS | 1 - 3 PM

- March 13th, Marketplace on the Green (1995 Central Park Dr.), trash pickup
- March 27th, Foster-Crouse Preserve (Buttercup Ln, Okemos), Invasive mustard pull & native plant inventory

TRAILSIDE ECOLOGY | VERNAL EQUINOX

MARCH 22ND | 2 PM - 3:30 PM

Vernal Pool Discovery Walk at Ponderosa Preserve



- Celebrate the spring equinox by learning about some of our smallest & most valuable wetlands: Vernal Pools! We will do some pool dipping to look for indicator species like fairy shrimp & salamanders! Wear your muck boots and get ready for some magic.. *This event is limited to 20 people.



STEWARDSHIP

*ALL EVENTS ARE WEATHER DEPENDENT & MAY BE CANCELLED THE DAY OF

S M T W T F S

2	3	4 VERNAL POOL TRAINING 6-8 PM	5	6	7	8 STEWARDSHIP SATURDAY 9:30-12 PM
9	10	11 VERNAL POOL TRAINING 6-8 PM	12	13 WEEKDAY WARRIORS 1-3 PM	14	15
16	17	18 VERNAL POOL TRAINING 6-8 PM	19	20	21	22 STEWARDSHIP SATURDAY 9:30-12 PM
23	24	25	26	27 WEEKDAY WARRIORS 1-3 PM	28	29 VPP FIELD TRAINING 10 AM - 12 PM

PLEASE CONTACT EMMA AT ECAMPBELL@MERIDIAN.MI.US, OR 517.853.4614

