

VOLUNTEER SERVICES: 2019 ANNUAL REPORT



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“I volunteer for the Metroparks, simply put, because I truly love helping people. But what I love most about volunteering at the Metroparks, is the camaraderie. There’s a special comfort being in the company of like-minded people, who adore and appreciate all things in nature, as much as yourself.”

Heather, Lake Erie Metropark Marshlands Museum volunteer

Cover Photo: Ford Motor Company employees volunteer to prep the area for the new amphitheater at the Kensington Nature Center.



OVERVIEW

The Metroparks Volunteer program supports the park systems missions in Education, Recreation, and the Stewardship of Natural Resources by engaging individual and group volunteers in meaningful activities and projects.

Metroparks volunteers enhance land management by removing invasive species with our Natural Resources team. At our Nature and Farm Centers they assist with regular programs and daily chores. On the Metroparks eight golf courses, our special events and fundraisers could not happen without them. Maintenance and Operations staff even rely on dedicated volunteers for help with park/river clean-ups and minor projects.

The valuable efforts Metroparks dedicated volunteers help to make the Metroparks a premier regional park system.



Photo 1: Bailey Price, a senior at Shorian High School and Farm Center volunteer, was recognized as 'Volunteer of the Year' for Wolcott Mills Metropark 2 years in a row!

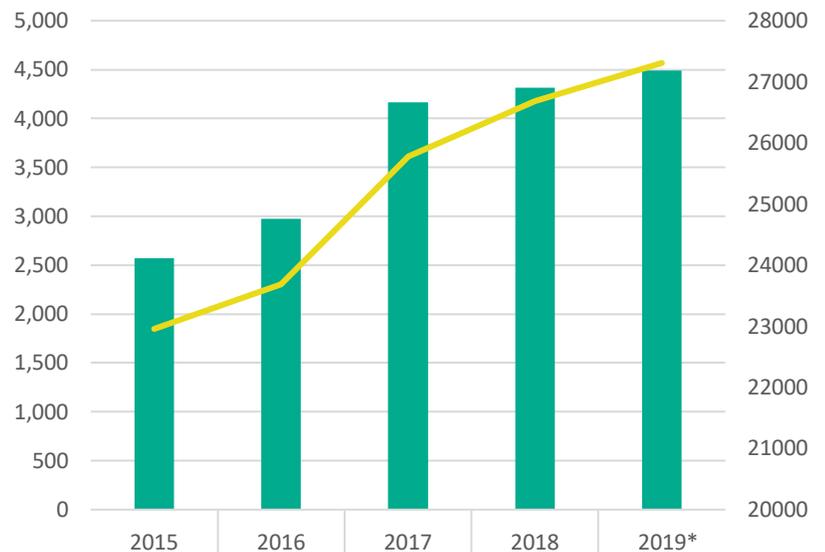
OVERVIEW

BY THE NUMBERS

In 2019, the Metroparks counted (and projected) **4,489** volunteers who put in **27,308** hours of work. When valued at an entry level wage, volunteer work represents **\$258,061** worth of labor benefit.

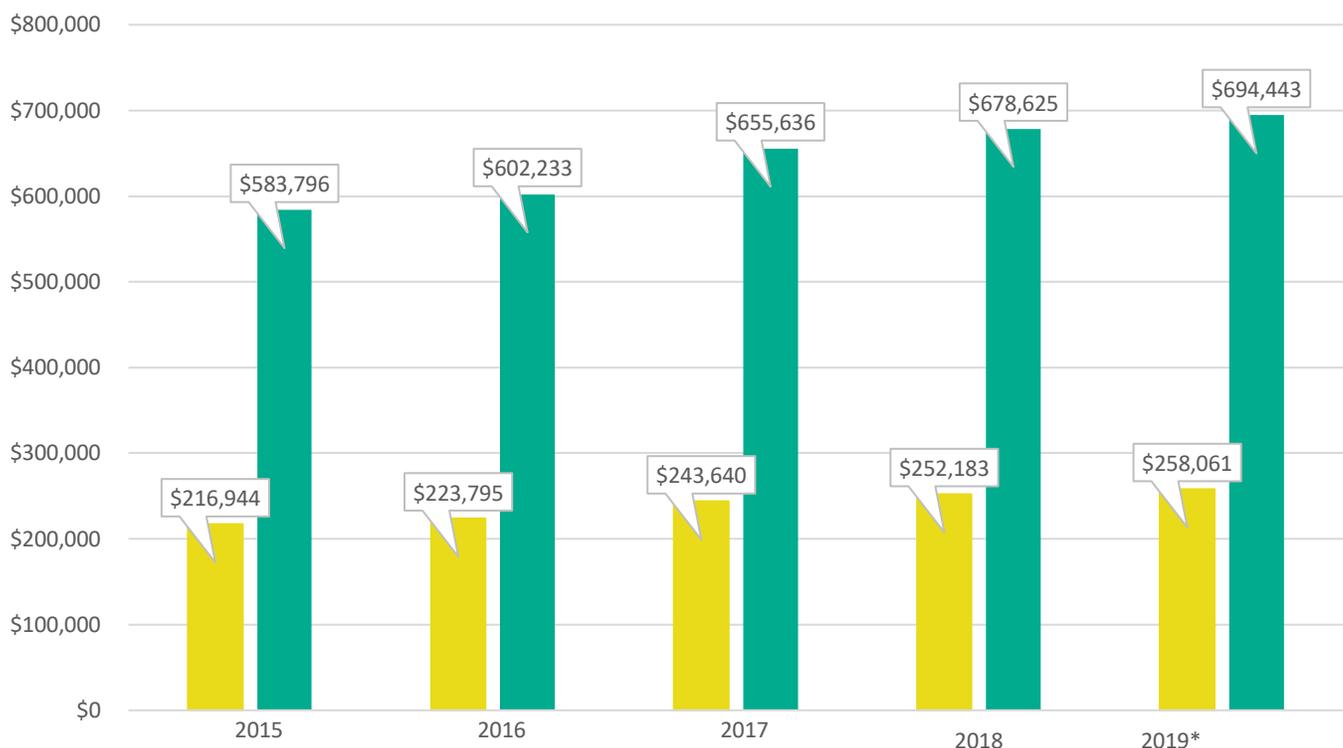
When valued at independent sector wages, this work provides a **\$694,443** labor benefit to the Metroparks.

2019 Volunteer Numbers



■ Total recorded volunteers	2,568	2,973	4,166	4,312	4,489
— Total recorded volunteer hours	22957	23682	25782	26686	27308

2019 Volunteer Value



■ Value of volunteer hours (based on 2019 entry level S1 level wage \$9.45/hr)

■ Value of volunteer hours (based on national value of volunteer service determined by the 2018 Independent Sector \$25.43/hr)

*2019 numbers are projected and include expected numbers of volunteers and hours for Heritage Holidays through December (240 volunteers, 960 hours).

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Metroparks volunteers support a wide variety of programs and activities throughout the year. Individuals, groups, one-time and regular volunteers support staff in a variety of capacities. Some examples from this past year include:

Events and Projects

Earth Day: In celebration of Earth Day (April 22), the Metroparks asked volunteers to help clean-up the park of trash and debris. Scouts were able to earn an Earth Day Fun patch for their efforts. In total, 930 volunteers helped at six Metroparks (Lake St Clair, Lake Erie, Wolcott Mill, Kensington, Oakwoods and Stony Creek).

Canoe Clean-ups: In partnership with the Huron River Watershed Council, volunteers assisted with multiple river clean-ups by canoe, from Hudson Mills to Delhi and Lower Huron to Oakwoods. Over the two days, 40 volunteers helped remove trash and debris from the river. The clean-up was financially supported by a grant from the Huron River Watershed Council.

Grant-funded Volunteer Project: The Metroparks was awarded a \$7500 grant from the Ford Volunteer Corps to build an accessible, outdoor Amphitheater with a bonfire pit at Kensington Nature Center. 28 Ford employees volunteered to help build the amphitheater; with land clearing, building benches, and plantings of native species. The Amphitheater will be used for educational programming, including evening programs.



Photo 2: Volunteers help pick up trash and debris at Lake St. Clair Metropark during the Earth Day clean-up event.



Photo 3: Ford Motor Co. volunteers sit at the newly built amphitheater at Kensington Nature Center. Ford employees worked on this project alongside Metroparks staff. The Metroparks received a \$7500 Ford Motor Volunteer Corps grant to pay for this project.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Ongoing Partnerships

Advisory Committees: 14 volunteers, with a variety of backgrounds and experiences with adaptive recreation, are part of the FAIR (Fun Accessible Inclusive Recreation) Play Coalition. This advisory committee has supported the design, marketing, and fundraising efforts for the accessible playground at Kensington Metroparks' Maple Beach area.

Event Support: Volunteers from Fiat Chrysler Automotive (FCA) helped at the Annual Metroparks Foundation golf outing held at Kensington Metropark. Volunteers helped staff with event support such as setting up the silent auction and being spotters on the golf course for the hole-in-one games.

Workplace Development: The Metroparks was pleased to partner with InPro Enterprises; Special Tree's vocational rehabilitation program that helps ease individuals with brain injury and other severe disabilities back to work. InPro Volunteers helped weekly at both Lake St. Clair Metropark and Lake Erie Metropark with minor maintenance activities such as cleaning picnic pavilions, removing staples from picnic tables, and trash pick-up.

Collaborations: For the second year, the Metroparks has collaborated with REI Co-Op, the Huron River Watershed Council, and Island Lake State Recreation Area to celebrate National Public Lands day. Celebrated on the fourth Saturday of September, volunteers helped with a river clean-up by canoe/kayak and removing invasive species, such as Autumn Olive, with the Natural Resources crew.

Natural Areas: 793 volunteers have helped our Natural Resources crew remove invasive species and with native seed collection throughout the Metroparks. Along with NR staff, volunteers covered 190 acres in 2019! (SEE APPENDIX 1).



Photo 4: Volunteers from FCA (Fiat Chrysler Automotive) do a clean-up by canoe of the Huron River from Dexter-Huron to Delhi.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Recognition

We are proud to have had Metroparks volunteers recognized for their service at The mParks Volunteer Service Awards this past year.



Photo 5: Toni Spears receives an mParks Volunteer Services Awards for her volunteer efforts in Natural Resources and land management at the Metroparks.

We thank the Clinton River Area Mountain Bike Association (CRAMBA) for their help with trail maintenance at Stony Creek; Toni Spears for her volunteer work in the natural areas; and the Cerku Family for all their work at Wolcott Mill Farm Center and the greenhouse

LOOKING FORWARD: 2020

We are excited about expanding the volunteer opportunities and creating a stronger volunteer services program in 2020 and beyond. We will be implementing new programs, partnerships and ideas, such as:

Trail Ambassador program: engaging volunteers to help maintain the trails by observation and light maintenance work.

Volunteer data collection and surveys: implementing a consistent feedback forum to better understand the volunteer successes and challenges and data of who makes up our volunteer base.

Garden volunteer program: Increase the scope of the program to help maintain garden beds throughout all 13 Metroparks.

Natural Resources: Partnering with the city of Detroit Parks & Recreation for volunteer engagement in natural areas. Expanding the river clean-up by canoe efforts.

Community Partnerships: Expand partnerships with community groups to continue to support volunteer services and grant opportunities.

Inclusion: Provide volunteer activities and events to engage volunteers of all abilities.



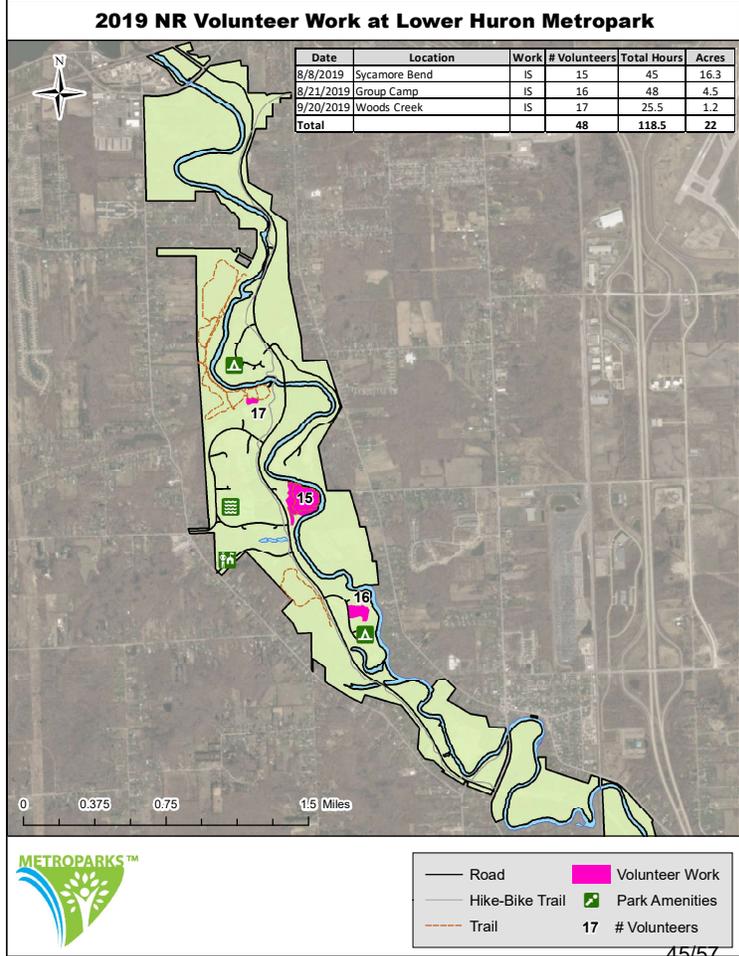
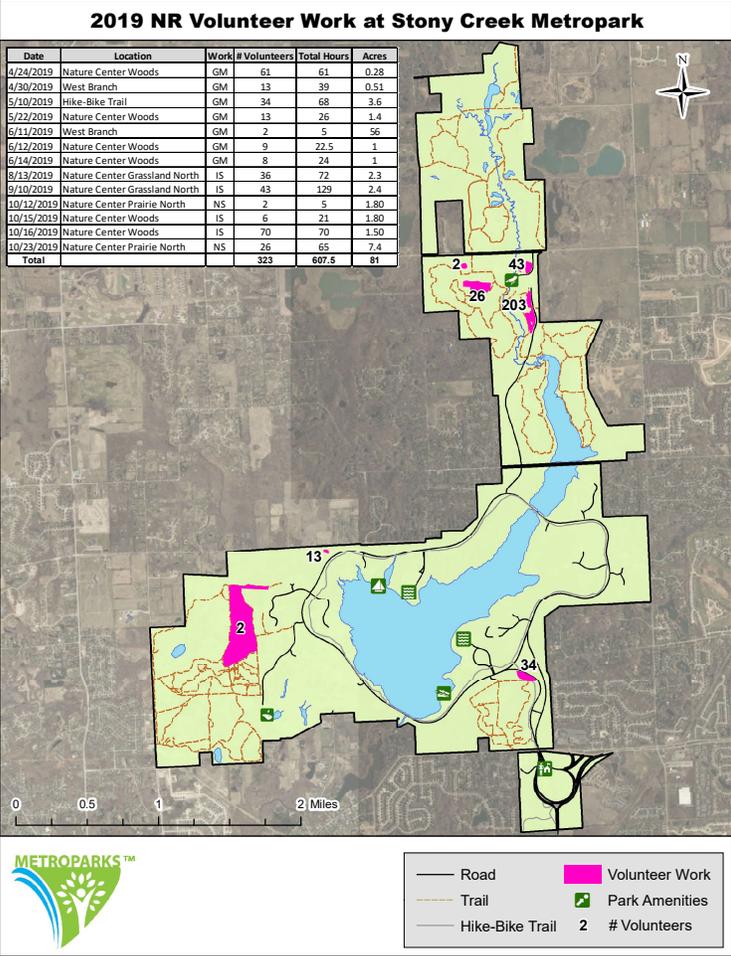
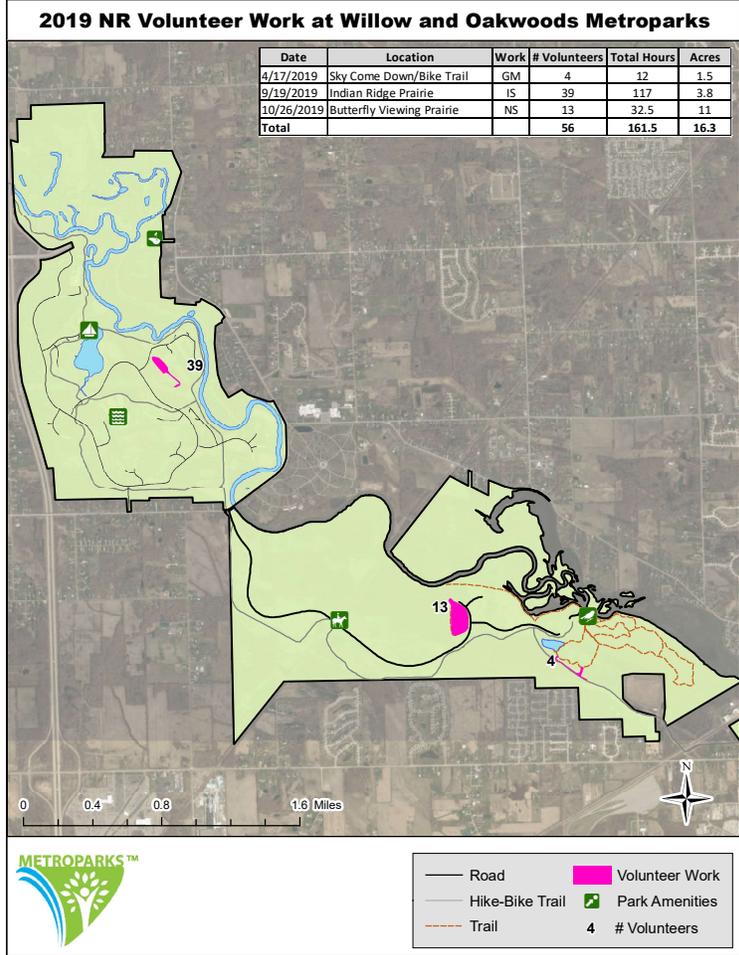
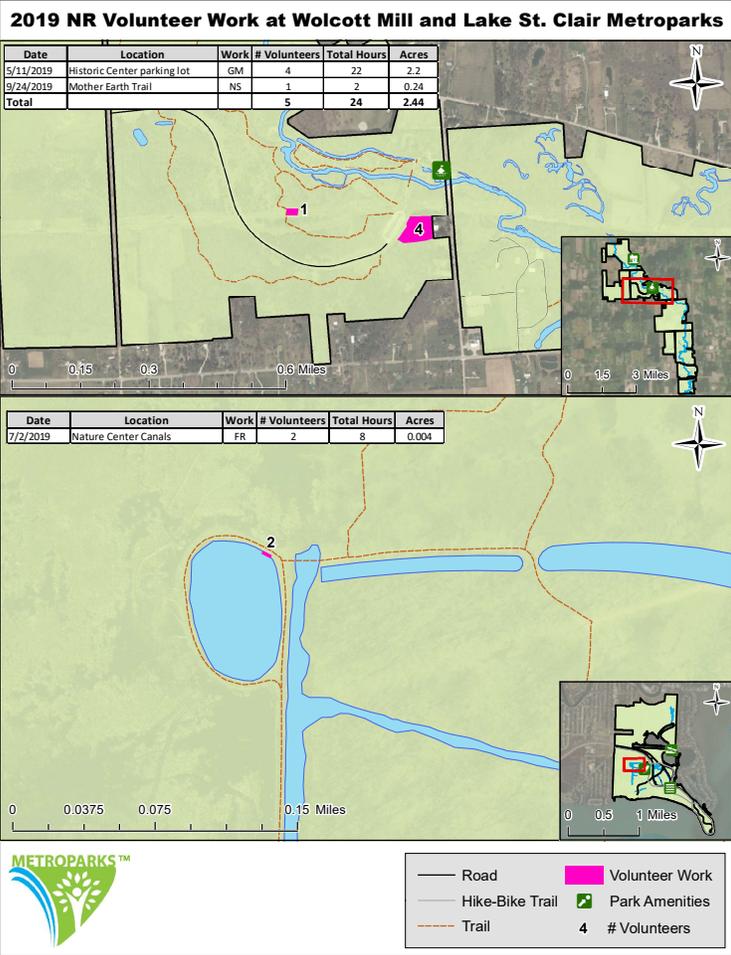
Photo 6: Volunteers worked alongside the Natural Resources technicians to remove garlic mustard, an invasive species at Willow Metropark.

My favorite thing about volunteering for the Metroparks, Wolcott Farm in specific, is getting the opportunity to connect with and care for the animals. I volunteer at the Metroparks to learn about nature and connect with the community of people around me.

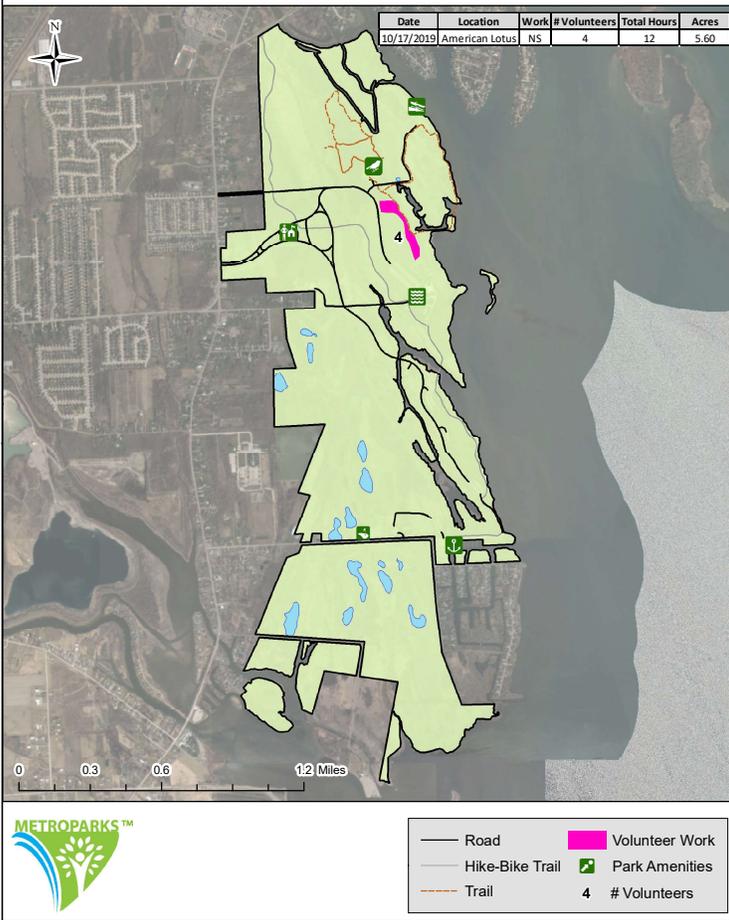
Bailey, Wolcott Mill Farm Center volunteer



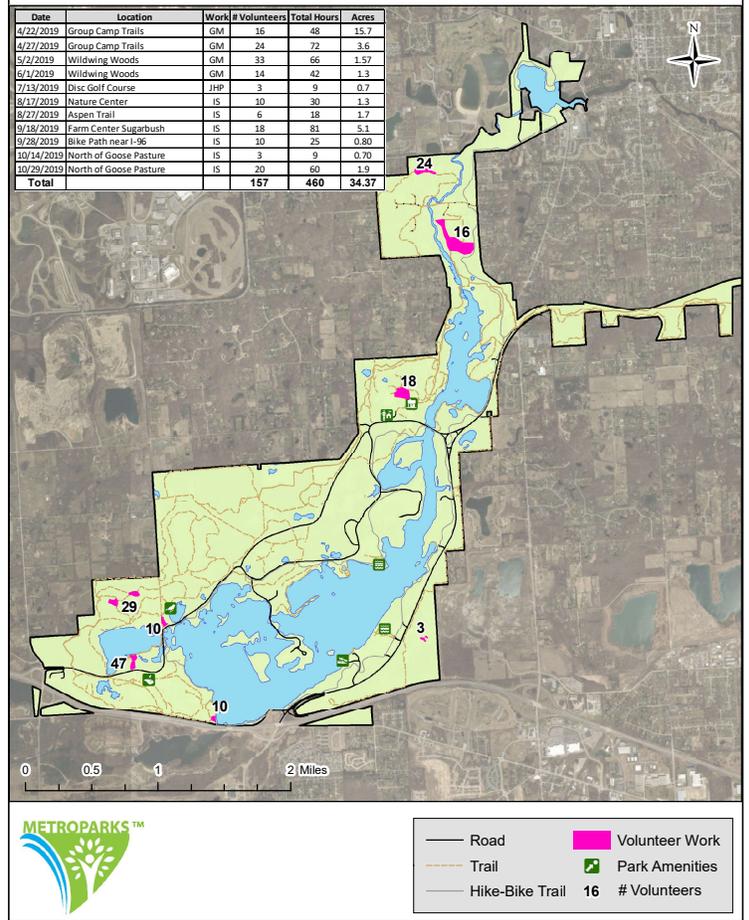
Photo 7: Lake St. Clair CISMA (Coordinated Invasive Species Management Area) from MDEQ at Stony Creek. Volunteers pulled 240 pounds of garlic mustard and learned to identify and report invasive species.



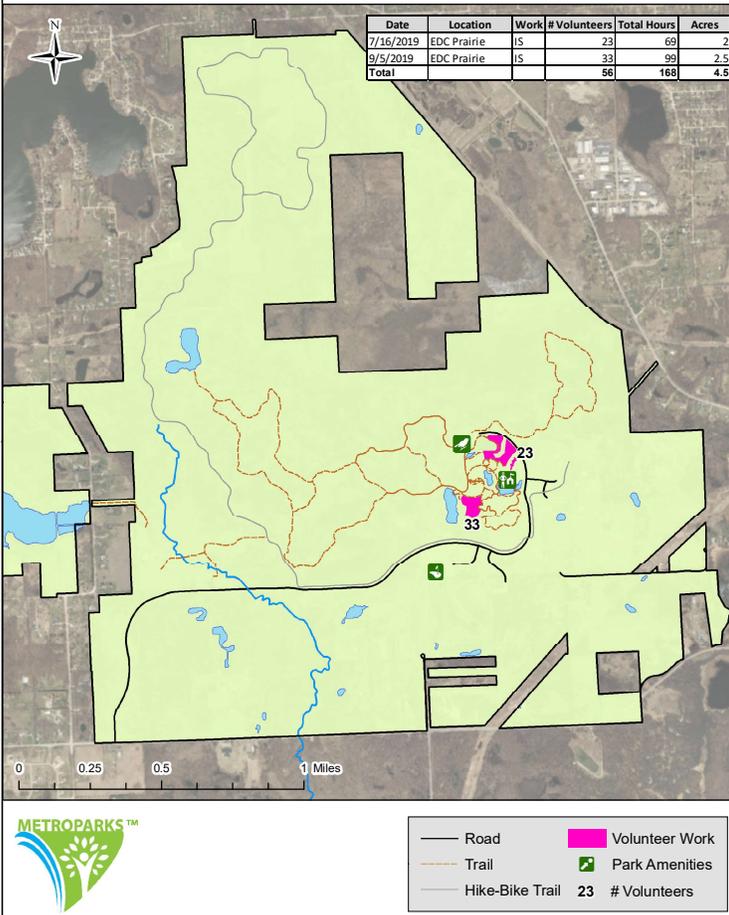
2019 NR Volunteer Work at Lake Erie Metropark



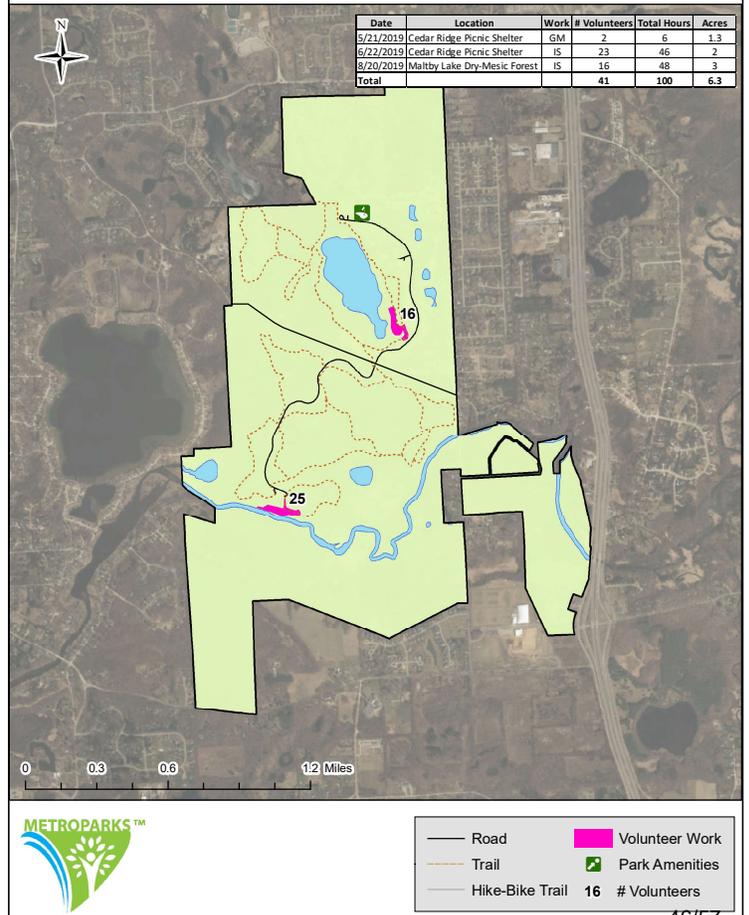
2019 NR Volunteer Work at Kensington Metropark



2019 NR Volunteer Work at Indian Springs Metropark

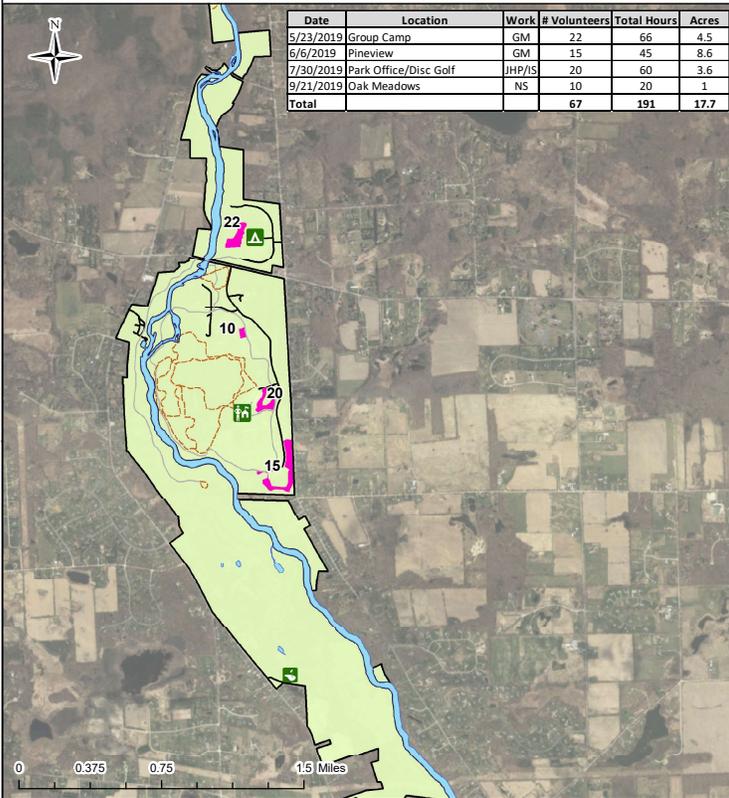


2019 NR Volunteer Work at Huron Meadows Metropark



2019 NR Volunteer Work at Hudson Mills Metropark

Date	Location	Work	# Volunteers	Total Hours	Acres
5/23/2019	Group Camp	GM	22	66	4.5
6/6/2019	Pineview	GM	15	45	8.6
7/30/2019	Park Office/Disc Golf	JHP/IS	20	60	3.6
9/21/2019	Oak Meadows	NS	10	20	1
Total			67	191	17.7





— Road	 Volunteer Work
- - - Trail	 Park Amenities
— Hike-Bike Trail	22 # Volunteers