



HURON-CLINTON METROPARKS CLIMATE ACTION PLAN ANNUAL REPORT AND Q4 UPDATE

2025



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BACKGROUND

BACKGROUND:

This Climate Action Plan ('CAP') is the Huron-Clinton Metroparks' formal plan for explicitly focusing on climate impacts the Metroparks have and how we will work toward a climate- positive future. We prioritized five goals for this plan, which include 89 near-term goals (5 years) and 41 long-term goals (10 years). Each action within each goal will include an update on progress thus far.

We recognize the time and financial commitments for this CAP's efforts overall and within each goal. Overall, financial commitments will be examined and detailed early in the plan's timeline and will be a continual check-in point for action prioritization and feasibility studies. We are taking a general approach of climate progress and curiosity with this CAP, centering learning, feasibility analyses, pilot areas, and ensuing actions / redirections as we implement actions and learn about their interactions.

This CAP is a "living document," meaning that adjustments are expected and encouraged as the work progresses and we learn how to refine our efforts in future plan versions. This plan is meant to be flexible and amenable to the uncertainty of climate change in the years to come. We will monitor progress on these actions and toward these goals with continuous tracking, re-evaluation, and updates.

The Steering Committee identified the needs for a succession plan that address staggering term limits, membership attendance, and other by-law components to ensure continuity in planning.

Progress on Metroparks staffs' overall climate-positive awareness, engagement, and behaviors will be assessed as well. Financial metrics and considerations will be tracked annually and considered in action updates. In 2027, a progress report and evaluation will be compiled to inform the direction of the 2028 Climate Action Plan, and to identify any changes or needed shifts in major areas of focus. The CAP will be updated every five years (e.g., 2028, 2033, 2038), aligning with planning standards set by the National Recreation and Park Association's Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

YEAR TWO:

The annual progress review demonstrates strong momentum in implementing sustainability and organizational initiatives across the Metroparks. Over the past year, **45% of the 130 planned actions** were completed, including 89 near-term tactical goals that **established critical baseline data**, with **56% of near-term actions finished—up 13%** from the previous year. This progress has set the stage for **41 long-term, high-impact actions**, reflecting a strategic shift toward system-level changes and sustainable growth. Significant efforts were made in gathering baseline data, most notably through a comprehensive Carbon Emissions Study, which provided a Greenhouse Gas inventory to guide future climate action aligned with the broader Climate Action Plan, focusing on emissions reduction, carbon sequestration, and the transition to a low-carbon economy.

Organizational improvements included developing a Metroparks Committee and Teams policy to ensure consistent performance across the organization. Workforce engagement and education were also robust, with six Lunch and Learn sessions reaching 143 participants, 18 teacher workshops engaging 250 participants, 513 staff trainings logged, and 17 climate and environment blogs posted to share knowledge with the community.

Environmental initiatives achieved tangible results, including the planting of 3,336 trees, turf reduction by 75 acres, a 1% decrease in annual spot mowing, and the expansion of natural areas by 191 acres. Volunteer engagement remained strong, with 29 workdays totaling 900 hours, improving 50 acres of natural area. The Metroparks' 21,037 acres of forests, wetlands, and grasslands store over 1.8 million tCO₂e, helping offset the park system's annual emissions, which are equivalent to 595 households.

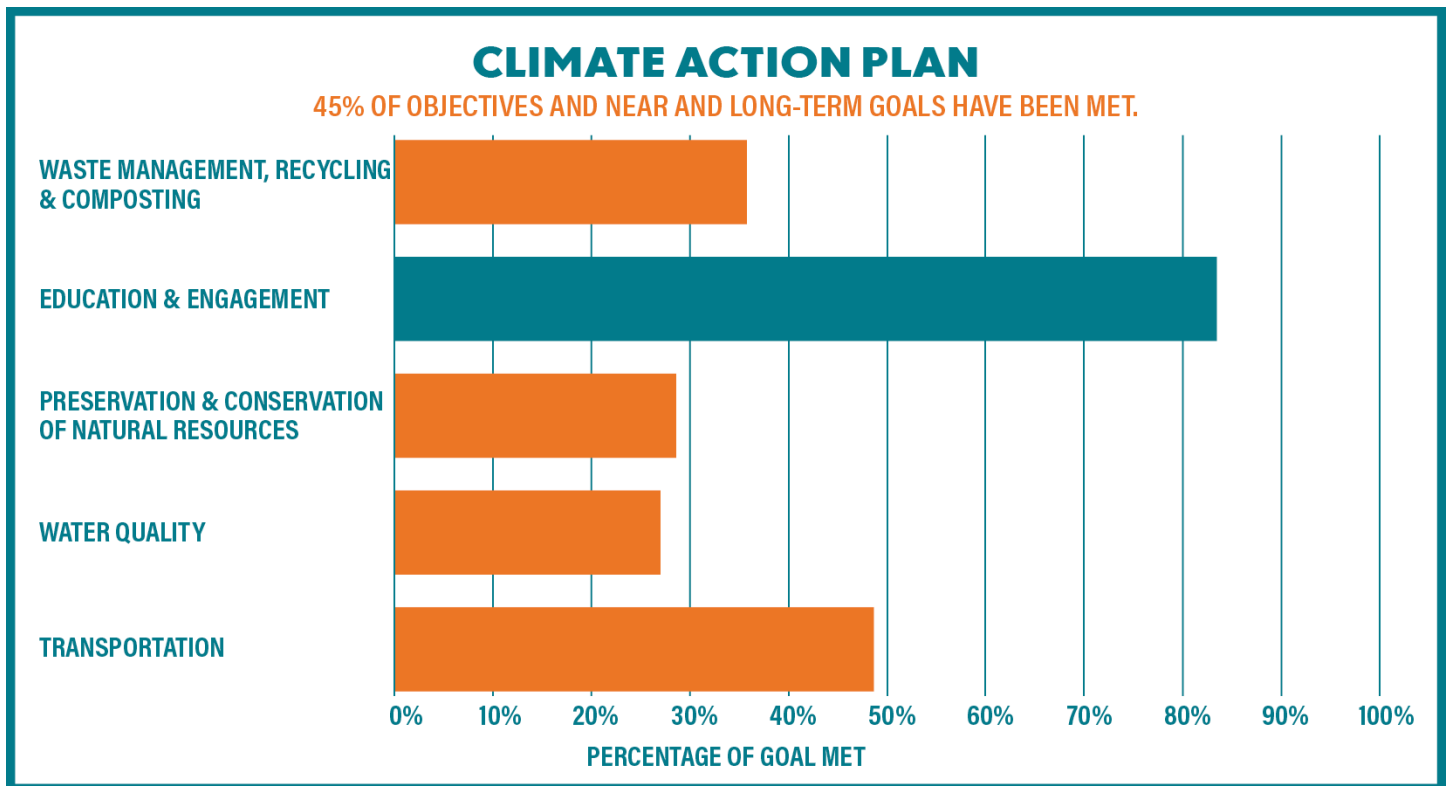
Stormwater management efforts through the Rain Garden Program engaged 186 participants in online and in-person sessions, with additional Rain Garden 101 programs reaching 56 participants at partner locations. Rain barrels installed at Stony Creek Nature Center and Lake St. Clair Park Office collected over 62,500 gallons of rainwater, with plans to expand the program in 2026. Transportation sustainability was also advanced, with five of seven golf cart fleets converted to electric, three hybrid vehicles purchased, and new partnerships formed with WAVE and Destination Cyclery.

Waste reduction and recycling initiatives further supported environmental goals, with 1,400 tires recycled and overall waste diversion increasing by over 35% compared to the previous year, resulting in an estimated 874 metric tons of CO₂e saved. Overall, these accomplishments demonstrate the Metroparks' commitment to strategic, measurable progress in sustainability, environmental stewardship, and organizational effectiveness.

Looking ahead, the Metroparks will focus on building upon the strong foundation established this year by expanding and scaling successful programs while addressing emerging sustainability priorities and continuing to collect data that will lead to better decision making. Efforts will include continuing the Rain Garden Program to further enhance stormwater management, expanding tree planting and natural area restoration projects, and increasing community engagement through volunteer opportunities and educational programs. The Metroparks will also advance its low-carbon initiatives by transitioning additional fleets to electric or hybrid vehicles, strengthening partnerships, and implementing strategies identified in the Carbon Emissions Study. In addition, the Metroparks will continue refining policies and procedures, such as the Committee and Teams policy, to ensure consistent organizational effectiveness. Collectively, these next steps aim to drive measurable environmental impact, support long-term system-level sustainability, and foster a resilient, engaged community.

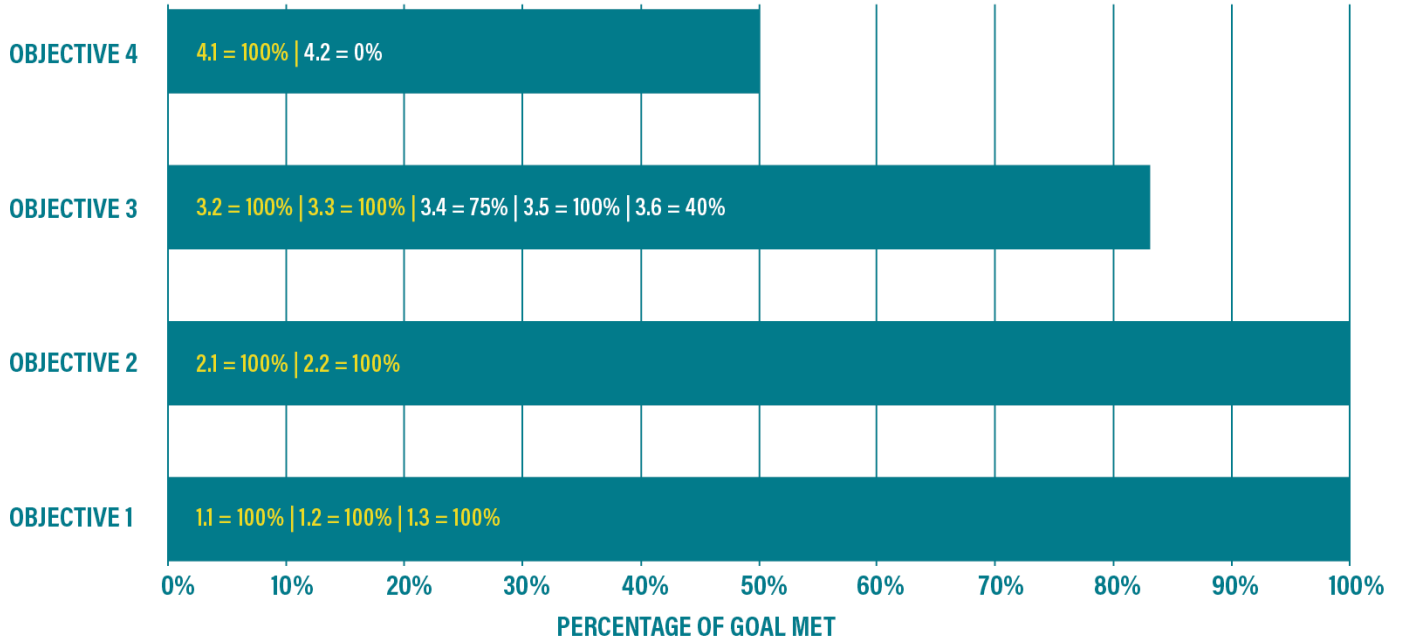
KEY FINDINGS

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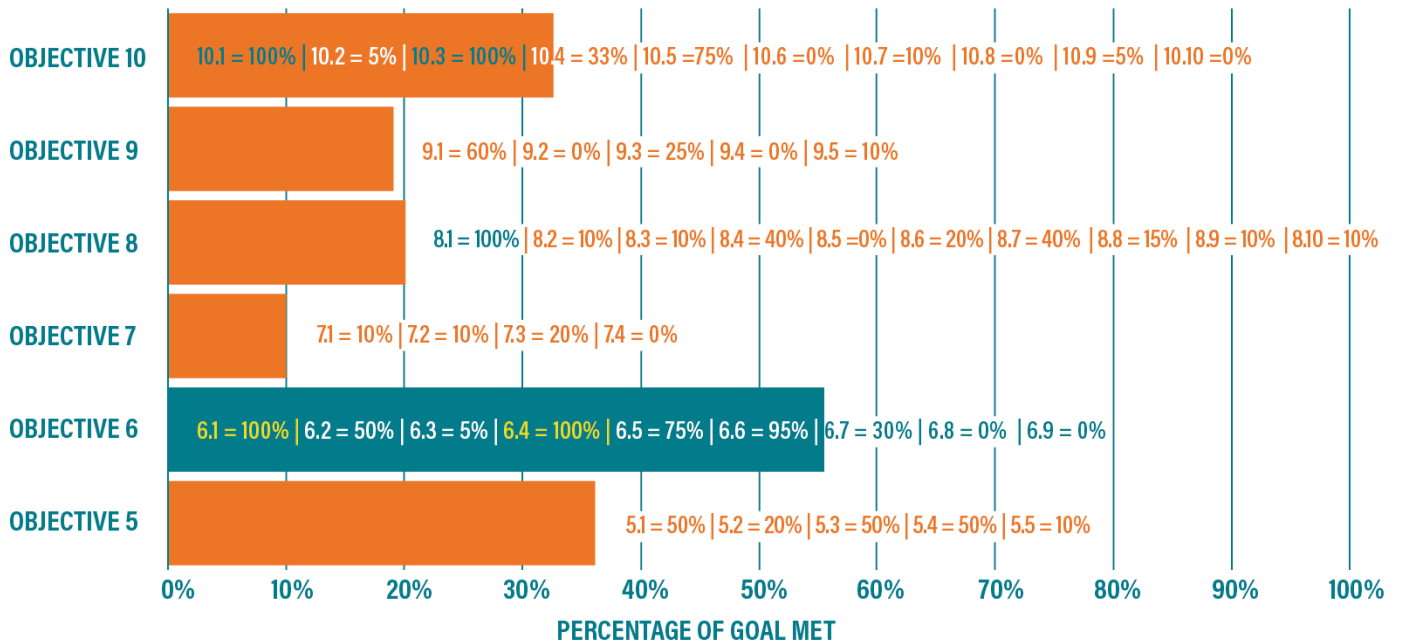
GOAL: EDUCATION & ENGAGEMENT

83.25% OF THIS GOAL HAS BEEN MET.



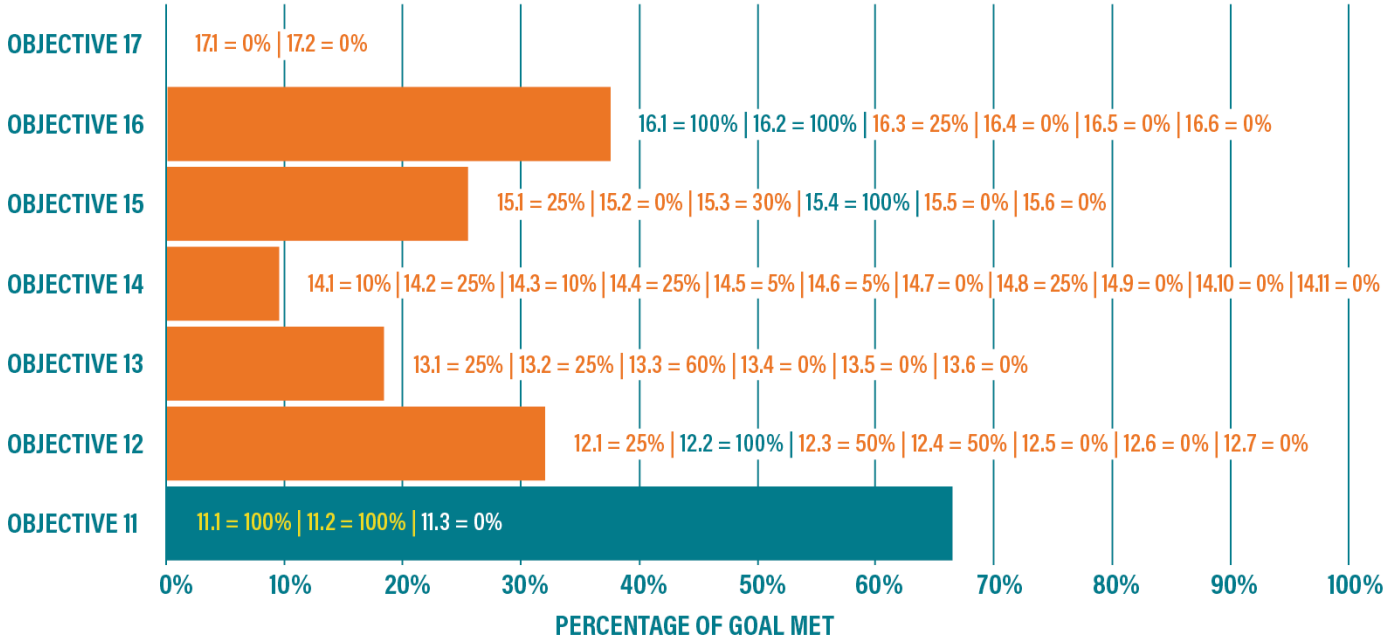
GOAL: PRESERVATION & CONSERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

28.9% OF THIS GOAL HAS BEEN MET.



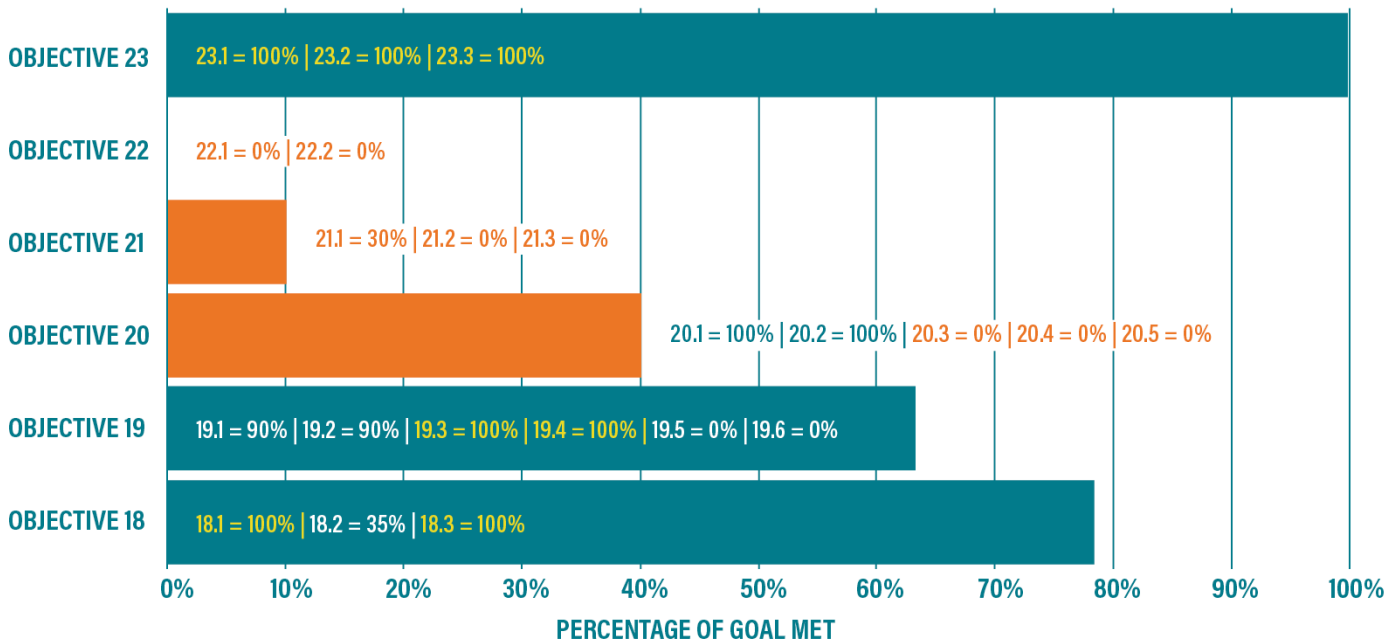
GOAL: WATER QUALITY

27.13% OF THIS GOAL HAS BEEN MET.



GOAL: TRANSPORTATION

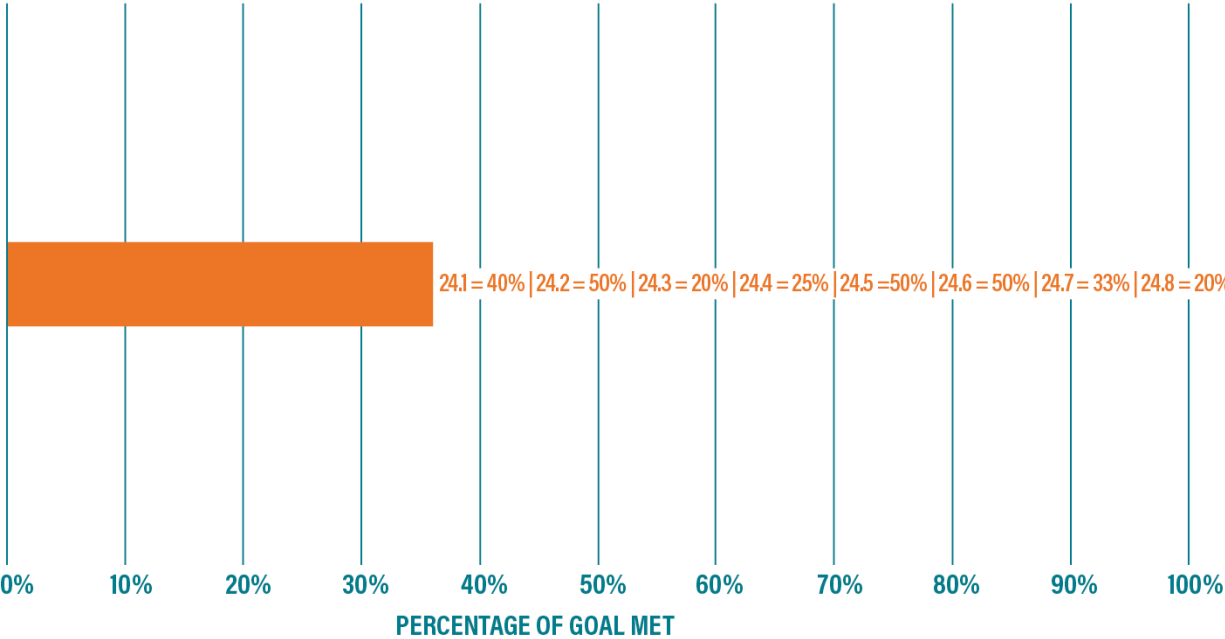
48.6% OF THIS GOAL HAS BEEN MET.



GOAL: WASTE MANAGEMENT, RECYCLING & COMPOSTING

36% OF THIS GOAL HAS BEEN MET.

OBJECTIVE 24



FINANCIAL

The financial impacts of the Metroparks' climate actions are being considered across the suite of efforts, as well as for individual actions. However, significant financial considerations and detailing are needed both in this initial stage and over the five years of climate action outlined in this plan. We recognize this and will act on four main areas of financial planning to support the work of this plan in an intentional manner. These efforts will be led by the Finance Department.

First, we aim to build the capacity of the Finance department to support the CAP goals. This will include seeking training on financing climate actions and educating Metroparks staff on the connections between climate action innovation and financing.

Second, we will create a financial plan for the CAP, in winter 2023/2024. This will be based on a detailed review of the goals and actions and the estimated costs of implementing them. Doing so may highlight groups of actions within each timeline that can be supported together. These types of considerations will be communicated to the CAP Team, Metroparks governance, and staff as appropriate, for adjustments and prioritizations in implementing the actions. Budgeting efforts will be identified in support of this financial plan, such as reserving allotted amounts for climate goals, evaluating capital and major maintenance impacts resulting from this plan, and evaluating the savings/additional costs regarding climate actions to determine the net costs. Within this financial plan, we recognize the ongoing impacts of climate change and will try to account for these. For example, longer summers and shorter winters will change the needs and operating dates of facilities. We will consider the impact that changing seasons have on operations when budgeting staff and material expenses and operating revenues each year.

Third, we will explore alternate sources of funding for our climate actions. At this initial stage of exploration, examples of those sources might be revenue bonds and/or grants. It also includes evaluating the potential for subsidizing climate actions with funding from revenue- generating projects. We will consider in what ways the Metroparks might pursue alternate sources of income to offset tolling losses with increased public transportation. We will also assess investments and financial institutions for climate-related risks and take steps to mitigate those risks.

Fourth, we will revise the Metroparks' purchasing policy. This will include updates to incorporate our climate goals, partnerships in support of these, and incentives for companies with a climate-smart practice. When purchasing, we will consider and promote climate- friendly options, taking into consideration climate impacts, waste generated, and per unit costs. For example, we will encourage buying in bulk, buying low packaging options, and buying green options.

What has been done in 2025

The Climate Action Plan Finance Subcommittee set a goal in 2025 to identify sustainable financial training and to provide process support the implementation of projects related to the climate action plan. This committee was able to achieve these goals along with the additional actions listed below.

- This group has determined that it will evaluate data from multiple software sources to help identify trends and optimize strategies for greater efficiency.
- We have been working to make sure that the new equipment and fleet management system has the necessary tools available to be able to analyze the efficiency of CAP related tools and equipment.
- We were able to analyze the charging data relating to the public charging stations at Willow Golf Course.
- The Authority's budgeted CAP related major maintenance projects make up 8% of the 2026 budget. This is an increase of 2% compared to the 2025 adopted budget.
- The Authority's budgeted CAP related capital improvement projects make up 16% of the 2026 budget. This is an increase of 16% compared to the 2025 adopted budget.
- The Authority was able to complete budget compliance projects for culverts, catch basins, and oil separator clean out.
- This group has created an employee survey regarding the use of gas powered and electric tools and equipment.

Amazon Order

Q1 (to date)

- Orders: 574
- Climate Pledge Vendors: 46
- Percentage: 8%

Q2 (to date)

- Orders: 678
- Climate Pledge Friendly: 52
- Percent: 7.7%

Q3 (to date)

- Orders: 772
- Climate Pledge Friendly: 46
- Percent: 6%

Q4 (to date)

- Orders: 678
- Climate Pledge Friendly: 42
- Percentage: 6.2%

GOAL 1. EDUCATION & ENGAGEMENT

Increase and embed climate action education across all areas of the Metroparks through sharing of knowledge, engaging with others, collaborating with partners, and forming connections with stakeholders, to make real world difference across the Metroparks and throughout our region.

Objective 1: Beginning in 2024, provide an annual education to all Metroparks staff on issues of climate resilience, climate equity, stewardship, and adaptation.

Near-term Actions

- Action 1.1: Identify topics and trainers for staff training.
- Lunch and Learn Presentations
The 2025 Lunch and Learn schedule for staff has been finalized.
- The first presentation of 2025 took place on February 11, with guest speaker Erick Elgin who discussed Shoreline Restoration. Twenty-eight staff attended the presentation.
- The next Lunch and Learn presentation will take place on Thursday, March 13, 2025, at 11:30 a.m., presented by Halima Afi Cassells, an artist who will discuss Eco Art and Community Action. This presentation is a collaboration between the CAP Education and Engagement subcommittee and the Metroparks DEI Team, and is open to staff, the public and the Board of Commissioners.

Date	Topic	Presenter	Organization	Attendance
2/11/2025	Shoreline Restoration	Erick Elgin	MSU Extension	28
3/13/2025	Eco Art and Community Engagement	Halima Afi Cassells	Sidewalk Detroit	18
4/22/2025	Keep it Clean Public Campaign	Danielle Mauter	Metroparks	23
6/17/2025	Composting	Patrick Bigelow	Metroparks	23
August	Transportation Initiatives	Jim O'Brien	Metroparks	23
12/2/2025	Precipitation, Runoff and Erosion	Cameron Kniffen	MSU ext.	28

- The Eco Art and Community event offered on March 13, 2025, was originally scheduled to take place as a Board Presentation, however, events beyond our control caused other BOC business to be rescheduled at the same time, so this program was open to the public and staff.
- As a result, Lake St. Clair Metropark pursued an Eco Art installation which was unveiled in August.
 - It was profiled in a Metroparks Blog entry.
(<https://www.metroparks.com/a-sturgeon-story-in-art-lake-st-clair-metropark-unveils-eco-friendly-photo-installation/>)



- CAP-specific questions were added to the Employee Engagement Survey taking place in Fall of 2025. This was done as a second data-point after the Climate Action Plan Employee Baseline Survey that took place in early 2024.
 - Some questions related to topics and trainers included:
 - What climate topics are most interesting to you? (Select all that apply).
 - Which training topics would help you better understand climate action in your job?

100%

100% of the action has been completed and ongoing.

- Action 1.2: Offer in-house training in collaboration with partners, opportunities to attend webinars or other local conferences, and access to climate education resources for the purpose of expanding knowledge to incorporate into daily work.
 - Trainers were hired from the National Network for Ocean and Climate Change Interpretation (NNOCCI) <https://nnocci.org/>, to provide training to staff in the Interpretive, Marketing and Communications, Natural Resources, Leadership team, and Staff who are part of the Climate Action Plan Steering Committee or Subcommittee. This training helps participants explore the challenges and opportunities associated with how people in the United States think about climate change and offers an introduction to how social science research-based tools (Strategic Framing) can help communicators more effectively navigate the topic.
 - Three sessions were offered, one in January (30 participants) and two in March (18 and 20 participants, respectively).

100%

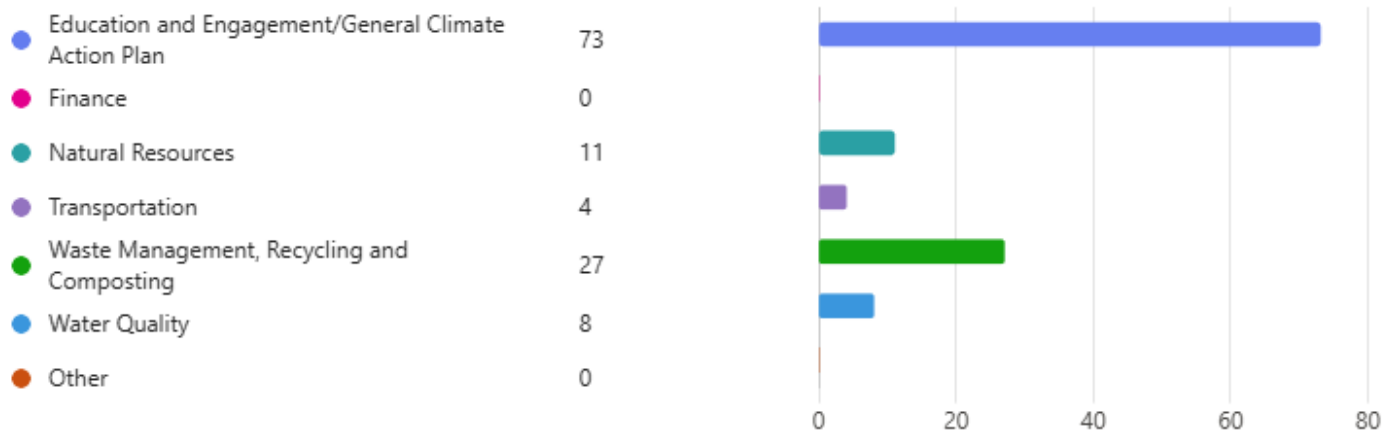
100% of the action has been completed and ongoing.

- Action 1.3: Hold workshops for staff and speaker series to educate why climate smart practices are implemented.
 - The subcommittee members crafted and provided a detailed toolkit to rollout to staff This included:
 - The Education and Engagement tool kit
 - Slides with information for supervisors to share with staff
 - One-slide for seasonal trainings
 - Slide deck for larger departmental meetings
 - Slides with information for supervisors to share with staff
 - Updates to staff flier and information
 - Presentation at an Operation Meeting
 - Multiple mentions on morning Leadership calls
 - Multiple mentions to include in staff orientation trainings
 - Presentation at an Operation Meeting
 - Follow up email to Operation meeting attendees
 - Multiple mentions on morning Leadership calls
 - Multiple mentions to include in staff orientations
 - Positive feedback from supervisors who have used the materials
 - CAP Education and Engagement Toolkit, originally rolled out in 2024 was

reviewed at the Operations Meeting in April 2025.

- CAP information is shared with new hires at seasonal trainings in each district.
- The Climate Action Training Form was updated for 2025 to simplify the training documentation process. It was created for staff to record their training related to Climate Action. An updated flier with QR code was distributed to staff and posted in common areas.
 - The subcommittee updated how CAP-related staff training is tracked. LMS Stormwater Training is reported through the LMS system. Other CAP-related trainings are documented by staff using a Microsoft Form called 2025 CAP Training Documentation Log.
 - The Microsoft form is held on the park's internal SharePoint system where employees are responsible for completing a brief survey to document their training.
 - A total of 153 non-LMS trainings were reported.
 - 123 entries of staff completing Climate Action training and entering it in the system themselves occurred between January and November.
 - 30 additional seasonal staff completed training which was entered into the system by their supervisors.
 - Communication to inform of the documentation process for staff included emails, announcements at Operations meetings
 - An updated flyer with a QRC to access the tracking system was sent to staff to display in areas where employee gather.
- A report of LMS Stormwater training completions is sent regularly to the CAP Education and Engagement Subcommittee Chair to be compiled.
 - 360 individuals have completed the Stormwater Training facilitated on LMS through November of this year.
- Training Details:
 - The most common topic for training besides LMS Stormwater Training was "Education and Engagement/General Climate Action Plan."

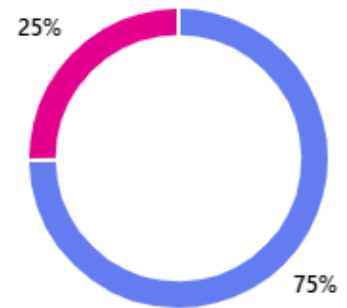
Which of the Climate Action Plan Goals did this training best support? (select the most relevant goal)



- Three-quarters of online or in-person training recorded was host by the Metroparks, and 25% of reported trainings were host by outside organizations.

Was your training hosted by the Metroparks or another organization?

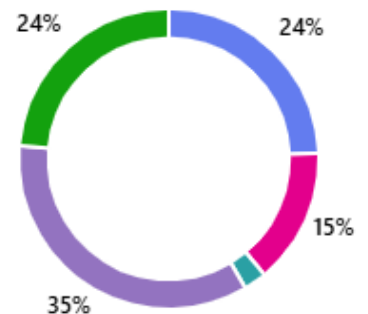
● Training hosted by the Metroparks	92
● Training hosted by outside organization	31



- The most frequently reported type of training was online and Metroparks-led.

Type of training

● In-Person Metroparks led training	30
● In-Person outside organization led training	18
● Multi-Day training or conference	3
● Online Metroparks led training	43
● Online outside organization led training	29



- In total, 513 Climate Action Plan-related training opportunities have been utilized by Metroparks employees in 2025.

100%

100% of the action has been completed and ongoing.

Metrics of Success

- 100% completed: Four educational workshops (speaker series) will be provided about climate initiatives, conducted by industry leaders, and aimed to increase the knowledge of Metroparks staff, regardless of job classification.

- 100% Completed: By 2025, two Learning Management System (LMS) trainings will be identified and made available for staff.
 - Metroparks EHS Compliance Specialist examined LMS Training options available that relate to the Climate Action Plan.
 - LMS Trainings that are currently assigned to staff and relate to the CAP are:
 - Stormwater Pollution: Baseline Best Management Practices-every 2 years
 - ENV-3.2 Spill Prevention/Control/Countermeasures – SPCC
 - Currently these climate and health and safety-related LMS are assigned:
 1. SPCC Training – Park Maintenance Workers and Golf Course Maintenance Workers
 2. Stormwater Training – all staff
 3. Heat Stress Training – all staff
 - The Education and Engagement Committee has discussed adding or creating a training specific to our needs, but it is currently in the idea stage.
 - Additional modules are available through the LMS system but not currently assigned to staff. These include:
 - Environmental Awareness
 - Environmental Awareness: Land Pollution (Microlearning)
 - Environmental Awareness: Water Pollution (Microlearning)
 - Environmental Awareness: Air Pollution (Microlearning)
 - Energy Efficiency at Home
 - Energy Efficiency: General Improvements
 - Energy Efficiency: Poor Energy Efficiency Indicators
 - Energy Efficiency: Sealing and Insulating Your Home
 - Sewage/ Wastewater/ Waterline Maintenance
 - Stormwater Pollution Prevention for Industrial Operations
 - Stormwater Pollution: Advanced Best Management Practices (Microlearning)
 - Stormwater Pollution: Water Pollution Regulations (Microlearning)
 - Universal Waste Management

360 LMS trainings have occurred. Stormwater training to all staff occurs every three yrs and new staff within one yr of hire.

Objective 2: Beginning in 2024, provide collective engagement tools across every department within the Metroparks on issues of climate resilience, climate equity, stewardship, and adaptation on an annual basis.

Near-term Actions

- Action 2.1: Create storytelling pieces around why the Metroparks have adopted a CAP, to be shared on all communication channels. Example engagement tools include public events in underrepresented communities, blogs, surveys, story maps, and social media and traditional communication strategies. These will incorporate stories/engagements from the public and be developed by every department.
- Mow Plan Updates
 - The Metroparks Mow Plan has been updated for 2025 and communicated with staff, along with the public on the web.

- Shoreline Contractor Training
 - Shoreline Contractor Training took place at Stony Creek Metropark, installing 90 feet of natural shoreline. This allowed for all the contractors working on the project to become certified natural shoreline installers.
- The Keep It Clean campaign was launched on the website: <https://www.metroparks.com/keep-it-clean/>
 - Information highlighted for the public to address all the CAP Objectives include:
 - Trash and Recycling
 - Don't feed Wildlife
 - Let It Grow
 - Carbon Emissions
 - Climate Classroom
 - Links to the Climate Action Plan/Updates and Blog pages are also featured.
 - Blog series on Environment and Climate action. This is shared over social media channels. The Metroparks are also tagging other organizations climate related posts.
 - Shared story telling posts on social media
- Efforts are being made to update the blog to garner more engagement. Staff is modifying the schedule to include scheduled social media posts and video content. Supervisors are identifying staff to help with additional videos and blog content. <https://www.metroparks.com/category/environment-climate/>
 - Shared story telling posts on social media:



1/8/25 **Softened Shorelines Protect Water Quality and Improve Habitat**

Caption: Michigan's shorelines do more than look beautiful – they protect water quality, provide critical habitat, and improve recreational areas for everyone to enjoy! Through a partnership with the Michigan Natural Shoreline Partnership the Metroparks are working to naturalize shorelines and empower others to do the same. Whether you're a homeowner, professional, or just curious, our Certified Natural Shoreline Professionals Workshop in March will give you the tools to make a difference – and then you'll join us in the parks to put your new skills to use. Learn more at <https://www.metroparks.com/softened-shorelines-protect.../>

- Facebook
 - Link: <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/168SciV8Fo/>
 - 25 likes, 1 share, 3 link clicks, 1666 impressions
- Instagram
 - Link: https://www.instagram.com/p/DEkTWIzNYJr/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRlODBiNWFiZA==
 - 106 likes, 1 link click, 782 impressions

1/31/25 **Rain Gardens: Your Neighborhood Superhero**

Caption: Can a garden be a superhero? 🌧️🌱 Rain gardens are nature's way of tackling stormwater pollution, reducing flooding, and creating beautiful spaces for wildlife and neighbors alike. Learn how these small but mighty gardens can transform your neighborhood and make a real impact. Dive into the details in this week's blog: <https://www.metroparks.com/rain-gardens-your.../>

- Facebook
 - Link: <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/15v3aCKbom/>
 - 10 likes, 1 share, 5 link clicks, 1010 impressions
- Instagram
 - Link: https://www.instagram.com/p/DFqOE_WP8Pw/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRlODBiNWFiZA==
 - 33 likes, 7 link clicks, 697 impressions

2/5/25 **World Wetlands Day 2025 – “Protecting Wetlands for Our Common Future”**

Caption: Did you know wetlands act like nature’s cleanup crew and storm protectors? They filter out pollutants, protect communities from floods, and provide safe habitats for countless species, including birds, fish, and amphibians. This World Wetlands Day, find out how you can help protect these vital ecosystems that benefit us all. Read more at <https://www.metroparks.com/world-wetlands-day-2025.../>

- Facebook
 - Link: <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1EtDJYSc1Y/>
 - 24 likes, 7 shares, 9 link clicks, 1339 impressions
- Instagram
 - Link: https://www.instagram.com/p/DFsniTztPnn/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRlODBiNWFiZA==
 - 27 likes, 639 impressions

2/19/25 **Art and Sustainability**

Caption: Meet Halima Afi Cassells, a Detroit-based artist whose work blends creativity with environmental consciousness. From large-scale murals using giveaway paint to upcycled collages and community-driven art projects, she reimagines sustainability through art. Read more about her inspiring journey and upcoming Metroparks presentation on March 13! <https://www.metroparks.com/art-and-sustainability/>

- Facebook
 - Link: <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/19hLWjTjG9/>
 - 8 likes, 1 share, 4 link clicks, 1372 impressions
- Instagram
 - Link: https://www.instagram.com/p/DGQn_B4NoCf/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRlODBiNWFiZA==
 - 21 likes, 1 share, 6 link clicks, 696 impressions

2/26/25 **Parks in Partnership: Cooperative Invasive Species Management Areas (CISMAs)**

Caption: 🕷️What’s Hiding in Plain Sight? This ootheca might look harmless now, but inside are over 100 mantis eggs from a nonnative species. Across Michigan, invasive species are altering landscapes, threatening wildlife, and even impacting local economies. Thankfully, Cooperative Invasive Species Management Areas (CISMAs) like [Lake St Clair CISMA](#) and [Oakland County Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area - CISMA](#) are working to identify, manage, and share strategies to help reduce their spread. This Invasive Species Awareness Week, learn how you can make a difference in protecting Michigan’s natural spaces! Read the full blog: <https://ow.ly/Jfx250V6STS>

- Facebook
 - Link: <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1Bo6CvNmm2/>

- 37 likes, 8 share, 23 link clicks, 7664 impressions
- Instagram
 - Link: <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1Bo6CvNmm2/>
 - 67 likes, 3 link click, 2537 impressions

3/19/25 **World Frog Day**

Caption: Did you know that many Michigan frogs, like the Eastern Gray Tree Frog, rely on temporary woodland ponds to breed? These seasonal wetlands are crucial for amphibian survival but are at risk due to development. On World Frog Day, let's pledge to protect their habitats! Learn more in this week's blog: <https://www.metroparks.com/world-frog-day/>

- Facebook
 - Link: <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1C21mPSZ6g/>
 - 70 likes, 13 share, 8 link clicks, 5873 impressions
- Instagram
 - Link: https://www.instagram.com/p/DHZgogRzR8g/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
 - 65 likes, 1 share, 4 link click, 1320 impressions

3/26/25 **Parks on Fire: The Benefits of Prescribed Burns**

Caption: Fire in the Metroparks? Yes, and for good reason! 🔥 Prescribed burns help keep our natural areas diverse and resilient by clearing out invasive species, improving soil health, and even filtering stormwater in wetlands. And the benefits go beyond plants—controlled burns can reduce tick populations by removing the leaf litter where they live. This spring, our natural resources team will be carefully conducting prescribed burns to keep our landscapes thriving. Learn more: <https://www.metroparks.com/parks-on-fire-the-benefits-of.../>

- Facebook
 - Link: <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1C3JxrNjhq/>
 - 53 likes, 4 share, 35 link clicks, 4625 impressions
- Instagram
 - Link: https://www.instagram.com/p/DHqrgzVsoiB/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
 - 66 likes, 2 share, 5 link click, 1873 impressions

4/2/25 **Let's All Speak for the Trees**

Caption: The Serviceberry isn't just a pretty tree—it's an essential food source for birds like the cedar waxwing! But trees do so much more than provide food. Native trees support entire ecosystems, offering shelter, filtering air and water, preventing erosion, and even housing hundreds of butterfly and moth species. 🌳 By learning to recognize and protect our native trees, we can help keep our environment thriving. Want to get started? Dive into this week's blog for expert tips on identifying, appreciating, and supporting the trees around you: <https://www.metroparks.com/lets-all-speak-for-the-trees/>

- Facebook
 - Link: <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/196J8YNyVn/>
 - 234 likes, 21 share, 57 link clicks, 22,764 impressions
- Instagram
 - Link: https://www.instagram.com/p/DH8tEAJx2Ea/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
 - 36 likes, 1 link click, 891 impressions

4/16/25 **Growing our Let it Grow Zones**

Caption: What looks like a patch of tall, soggy grass is actually doing a lot of heavy lifting. These Let it Grow zones—filled with native plants—are supporting wildlife, filtering stormwater, and protecting overwintering insects during this cold, wet spring.

Goldenrod galls are providing shelter (and even snacks for birds), while deep roots are helping prevent erosion and absorb excess water. These areas may look dormant, but they're anything but.

✿ Learn how these natural spaces support biodiversity and why a little patience in your own yard can go a long way. Read the full blog at <https://www.metroparks.com/growing-our-let-it-grow-zones/>

- Facebook
 - Link: <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/15HrHUzrJU/>
 - 50 likes, 6 share, 7 link clicks, 4708 impressions
- Instagram
 - Link: https://www.instagram.com/p/DlhScIzT0Hm/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
 - 48 likes, 1 share, 906 impressions

4/22/25 Earth Day Post 1

Caption: Happy Earth Day! Just a raccoon popping in to remind you, litter harms wildlife, pollutes ecosystems, and diminishes the natural beauty of your Metroparks. To reduce this impact, all parks now feature single-stream recycling bins, allowing you to place all recyclables — paper, cardboard, glass, metal, and certain plastics — in a single container. Please check bin labels and ensure all materials are clean and free of food waste.

Improper recycling — like dirty containers or pizza boxes — can contaminate entire batches. Always use designated trash and recycling receptacles and remember to check the signs on bins for what can and cannot go inside. Every visit is an opportunity to do the right thing — let's all keep our parks beautiful and healthy. ♻️

Learn more at <https://www.metroparks.com/keep-it-clean/>

- Facebook
 - Link: <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1VrS97WXGH/>
 - 9 likes, 1 share, 1600 impressions
- Instagram
 - Link: https://www.instagram.com/p/DlwvM2nzzi/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
 - 28 likes, 2 share, 942 impressions

4/22/25 Earth Day Post 2

Caption: Happy Earth Day! Remember feeding wildlife may seem harmless — or even helpful — but it often causes lasting harm. Animals that become accustomed to human food can develop aggressive behaviors, become reliant on unnatural diets that make them ill, and increase the risk of spreading disease, including avian flu.

Feeding wildlife also creates nuisance behaviors that are difficult to reverse. In some cases, animals that can't unlearn these habits must be relocated or euthanized. Even nuts left behind for birds or squirrels pose risks to visitors with food allergies.

Enjoy wildlife safely by observing from a distance or visiting one of our Nature Centers, where feeders are carefully maintained and offer safe, educational viewing experiences for all ages.



Learn more at <https://www.metroparks.com/keep-it-clean/>

- Facebook
 - Link: <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1J8fN5cS4t/>
 - 16 likes, 2 share, 6 link clicks, 2760 impressions
- Instagram
 - Link: https://www.instagram.com/p/Dlw1930zBpj/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
 - 31 likes, 1 link click, 1210 impressions

4/22/25 Earth Day Post 3

Caption: This Earth Day, remember Let it Grow Zones — or “No-Mow Zones” — are there for a reason. These are areas in the Metroparks intentionally left unmowed to support climate and ecological health. These zones improve stormwater management, reduce carbon emissions from mowing, and create habitats for pollinators, migratory birds, and native wildlife.

Taller plants help absorb and filter rainwater, slowing runoff and reducing the amount of pollution that reaches lakes, rivers, and recreational areas. While Grow Zones may appear “unkept” during early establishment, they play a vital role in improving water quality, reducing flooding, and restoring ecological balance over time.

These zones are part of a Mowing Plan and represent a growing commitment to sustainable land management practices. 🌱

Learn more at <https://www.metroparks.com/keep-it-clean/>

- Facebook
 - Link: <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/15nqmSxUHm/>
 - 22 likes, 4 shares, 1 link click, 2184 impressions
- Instagram
 - Link: https://www.instagram.com/p/Dlw8362z7K3/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
 - 25 likes, 685 impressions

4/22/25 Earth Day Post 4

Caption: Happy Earth Day! It’s about more than just a day of cleanups. Did you know Metroparks is taking proactive steps to reduce carbon emissions — the primary driver of climate change? These projects might look different than you would expect, and they improve both your experience in parks and improve the environment! Things like:

Converting gas-powered golf carts to electric models

Testing electric mowers and hybrid vehicles for staff

Installing electric vehicle charging stations for visitors

Adding more “Let it Grow Zones” which reduces mowing and therefore reduces emissions while also improving habitat and reducing flooding

Conducting a carbon footprint study to guide future improvements

You can help, too — by reducing personal vehicle use, choosing clean energy, and supporting local climate solutions. Together, these choices protect our natural spaces for future generations. 🦋

Learn more at <https://www.metroparks.com/keep-it-clean/>

- Facebook
 - Link: <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1P9hCuEXgo/>
 - 20 likes, 1 share, 1 link clicks, 2099 impressions
- Instagram
 - Link: https://www.instagram.com/p/DlxDr_Ez-7s/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
 - 36 likes, 1 link click, 1015 impressions

4/23/25 Earth Day is Every Day at the Metroparks

Caption: For 55 years, Earth Day has inspired action—but at the Metroparks, we champion the planet year-round. From hands-on programs at our interpretive centers to guided tours of sustainability projects like rain gardens and “Let it Grow” zones, there are countless ways to learn and get involved. Discover upcoming volunteer opportunities, our Climate Classroom, and how you can celebrate Earth Week with us.

🌸 Read the full blog and join us in making everyday Earth Day -

<https://www.metroparks.com/earth-day-is-every-day-at-the.../>

- Facebook
 - Link: <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1AejidU6Xm/>
 - 15 likes, 1 link clicks, 1360 impressions

- Instagram
 - Link: https://www.instagram.com/p/DlxDr_Ez-7s/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
 - 28 likes, 752 impressions

5/14/25 **Taking Steps to Reduce Beach Closures**

Caption: Did you know one goose can produce nearly 2 pounds of waste a day? That waste could end up in our lakes if we're not careful. Beach closures are frustrating, but they're often preventable. From stormwater bioswales to managing pet and goose waste, the Metroparks are taking action to protect your summer swim days. Learn what's being done — and what you can do — to help keep the water clean and our beaches open.

👉 Read the full blog: <https://www.metroparks.com/taking-steps-to-reduce-beach.../>

- Facebook
 - Link: <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/16EinV3qvU/>
 - 20 likes, 2 shares, 28 link clicks, 4046 impressions
- Instagram
 - Link: https://www.instagram.com/p/DJpmVlqtZSV/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
 - 33 likes, 3 link clicks, 1272 impressions

5/28/25 **Composting in the Metroparks**

Caption: 🐑 What happens to all the manure from our adorable spring lambs and goat kids? At the Kensington and Wolcott Mill Farm Centers, it's turned into compost that helps grow pumpkins, fertilize landscapes, and cut down on waste. In an average year, the farm's employees clean up about 300,000 lbs of animal manure and dirty bedding. Now, we're testing new composting methods to boost sustainability across all 13 Metroparks.

🌱 Dive into the dirt (in a good way) here: <https://www.metroparks.com/composting-in-the-metroparks/>

- Facebook
 - Link: <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1EDaHk37zf/>
 - 20 likes, 1 share, 7 link clicks, 4787 impressions
- Instagram
 - Link: <https://www.instagram.com/p/DKNpd4PswTs/?igsh=MTljM3ZoaWFmYWV2aw==>
 - 58 likes, 2 shares, 5807 impressions

6/11/25 **Clean Air Action Days and National Clean Air Day**

Caption: Did you know air quality alerts are becoming more frequent and starting earlier in the year? 🌍 Ozone and Clean Air Action Days are issued when outdoor air conditions may pose health risks due to pollutants like ground-level ozone or wildfire smoke. This week's blog explains what triggers these alerts and how Metroparks staff adapt park operations to reduce emissions and protect visitor health. Plus, learn about National Clean Air Day on June 19, a day dedicated to raising awareness about air quality and encouraging actions that lead to cleaner, healthier air for all.

Read the full blog at <https://www.metroparks.com/clean-air-action-days-and.../>

- Facebook
 - Link: <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/164M6KNP9D/>
 - 18 likes, 1 comment, 6 shares, 8 link clicks, 7774 impressions
- Instagram
 - Link: <https://www.instagram.com/p/DKxsl93TBd7/?igsh=aTJpN2l0cmtkY2s5>
 - 21 likes, 1322 impressions

7/2/25 **Keep It Clean**

Caption: What goes in the bin — and what should go home with you? Proper sorting of trash

and recyclables helps keep the parks beautiful and reduces harm to local wildlife. This week's blog breaks it all down, including what not to recycle and why fishing line disposal matters more than you might think.

Discover how to be part of the solution at <https://www.metroparks.com/keep-it-clean-blog/>

- Facebook
 - Link: <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/164M6KNP9D/>
 - 16 likes, 3 shares, 2 link clicks, 5694 impressions
- Instagram
 - Link: <https://www.instagram.com/p/DKxsl93TBd7/?igsh=aTJpN2l0cmtkY2s5>
 - 37 likes, 2 comments, 4529 impressions

8/27/25 Expanding Community Resiliency through Rain Gardens

Caption: 💧 Every storm has a story and we're changing the ending.

Thanks to the [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency](#) GLRI Grant, Lake Erie Metropark now has a thriving 7,130 sq. ft. rain garden filtering runoff and protecting marshlands. With the [Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy](#) Watershed Council Grant, we're taking the next step: expanding rain garden education, launching tool lending libraries, offering scholarships, and partnering with [Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner's Office](#) and [St. Suzanne Cody Rouge Community Resource Center](#) to support both residents and green jobs for SWST graduates.

Read the full story of how rain gardens are reshaping Southeast Michigan's water future:

<https://www.metroparks.com/expanding-community.../>

- Facebook
 - Link: <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1A5sGNE4eC/>
 - 16 likes, 4 shares, 3 link clicks, 1443 impressions

9/3/25 Solar Paddle Shack Conversion

<https://www.metroparks.com/solar-projects-in-the-parks.../>

- Facebook
 - Link: <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1a8TsooahT/>
 - 76 likes, 4 shares, 10 link clicks, 3880 impressions
- Instagram
 - Link: https://www.instagram.com/p/DOLtcDZjsXj/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRlODBiNWFiZA==
 - 49 likes, 3 shares, 4054 impressions

10/15/25 Leave the leave this fall...

<https://www.metroparks.com/leave-the-leaves-this-fall-a-smart-choice-for-your-lawn-and-for-wildlife/>

- Facebook
 - Link: <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1ZxtoKhGsZ/>
 - 46 Likes, 2 Comments, 8 Shares, 19 Link Clicks, 4742 Impressions
- Instagram
 - Link: https://www.instagram.com/p/DP2lwn0D_Kv/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRlODBiNWFiZA==
 - 106 Likes, 13 Shares, 3514 Impressions

11/12/25 Fall Leaves and Stormwater: Managing the Season Mindfully

<https://www.metroparks.com/fall-leaves-and-stormwater-managing-the-season-mindfully/>

- Facebook
 - Link: <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1C3yFK1rH8/>
 - 14 Likes, 1 Comment, 1 Share, 3 Link Clicks, 1433 Impressions
- Instagram
 - Link: https://www.instagram.com/p/DQ-V0e4jLAK/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRIODBiNWFIZA==
 - 44 Likes, 1 Comment, 1240 Impressions

100%

100% of the action has been completed and ongoing.

- Action 2.2: Collaborate with other departments, partners, and the community to create an annual story collection process about topics including but not limited to: Clean Air Action Days, prescribed burns, burning tree debris, environmental justice, mental health and wellness, composting/food waste, recycling, Leave No Trace campaigns, and reducing energy and fuel consumption.
 - 12-month calendar of a blog post schedule is complete with the following identified: date, topic, person writing, organization partnership.
 - Writing Blog series on Environment and Climate action. This is shared over social media channels. The Metroparks are also tagging other organizations climate related posts.

Topic	Publish date
Attracting backyard birds	1/1/2025
Softened shorelines	1/8/2025
Planning for pollinators	1/15/2025
Rain Garden Classes	1/22/2025
Values of wetlands	2/5/2025
Actions to protect wildlife (windows, no rodenticide)	2/12/2025
Art, social justice, environmental	2/19/2025
Recognizing/reporting invasives	2/26/2025
Workdays and other ways to get involved	3/5/2025
Ethics and best practices	3/12/2025
World Frog Day	3/19/2025
Prescribed fires	3/26/2025
Benefits of indigenous trees	4/2/2025
benefits of beavers in parks	4/9/2025
Values of no mow zones	4/16/2025
Earth Day is every day in the Metroparks	4/23/2025
What/why/how green schools	4/30/2025
Supporting birds during migration	5/7/2024
What HCMA does to reduce	5/14/2025
Macroinvertebrates	6/18/2025
Amphibians of Michigan	6/25/2025
Vultures	8/13/2025
EV vehicles and golf fleet	8/20/2025
Cody Rouge/rain gardens	8/27/2025
Paddle shack at Stony	9/3/2025

Moths	9/10/2025
Tree pests and diseases	9/17/2025
Fall migration and lights out for birds	9/24/2025
Fall planting - indigenous plants	10/1/2025
Opossums and raccoons	10/8/2025
Leave your leaves, etc.	10/15/2025
Bats of Michigan	10/22/2025
Cedarbrook	10/29/2025
Owls of Michigan (inc. owling ethics!)	11/5/2025
Autumn actions / Stormwater Day	11/12/2025
Flying squirrels	11/19/2025

100%

100% of the action has been completed and ongoing.

Metrics of Success

- 100% Complete and Ongoing: Collaboratively create a monthly engagement, combined annually as a story collection (12 stories).
 - 17 climate and environment blogs have been written and posted
- 100% Complete and Ongoing: Provide four educational workshops or speaker series events about climate initiatives, conducted by industry leaders, aimed to increase the knowledge of Metroparks staff and visitors.
 - Lunch and Learn
 - Feb. 11, 2025, Shoreline Restoration, Erick Elgin, MSU Extension
 - March 13, 2025, Eco Art and Community Engagement, Halima Afi Cassells, Sidewalk Detroit
 - April 22, 2025, Keep it Clean Public Campaign, Danielle Mauter, Metroparks
 - June 17, 2025, Composting, Pat Bigelow, Metroparks
 - August, Transportation Initiatives, Jim O'Brien, Metroparks
 - Dec. 2, 2025, Precipitation, Runoff and Erosion, Cameron Kniffen-Frost, DZS.
 - Additional Training Opportunities available in each department as documented in the CAP Training Documentation Log

Objective 3: Integrate concepts of climate change into existing and new programs at the Metroparks and throughout our region.

Near-term Actions

- Action 3.1: Increase Green School participants across the five-county region by 10% by 2028.
 - First step is to determine how many green schools the Metroparks work with currently.
 - Met with Michigan Green Schools Coordinator Samantha Lichtenwald on September 6, 2024, to learn baseline information about the MI Green Schools program.
 - We learned that in 2024 each county had this many schools participate:

- Macomb – 81 schools certified
 - Oakland – 92 schools certified
 - Wayne – 57 schools certified
 - Livingston – 11 schools certified
 - Washtenaw – 18 schools certified
- Schools are certified on an annual basis, so the numbers in each county change annually, which may create challenges for our metric of increasing green schools by 10% by 2028.
- Metroparks CAP goal is to increase number of green schools 10% by 2028; this would be 26 more schools certified. This is a moving target based on the number of schools that apply each year, because the designation is only for one year.
- The recommendation is that the committee discuss the metric needs to be clarified or rewritten.
- Update:

After discussion at several CAP EE Team meetings, the recommendation is to **remove Action 3.1 from Objective 3**. EGLE leads Michigan Green Schools program. Metroparks interpretive programs will continue to support teachers who are looking for programming to support their Green Schools Certification.
- Action 3.2: Increase teacher training opportunities by 10% by 2028, by offering accredited continuing professional development to improve teachers' personal understanding and ability to incorporate current data and science of our changing climate and its impacts into classroom instruction.
 - 8 Russell Foundation Grant Science Learning Box Workshops
 - 78 registrations.
 - These focused on Plants, School Gardens, Birds, Ecosystems, and Water Quality
 - 5 Early Childhood Workshops took place
 - 147 registrations
 - Focused on helping early childhood teachers bring nature into their classrooms
 - 5 BWET Workshops took place
 - 25 registrations
 - Focused on Water Quality and Environmental issues and activities

TEACHER WORKSHOPS

Are you a teacher interested in providing more hands-on outdoor learning opportunities for your students? Well, the Metroparks are here to help.

In addition to offering a wide variety of field trips and in-school programs, we are now offering teacher workshops. The workshops are created to teach you projects you can do with your students throughout the year regardless of the size of your outdoor learning space. We'll focus on projects that relate to topics of the outdoor world around us; how they tie to the standards, and how to use student engagement with the natural world to build learning across the content areas.

The best part is you can also earn State Continuing Education Clock Hours (SCECHs) by attending our workshops.

March 1 - Exploring Ecosystems: Stony Creek Metropark	▼
March 14 - Water Quality: Lake St. Clair Metropark	▼
April 26 - School Gardening: Kensington Metropark	▼
May 3 - Exploring Plants Outdoors: Oakwoods Metropark	▼
May 17 - Birds/Ornithology: Lake Erie Metropark	▼
July 29 - Science Learning Outdoors: Oakwoods Metropark	▼
October 18 - Science Learning Outdoors: Lake St. Clair Metropark	▼
November 1 - Science Learning Outdoors: Kensington Metropark	▼
November 15 - Science Learning Outdoors: Oakwoods Metropark	▼
December 13 - Climate Connections to Our Great Lakes: Willow Metropark	▼

100%

100% of the action has been completed and ongoing.

- Action 3.3: Collaboratively develop new programs by 2025, that allow students to research climate change effects (e.g., green-up/green-down, water quality, invasive species).
 - Evaluation of current programs has begun. Some processes are in place however more work will be done throughout the year.
 - BWET Grant activities will focus on water quality.
 - Environmental Outreach Interpreter has scheduled several rain garden and water quality programs in 2025.
 - The Interpretive Department completed training - Introduction to NAAEE Guidelines for Excellence – Educating for Climate Action and Justice at the March 3, 2025. All Interpretive Meeting and worked to identify ways Climate Action are currently addressed by programming and how concepts may be added.

100%

100% of the action has been completed and ongoing.

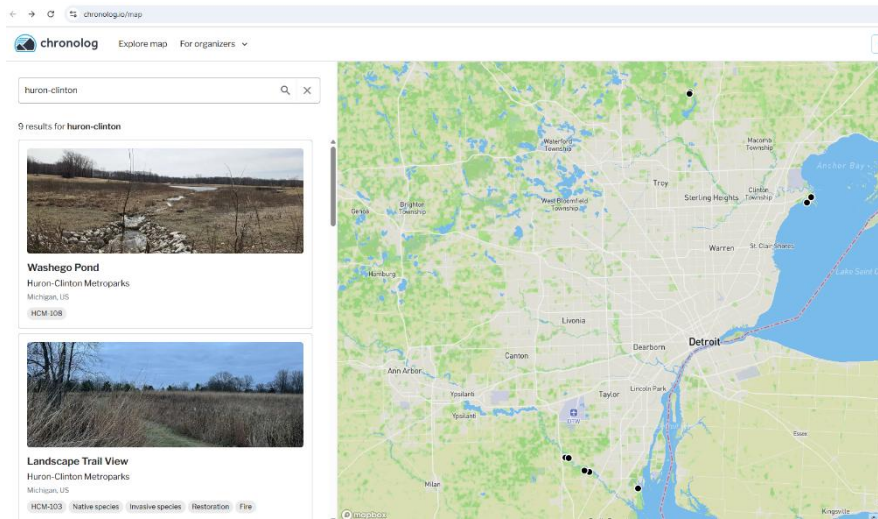
- Action 3.4: Beginning in 2024, address climate action in exhibits and programs.
 - A process for tagging in Rec Trac for stormwater and climate action public programming and facility programs has been implemented.
 - Rain Garden Program continued in 2025 with an emphasis on providing stormwater management in a changing climate in equity emphasis areas of Wayne County. Plans are in place to continue to grow the program in 2026.
 - 186 Participants including online and in-person classes
 - Rain Garden 101 programs took place at partner locations such as libraries
 - 56 participants for these in-person classes
 - The Climate Classroom was added to the Metroparks website, under the “Things To Do” menu (<https://www.metroparks.com/climate-classroom/>), to allow the public to see at a glance where there are climate action-related programs taking place and how they can participate.
 - A screenshot of current opportunities is below:

CLIMATE CLASSROOM
January 30-February 27 - Master Rain Gardener: Online Class
February 13 - Rain Gardens 101: Detroit Exploration & Nature Center
March 13 - Eco Art and Community Engagement
April 21-25 - Earth Week Virtual Happy Hour
May 17 - Rain Garden Tour: Lake Erie
May 17 - Native Plant Sale & Swap
July 10-August 7 - Master Rain Gardner Class: Westland Public Library
July 29 - Master Rain Gardner Class: Detroit Public Library Main Branch

75%

75% of the action has been completed.

- Action 3.5: Beginning in 2024, create an images-based community science project.
 - Photo Stations (Chronolog) locations have been identified and installed in the following Metroparks, Stony Creek, Lk. St. Clair and Dexter Huron, Willow, Oakwoods and Lake Erie
 - 9 Chronologs are installed and have 311 contributions to date.
 - <https://www.chronolog.io/project/HCM>



100%

100% of the action has been completed and ongoing.

- Action 3.6: Beginning in 2024, staff will consider climate action best practices when planning and implementing programming.
 - Audit of stormwater and climate action tag usage when programs are booked in RecTrac.
 - Conduct 50% of programs annually as part of the center repertoire of public offerings.

40%

40% of the action has been completed.

Metrics of Success

- Removed : Number of Green School participants increased by 10%.
 - Removed this metric, after learning more about this EGLE Program.
- 100% Complete: Number of teacher education programming offered by 10%, and feedback received from participants. Staff becomes certified to lead MEECS Climate Change Curriculum
 - MEECS Climate Change Curriculum Workshop offered July 2024 (100% more climate change workshops than offered in 2023)
 - Participants were asked to complete post-program evaluation
 - 10 teacher workshops were held in 2025
- 50% Complete: Internal audit conducted of interpretive programs and displays for climate relevant messaging.
- 25% Complete: Conducted 50% programs annually as part of the center repertoire of public offerings.
 - Rectrac Tags implemented to begin regular recording of CAP and Stormwater programs
 - Evaluation of current programs for messaging is ongoing
- 75% Complete: Climate change messaging incorporated in new interpretive exhibits as the feature of the exhibit or as a supplement to the core message AND Climate change messaging incorporated in programs (including special events, interpretive programming, etc.)
 - Photo Stations are installed and activated, for visitors to take images within the parks over time
 - Rain Garden programming

- Keep It Clean
- Earth Week Happy Hour
- Climate Classroom

Objective 4: By 2028, host an Interpretive Regional Climate Action Conference, encouraging Interpreters and educators from across the region to attend and present on climate-related programming that they conduct. This would introduce staff to potentially new, innovative ways of presenting climate programming.

Near-term Actions

- Action 4.1: Work with partnering organizations to host a Climate Action Conference for formal and informal educators by 2028.
- The Winter Workshop was held at the Environmental Discovery Center on January 19, 2024, with a theme of: “Interpretive Preparedness: A Focus on Resilience in Interpretation,” participants enjoyed advice and story-sharing from peers on staying relevant during changing climates. From the light-hearted to serious content, and professional development, the sessions during this workshop will have a little of everything including a foremost topic in our field: incorporating climate action.

76 participants attended from the following organizations:

- Michigan Department of Natural Resources
- Johnson Nature Center
- University of Michigan
- US Fish and Wildlife based out of the Detroit International Wildlife Refuge
- Oakland County Parks
- Crosswinds Marsh - Wayne County Parks
- Dinosaur Hill Nature Preserve
- DZS - Detroit Zoo and Belle Isle Nature Center
- Belle Isle Conservancy
- Cedar Creek Institute
- Oak Nature Center

9 sessions were offered:

- Composting
- The Unhuggables: Conserving the Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake and Michigan’s Natural Heritage
- Adventure Challenge Education: A Social-Emotional and Teambuilding Opportunity for Students and Staff
- 3D printing in interpretation and classroom education
- The Future of the Past: The National Register
- Climate Change in Interpretation: Tools for Engagement and Action
- Tracking the Untrackable: Snowmen and Sasquatch
- Nature Preschool 101
- Recipe for Preschool Program Success



Yu Man Lee from MNFI giving rattlesnake presentation.

○ Regional Informal Educator Climate Action Workshop

The Regional Informal Educator Climate Action Workshop will take place September 8, 2025, at the Environmental Discover Center at Indian Springs Metropark, with collaboration from the Michigan Alliance for Environmental and Outdoor Education. Guest speakers and Metroparks employees will lead several concurrent sessions.

- There were 60 registered attendees.
- Guest speakers from the Michigan DNR, Sidewalk Detroit, Michigan Department of Health & Human Services, Cranbrook Institute of Sciences, The Detroit Zoo and Metroparks employees led several concurrent sessions including:



- Project Learning Tree and WILD Favorites for Climate Education
- Rain Chain Workshop
- Public Health and Climate Change in Michigan
- Air, Water and Earth – Engaging Weather and Climate Change for 6th-8th Graders
- Rooted in Reflection: Contemplative Pathways to Climate Action and Justice
- Science and Stewardship in the Heart of the Great Lakes
- Creating Place-Based Exhibits that Spark Curiosity and Engage the Senses

Pictures are from different sessions of the Regional Informal Educator Climate Action Workshop.



100%

100% of the action has been completed and ongoing.

Metrics of Success

- 100% Complete: Host climate action conference by 2028.
 - Created and Hosted a Regional Informal Educators Climate Action Workshop
 - Hosted Winter Interpreter Workshop with some sessions on Climate Change
- 100% Complete: Conference evaluations were conducted.
 - Conference evaluation was conducted for the 2025 Winter Interpreter Workshop
 - Conference evaluation was conducted for the 2025 Informal Educators Climate Workshop

Long-term Actions

- Action 4.2: Expand/ramp up Climate Action Conference based on feedback from previous conference to increase effectiveness and ensure learning-outcomes are up to date.

0%

0% of the action has been completed and ongoing.

GOAL 2. PRESERVATION AND CONSERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Protect and enhance natural resources to ensure longevity of important ecosystems in a changing climate, to preserve these resources for the benefit of future generations.

Near-term Actions

- Action 5.1: Identify important habitats and determine which ecosystem types are most threatened by climate change. Habitats will be identified and ranked by 2028.
 - Staff created an inventory of the natural communities' assets in GIS.
 - A survey is currently being conducted to determine updates to the natural communities and changes that may have occurred. The survey is open for staff input until September 13, 2024.
 - Survey was completed, review of results ongoing.
 - Define and identify natural areas that are remnant or restored natural communities based on current AGOL map. Update the Natural Community layer to reflect these differences. Rank Natural Communities based on Global Rank and State Rank and include climate threats based on community abstracts.
 - Natural Areas Crew have written a management plan for Hudson Mill's wet-mesic prairie. Management work started over the winter by NAC and continued into Q3 with contractors treating invasive plants.
 - Identified eleven elemental occurrences through data sharing with Michigan Natural Features Inventory.
 - Using GIS to identify important habitats including acres and state ranking of natural communities, work ongoing.

50%

50% of the action has been completed.

- Action 5.2: Create a formal review process for the Natural Resources Department to assess the impact of trails and development on natural areas with multi-departmental review, to be implemented on new developments, repair work, etc., by 2028.
 - Develop a standard operating procedure that includes if this, then that type of checklist for use by other departments during project planning, expanding, construction.
 - The formal review will include identifying issues such as soil compaction, impact to trees, fragmenting habitats, disturbance bringing in invasive species.
 - Tree Standards and Site Restoration Plan will capture this effort. This plan is in an early draft form.
 - A site visit was held to assess a connector trail through Huron Meadows Metropark. NR Staff was unavailable and will do a desktop review and separate site visit to assess impact on natural areas.
 - Natural Resources and Planning elaborated on several trail changes, including Hudson Mills, Huron Meadows and Stony Creek.

20%

20% of the action has been completed.

- Action 5.3: Identify specific tree species that are vulnerable to a changing climate and select suitable replacements (for all new plantings) that will preserve ecosystem integrity under changing conditions. These trees should be used in all landscaping, project design, and restoration efforts by 2028.
 - Research continues to identify trees vulnerable to climate change and best practices.
 - Tree and Site Restoration Plan is being written by the Natural Resources Dept.
 - This guide will include:
 - Tree restoration standards, guiding principles, best practices for planting/location, and a list of native trees.
 - A quick reference guide will be created to include as an appendix in bid documents.
 - Reference material will be included for staff (e.g. engineering, planning, purchasing, maintenance supervisors)
 - Appendices to specific department needs e.g. "I need to replace a tree" "I'm bidding a project, what is required" "A patron is wishing to donate a tree."
 - Annual, no mow areas, bioswales, include seed mixes, donation trees as an addendum.
 - Work has continued to progress on this document.
 - Created a "Tree Tracker" form for planting trees. To be used by all staff in all parks for submittal after work completed. Will assist in tracking towards our planting goals.



50% of the action has been completed.

Metrics for Success

- 25% Completed/Ongoing: A ranked list of important habitats, vulnerable to climate threat by 2028.
- 10% Completed/Ongoing: Formal review process for trail development established by 2028.
- 50% Completed/Ongoing: All landscaping, project design, and restoration efforts are utilizing suitable tree species by 2028.

Long-term Actions

- Action 5.4: Create an "eyes-in-the-field" type app or program, to document presence of endangered species, by crowdsourcing data collection and helping educate staff and the public. This would include a portal for invasive species identification and reporting, similar to the Midwest Invasive Species Information Network. Target pilot app or program for internal use and testing by 2028, and release for public use by 2033.
 - Conversations included discussion on using a pre-existing app like iNaturalist, which uses citizen science to count and monitor species in specific areas. Visitors and staff can submit photos of plants, animals, fungi, etc to iNaturalist projects created by staff. Projects can be made for each park, or even sections of a park if more specific data is desired.
 - Incorporated iNaturalist Bioblitz into Lake Erie Family Campout in August.
 - Discussed using Survey123 for collecting flora and fauna observations at multiple parks.
 - Recovered admin access to iNaturalist.
 - Incorporated iNaturalist Bioblitz into Lake Erie Family Campout in August.
 - Provided a link to HCMA Nature Center staff to directly report Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake (EMR) siting to MNFI through Survey123.
 - Purchased multiple Chronolog stations. 9 chronologs have been installed in 2025 across multiple Metroparks. <https://www.chronolog.io/map>. Since the chronologs have

been installed, 416 photos have been taken by 288 contributors.

50%

50% of the action has been completed.



Lake Erie Metropark, Riley Creek overlook chronology station. In 2025, 95 pictures from 82 contributors have been uploaded from this location.

- Action 5.5: Develop habitat or species management plan for critical threatened and endangered species identified within the Metroparks, with a section devoted to climate change pressures and strategies to mitigate them by 2028. We will begin to address species of special concern by 2033. Each plan will be reviewed and approved by the Board of Commissioners. Actions will be identified and integrated into relevant park master plans and budgeted on a prioritized annual basis.
- The committee has accessed current work done by the Natural Resources department. A species lists for different management areas throughout all Metroparks. Natural Resource staff annually survey for presence/absence of threatened and endangered (plant) species. In 2023, a management plan was created for the Eastern Prairie Fringed Orchid at Lake Erie Metropark, which includes information on the pressures of climate change.
 - A management plan was implemented for Eastern Prairie Fringed Orchid (EPFO) in 2023. By following this plan, NAC found a record number of orchids in 2025 with a count of 114 individual plants.
 - Applied for permit and funding for ongoing monitoring and restoration of EPFO.
- Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake surveys started at Kensington, Hudson Mills, Indian Springs Metroparks. Natural Resources staff will assist Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI) in surveying likely habitat for two weeks in April. MNFI will continue surveys throughout the summer.
- Reviewing the threatened and endangered species database.

10%

10% of the action has been completed.

Objective 6: integrate our land management best practices to align with the changing climate and adapt habitat management strategies and plans for on-the-ground work consistent with best management practices.

Near-term Actions

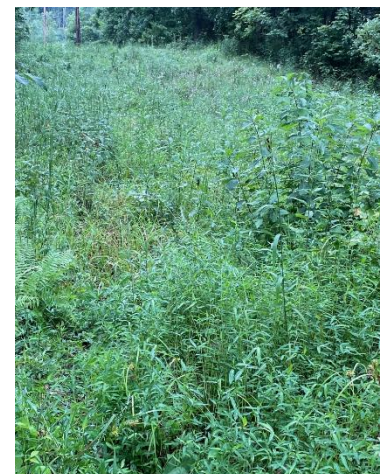
- Action 6.1: Identify staff training needs associated with this objective.
 - Preservation and Conservation of Natural Resources subcommittee completed a survey for potential educational needs. CAP Education and Engagement survey completed, and results will provide better insight.
 - Results: 1. Climate change, how it affects fieldwork e.g suitable native species selection for landscaped areas. 2. Workdays to educate community partners and volunteers for best management practices. 3. Training with new equipment and why we are reducing emissions, thinking greener in general. 4. Educate best management practices for field rotation, no till farming, cover crop planting etc. 5. Composting practices. 6. Innovative carbon storage solutions. 7. Fuel assessment and carbon release, related to prescribed fires and burning tree debris; internal and park visitors.
 - Evaluation will occur to monitor need of new training opportunities.
 - A question has been included in 2025 Employee Engagement Survey about Climate Action Plans awareness and needs for training.

100%

100% of this action has been completed and ongoing.

- Action 6.2: Create and enact an Early Detection and Rapid Response (EDRR) survey protocol, to detect and respond to emerging invasive species threats, specific to each Metropark by 2028.
 - Current EDRR surveys underway:
 - Lake St Clair – Water Primrose
 - Wolcott Mill – Spotted Lanternfly/tree of heaven
 - Stony Creek – Spotted Lanternfly/TOH, Swallow-wort, Porcelainberry
 - Indian Springs – Spotted Lanternfly/TOH, Swallow-wort
 - Kensington - Spotted Lanternfly/TOH, Swallow-wort, Siltgrass survey (found, 2025)
 - Huron Meadows – Tree of Heaven
 - Hudson Mills – Siltgrass survey (found, August 2024)
 - Dexter-Huron – Stilgrass survey (not yet found)
 - Delhi – Japanese Stilgrass (known population)
 - Lower Huron
 - Willow
 - Oakwoods
 - Lake Erie – Frogbit, Flowering Rush

pictures of Stiltgrass



- Staff are working on a Stiltgrass literature review and protocols to develop a stiltgrass survey best management plan; this will hopefully translate to other locations and species.
- In August 2024, Natural Resources staff found a new population of Japanese Stiltgrass in the northern section of Hudson Mills Metropark. After initial observation, staff completed extensive surveys, two rounds of treatment, and notified park neighbors of the new invasive plant in the region. Plans include one more round of treatment and coordinating with power line companies to slow the spread. Stiltgrass was first found in Michigan in 2017 in Washtenaw County. Previous known populations exist at Delhi Metropark, and continuing treatment has resulted in smaller populations.
- In 2025, staff found a Stiltgrass population at Kensington Metropark and immediately surveyed and treated in September.
- MSU completing research at Lower Huron and Huron Meadows to surveying tree of heaven stands and the threat of invasive new Spotted Lanternfly (SLF) in SE Michigan. SLF surveys continued through 2025 by contractor (Superior Invasives), paid for by MISGP grant.
- Update:
 - Number of acres surveyed by Superior Invasives for SLF at Kensington, Stony Creek, Indian Springs, Wolcott Mills – 791 acres
 - Hours spent treating Tree-of-Heaven (preferred host for SLF) – 52 hours
 - Acres surveyed and/or treated for Tree-of-Heaven – 43 acres
 - Number of acres treated for Stiltgrass between Hudson Mills, Delhi - None found in Delhi 2024; 1 acre ROW in Hudson Mills
 - Acres surveyed for beech leaf disease – 27 acres
 - Acres of porcelain berry treated – 2 acres
 - Hours spent treating porcelain berry – 23 hours
- Discussion to develop the EDRR survey protocol to be specific to each species rather than to each Metropark since we don't know what will show up where.
- Partners from EGLE and LSC Cisma surveyed and found water primrose at Lake St Clair and Lake Erie Metroparks. Treatment of this watch-list invasive species was completed in September.
- Through a MISGP grant, a contractor continued surveying for Spotted Lanternfly at Kensington, Indian Springs, Stony Creek and Wolcott Mill Metroparks. As match for the MISGP grant, the NAC treated tree of heaven, the preferred host plant for spotted lanternfly.
- NAC surveyed for Lesser Celandine along high-risk areas, such as Huron River.

50%

50% of the action has been completed.

- Action 6.3: Develop and implement a framework for assessing and reviewing fieldwork, monitoring ecosystems, and identifying the need to adjust practices based on climate changes by 2028.
 - Staff are evaluating a variety of practices such as southern hardiness zones for tree plantings, reducing emissions, evaluating if the prioritization of management units will change and equipment needed (Blowers, chainsaws, mowers).

A	Carbon Storage Baseline
B	Fuel Assessment and Carbon Release
C	Emissions Reduction from No-Mow Areas
D	Fleet and Equipment Emissions Baseline

E	Transition to Electric Fleet
F	Facility Emissions Baseline

- Deliverables at the conclusion of this Carbon Emissions report will include an executive summary, results, and recommendations for further study, as well as guiding principles and high-level coherent actions for strategy development.



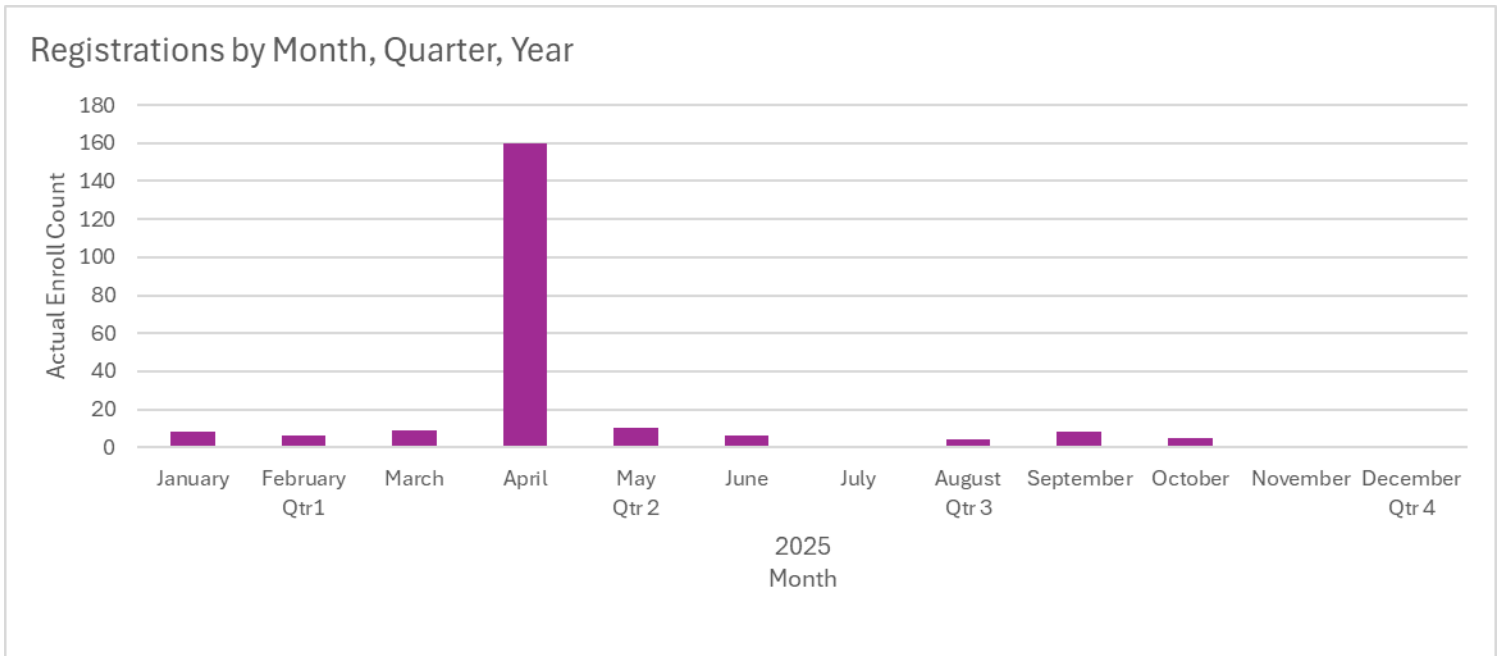
5% of the action has been completed.

- Action 6.4: Seek training opportunities for Metroparks staff to learn about climate change and how it affects their fieldwork. Training will include suitable native species selection for landscaped areas.
 - The Environmental Discovery Center hosted a Winter Interpreters Workshop this January with a theme of Interpretive Preparedness: A Focus on Resilience in Interpretation. The EDC is hosting the workshop again in 2026.
 - Natural Resources attended conferences and trainings related to oak wilt, stewardship, and others related to climate change.
 - Many subcommittee members participated in Earth Week Virtual Happy Hour, touching on several subjects from committee work
 - Monday, April 21st: Invasive Species Awareness: @Katie Carlisle or @Julie Mclaughlin
 - Tuesday, April 22nd: Improving Air Quality: @Holly Clegg
 - Wednesday, April 23rd: Composting Made Easy @Patrick Bigelow and @Jessica Mazzoli
 - Thursday, April 24th: The Magic of Rain Gardens: @Jason Bibby
 - Friday, April 25th: Get Involved with Citizen Science
 - Natural Resources, Interpretive, and Planning staff along with interns attended a workshop at Lake Erie Metropark to learn about bioswale and rain garden installation and maintenance, which included native species selection.
 - In collaboration with Michigan Natural Shoreline Partnership, HCMA hosted a contractor training to teach the importance of natural shorelines, the native plants needed for them to be successful, and their importance to improving water quality and biodiversity. Two HCMA staff also attended the training.
 - Natural Resources staff attend Professional Stewards Hikes, which bring together professionals from the region tour project sites and discuss changing best management practices such as oak wilt, monitoring deer browse, beaver impacts, and beech leaf disease.



100% of the action has been completed and ongoing.

- Action 6.5: Use community partnerships and volunteer workdays to educate the public on changing best management practices and share lessons learned.
 - Continue collaboration between Natural Resources and Interpretative Services for volunteer workdays.
 - In 2025, Natural Resources Department hosted 29 volunteer workdays throughout the park system focused on invasive species removal, tree planting, and seed collection. Nine of the workdays were open to the public and 20 were with private groups. Volunteers spent almost 900 hours to improve 50 acres of natural area.



2025 Volunteer Registrations for Workdays.



75% of the action has been completed

- Action 6.6: Develop a policy of mowing reduction on Clean Air Action Days, to include as an update to the established mowing plan. This policy should identify and suggest the mowing of select critical areas, as needed, on Clean Air Action Days, forgo regular mowing during these days, and communicate to the public why mowing may be reduced in certain areas.
 - In the 2025 update of the Mowing Plan includes procedure relevant to Clean Air Action Days and designate "critical areas" with assistance from operations. <https://www.michigan.gov/egle/newsroom/mi-environment/2024/03/01/ozone-season-starts-march-1>
 - Staff are having conversations about what could be included in a Standard Operating procedure for Clean Air Action Days. Staff were asked to think about what they can do to address this, and a survey will be sent after Labor Day to gather more input.
 - Metropark Supervisors were welcome to fill out a Survey.
 - Standard Operating Procedure for Clean Air Action Days went out to staff for review. Next step will be asking for CEO signature and 2026 implementation.



95% of the action has been completed.

Metrics of Success

- 50% Completed/Ongoing: EDRR survey protocol specific to each Metropark created.
- 5% Completed/Ongoing: Framework for assessing fieldwork and adjusting practices based on climate threats developed.
- 100% Completed/Ongoing: Identified staff will attend three climate-related training sessions by 2028.
- 75% Completed/Ongoing: Host volunteer days specific to educating the public on the reasons for changing best management practices for ecosystem management in a changing climate.
- 60% Completed/Ongoing: Policy regarding mowing on Clean Air Action Days created and implemented.
- Ongoing: Development of a communication strategy with the Marketing Department to communicate park actions (or non-actions) to the public.

Long-term Actions

- Action 6.7: Evaluate potential changes in equipment, reduction of 2-cycle engines, and guidance on more restrictive emission standards (e.g., California's).
 - Working with Transportation Subcommittee to create a “catalog” of battery-operated small tools (i.e. string trimmers, chainsaws etc.). Information from their inventoried items.



30% of the action has been completed.

- Action 6.8: Identify ways to address these changes in purchasing policy and vendor offers.



0% of the action has been completed.

- Action 6.9: Seek grant funding to assist in this conversion.



0% of the action has been completed.

Objective 7: Enhance, expand, and restore natural areas and strengthen the ability of ecosystems to combat pressures of climate change.

Near-term Actions

- Action 7.1: Improve Forest health and increase tree canopy cover to create healthy habitat, improve air filtration, and increase carbon storage in the Metroparks.
 - Staff will take thoughtful approach when assessing forest health, for example, thin maples from oak/hickory forest to encourage oak regeneration.
 - Staff are beginning to identify forests that will benefit from maple thinning and are creating procedure to monitor.
 - Contracted work in flood plain forests
 - 360 trees planted at Lake St. Clair Metropark to offset canopy loss from cottonwood

removals.

- Prescribed burns conducted in high quality forests to maintain and improve the habitat.
- Carbon storage study quantified carbon storage levels in natural communities throughout the Metroparks to create a baseline.



10% of the action has been completed.

- Action 7.2: Review known sensitive habitats and identify the habitats with the most potential for improvement. Update ranking system and prioritize three management units per district for targeted restoration by 2028.
 - Natural Areas Crew have written a management plan for Hudson Mill's wet-mesic prairie. Management work started over the winter by NAC and continued into Q3 with contractors treating invasive plants.
 - High quality area data has been acquired and is being reviewed to prioritize future management.



10% of the action has been completed.

- Action 7.3: Enhance selected no-mow zones with pollinator-friendly grassland and savanna species.
 - Already completed in 2024
 - Sprayed turf grass over 4.25 acres at Lake St Clair Metropark and seeded with pollinator-friendly species in 2022 and 2023. Once established, we will continue in adjacent no-mow areas.
 - Natural Area Crew annually collects and processes seeds, in addition to seeds being purchased. For 2024, there are plans to enhance the Wolcott Metropark North Branch Trails (old Golf Course), which is currently designated an annual mow area.
 - Lake Erie GLRI project is creating bioswales throughout the park, where previously it was regularly mowed or annually mowed.
 - Natural Resources is working with Kensington staff to incorporate seed ball distribution into family campout, which will hopefully improve no-mow areas.
 - Additional enhancements completed in 2024, Lake St Clair (Point), Wolcott Mill (NB Trails), Hudson Mills (Entrance fields, monarda prairie), Kensington (adj Farm Center), Willow (expanding Big Bend restoration), Lake Erie (tree planting and bioswale improvements).
 - The Mow Plan has been updated 2025-2027.
 - 2025 Mow Plan update shows we have decreased turf areas by 2% or 75 acres, decreased Annual Spot Mow by 1% or 39 acres, and increased Natural Areas by 3% or 191 acres. Staff continued to enhance several projects, including Lake St Clair shoreline and point, Hudson Mills entrance fields, Lake Erie shoreline.



20% of the action has been completed.

Metrics of Success

- 0% Completed/Ongoing: Expanded softened shoreline along inland lakes by 5% by 2028, up to 90% total natural shoreline makeup.

- 0% Completed/Ongoing: Met a 10% increase in natural shoreline cover through restoration of great lakes shoreline by 2028, and 20% by 2033.
- 20% Completed/Ongoing: Converted 100 acres of no-mow area to pollinator-friendly grassland and savanna habitats by 2028, and 200 acres by 2033.
- 0% Completed: Updated habitat ranking system, with three management units per district prioritized for targeted restoration by 2028.

Long-term Actions

- Action 7.4: Restoration efforts ongoing to target 2033.

0%

0% of the action has been completed

Objective 8: protect existing and acquire additional undeveloped lands as a resource to buffer ecosystems and infrastructure from the pressures of surrounding land use and effects of climate change. Consider divestment of undesired parcels and reinvestment in acquisition of critical parcels.

Near-term Actions

- Action 8.1: Review the current land acquisition/divestment policy (conducted by the Natural Resources Department leadership), and update if needed.
 - Land Acquisition and Divestment Plan was approved at the August 2024 Board meeting.
 - The Land Acquisition and Divestment Plan was drafted in May 2020. The plan was recently updated during the final team meeting regarding the stormwater parcel assessment project in Wayne County. The property acquisition team (Director, Deputy Director, Executive Assistant, Chief of Planning & Development, and Chief of Natural Resources) reviewed the updated acquisition language to include stormwater management as a consideration when reviewing parcels for acquisition.

100%

100% of the action has been completed.

- Action 8.2: Identify adjacent land managers and coordinate conservation of buffer ecosystems across boundaries, to be included in all ecosystem management plans by 2028.
 - In 2024,
 - Staff has begun making a list of potential adjacent land managers for management plans.
 - Met with partners from Ann Arbor area on surveying, monitoring, and treating Stiltgrass on landscape scale. Talked about surveying on neighboring property (Scio Twp) and creating best management plans for surveying.
 - With funding from EPA-GLRI, HCMA staff worked across boundaries to remove invasive species and engage with volunteers at Lake Erie Metropark and Wyandot of Anderdon Nation's Six Points property.

10%

10% of the action has been completed.

- Action 8.3: Acquire an additional 1000 acres, preferring in contiguous parcels, by 2028, for the specific purpose of maintaining as undeveloped land.
 - Storymap drafted by planning department prioritizes parcels for acquisition in Wayne County based on stormwater storage, filtering, etc.

10%

10% of the action has been completed.

- Action 8.4: Identify areas totaling 200 acres within currently developed lands that can be converted back to undeveloped areas by 2028.
 - The Mow Plan has been updated 2025-2027.

- A section of Kensington Group Camp has been converted, 6 acres
- 2025 Mow Plan update shows we have decreased turf areas by 2% or 75 acres



40% of the action has been completed.

- Action 8.5: Identify properties within Metroparks' ownership that are underutilized and good candidates for divestment, according to established acquisition and divestment strategy plan.



0% of the action has been completed.

- Action 8.6: Prioritize climate resiliency of parcel acquisition.
 - Storymap drafted by planning department prioritizes parcels for acquisition in Wayne County based on stormwater storage, filtering, etc.
 - Joined technical advisory committee for Huron River Watershed Council, looking at feasibility of a water fund that would protect land to improve water quality in the region. This will have an emphasis on climate change.



20% of the action has been completed.

Metrics of Success

- 100% Completed: Review current land acquisition/divestment policy, with policy recommendation for Board of Commissioners consideration (if needed).
- 10% Completed/Ongoing: List developed of adjacent land managers and conservation of buffer ecosystems.
- 0% Completed: 1000 acres of land acquired for preservation by 2028.
- 40% Completed: 200 acres of land converted from developed to undeveloped by 2028.
- 0% Completed/Ongoing: Acres of mowed turf decreased.

Long-term Actions

- Action 8.7: Decrease regularly mowed areas within the Metroparks by 5% by 2033.
 - <https://www.metroparks.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Metroparks-Mow-Plan-2023.pdf>
 - 2025 Mow Plan update shows we have decreased turf areas by 2% or 75 acres, decreased Annual Spot Mow by 1% or 39 acres, and increased Natural Areas by 3% or 191 acres.



40% of the action has been completed.

- Action 8.8: Implement a cover crop planting policy, field rotation, and no till farming; seek equipment needed and training for staff; and identify best management practices for staff and conditions for leased land.
 - Staff determined how broad cover crop planting strategy will apply and create a definition for the Metroparks. For example, current farming practices within the Metroparks or if it is expanded to other areas of the parks or to leased lands. Examples could include stipulation in leasing

contracts for cover crop usage, fertilizer/chemical limits, or no-till practices in order to lease lands. Additionally, other areas of the park such as beaches could benefit from cover crops in the winter to help keep sand from blowing away.

- Committee conversations include collaboration between departments to ask Ag Equipment dealers to provide demo units of specialized planters needed for cover crop and no-till planting.
- Industry professionals or MSU Extension could provide training for staff to develop a plan using the most recent science-based practices. In addition, it's possible to partner with other ag organizations to host demonstrations/field days to showcase environmentally friendly agricultural practices.
 - Staff attended training on Cover Crop/Soil Health Improvement, which covered best practices that inspired future ideas and shared many resources to help towards implementation.
- Researched and priced out equipment that would be necessary to implement no till farming.
- Staff has identified of the 125 acres of agriculture at Wolcott Farm, 85 is currently no-till, 35 is cover crop, and only 4 acres have been tilled. In summary, 96% is either no-till or cover crop in 2025.

15%

15% of the action has been completed.

- Action 8.9: Identify potential locations for solar, wind, and other green energy generation installations.
 - Solar panel study completed at Willow Metropark Golf Course.
 - Engineering added Solar panel studies to cart barn projects during the design phase.
 - Solar panels will be located at Stony Creek Metropark, Eastwood Beach, on the Paddle Shack. The panels will be mounted to the roof of the building.
 - The system will not be attached to grid and is self-powered with the ability to charge the batteries off a small suitcase generator if needed on cloudy days.
 - Metroparks and visitors will benefit of less noise pollution and lower carbon emissions emitted from the generator. A solar calculator to determine the required battery sizes and what type of draw we would have from the equipment in the facility. There should be a surplus available each day under normal conditions.



Staff installed two solar panels and four lithium iron phosphate batteries, and one charger/inverter to be installed at Stony Creek, Eastwood Beach, paddle shack.

Feedback from staff on how the solar panels are working:

- "The staff love how quiet it is to work the paddle shack this season. We have not had any issues with power this season." J. Erskine

- Staff is working out an issue with the firmware as the controller getting stuck on 100% charge.



10% of the action has been completed.

- Action 8.10: Implement conversion of developed land back to undeveloped.
 - A section of Kensington Group Camp has been converted, 6 acres
 - 2025 Mow Plan update shows we have decreased turf areas by 2% or 75 acres



10% of the action has been completed.

Objective 9: Build strategies into all “existing and future” plans to incorporate climate adaptation resilience.

Near-term Actions

- Action 9.1: Develop a policy with standards for selecting vegetation or trees for planting, selecting native species that are hardy or resilient to climate pressures by 2024.
 - Natural Resources staff are creating a Tree and Site Restoration guide that will include suitable replacements for new plantings, including species vulnerable to a changing climate. Additionally, native plants in gardens, rain gardens that will require less water and maintenance and will provide for pollinators.



60% of the action has been completed.

- Action 9.2: Advocate for local climate monitoring efforts, to incorporate future climate models and projections into climate resilience planning beginning in 2023. Examples of climate monitoring data sources to be used include FEMA’s Hazard Mitigation Plan, the EPA, USGS, and the State Senate.
 - Staff is identifying potential data sources. One source is the State of Michigan historical climate change data: <https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/safety-injury-prev/environmental-health/topics/mitracking/climate-change>



0% of the action has been completed.

- Action 9.3: Create regional partnerships to define mutual goals for integrating climate resilience plans and identifying funding sources by 2025.
 - Joined technical advisory committee for Huron River Watershed Council, looking at feasibility of a water fund that would protect land to improve water quality in the region. This will have an emphasis on climate change.

**25%**

25% of the action has been completed.

Metrics of Success

- 60% Completed/Ongoing: Development of policy with standards for selecting vegetation or trees for planting and presented to the Board of Commissioners for consideration.
- 0% Completed: If adopted by the Board of Commissioners, policy implemented on all internal and contracted projects by 2028.
- 0% Completed: All lands leased by the Metroparks will hold lessee to internal standards according to the CAP by 2028.
- 5% Completed/Ongoing: Development of a database of regional partners and mutual goals for integrating climate resiliency plans and funding strategies.

Long-term Actions

- Action 9.4: Incorporate climate resilience and impact analysis into infrastructure development and maintenance planning.

**0%**

0% of the action has been completed.

- Action 9.5: Review all current natural resources plans and incorporate specific strategies to combat climate change.

**10%**

10% of the action has been completed.

Objective 10: Increase capacity for carbon storage in natural areas and pursue projects for the intentional storage of carbon.

Near-term Actions

- Action 10.1: Identify a consultant and/or partner to assess the level of carbon currently stored in the Metroparks.
- Update: RFP was awarded to CIS during the October board meeting.
 - Through proposed audit methods detailed in the proposal, CIS will be responsible for the assessment and establishment of the following:

A	Carbon Storage Baseline
B	Fuel Assessment and Carbon Release
C	Emissions Reduction from No-Mow Areas
D	Fleet and Equipment Emissions Baseline
E	Transition to Electric Fleet
F	Facility Emissions Baseline

- Deliverables at the conclusion of this report will include an executive summary, results, and recommendations for further study, as well as guiding principles and high-level coherent actions for strategy development.
- Next Step:
 - IT is determining best practices on tracking Metropark data for future use. Then high-level carbon emissions goals will be written for the organization.

100%

100% of the action has been completed.

- Action 10.2: Develop policy governing composting practices in internal operations by 2028.
 - This overlaps with Waste Sub-committee. There is a proposed pilot project for composting at Kensington in 2025.
 - Working with Waste sub-committee on composting at Wolcott for education in spring 2025.
 - BMPs are being formalized from Kensington Farm Center to share across the system with a pilot project testing 3 composting recipes.

5%

5% of the action has been completed.

- Action 10.3: Identify the education necessary to support innovative carbon storage solutions.
 - Committee participated in the Education and Engagement committee survey to identify high priority education topics. The intention is to have the subcommittee fill out the survey together to identify training needs within their CAP goal.
 - Survey to identify topics sent to subcommittee chairs. The intention is to have the subcommittee fill out the survey together to identify training needs within the CAP goal.
 - The identified topics include:
 - No mow areas
 - Reducing emission
 - Park connectivity projects

- Climate Action funding
- Transitioning to EV
- Runoff and Storm Drains
- Waste and Recycling
- Plant Selection
- Maintenance resources
- Climate Change predictions
- Transit opportunities
- Metroparks role in the regional
- Mitigating climate change on a small scale
- How is the world being impacted
- Best practices for communicating with the public regarding climate change
- Other

100%

100% of the action has been completed.

- Action 10.4: Partner to plant 10,000 native trees across the Metroparks' five-county area by 2028 (2,000 bare root saplings per year).
 - 2023-2024: 2500 trees were planted in the Metroparks.
 - 836 trees were planted in 2025 throughout the five-county area.

33%

33% of the action has been completed.

- Action 10.5: Incorporate fuel assessment and carbon release into planning related to prescribed fire and burning of tree debris. Provide education and rationale internally and broadly to Metropark visitors on these practices.
 - Staff are exploring the possibilities of alternatives to burning logs/brush. They are reaching out to partner organizations about their research into carbon release from prescribed burning as well as incorporate fuel load into burn prescriptions (low/medium/high) and compare to amount of carbon stored in healthy ecosystem to carbon release in prescribed fire.
 - Update: RFP was awarded to CIS during the October board meeting.
 - Through proposed audit methods detailed in the proposal, CIS will be responsible for the assessment and establishment of the following:

A	Carbon Storage Baseline
B	Fuel Assessment and Carbon Release
C	Emissions Reduction from No-Mow Areas
D	Fleet and Equipment Emissions Baseline
E	Transition to Electric Fleet
F	Facility Emissions Baseline

- Deliverables at the conclusion of this report will include an executive summary, results, and recommendations for further study, as well as guiding principles and high-level coherent actions for strategy development.
- IT is determining best practices on tracking Metropark data for future use. Then high-level carbon emissions goals will be written for the organization.



75% of the action has been completed.

Metrics of Success

- 100% Completed/Ongoing: Create and finalize a report on current carbon levels stored in the Metroparks.
- 5% Completed: Completed employee training(s) on carbon storage issues and strategies within the Metroparks.
- Ongoing: Composting policy created by 2028.
- 33% Completed/Ongoing: 10,000 trees planted.
 - 3,336 trees have been planted to date.
- 75% Completed/Ongoing: Prescribed fire and burning plans updated by 2028.

Long-term Actions

- Action 10.6: Engage in carbon offsetting, provide sink for vehicles or other emissions.



0% of the action has been completed.

- Action 10.7: Protect, expand, and improve tree canopy coverage.
 - Contracted work in flood plain forests
 - 360 trees planted at Lake St. Clair Metropark to offset canopy loss from cottonwood removals.
 - Prescribed burns conducted in high quality forests to maintain and improve the habitat.
 - Carbon storage study quantified carbon storage levels in natural communities throughout the Metroparks to create a baseline.



10% of the action has been completed.

- Action 10.8: Evaluate forestry management practices to selectively develop and harvest stands of timber for carbon storage initiative funding.



0% of the action has been completed.

- Action 10.9: Address procurement policies, local sources, food operations, and materials, to reduce transportation carbon costs and footprints.
 - Staff is exploring the possibility of having Metropark farms have the ability to produce consumable goods. Strategic plans could be developed to help offset items purchased with items grown/produced in house. Examples could include vegetables, annual and perennial flowers, pumpkins, Maple Syrup, and Ice Cream.



5% of the action has been completed.

- Action 10.10: Evaluate opportunity to purchase, or provide, Regional Carbon Banking or Credits.

0%

0% of the action has been completed.

GOAL 3. WATER QUALITY

Enhance built and natural stormwater infrastructure in preparation for increasingly intense storms and promote the protection of water quality.

Objective 11: Beginning in 2024, provide annual education opportunities to staff on issues of stormwater management and water conservation.

Near-term Actions

- Action 11.1: Develop methods of communication with and for Metroparks staff related to stormwater management and water conservation.
 - Water Quality committee participated in CAP Education and Engagement Survey collaboratively at Meeting #3. Survey results will provide staff training methods of communication.
 - The Metroparks environment and climate section of blog authored by Interpretive Department staff which highlights the following water quality initiatives as part of the blog cycle.
 - Four blogs relating back to Water Quality have been shared to the Environment & Climate section of our blog so far this year. They are:
 - [Rain Gardens: Your Neighborhood Superhero](#)
 - [Softened Shorelines Protect Water Quality and Improve Habitat](#)
 - [Growing our Let it Grow Zones](#)
 - [Earth Day is Every Day at the Metroparks](#)
 - LMS Training Stormwater Management
 - Lunch and Learn series.

100%

100% of the action has been completed and ongoing.

- Action 11.2: Offer staff in-house training, opportunities to attend webinars or other local conferences, and access to water quality resources for the purpose of expanding knowledge to incorporate into daily work.

- Erick Elgin from MSU Extension provided a Lunch and Learn to Metroparks staff on Natural Shorelines – what they are, why they are important, how they improve water quality.
- Sub Committee members attended the National Network for Ocean and Climate Change Interpretation Training.
- Continue in 2025 to compile list of related in-house training, webinars, local conferences, access to Water Quality resources for knowledge into daily work.
 - Zoning for Coastal Resilience Training, 2025 MAP/SEMCOG/EGLE/NOAA
 - Stormwater Conference
 - Michigan Environmental Compliance Conference
 - Metropark staff attended conference with climate initiative focus continuing education classes and these were reflected in the training log.
 - MSU Extension Wild About Conservation Webinar: Managing Stormwater in a Changing Climate
 - Great Lakes Educators of Aquatic and Marine Science: Restoring Urban Rivers
- Engineering and Natural Resources staff attending the Michigan Shoreline Partnership's shoreline training. Natural shorelines improve water quality by infiltrating runoff before reaching surface water.
- Water Quality subcommittee members attended a webinar on August 28 "Acquiring Land for Parks, Connectivity, and Conservation"
- Staff from Lake Erie, Natural Resources Dept., Planning & Development Dept., and Interpretive Services Dept. are putting together a workshop to take place in September. The workshop is funded partially through an EGLE green infrastructure stewardship workforce grant project will train both staff and workforce group in providing best practices to maintain green infrastructure following the completion of the Lake Erie Green Infrastructure project which is further detailed in action item 12.1.



Coastal Solutions Compendium

August 2025

Financial assistance for this project was provided by the Michigan Coastal Management Program, Water Resources Division, EGLE, with funding through the National Coastal Zone Management Program.

PROCEDURE	RECOMMENDED FREQUENCY ¹	TIMES PER YEAR ²	HOURS PER TIME ³	AVG. ANNUAL O&M HOURS ⁴	RATE/ HR ⁵	EQUIPMENT NEEDED ⁶ / MATERIAL COST ⁷	AVERAGE ANNUAL COST ⁸	NOTES
Inspect for ponded water and assess cause	Approx. bi-weekly after significant rain event	9.00	1.00	9.0	\$20	Trash bag/\$1	\$189	Time assumes generally no significant ponding but some trash removal each time.
Inspect for and remove obstructions at inlet and outlet structures								
Inspect for and remove accumulated trash								
Mow side slopes	Weekly	17.00	1.00	1	\$20	Mower/\$2	\$58	Material cost is for lawn mower gas or charging
Spot herbicide	Annually-Spring/Fall before seed	2.00	4.00	8.0	\$40	Trash bag & herbicide/ \$10	\$340	
Inspect underdrains for root obstruction	Every two years or as needed	0.50	2.00	1.0	40	Cable camera	\$40	Remove clean out cap and observe using cable camera
Clean underdrains when obstructed by roots	As needed	0.10	2.00	0.2	\$40	Root cutter/\$500	\$58	Assumes specialized contractor cleaning every ten years
Remedial maintenance for clogging, including replanting	As needed	0.20	16.00	3.2	\$40	Trash bags & plants/ \$200	\$168	Limit maintenance to areas of clogging. Rake surface to remove sediment clogs. Replace plants as needed. Assumed frequency every five years
Total							\$853.00	

¹ Recommended frequency per typical requirements. Actual frequency will vary based on site conditions

² Times per year is the inverse of the frequency. Used to calculate annual O&M hours

³ Labor hours required to complete the task

⁴ Average annual O&M hours accounting for frequency of activity (product of times per year and hours per time)

⁵ Many activities could be completed using volunteer labor but labor rate assumes use of paid workers

⁶ Some activities require readily available equipment while others require special equipment

⁷ Cost to complete the work one time using outside service and/or cost of special equipment

⁸ Average annual cost (for labor and materials cost accounting for frequency of activity)

Chart showing estimated annual cost for maintenance.

- Planning & Development, Interpretive, and Natural Resources staff attended a SEMCOG webinar on October 30, 2025 introducing two new planning tools designed to assist our green infrastructure projects to be evaluated for environmental impacts and stormwater considerations early in the project development process; 1) Eco Planning Tool (EPT): Provides quick, data-driven insights on potential environmental impacts, regulatory considerations, and cost-effective mitigation strategies for development, transportation, and green infrastructure projects; 2) Stormwater Planning Tool (SPT): Builds on the EPT with GIS-based modeling to estimate runoff volumes, pollutant loads, and the effectiveness of stormwater best management practices.

100%

100% of the action has been completed and ongoing.

Metrics of Success

- 100% Complete and Ongoing: Four educational experiences provided by Natural Resources Department and Planning and Development for staff across the Metroparks, in coordination with education goals/objectives about climate initiatives, conducted by industry leaders, and aimed to increase the knowledge of Metroparks staff, regardless of job classification.
- 100% Complete and Ongoing: Metroparks staff have participated in at least one workshop/webinar/continuing education seminar with a climate initiative focus that pertains to their department. Training will be selected by departmental lead or designated committees.
- 100% Complete and Ongoing: Staff can demonstrate learning by incorporating it into their work responsibilities (i.e., transfer of knowledge).
- 100% Complete and Ongoing: By 2025, two Learning Management System trainings will be identified and scheduled for staff participation.

Long-term Actions

- Action 11.3: Demonstration projects for long-term living labs.

0%

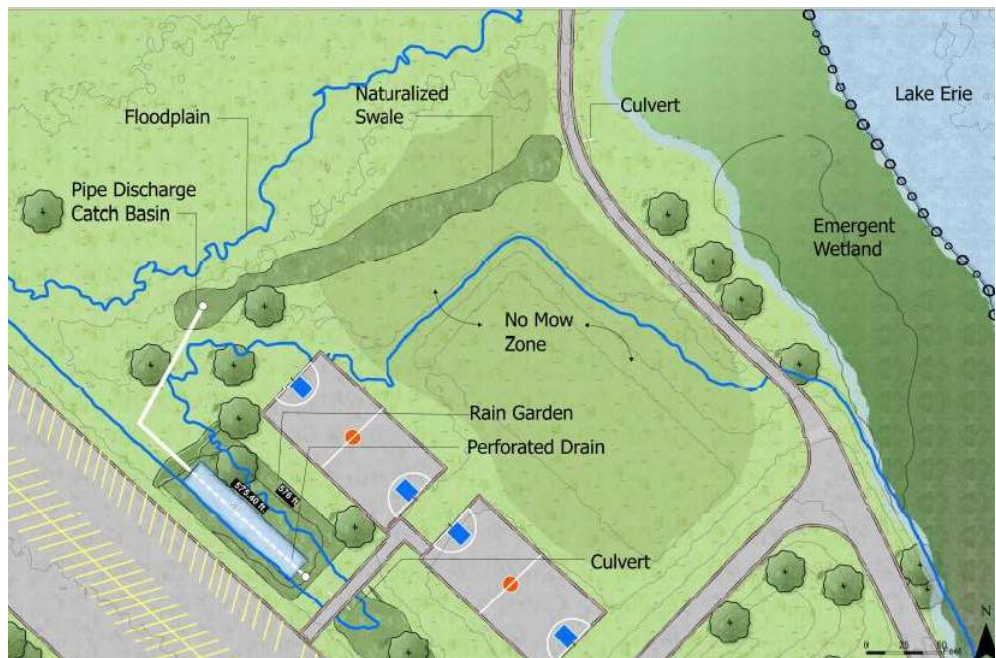
0% of the action has been completed.

Objective 12: Adopt innovative strategies to capture and manage stormwater in preparation for more severe storms and educate the public about these efforts.

Near-term Actions

- Action 12.1: Identify internal education needs related to stormwater management, including financial considerations.
 - Water Quality Subcommittee completed a survey (results in meeting #2 summary) for potential educational needs. CAP Education survey completed, and results will provide better insight. Committee will discuss projects and equipment in upcoming meetings to be proactive on 2025 budget items.
 - Staff are participating the LMS training: Stormwater Pollution, Baseline Management Practices.

- On-going Natural Resources and Planning and Development Departments along with Park Maintenance staff have begun to develop long term maintenance/stewardship training for staff following green infrastructure projects implemented. Currently the EPA-GLRI grant funded green infrastructure project wrapping up this summer at Lake Erie has the project team reviewing a draft



maintenance/stewardship plan for the green infrastructure improvements that will be transitioned this summer/fall from contractors over to park maintenance staff and volunteers. Following guidance from the Washtenaw County Water Resources Commission, a two-page maintenance manual is being created for both the Lake Erie naturalized swales and the rain garden.

Lake Erie Metropark Green Infrastructure project.

- EGLE Watershed Council Grant: Expanding Community Resiliency through Rain Gardens

- Goals:
 - Demonstrate the effectiveness of green infrastructure practices to reduce stormwater flow, namely rain gardens, at both the homeowner and community level. Objective: Conduct 6 Master Rain Gardener courses for 100 participants (80 in-person and 20 online), 10 Rain Garden-101 programs for 100 participants, and 4 stormwater educational booths at major community events. Total individuals reached in class setting is 200; additional reach will be achieved through event booths.
 - Increase the stormwater resiliency of equity communities in the Detroit River and Rouge River watersheds through the creation of rain gardens. Objective: A minimum of 35 rain gardens, collecting a total estimated 875,000 gallons per year, will be created by participants that have attended a Master Rain Gardener course. At least 5% of participants will volunteer to help maintain an already established community rain garden.
 - Provide hands-on job experience and employment opportunities for the Detroit Stormwater Specialist Training (SWST) workforce graduates. Objective: The project will contract with the St. Suzanne Cody Rouge Community Resource Center to hire SWST graduates to install 5 home rain gardens and maintain the existing rain garden at Lake Erie Metropark.
 - Partners include St. Suzanne Cody Rouge Community Resource Center (Cody Center), Detroit Public Library (DPL) and its branch locations, Washtenaw County Water Resources – Commissioner’s Office (WCWR).



25% of the action has been completed.

- Action 12.2: Work with partners and/or consultants to identify options and determine the viability of each.
 - Working with Don Carpenter and Brendan Cousino, Stormwater consultant’s regional stormwater plan. Planning department and Leadership are working on next steps.
 - The draft report from stormwater consultants Drummond & Carpenter, which will highlight opportunities to improve stormwater management and partnerships was presented to the project team on February 5, 2025. A project spreadsheet by the consultants is being placed on the CAP sharepoint landing site for any potential projects staff would prioritize for the consultants to generate 10 project profiles to assist with the identified grant opportunities.
 - The following project profiles generated.
 - Phragmites treatment across all applicable parks
 - General invasive species control across all 13 Metroparks
 - SC- Addressing TMDLs
 - General stormwater infrastructure repairs across all parks
 - Ken- Farm Center Stormwater Improvements
 - LH- Erosion Control issues on the Huron River
 - Willow- Washago Restoration
 - LSC- Black Creek Marsh Restoration
 - LSC- Huron Point Shoreline Restoration
 - Willow- Trail Restoration between Willow and Oakwoods
 - WM- North Branch Restoration
 - WM- North Branch Greenway Plan

100%

100% of the action has been completed.

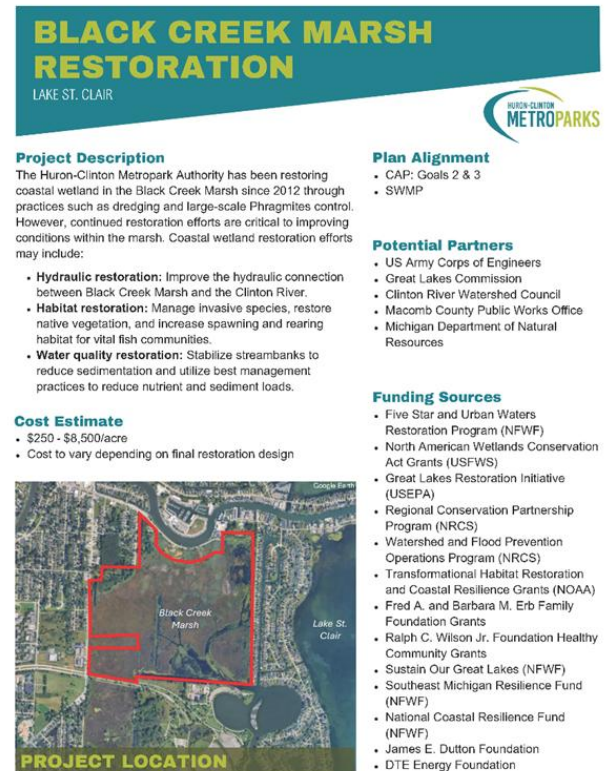
- Action 12.3: Based on the findings, develop a pilot project utilizing innovative strategies (e.g., green roof, permeable pavement, bioswales, increase culverts).
 - Add green infrastructure training for Water Quality Subcommittee members in order to prioritize a list of potential pilot projects (rain garden/bioswale, shoreline stabilization, riparian buffers).
 - As part of the green infrastructure project at Lake Erie Metropark, our consultant will develop instructions for maintenance of bioswales and rain gardens. Staff will be trained.
 - Chair of the Water Quality committee participated in consultant led hands-on training.
 - Out of this process a best practices procedure will be created.
 - As part of the EGLE Watershed Council Grant the Metroparks will provide hands-on job experience and employment opportunities for the Detroit Stormwater Specialist Training (SWST) workforce graduates.
 - The project will contract with the St. Suzanne Cody Rouge Community Resource Center to hire SWST graduates to install 5 home rain gardens and maintain the existing rain garden at Lake Erie Metropark.
 - Kensington Metropark Farm Center Sugar Bush Restoration Project. RFP was awarded to GEI consultants at the November board meeting.
 - Drummond & Carpenter project profiles that focus on these types of GI strategies.

50%

50% of the action has been completed.

- Action 12.4: Create a list of 5-10 projects where innovative strategies might be employed, including financial analysis.

- Water Quality Committee will be involved in the 10 project profiles developed by Drummond & Carpenter.
- The following project profiles generated.
 - Phragmites treatment across all applicable parks
 - General invasive species control across all 13 Metroparks
 - SC- Addressing TMDLs
 - General stormwater infrastructure repairs across all parks
 - Ken- Farm Center Stormwater Improvements
 - LH- Erosion Control issues on the Huron River
 - Willow- Washago Restoration
 - LSC- Black Creek Marsh Restoration
 - LSC- Huron Point Shoreline Restoration
 - Willow- Trail Restoration between Willow and Oakwoods
 - WM- North Branch Restoration
 - WM- North Branch Greenway Plan



50%

50% of the action has been completed.

- Action 12.5: Present pilot project to the Board of Commissioners.
- Prioritized this action to year 3-5.

0%

0% of the action has been completed.

Metrics of Success

- 100% Complete and Ongoing: Provision of stormwater management education to all Metropark staff.
- 100% Complete: Connected with partners and/or consultants to assist in the identification of suitable options.
- 100% Complete: Development of a list of innovative stormwater management strategies.
 - Strategy list presented to and approved by the Board of Commissioners.
- 50% Complete: Development of stormwater management pilot project and assessment.

Long-term Actions

- Action 12.6: Plan an additional five projects with potential to innovate and provide information to the public.

0%

0% of the action has been completed.

- Action 12.7: Result of pilot projects communicated to public and partner agencies.

0%

0% of the action has been completed.

Objective 13: Become a prominent stormwater management partner in the region.

Near-term Actions

- Action 13.1: Identify important stormwater corridors, documenting and providing staff with locations, jurisdictions, and responsibilities by 2028. This documentation includes description of the opportunities, challenges, and possible solutions.
 - ERB Foundation Grant Project completed and next steps to be considered.
 - SEMCOG Green Infrastructure Subcommittee
 - City of Detroit Green Infrastructure Project Submittal
 - Working on other community partnerships
 - Planning and Development Dept. attended the Milford Township Green Infrastructure Visioning Workshop on October 29, 2025



25% of the action has been completed.

- Action 13.2: Actively research and identify innovative global and regional strategies for stormwater treatment methods and adapt to the Metroparks system. These strategies should be incorporated into all stormwater partnerships.
 - SEMCOG Green Infrastructure Sub-Committee will follow innovative and regional strategies for stormwater treatment.
 - Policy development in conjunction with other regional entities for HCMA development projects to successfully incorporate GSI into construction methods and standards.
 - Planning and Development, Interpretive, and Natural Resources Staff attended the State of the Huron River Conference, November 2025
 - Staff presented the Lake Erie Green Infrastructure project at the Special Parks District Forum hosted by the Metroparks. Stakeholder input from partnering park agencies assisted with nationwide best practice strategies followed the presentation.



Special Parks District Forum presentation



25% of the action has been completed.

- Action 13.3: Share at least 20 articles or blog posts with the public related to stormwater climate action by 2028.
 - 4 Blogs have been completed in 2025 focusing on rain gardens and shoreline softening. A total of 12 blogs have been written on rain gardens and shoreline softening since 2024. Blog posts can be

found on the Environment and Climate section of blog at <https://www.metroparks.com/category/environment-climate/>

- 2/21/24 Rain Gardens – Putting Your Yard to Work for You (And Your Community)!
- 3/13/24 No-Mow May is not just a catchy phrase... it is a mindset!
- 3/27/24 Parks in Partnership Highlight: Michigan Natural Shoreline Partnership
- 5/15/24 Water Wise: Empowering Students Through Stormwater Education
- 6/12/24 Beach Management: Combating E. coli
- 6/28/24 Softened Shorelines, Cleaner Water for All
- 7/31/24 Parks in Partnership: Michigan Sea Grant
- 11/27/24 Parks in Partnership: Six Rivers Land Conservancy
- 1/8/25 Softened Shorelines Protect Water Quality and Improve Habitat
- 1/31/25 Rain Gardens: Your Neighborhood Superhero
- 8/27/25 Expanding Community Resiliency through Rain Gardens
- 11/12/25 Fall Leaves and Stormwater: Managing the Season Mindfully

60%

60% of the action has been completed.

Metrics of Success

- 100% Complete: An internal document created that identifies stormwater corridors and related responsibilities.
- 25% Complete: Regional standard policy created for engineering standards.
- 60% Complete: Stormwater management partnerships created, joined, or facilitated.

Long-term Actions

- Action 13.4: Identify existing local and regional stormwater partnerships and how the Metroparks can collaborate. Identify stormwater management gaps in the region and partnerships that need to be created to address these gaps in stormwater leadership.

0%

0% of the action has been completed.

- Action 13.5: Create an internal policy establishing a regional Metroparks standard for stormwater management, adhering to or exceeding individual county engineering standards.

0%

0% of the action has been completed.

- Action 13.6: Develop plans or recommendations for maintenance of stormwater corridors by 2033, implementing them (e.g., resolving conflicts and reroutes) after 2033.

0%

0% of the action has been completed.

Objective 14: Adopt a practice of strategic water usage that minimizes stress on and protects regional water resources.

Near-term Actions

- Action 14.1: Determine the current level of water use in the Metroparks, including golf courses, water features, buildings, etc.
 - Currently Water Quality Subcommittee determining by meeting #4 (February 28, 2024) on a tentative schedule to complete a water inventory system wide. Staff will determine the level of effort to complete checklists for all water usage and provide a gap study of those facilities/water features/water resources that need water metering installed to determine water usage baseline in 2024.
 - Staff determined to implement a pilot project at Kensington to estimate the metering of water usage throughout the park. i.e., Water wells and including the irrigation system.
 - As part of this pilot, staff discovered the need to update the inventory of the active water well location within GIS prior to providing consultants with this data.
 - Understanding meter and system based on pipe inventory and a scope for plumbing contractor is the recommendation from this subcommittee. Staff will work on the scope of this recommendation. Staff has met with potential contractors and received two quotes for meter equipment.
 - Groundwater smart metering pilot project Kensington continuing with one staff meeting in January.
 - This project is temporarily paused due to project volume within the engineering department; it is anticipated this will be in que for 2026.

10%

10% of the action has been completed.

- Action 14.2: Identify innovative strategies and the financial viability to reduce water usage.
 - SEMCOG Green Infrastructure Sub Committee
 - Multiple departments collectively participate in continuing education that include water usage strategies.
 - DNRTF/LWCF grants scoring system incorporates reduction of water usage in the scoring for sustainable design (total of 20 points). Planning and Development department researching the reduction of water usage for future grant submittals.
 - Best Practices implemented through NPDES Non-Point Stormwater Permit administered by the Natural Resources Department that are related to water reduction.

25%

25% of the action has been completed.

- Action 14.3: Create an inventory of water usage (the draw of water on natural or municipal water resources) within facilities, buildings, bathrooms, splash pads, pools, etc., and install sub-meters to monitor and actively manage water usage rates by 2028.
- Groundwater smart metering project Kensington.



10% of the action has been completed.

- Action 14.4: Collect rainwater runoff from buildings and store rainwater to irrigate landscaped areas.
- Stony Creek Nature Center has 2 rain barrels installed and collected just over 20,000 gallons of rainwater for irrigation in 2025.
- Lake St. Clair Park Office has three rain barrels installed and collected 42,500 gallons of rainwater for irrigation in 2025.



25% of the action has been completed.

- Action 14.5: Establish targets for water use reduction.
- Groundwater smart metering project Kensington.



5% of the action has been completed.

- Action 14.6: Reduce irrigation of landscapes, implementing resilient plantings and identifying areas to reduce turf.
- Groundwater smart metering pilot project Kensington.
- Installation of natural shoreline at Stony Creek Metropark using native plants.
- Installation of rain garden and bioswales at Lake Erie Metropark using native plants.
- Natural Resources staff met with each district to review mow plans and identified areas to transition turf to annual spot mow or natural area. Maps will also be updated to reflect projects completed in the past two years, such as Willow Big Bend Restoration Project and Natural Shoreline Installation at Eastwood Beach, Stony Creek.
- The Mow Plan has been updated 2025-2027.
- 2025 Mow Plan update shows we have decreased turf areas by 2% or 75 acres, decreased Annual Spot Mow by 1% or 39 acres, and increased Natural Areas by 3% or 191 acres



5% of the action has been completed.

- Action 14.7: Evaluate potential for irrigation with gray water using cisterns, rain barrels, and other local stormwater storage elements.
- Prioritize to years 2-5.



0% of the action has been completed.

- Action 14.8: Install timer and motion sensor faucets, waterless or low volume urinals and toilets, dual flush valves (low versus full volume flush), and other water use reduction equipment on all new facilities by 2028.
 - 2024:
 - New construction facility Willow Park Office
 - Various bathroom updates throughout the system
 - New construction facility Stony Creek Boat Launch



25% of the action has been completed.

Metrics of Success

- 10% Complete: Anticipated completion timeframe, 2028: Create and measure inventory of metered water usage.
- 10% Complete, anticipated completion timeframe, 2028: Development of water use reduction strategies, each including a financial analysis.
- 25% Complete: Anticipated completion timeframe, 2028: Implementation of pilot projects to collect rainwater runoff from buildings to be reused onsite.
- 25% Complete: Anticipated completion timeframe, 2028: Installation of water saving equipment in new facilities.
- 0% Complete: Anticipated completion timeframe, 2028: Policies created to address water usage.

Long-term Actions

- Action 14.9: Dedicate staff and resources to maintain water utility installations and hardware. Evaluate potential for retrofit on existing facilities by 2033.



0% of the action has been completed.

- Action 14.10: Evaluate splash pads and other aquatic facilities' ability to capture, filter, and reuse water in operation. In new facilities or infrastructure, show preference on design of systems with reuse of water.



0% of the action has been completed.

- Action 14.11: Develop 1) a policy to use compressed air to blow grass clippings off mowing equipment and golf carts and 2) best management practices of washing equipment off into turf areas, where water can infiltrate rather than being conveyed into storm or municipal sewer.



0% of the action has been completed.

Objective 15: Monitor and protect quality of water resources adjacent to and in close proximity of the Metroparks from pollution, erosion, contamination, and other detrimental effects exacerbated (i.e., accelerated or increased) by climate change.

Near-term Actions

- Action 15.1: Actively monitor and treat algal blooms, identify trends, and establish survey protocol and areas at Kent and Stony Lakes by 2028.
 - Roughly 375 acres of surface water have been treated in 2025 at Stony Creek, Kensington, Hudson Mills, and Lake Erie Marina. The goal of treatment is to decrease the amount of invasive aquatic plants (curlyleaf pondweed, water milfoil) and algae. A final treatment is scheduled for Stony Creek and Kent Lake.



25% of the action has been completed.

- Action 15.2: Identify and evaluate potential training for staff to have certification for soil erosion and sedimentation control authority over Metroparks projects to ease administration of stormwater improvement projects.
 - Engineering Department SESC Standards implemented on every construction project 1 acre in size or within 500 feet of a watercourse through SESC Permit administration through outside agencies. The committee identified a cost feasibility study needed to determine if this should be administered internally as a SESC Authority, not started yet.



0% of the action has been completed.

- Action 15.3: Identify and design stormwater green infrastructure that will capture or filter an additional 10 million gallons annually by 2028.
 - Installation of 1350 square feet of natural shoreline at Stony Creek's Eastwood beach using native plantings will reduce shoreline erosion and provide infiltration of run-off before reaching surface water.
 - Through funding from EPA and GLRI, bioswales and a rain garden were installed at Lake Erie Metropark by converting ditches and turf grass into native plantings. This will capture 2.8 million gallons stormwater.



30% of the action has been completed.

- Action 15.4: Create public education pieces surrounding nutrient pollution (e.g., *Escherichia coli* or *E. coli*), related closures and reasons for closures, and methods the Metroparks are pursuing to reduce nutrient loads and keep lakes open.
 - NPDES Non-Point Source Stormwater Permit related measures for public education administered by the Natural Resources department.
 - Natural Resources department annually participates in goose management, which is in coordination with DNR best management practices and permitting.
 - Natural Resources Dept. joined the Clinton River Public Advisory Council for the Beach Closings Subcommittee for the Clinton River Area of Concern.

100%

100% of the action has been completed and ongoing.

Metrics of Success

- 25% Complete: Anticipated completion timeframe, 2028: Community monitoring plan for algal blooms created.
- 30% Complete: Benchmark current stormwater capture using the EPA National Stormwater Calculator.
- 30% Complete: Anticipated completion timeframe, 2028: Increase the gallons of stormwater treated or captured annually, including increased storage based on pre- and post-construction capacity on stormwater projects.
- 100% Complete: Published blog and/or social media posts educating about nutrient pollution and the Metroparks' efforts to reduce it.
- 30% Complete: Based on analysis, installed and/or retrofitted stormwater infrastructure to best manage stormwater within the Metroparks.

Long-term Actions

- Action 15.5: Address critically eroded shoreline areas identified in the Stormwater Management Plan, restoring 30% of these areas by 2028, and 60% of these areas by 2033.

0%

0% of the action has been completed.

- Action 15.6: Create a stormwater plan element that identifies and prioritizes facilities and proposes to capture 100% of rainfall of a two-year, 24-hour storm event in all developed areas of the parks. Target 10 projects within this element to be installed by 2033.

0%

0% of the action has been completed.

Objective 16: Partner with regional organizations, including government agencies, watershed councils, non-profits, and corporate and philanthropic organizations to identify alignment and advance mutual goals of water quality protection in a changing climate.

Near-term Actions

- Action 16.1: Identify regional organizations who share mutual goals of water quality protection and establish meaningful partnerships centered on water quality in each of our service counties.
 - Stormwater consultants, Drummond & Carpenter, provided draft report which highlighted opportunities to improve stormwater management and Partnerships. HCMA is in partnership with Washtenaw County Water Resources Commission, Friends of the Detroit River, Oakland County Water Resources Commission, River Raisin Watershed Council, Rain Catchers Collective: Clinton River Watershed Council, Friends of the Rouge, and Huron River Watershed Council to share education with the community on stormwater management through the Southeast Michigan Master Rain Gardener Class.

- Staff from Operations, Interpretive, and Natural Resources are members of the Clinton River Area of Concern Public Advisory Committee's subgroup on Beach Closings. This subcommittee focuses on improving the water quality and monitoring efforts at Lake St Clair in order to minimize the number of summer beach closings due to high e. coli counts.
- Natural Resources Dept has joined a technical advisory committee for the Huron River Watershed Council. The goal of the TAC includes, but is not limited to, advising on the development of a land prioritization model that emphasizes water quality and climate resilience benefits, and evaluates ecosystem services within the Huron River Watershed Council.

100%

100% of the action has been completed.

- Action 16.2: Participate in professional groups, to meet potential partners and collaborate on water quality issues.
 - Planning and Development Dept. joined the SEMCOG Green Infrastructure Sub Committee.
 - Staff from Operations, Interpretive, and Natural Resources are members of the Clinton River Area of Concern Public Advisory Committee's subgroup on Beach Closings. This subcommittee focuses on improving the water quality and monitoring efforts at Lake St Clair in order to minimize the number of summer beach closings due to high e. coli counts.
 - Natural Resources Dept has joined a technical advisory committee for the Huron River Watershed Council. The goal of the TAC includes, but is not limited to, advising on the development of a land prioritization model that emphasizes water quality and climate resilience benefits, and evaluates ecosystem services within the Huron River Watershed Council.



100%

100% of the action has been completed.

- Action 16.3: Identify funding opportunities that support partnerships around water quality.
 - The draft report from stormwater consultants Drummond & Carpenter, includes a project spreadsheet by the consultants to seek grant opportunities.
 - Planning and Development Dept. has developed a 5-Year Grant Plan that incorporates these grant opportunities identified.
 - Developed partnership with the St. Suzanne Cody Rouge Community Resource Center, Friends of the Rouge, and the Sierra Club Michigan Chapter with their Detroit Stormwater Specialist Training.
 - Natural Resources Dept has joined a technical advisory committee for the Huron River Watershed Council. The goal of the TAC includes, but is not limited to, advising on the development of a land prioritization model that emphasizes water quality and climate resilience benefits, and evaluates ecosystem services within the Huron River Watershed Council.



25% of the action has been completed.

- Action 16.4: Seek to be included or represented on boards pertaining to matters of water quality.



0% of the action has been completed.

Metrics of Success

- 100 Complete: Anticipated completion timeframe, 2028: Form a minimum of one partnership per county in the Metroparks service region focused of water quality.
- 25% Complete: Anticipated completion timeframe, 2028: Identified and pursued funding opportunities to enhance partnerships.

Long-term Actions

- Action 16.5: Create a Strategic Partnership Matrix that identifies high, medium, and low priority partners in this work. Then create the plan to engage and nurture those partnerships.



0% of the action has been completed.

- Action 16.6: Engage with the Metroparks' lobbying firm to connect with existing and potential partnerships.



0% of the action has been completed.

Objective 17: Advocate for the protection of water resources.

Near-term Actions

- Action 17.1: Work with our Lobbying firm to engage and inform the Metroparks Caucus on pursuing action on Metropark priorities concerning water quality.



0% of the action has been completed.

Metrics of Success

- 0% Complete: Annual Metroparks Caucus letter issued.

Long-term Actions

- Action 17.2: Seek Board of Commissioners resolutions that support goals pertaining to water quality protection, formalizing Metroparks support for internal and external water quality initiatives.

0%

0% of the action has been completed.

GOAL 4. TRANSPORTATION

Reduce carbon emissions associated with transportation vehicle miles traveled and provide equitable transportation options to and within the Metroparks to help mitigate the impacts of climate change.

Objective 18: Identify and evaluate efforts to reduce the vehicle miles traveled by Metroparks staff and reduce current levels of carbon emissions emitted.

Near-term Actions

- Action 18.1: Establish the current carbon emissions baseline and provide recommendations on ways to reduce it.
 - RFP was awarded to CIS during the October 2024 board meeting.
 - Through proposed audit methods detailed in the proposal, CIS will be responsible for the assessment and establishment of the following:

A	Carbon Storage Baseline
B	Fuel Assessment and Carbon Release
C	Emissions Reduction from No-Mow Areas
D	Fleet and Equipment Emissions Baseline
E	Transition to Electric Fleet
F	Facility Emissions Baseline

- Deliverables at the conclusion of this report will include an executive summary, results, and recommendations for further study, as well as guiding principles and high-level coherent actions for strategy development.

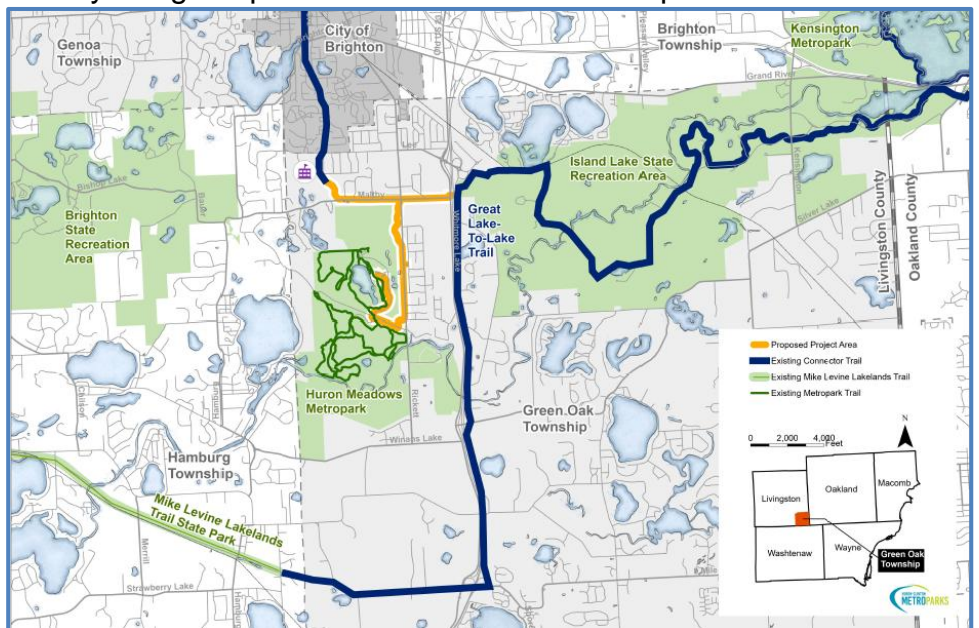
- We will further define the metric once we have the carbon emissions document to assist as a guide. One metric may be to set percentage reductions over time, such as comparing the baseline year with future years.

100%

100% of the action has been completed.

- Action 18.2: Advocate, promote, and incentivize alternatives to autocentric development patterns through close coordination between state, county, and local governments.
 - In 2025, the committee will work on further defining specific actions and metrics associated with this action item that is already a regular park of our work within Metroparks.

- A TAP application was submitted for the Metroparks to State Park Connector. The application was for \$8,064,206 and would connect Huron Meadows to Island Lake State Park via a non-motorized trail connection and a pedestrian bridge over US-23.



- Next Step: Work on updating the Master Plans for each of the 13 parks by 2027. The Master Plans will further define regional trail expansion goals for the 13 individual parks, which will allow HCMA to establish short and long-term goals associated with the expansion on regional connections.
- Continue to track bicycle and pedestrian access to parks, open spaces, and natural areas with potential metrics of both miles of paved hike-bike paths, percentage of the long-range non-motorized network vision completed for the Metroparks and surrounding communities, and percentage of parks and open spaces with bicycle and pedestrian access.
- Serve as a regional leader in the Southeast Michigan working with partners to implement the regional connectivity of non-motorized trails and transit routes.

35%

35% of the action has been completed.

- Action 18.3: Calculate emissions reductions made by creating new no-mow areas.
 - RFP was awarded to CIS during the October 2024 board meeting.

- Through proposed audit methods detailed in the proposal, CIS will be responsible for the assessment and establishment of the following:

A	Carbon Storage Baseline
B	Fuel Assessment and Carbon Release
C	Emissions Reduction from No-Mow Areas
D	Fleet and Equipment Emissions Baseline
E	Transition to Electric Fleet
F	Facility Emissions Baseline

- Deliverables at the conclusion of this report will include an executive summary, results, and recommendations for further study, as well as guiding principles and high-level coherent actions for strategy development.
- The calculation used to determine carbon emissions reductions associated with mow reductions will be provided as part of the ongoing carbon emissions study. Natural Resources will then update their annual mow reduction report to include carbon emissions reductions data.

- The Mow Plan has been updated 2025-2027.



New annual mow areas.

100%

100% of the action has been completed.

Metric of Success:

- Study and development of associated recommendations and phased implementation.
- Miles of trail completed.
- The number of additional acres added to the "no-mow" list per year and associated carbon emissions reduction.

Long-term Actions

- Action 18.4: Revise parking requirements, including reduction of parking and consideration of options for reducing reliance on single-occupancy vehicles and switching to climate-friendly travel options.

0%

0% of the action has been completed.

- Action 18.5: Support and participate in state, regional, and local infrastructure planning with a unified approach to planning for transportation investments.

0%

0% of the action has been completed.

Objective 19: Explore the viability of using an EV fleet and developing EV charging infrastructure by 2033.

Near-term Actions

- Action 19.1: Pilot program with two EVs with EV infrastructure and collect usage data.
 - RFP was awarded to CIS during the October 2024 board meeting.
 - Through proposed audit methods detailed in the proposal, CIS will be responsible for the assessment and establishment of the following:

A	Carbon Storage Baseline
B	Fuel Assessment and Carbon Release
C	Emissions Reduction from No-Mow Areas
D	Fleet and Equipment Emissions Baseline
E	Transition to Electric Fleet
F	Facility Emissions Baseline

- Deliverables at the conclusion of this report will include an executive summary, results, and recommendations for further study, as well as guiding principles and high-level coherent actions for strategy development.
- The purchase of 2 EVs with supporting charging stations, the collection of data, and the establishment of a data review process to guide future decisions.
- The data should help establish a future metric related to the pace of transition and what we recommend transitioning to (EV, Hybrid, both, neither). Having the data in 2025 will drive what we do in 2026. The information will be made available in advance of the development of the fleet replace procedure.

- In addition to the two EVs purchased in 2024, HCMA purchased three hybrid vehicles. Two of the three hybrids have arrived and one other, the Ford Maverick, is on back order due to increased demand for hybrid options.
- In 2026, HCMA also intends to acquire two Hybrid Ford Explorer Interceptors for the police department, two Hybrid Ford Mavericks for the engineering department, and one Hybrid Ford F-150 for Stony Creek Maintenance.



90% of the action has been completed.

- Action 19.2: Conduct an analysis to understand barriers to moving to electric, unexpected costs or savings, and expected carbon emission reductions.
- RFP was awarded to CIS during the October 2024 board meeting.
 - Through proposed audit methods detailed in the proposal, CIS will be responsible for the assessment and establishment of the following:

A	Carbon Storage Baseline
B	Fuel Assessment and Carbon Release
C	Emissions Reduction from No-Mow Areas
D	Fleet and Equipment Emissions Baseline
E	Transition to Electric Fleet
F	Facility Emissions Baseline

- Deliverables at the conclusion of this report will include an executive summary, results, and recommendations for further study, as well as guiding principles and high-level coherent actions for strategy development.
- The purchase of 2 EVs with supporting charging stations, the collection of data, and the establishment of a data review process to guide future decisions.
- Metric: This action will be accomplished in a combination of ways: we will identify barriers to moving to electric vehicles and equipment through the establishment of pilot programs that will include documenting usage, associate expenses, and expected carbon emissions reductions provided in a variety of ways (manufacturer information, carbon study information, usage calculations, Total Cost of Ownership comparisons). The analysis will be completed by the end of 2025.
- The completion of the first EV annual report will achieve the initial objective. However, data collecting and comparing the various vehicle options will be an ongoing process. The information will be made available in advance of the development of the fleet replace procedure.



90% of the action has been completed.

- Action 19.3: Replace internal combustion engine equipment such as mowers and golf carts with electric options as equipment ages out.
 - Metroparks procured two electric greens mowers as an alternative to fuel powered greens mowers. These pieces of equipment will be utilized and evaluated in the Western District to determine if we want to continue to move in this direction as part of our equipment replacement process.
 - In 2026 with Board approval, HCMA intends to purchase 3 Hybrid Toro Greens Mowers, an Electric Beverage Cart for Indian Springs, and will be considering additional EV utility vehicles.
 - 5 of 7 golf cart fleets have been converted to electric fleets. The remaining two fleets, Kensington and Hudson Mills, will be converted in the next two fleet replacement cycles. All fleets will be electrified by 2028.
- Metric: The gradual purchase of gasoline powered alternative equipment (example #1: turning one golf course over to electric carts annually until all 7 courses have been converted. Example #2: transitioning to electric greens mowers at one course per year if we find having electric mowers is value added and not cost prohibitive through the pilot (2025: Huron Meadows).
- Next Step: Determine what our pace of transition should be for the individual pieces of equipment (carts, mowers, tractors, UTVs). There should be a different pace depending on the type of equipment and individual benefits from transitioning. In some cases, it may be determined that transitioning away from fuel powered is not a viable option at this time.
- Future Step: Compare equipment purchased from year to year to show the addition of electric powered equipment being used in the field in comparison to past years (for example, the purchase of an electric powered pole saw at Huron Meadows pictured below).



Lake Erie Metropark- New Electric Golf Cart Fleet



Sergeant Proudlock Ride Smith Alternative Electric Equipment Demo



Louis Kraft holding a new batter operated pole saw at Huron Meadows

great alternatives to their fuel powered counterpart with the added benefit of no damage associated with hydraulic line leaks or noise.

- A review of data from our Faster System has been conducted to establish a baseline for fuel and battery-operated hand tools (backpack blower, trimmers, chain saws). Over time, we will be able to report the number of conversions

that are occurring. It will also help us provide a list of preferred alternatives to fuel powered equipment.

100%

100% of the action has been completed.

- Action 19.4: Provide EV charging infrastructure for public use.
 - Two charging stations were installed at the Willow Golf Course in 2024. This year, we will be developing a process to collect, document, and review usage data to determine the frequency of usage. In addition, we will establish basic costs associated with the installation of EV charging stations, while keeping in mind every location is unique so costs can vary significantly. We will develop a report that includes usage data, startup costs, and long-term costs that can be used when considering the expansion of EV charging infrastructure to other locations.
 - HCMA will evaluate the potential of adding public EV charging stations at Kensington's Golf Course as part of the cart barn electrical design and upgrade needed to support the future electric fleet.
 - Metric: The implementation of a pilot program at the Willow Golf Course and the development of a schedule (3 times annually) to review Red-E usage data to see if there is sufficient usage to justify program expansion to other Districts in 2026.
 - Metric 2: Identify the next location to consider expanding the program supported by information gathered through the pilot. One option may be to add charging stations at Kensington's Golf Course as part of the upcoming cart barn electrification project planned for the Fall of 2026/Spring of 2027.



100%

100% of the action has been completed.

Metrics of Success

- 100% Complete: Initial EV usage data collected.
- 90% Complete: EV infrastructure analysis.
- 90% Complete: Some internal combustion engine equipment has been replaced with electric options as equipment ages out.
 - The gradual purchase of gasoline powered alternative equipment (example #1: turning one golf course over to electric carts annually until all 7 courses have been converted. Example #2: transitioning to electric greens mowers at one course per year (2025: Huron Meadows.)
- 100% Complete: EV charging infrastructure in place for public use in at least one location per district by 2028.
 - Updated metrics:
 - The implementation of a pilot program at the Willow Golf Course and the development of a schedule (3 times annually) to review Red-E usage data to see if there is sufficient usage to justify program expansion to other Districts in 2026.
 - Identify the next location to consider expanding the program supported by information gathered through the pilot.

Long-term Actions

- Action 19.5: Act on the findings of the pilot program, such as installing EV infrastructure for the public in all parks by 2033.

0%

0% of the action has been completed.

- Action 19.6: After evaluation of pilot program, transition Metroparks fleet (police, maintenance, operations, and administrative vehicles) to EV.

0%

0% of the action has been completed.

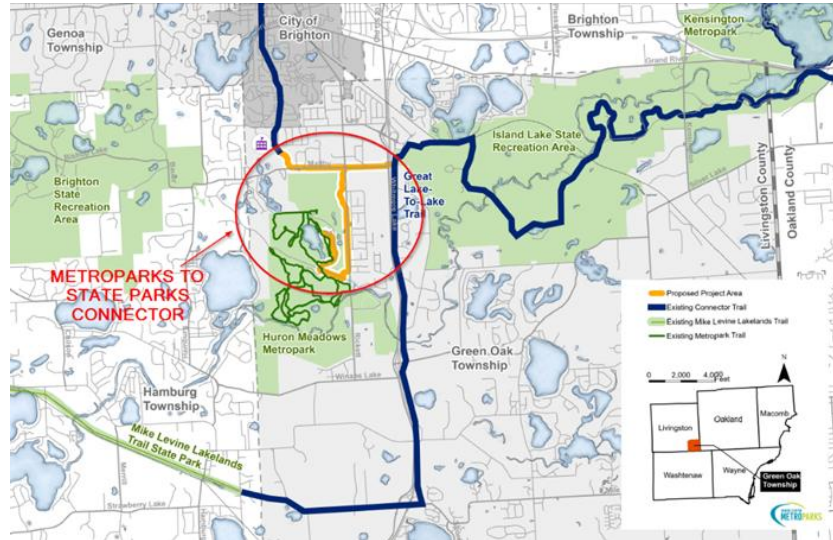
Objective 20: Increase connectivity within our parks.

Near-term Actions

- Action 20.1: Based on a trail gap study, identify connectivity options between disconnected Metroparks by 2024.
 - The Metroparks Trail Gap Study has been completed in the summer 2024 and will be used as a guide moving forward to develop connections between the parks. The study provides preliminary cost estimates for each gap and will break down the larger gaps into smaller sections to phase funding and construction. Planning has been leading this project since 2023.

- Current Project: The US-23 Gap has transitioned from the study to the design phase. This project will ultimately connect Brighton State Rec. Area, Huron Meadows, Island Lake RA, and Kensington Metropark.

- A TAP application was submitted for the Metroparks to State Park Connector. The application was for \$8,064,206 and will connect Huron Meadows to Island Lake State Park via a non-motorized trail connection and a pedestrian bridge over US-23.



- In addition, a grant has been submitted for the design of the Gap between Lower Huron Metropark, French Landing Twp Park and on to the 275 non-motorized pathway.

100%

100% of the action has been completed.

- Action 20.2: Identify partners to address trail gaps by 2024.
 - Metric: Partners were identified as part of the trail gap study, and the lists will be continually reviewed and updated when sections of trail gaps are identified as short-term development priorities. Metric has been completed and is now a part of Planning's routine work.

100%

100% of the action has been completed and ongoing.

Metrics of Success

- 100% Complete: Completion of the study and identification of options between Metroparks by 2024.
 - Partners were identified as part of the trail gap study, and the lists will be continually reviewed and updated when sections of trail gaps are identified as short-term development priorities. Metric has been completed and is now a part of Planning's routine work.
- Development of a non-motorized infrastructure funding strategy by 2025
- Development of a trail connectivity plan that includes partners input to prioritize segments for detailed engineering design/construction.

Long-term Actions

- Action 20.3: Complete at least one trail gap identified by 2033.

0%

0% of the action has been completed.

- Action 20.4: Continue to expand the length of trail networks (hike-bike, nature, and rustic trails) to increase ability for non-motorized movement within Metroparks.

0%

0% of the action has been completed.

- Action 20.5: Complete all trail gaps identified by 2050, and all Metroparks are connected via non-motorized trails.

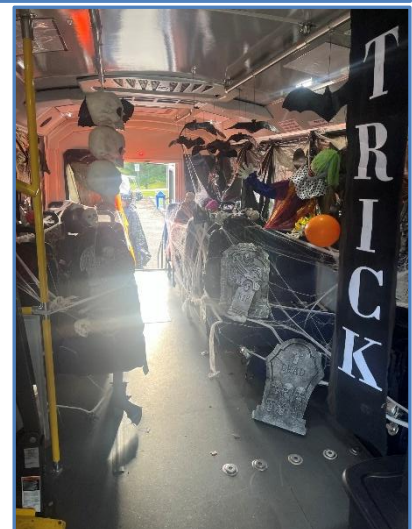
0%

0% of the action has been completed.

Objective 21: Increase access to the Metroparks by centering environmental justice through every transit investment.

Near-term Actions

- Action 21.1: Partner with existing public transit agencies to develop efficient and equitable transportation to the Metroparks by 2026.
 - Metropark Express is a transit program in partnership with Smart and Harrison Township. Visitors can take the weekend Summer Shuttle for Harrison Township residents and seasonal boaters to and from popular destinations within Lake St. Clair Metropark for free.
 - Metric: The identification and promotion of what is presently available to each Metropark and then build upon what exists where it is mutually beneficial to do so. In addition, establish public transit utilization metrics to measure current and future usage of the existing services provided.
- The Huron-Clinton Metroparks supported WAVE in applying and receiving a AAACF Community Foundation grant. WAVE was awarded this \$7500 grant; WAVE will be able to work in partnership with the Metroparks to support public transportation initiatives by promoting greater accessibility to residents throughout the region. The Metroparks have a common desire for the public to utilize the parks and trails safely and efficiently with public transportation.
 - AAACF's Community Foundation grant will be used towards planning, marketing, and fare pass give aways for Hudson Mills, Dexter-Huron, and Delhi Metroparks and similarly with the Border-to-Border Trail.
- The WAVE will be at Hudson Mills for the Trunk or Treat Event in October. They will have a table with lots of free swag to hand out and their Haunted Bus for kids to walk through.
- Next Step: Setup a meeting this year with Marketing to see what can do cross promotional wise with public transit entities.
- HCMA staff have learned all Metroparks have some level of door-to-door public transit service being provided. It is important to continue to promote these opportunities and strengthen relationships with service providers to help lead to future fixed routes, which are demand based.



30%

30% of the action has been completed.

- Action 21.2: Identify locations to support public transit, including strategically placed destination/origin points by 2028.
 - In 2020, a Park Access Plan was completed. This plan identified existing conditions and future recommendations. The subcommittee will use this plan to identify next steps within this action. This action has been scheduled for discussion in 2025.
 - Metric: Incorporate into Transit Master Plan by 2028.

0%

0% of the action has been completed.

- Action 21.3: Explore viability for public transit discounts to and from the Metroparks, including a financial impact analysis by 2028.
 - A pilot partnership between SMART and Lake St. Clair was established in 2021 to provide public transportation to the park. The bus route runs Memorial Day to Labor Day. Conversations between partners continues. This action has been scheduled for discussion in 2025.
 - Metric: OHM Transit Access Study by 2028.

0%

0% of the action has been completed.

Metrics of Success

- Establishment of Public Transportation Service partnerships or Circulator or Commuter service in all three park districts by 2030.

Updated: The identification and promotion of what is presently available to each Metropark and then build upon what exists where it is mutually beneficial to do so. In addition, establish public transit utilization metrics to measure current and future usage of the existing services provided.

- 100% of equity population zip codes within the Metroparks' five counties have access to transit service within a 10-minute walk to visiting Metroparks by 2030.
- Transit incentive programs increase visitation from community members living in equity zones by 25% by 2030.

Objective 22: Create an internal EV transit system within the Metroparks that have the highest vehicle counts.

Near-term Actions

- Action 22.1: Partner with existing public transit agencies to develop alternative vehicle transit opportunities for visitors to travel within the Metroparks by 2028.
 - The subcommittee has determined that Actions 21.1 – 21.3 need to be accomplished prior to working on this action. This action has been scheduled for discussion in 2025.
 - Metric: OHM Transit Access Study by 2028.

0%

0% of the action has been completed.

- Action 22.2: Pilot circulator services at Kensington and Stony Creek Metroparks by 2028.
 - The subcommittee has determined that Actions 21.1 – 21.3 need to be accomplished prior to working on this action. This action has been scheduled for discussion in 2025.
 - Metric: OHM Transit Access Study by 2028.

0%

0% of the action has been completed.

Metrics of Success

- Establishment of Public Transportation Service partnerships with EV transit.
- Pilot project implemented and completed.
- Infrastructure (bus stops, charging stations, and staff) available to support an internal EV transit system.

Objective 23: Explore the viability of micro-mobility modes of transportation within Metroparks.

Near-term Actions

- Action 23.1: Conduct an assessment on the viability of micro-mobility options, including a financial analysis, including our own bike-rental facilities by 2025.
 - A micro-mobility Subcommittee will assess current facilities and identify gaps within the Metropark system.
 - The micro-mobility subcommittee developed a survey for Operations Managers/Supervisors to complete.
 - A survey was also developed and completed by the locations within Metroparks that presently rent bikes or have a concession bike rental agreement.
 - It will be used to determine needs within the existing operations and potential opportunities to expand. It will help show the value of this service and why it is important.
 - The survey helped establish revenues and expenses associated with the various rentals, as well as usage information.
 - In 2024, the committee did extensive research on the availability of micro-mobility opportunities, including two demo days (Type 1 and Type 2 electric bikes).
 - The Transportation Committee's target was to have 23.1 and 23.2 wrapped up early enough in 2024 so any parks considering expanding or adding micro-mobility opportunities can develop proposals to align with the 2025 budget cycle. The committee was successful in doing this.
 - 3 Parks within the Metroparks already offer rental bikes (Hudson Mills, Stony, and Willow)
 - Lake St. Clair offers rental bikes through vendor: Simple Adventures.
 - Update OHM Transit Access Study by 2028.

100%

100% of the action has been completed.

- Action 23.2: Identify other areas in the Metroparks where it could be feasible to expand our bike-rentals by 2025.
 - A micro-mobility subcommittee assessed current facilities and identified gaps within the Metropark system.

- The micro-mobility subcommittee developed a second survey that went out to parks that do not presently offer bike rentals to identify concerns and identify opportunities
 - The information was collected, reviewed, and consolidated into one document., along with 23.1.
 - 3 Parks within HCMA already offer rental bikes (Hudson Mills, Stony, and Willow)
 - Lake St. Clair offers rental bikes through vendor: Simple Adventures.
- Update: A survey was completed to help identify locations without rental bikes and to identify potential opportunities and a list of “draft” recommendations have been developed. A follow-up step will be to schedule discussions with those that showed an interested.
- Metroparks Staff had a demo at Pedego Walled Lake to try out a variety of Segways, e-bikes, UTV’s, and other non-fuel powered options available on the market for purchase or rental.
- A second demo has been arranged at Lake Erie in June to test out Type 1 e-bikes.

100%

100% of the action has been completed.

- Action 23.3: Where the Metroparks do not have bike-rental facilities, if viable, partner with e-scooters, e-bikes, and other micro-mobility vendors to provide access for a more affordable mode transportation within the Metroparks.
- Metric: Initiation of a pilot at Hudson Mills, Dexter-Huron, Delhi, and Kensington in 2025. Update OHM Transit Access Study by 2028.
- Destination Cyclery recently provided usage updates for the 5 locations from the start of the program in late May through July. The reports show a steady increase in usage and high satisfaction ratings among customers.



Bike rentals at Kensington Metropark through Destination Cyclery.

100%

100% of the action has been completed.

Metrics for Success

- Expanded bike-rental facilities (Metroparks owned or through vendors) throughout the Metroparks

by 2028.

Update OHM Transit Access Study by 2028.

- 10% increase in micro-mobility rentals by 2028.

GOAL 5. WASTE MANAGEMENT, RECYCLING, AND COMPOSTING

Decrease the amount of waste going to landfills by increasing efforts internally and with the public to refuse, reduce, reuse, repurpose, and recycle materials.

Objective 24: Increase waste diversion rates internally, including vendors, through reducing, reusing, and recycling.

Near-term Actions

- Action 24.1: Determine current levels of waste as a baseline by year-end 2024 and provide options for reduction with potential financial impacts.
 - In 2024, Baseline waste levels were established
 - In early 2025, Waste Management updated their dashboard to show analytics, create reporting, and to adjust services. The platform has a diversion dashboard, a tonnage dashboard, a roll-off efficiency dashboard, and a green facts dashboard. This tool is useful for staff that is responsible for scheduling waste and recycling services, and administrative staff for reporting purposes.
 - Overall, landfill diversion rates (i.e. recycling not going to a landfill) ranged throughout the parks. Some increased, some decreased. We do know that contamination was an issue as staff and the public were learning more about our new single-stream recycling capabilities.

Tonnage by location for landfill and recycling: January 1 – December 31

Location	Year	Landfill Tonnage	Recycling Tonnage	Total	Diversion Rate
Lake St. Clair	2024	229	37*	266	13.9%
	2023	164.72	44.19	208.91	21.2%
	2017	220.54	5.28	225.82	2.3%
Kensington	2024	247	112	359	31.19%
	2023	121.11	69.84	190.95	36.6%
	2017	182.78	32.82	215.6	15.2%
Indian Springs	2024	49	18	67	26.89%
	2023	44.2	13.75	57.95	23.7%
	2017	34.48	7.04	41.52	17.0%
Lower Huron	2024	14	14	28	50%
	2023	11.49	18.11	29.6	61.2%
	2017	137.8	6.8	144.6	4.7%
Stony Creek	2024	193	57	250	22.8%
	2023	152.01	15.53	167.54	9.3%
	2017	161.97	6.92	168.89	4.1%

Willow	2024	21	21	42	50%
	2023	3.68	8.04	11.72	68.6%
	2017	21.51	3	24.51	12.2%
Wolcott	2024	16	5	21	23.8%
	2023	16.11	6.03	22.14	27.2%
	2017	40.3	8.8	49.1	17.9%
Lake Erie	2024	58	24	82	29.2%
	2023	46.62	27.24	73.86	36.9%
	2017	58.52	12.91	71.43	18.1%
Huron Meadows	2024	26	10	36	27.78%
	2023	21.51	8.37	29.88	28.0%
	2017	16	2.04	18.04	11.3%
GRAND TOTALS	2024	891	328	1,219	26.9%
	2023	581.45	211.1	792.55	26.6%

*To-date, Lake St. Clair is on pace to more than double total tons diverted for 2025. Up to 86 tons as of November 2025.

- As we look at 2025 numbers, which only go to November currently, we are seeing a significant increase in diversion rates.
- In April, we helped staff a 2-day e-recycling event in partnership with Detroit Zoological Society. The Metroparks provided volunteers through our volunteer effort and 2 staff. A total of 4 and $\frac{3}{4}$ semi-tractor trailers were filled with electronics that will be recycled instead of heading to a landfill.
- In 2025, the “Keep it Clean” campaign and raccoon mascots to tied Climate Action Plan actions into public communications in the ways they can participate.
- Waste Management held a training for Metroparks staff in March 2025 to show how to utilize their dashboard to track metrics and streamline services.
- Tire recycling has happened across all 3 districts, about 1400 tires in total have been recycled.



2-day e-recycling event in partnership with Detroit Zoological Society.



40% of the action has been completed.

- Action 24.2: Educate and/or share resources with staff on waste management strategies and solicit suggestions to get input across levels and departments by 2025.
 - Staff attended the Michigan Climate Conference in Detroit

- New stickers are being installed on all of the single-stream recycling dumpsters across the system. These stickers are large and meant to capture the attention of any staff who might use the dumpsters, to help reduce contamination.
- Shared a webinar with staff on lithium-ion battery safety and recycling from EGLE.
- Waste Management hosted a training for our staff on how to utilize their new dashboard in March.
- Pat hosted a lunch and learn for the composting efforts at Kensington Farm Center.
- Farm Center Staff at Kensington Farm Center and Wolcott Farm Center will either be attending Master Composter classes, though KFC was unable to host with the tree falling on the office.
- Contamination at dumpsters is still an issue that maintenance supervisors are noticing. Liners (i.e. plastic bags) cannot be used when disposing recycling in the recycling dumpsters. This is being shared with staff as it's a learning process with newer hires.
- In partnership with the Detroit Zoological Society, staff volunteered for e-recycling events at the Detroit Zoo in April 2025. This was our second time partnering with DZS to enhance our relationship and commitment towards meeting sustainable goals.

50%

50% of the action has been completed.

- Action 24.3: Reduce dependency on single use products:
 - Increase the number of water bottle filling stations in the Metroparks by 20% by 2028. Ensure that staff have reasonable access to filling stations to avoid plastic water bottle usage (e.g., filling station needed at Kensington boat rental) by 2028.
 - Water bottle filling stations are planned for two upcoming grant projects at Lake St. Clair
 - Water bottle filling stations are planned for North Marina Bathhouse renovation, Daysail trail development, and Walnut Grove campground modernization projects.

Water Bottle Filling Stations Use Counts

Park	Location	Baseline count in 20oz bottles (Oct 2024)	Counts in October 2025
Stony Creek	Landing	17,777	29,592
	Park Office	7,499	12,083
	Nature Center	9,914	15,652
	Southdale	7,350	8469
Lake St. Clair	Park Office	42,817	50,108
	Nature Center	18,579	21,370
Huron Meadows	Golf Course Clubhouse	6,393	9009
	Cedar Ridge	4,386	5453
Hudson Mills	Golf Course Clubhouse	2,507	4538
Kensington	West Boat Launch	5,947	8370
	Turtlehead	1,428	2073
	Maintenance Breakroom	26,118	32,645
Indian Springs	Golf Course Clubhouse	560	2243
Admin Office	Hallway	18,815	
Lower Huron	Turtle Cove	45,042	57,841

	Breakroom		
Willow	Park Office	866	2,223
	Maint. Lunchroom	7,220	9,797
	Food Bar	15,764	19,242
	Washago	30,461	35,379
	Golf Course Starter	3,284	4,435
Oakwoods	Nature Center Children	2,854	3,832
	Nature Center Adult	4,877	6,353
Lake Erie	Park Office	7,106	7,665
	Boat Launch	1,952	3,285
	Marshlands Museum	1,139	2,465
	Food Bar	3,310	9,146
	Maint. Lunchroom	1,527	1,972
	Golf Course Starter	2,789	3,960
	Maint. Lunchroom	723	1,194

- Reduce the purchasing of paper by 10% annually through 2028.
 - The elimination of paper event calendar flyers/rack cards has eliminated significant amounts of paper and saved on printing and shipping costs. Individual cost centers will be assessing total paper usage in 2025 to look for additional reductions.
 - We're buying most paper through ODP. The following is how much we are spending on paper and by what grade. We're using this as baseline numbers, for 2025. For the following years, we can benchmark upon this year.
 - \$6417 on paper
 - \$690 on mid-green
 - \$287 light green
 - \$3930 meets industry environmental norms
 - \$1510 none or unknown
- Adopt a plan for recycling of batteries for the Metroparks fleet of EVs, equipment, etc., by 2028.
 - As part of the CAP, staff are instructed to consider replacing worn-out landscaping equipment and power tools with gasoline two-cycle engines with comparable rechargeable battery powered equipment. This reduces carbon dioxide emissions and improves air quality within the Metroparks. To ensure that lithium-ion rechargeable batteries are properly recycled, information was disseminated to all Park Maintenance Managers for the inclusion of batteries in the Metroparks' annual recycling program as well as manufacturer recycling programs including those below.

Milwaukee: <https://www.milwaukeeetool.eu/header/sustainability/batteryrecycling/>

Stihl: <https://www.stihlusa.com/faq/products/battery/>

- Shared a webinar with staff on lithium-ion battery safety and recycling from EGLE



20% of the action has been completed.

- Action 24.4: Encourage staff to identify areas where material can be reused and work with the Metroparks' farm centers to identify best management practices and opportunities to better manage waste by 2025.
 - BMPs were implemented in 2024 with the NextCycle grant and are being documented and shared with Kensington Metropark Farm Center Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm Center. Recipes for compost may have to be adjusted depending on inputs.
 - Pat is identifying which models of compost screeners would work best at Kensington Farm Center. Once identified, planning staff will assist in finding grant funds.
 - Update: RRS Compost Feasibility study at Kensington Metropark Farm Center is complete and recipes are identified.



25% of the action has been completed.

- Action 24.5: Create new recycling opportunities to reduce waste by adding recycling for aluminum by 2028.
 - New contract for waste & recycling services including aluminum recycling went live April with single stream recycling.
 - Aluminum is now accepted in all of the single-stream locations. When Waste Management's new Materials Recycling Facility opens in Detroit in 2026 – additional single-stream locations will become available.
 - Planning and Kensington staff purchased four Big-Belly recycling compactors. They have not yet been received; this was supported by an EGLE recycling grant.
 - The Big Belly Recycling and Trash Compactors are installed at Kensington Farm Center and Nature Center.
 - Maintenance Supervisors are in the process of conducting annual tire recycling. Each facility has 300-400 tires that will be recycled.
 - A Waste Management Audit was completed in each district with the assistance of Waste Management. Containers were removed as needed, frequency of pickups were adjusted based on usage, and all containers received an identifying number to help streamline communication and identity of containers at pickups.



Big Belly recycling compactors installed at Kensington Farm Center.

Graphic shows a snapshot from the Waste Management dashboard. To date (11/17/25) our diversion is up over 35% compared to last year. This equates to 874 Mt of CO2e saved, and many other metrics that are easily calculated.

Total Tons Diverted		Total Tons Not Diverted		% Diversion
Current	vs Prior	Current	vs Prior	Current
415	35.8 %	491	-6.5 %	45.8 %
Prior		Prior		Prior
305		525		36.8 %
Environmental Savings				
Trees Saved	GHG Emissions Saved	Landfill Airspace	Water Saved	Electricity Saved
6,287	874 MtCO2e	903 yd3	1.60M Gal	541.92k Kw-Hr
Trees Saved Prior	GHG Emissions Saved Prior	Landfill Airspace Prior	Water Saved Prior	Electricity Saved Prior
5,171	706 MtCO2e	690 yd3	1.30M Gal	427.37k Kw-Hr

50%

50% of the action has been completed.

- Action 24.6: Update purchasing policies to improve the sustainability of purchased products:
 - When purchasing giveaway items, staff are instructed to consider low waste, recycled, recyclable, or reusable such as reusable straws, made from recycled plastic, carbon neutral deliveries, etc.
 - The trail challenge event is giving away reusable water bottles.
 - By 2025, 90% of paper products purchased should be recycled paper, and/or carbon-friendly paper products.
 - We're buying most paper through ODP
 - We will look at adjusting what we're buying so that we're purchasing more in the mid-green and light green categories.
 - Encouraging the use of sustainable construction materials and diversion of demolition waste from landfills is being factored into new engineering project designs and implementation.
 - Review of the Metroparks' green food packaging efforts is in progress with an update for compostable food packaging and bulk purchasing policy expected in 2025.
 - Purchasing contracts are being examined with a goal of reducing waste, increasing recycling, and improving sustainability. For example, verbiage was added to RFP 2024-010, for Glo-Work Product Sales, stating that vendors shall remove and properly dispose of original packaging items of products, immediately upon sale. Any associated waste generated throughout the event was also to be properly disposed of. These contract assessments for environmental sustainability will continue in 2025.

50%

50% of the action has been completed.

Metrics of Success

- Completed assessment and benchmarking of current waste and recycling.
- Vendors encouraged to use more sustainable products by sharing purchasing power, with the goal of reducing waste going to a landfill by 20% by 2028.
- Increased recycling rates. Use baselines from the 2020-2023 recycling program, with a goal of increasing recycling rates 10% every year from 2024-2028.
- Annual waste and recycling report – included into CAP's annual report in December.
- Track El-Kay water bottle fillers for report.
- Have attended or provided recycling resources/bins to at least five outreach events with our community partners by 2028.
- Staff from at least two departments have attended recycling or sustainability-related conferences annually.
- Staff from at least two departments have contributed to at least five blog posts related to waste management and recycling by 2028.
- Contamination rates in recycling have been reduced by at least 10% annually.
- Landfill waste has been reduced by 20% by 2028. This is the ultimate metric of success to show the above actions are working.

Long-term Actions

- Action 24.7: Create at least one composting facility in each district, to ensure composting opportunities are an asset for park operations.
 - Next Cycle application was accepted for composting feasibility. RRS conducted the feasibility study.
 - A kick-off meeting was held on the pilot composting project. The plan is to identify what we are missing in terms of staff resources and capital equipment, which would lead to a grant opportunity on needs.
 - EGLE awarded \$5000 to kickstart this pilot project as a result. Funds will be used to address site needs for the sorting and storage of compostables and implementation of developed recipes.



Composting piles at Kensington Metropark Farm Center.

- BMPs are being formalized from Kensington Farm Center to share across the system with a pilot project testing 3 composting recipes.
- Staff identified the need for a screener (capital equipment) but unclear as to which model would work best. Working on finding a mobile screener and a quote – then looking for grant opportunities to off-set initial purchase.



33% of the action has been completed.

- Action 24.8: Add compost bins for capturing food waste by concession areas by 2030.
 - The feasibility and scale of this food waste diversion was assessed in Kensington Metropark in 2024. Consultation with Operations and the RRS feasibility study determined food waste generation in the non-public side (back-of-house) of park concession locations was minimal and collection would create a larger carbon footprint than it would offset.
 - As part of the Compost Pilot Project, Wolcott Mill Farm Center will be trialing food waste collection and composting from staff and public areas in 2026.
 - Since June 2025, staff at Wolcott Farm Center have composted over 100 pounds of food waste internally in the staff break room. Next steps include a public collection bin planned for the picnic shelter with accompanying signage and messaging.
 - Further education of patrons on properly sorting food waste, recyclable, and non-recyclable will be necessary before systemwide implementation of food waste collection and composting.
 - Update:
The Metroparks explored several vendors and concepts to find a pilot for food waste. At the current time, there is not enough volume at one single location or staff to try a pilot. It would require consolidation of food waste across the system to get enough volume for effective processing.



20% of the action has been completed.

MONITORING AND REVISING

This CAP is a “living document,” meaning that adjustments are expected and encouraged as the work progresses and we learn how to refine our efforts in future versions of this plan. For example, actions seen now as easily accomplishable may require more concentrated efforts than anticipated. Others seen now as large challenges may prove otherwise and thus free up capacity for a new metric of success or further work on other actions. Because this plan is wide-reaching across the breadth of the Metroparks and the benefits they provide, we may also learn along the way that actions and goals have more connections and impacts to each other than originally thought. This may mean that priorities are adjusted to account for these synergies, or ripple effects, among efforts. Finally, within the five-year timeline of this plan, changes may occur that impact the Metroparks, the region and residents they serve. We write this plan in the spirit of flexibility to our dynamic world and our current knowledge about climate change.

This has been a departments-wide, parks-wide effort, and responsibility for accomplishing goals is integrated throughout our organization. Department Heads will lead the implementation of many of these actions, while capacity-building early in the timeline will encourage all staff members to understand how this plan impacts them, and how they can assist in the implementation of appropriate actions. We will report annually and at the end of this CAP’s timeline about our achievements on each of the actions. Financial metrics and considerations will be tracked annually and considered in action updates.

The CAP will be updated every five years (e.g., 2028, 2033, 2038), aligning with planning standards set by the National Recreation and Park Association’s Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA). Similarly, to other Metroparks plans, this CAP will be continually tracked, re-evaluated, and updated in the coming years.

