

Newaygo CD January Newsletter ❄️

From: Newaygo Conservation District (newaygcd@macd.org)

To: goodwill.clerk@yahoo.com

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Newaygo Conservation District **January Newsletter**

In this issue:

- Upcoming Events
- Spotlight: Hibernation
- Partner Updates
- Program Updates



Events



**Please join us at the Kropscott Farm Environmental Center for
Newwaygo Conservation District
Open House!**

Help us kick off our 76th year of service at our winter open house! Join us for an Open House event on **Saturday, January 25th, from 12 pm to 4 pm.**

Come for family fun, games, and crafts. Learn about how we serve our Newwaygo County neighbors and how you can be involved!

TO REGISTER FOR THE EVENT PLEASE SCAN QR CODE OR GO TO:
<http://www.newwaygcd.org/upcoming-events.html>

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS? CONTACT:
jen.burfield@macd.org
231-225-3189








This event is brought to you by Nature is Our Educator

NCD Winter Open House

Saturday, Jan 25th, 12PM-4PM at Kropscott Farm Environmental Center. Free event for family fun, snowshoeing, games, snacks, and to learn more about what we do and how you can get involved. We will also be honoring our current volunteers for all the hard work they do!

Register for free here

INVASIVES 101

Muskegon CD and Newaygo CD would like to get the Newaygo community aware about invasive species in the area. Come join us at the Fremont District Library for the free workshop to learn the basics about invasive species. We will go into detail on what is an invasive, invasives we deal with on a day to day basis, and different ways you can prevent and help stop the spread.

We ask for you to please sign up through if you are interested.

If you have any questions please contact Sabrina Huizenga at: sabrina.huizenga@macd.org

Register for free here



MUSKEGON
Conservation District

NEWAYGO
Newaygo Conservation District

INVASIVES 101 WORKSHOP

**UNLEASH YOUR CURIOSITY ON WHATS LURKING
IN YOUR BACKYARD!**

Come and join Muskegon Conservation District and Newaygo Conservation District at the Fremont District Library to talk about the basics of invasives species.

FREE EVENT

104 EAST MAIN STREET, FREMONT MI 49412
JANUARY 30TH, 2025
5:30 PM - 6:30PM

HOW TO SIGN UP
Go to <https://muskegoncd.org/events>
and select the event
If you have questions please contact
Sabrina Huizenga at
sabrina.huizenga@macd.org
231-828-5097

COMPOSTING WORKSHOP

Come join Muskegon Conservation District and Great Lakes Mushroom Company for an informative hands on composting presentation.

Sign up today on our Website
muskegoncd.org/events/composting-workshop

What you will learn:

- Basics of composting
- Specific compost for certain plants
- Composting worms

Whats included:

- Hands on composting
- Snacks
- Food Scrap Collector for your kitchen
- A free gift from Great Lakes Mushroom Company



TICKET FEE **\$35.00**/PERSON

9.FEB.2025
@2pm

At Muskegon Conservation District
 4735 Holton Road Twin Lake, MI 49457

QUESTIONS?
 Email Sabrina Huizenga
sabrina.huizenga@macd.org
 231-828-5097
muskegoncd.org



Composting 101

Sunday, Feb, 9 2025: Join Muskegon CD and Great Lakes Mushroom Company for an informative and hands on composting workshop. Our Produce Safety Technician will also be there to answer any questions and provide resources for applying compost to fruit & vegetables in a safe manner.

If you have any questions please contact Sabrina Huizenga at:
sabrina.huizenga@macd.org

\$35/person, register here

Spotlight: Getting Cozy with Winter Hibernation



Hibernation is a steady drop in metabolism, breathing, heart rate, and digestion that causes animals to enter a coma-like state. One of the most common misconceptions about hibernation is that most animals hibernate. However, hibernation is primarily linked to mammals.

Michigan, a land of diverse wildlife, is home to a variety of true hibernators. These mammals, such as jumping mice, groundhogs, little brown bats, and ground squirrels, all have their unique hibernation strategies.

Contrary to popular belief, bears do not truly hibernate. Their unique hibernation behavior, which involves not lowering their body temperatures to match the surroundings and being able to wake up easily to escape quickly if they feel threatened while in their dens, sets them apart from other hibernating mammals.

True hibernators, a fascinating group of creatures, possess unique characteristics that set them apart. They cannot be woken up and do not respond to outside stimulation. They build up fat in the fall to survive through the winter until spring. Their body temperature is slightly warmer than their surroundings, and they usually hibernate in weather-safe places like trees, caves, or underground.



[Click here to learn more about hibernation](#)

NCD Partner Updates

Survey Results from the White River Watershed Partnership



White River Watershed Partnership

Survey Results

Survey Respondent Attitudes on Land Use Controls and Zoning

- **97%** agreed that controlling development along the White River is needed to protect the river today and for the future.
- **96%** agreed that what one White River property owner does on their property can negatively affect other properties downstream.
- **89%** agreed that zoning standards still allow property owners the ability to enjoy and profit from their White River property.
- **86%** agreed that zoning improves the value of their property.
- **78%** agreed that educating property owners to voluntarily protect the river was better than regulating land uses.
- **62%** disagreed that it was difficult to sell White River property due to restrictions that discourage property improvements.

Survey respondents indicated that property owners faced these barriers in taking actions to protect the White River:

Lack of information	33%
Lack of money	20%
Lack of time	14%
Disagree with requirements	12%
No incentives to use such actions	12%
Concern about value of such actions	7%
Other	2%

Property Owners' Opinions on the White River's Health and Threats

The best experts about a place are those that live there. From a recent survey, it was apparent that property owners along the White River treasure the river.

In 2006, a survey of White River property owners in Newaygo County was conducted as part of a project funded by the Fremont Area Community Foundation.

The purpose of this project was to gauge the perspectives of these property owners on the White River and its designation as a state natural river.

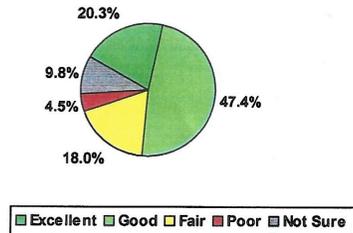
All 371 White River property owners in Newaygo County, identified through public records, received a survey. Over 37% of property owners returned surveys.

More than 70% were year-round residents. Of the seasonal residents, nearly 52% lived within an hour drive of the river, 32% lived elsewhere in Michigan, and 16% lived out of state.

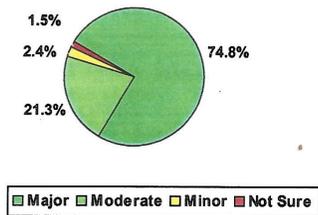
The 3 most important attributes of the White River were its water quality (92%), wildlife habitat (86%), and natural scenery (77%).

"Opinions" continued next page...

How would you describe the health of the White River?



What role do you believe a healthy White River plays in the value of your property?



The White River - A State Natural River

Nearly 75% of respondents were aware that the White River was designated as a state natural river.

They were most familiar with the natural river standards on building setbacks and minimum lot widths; septic system setbacks; and maintaining a natural buffer. These prop-

erty owners felt the standards were accomplishing the law's objectives, such as protecting wildlife habitat and discouraging harmful development.

Maintaining the trees and bushes on their property (39%) and keeping a natural buffer along the river (37%) were the most com-

mon actions taken by property owners to protect the White River.

Almost 34% believed that it was more important to provide information on the Natural Rivers Act standards when compared to information about buffer strips, technical assistance or tax incentives.

White River Watershed Management Plan

Since completion of the survey, the AWRI and WRWVP are preparing a *Watershed Management Plan* for the White River. During this process, the health of the White River and its watershed will be assessed. Options for improving watershed health will be also be addressed in the final plan.

Many communities in Newaygo, Oceana, and Muskegon Counties will be participating in plan development. Additionally, there will be opportunities for watershed residents, including property owners along the White River, to contribute to plan creation.

Survey Partners:

Fremont Area Community Foundation
 Generously supported and provided funding for the survey
 P.O. Box B, Fremont, MI 49412
<http://www.tfaf.org/>

White River Watershed Partnership (WRWP)
 Provided guidance during survey development, distribution, and implementation
 P.O. Box 416, Hesperia, MI 49421
<http://www.wrwp.org/>

Annis Water Resources Institute (AWRI)
 Developed the survey and compiled survey results
 Grand Valley State University—Lake Michigan Center
 740 W. Shoreline Dr., Muskegon, MI 49441
<http://www.gvsu.edu/wri/>

5 TIPS FOR TAKING CARE OF YOUR RIVER

1. **Remember the watershed** — there's much more to the White River than the water flowing past your property.
2. Take advantage of **Michigan's native plants**, especially preserving them in a natural buffer garden along the river.
3. **Water quality begins with rain**—reduce hard surfaces, eroded soils, phosphorous in fertilizers, and pesticide use.
4. Prevent messy headaches—faithfully maintain your **septic system** by inspecting it each year for a job well done.
5. **Stay in touch** with activities affecting your river — become a WRWP member, volunteer for cleanups, attend meetings, etc.

Summary of White River Acreage, River Frontage, and Years Owned as Represented by Survey Respondents

	Total	Range	Average
Acreage	1,523 acres	0.5 to 120 acres	12.4 acres
Frontage	73, 472 feet (13.9 miles)	50 to over 5000 feet	600 feet
Years Owned	NA	1 to 75+ years	18 years

Opinions continued...

Over 49% of respondents primarily use their White River property for **hunting and fishing** while 30% use the property as a **natural area**. Less than 17% use the property for other types of recreation and only 3% primarily use the property for farming.

In the opinion of respondents, **property owners themselves (67%)** and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (59%) were cited most frequently as having the *most* responsibility for taking care of the White River. Respondents often charged Newaygo County and local governments as having *some* responsibility.

Nearly 76% were concerned with how land is used along the White River.

Most respondents (59%) suggested that protecting the White River through **zoning** laws doesn't work since too many variances and exceptions are granted. Individual **property rights**, as most (61%) concurred,

were obstructed when restricting land use along the river. Yet even more respondents (86%) thought that it makes more sense to use zoning to protect the White River rather than spending tax dollars to fix problems resulting from poor land use.

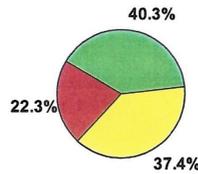
Finally, fewer than 29% of respondents indicated that they were aware of the White River Watershed Partnership.

Nearly 48% of survey respondents offered **comments** with their survey. The majority of the comments requested more information about how they can protect the quality of the White River.

As one survey respondent commented:

Living on the White River is a joy. To look at the river in the morning is special. Whatever it takes to keep the river nice for future generations I will go along with.

What is the single most important long-term goal for managing your White River property?



- Maintaining Heritage/Passing on to Family
- Keep Land in Natural Condition
- Selling on Open Market

Outline of White River Natural River Setbacks

Setback distance
in feet

10'

The *preliminary White River Natural River Plan proposed* that lawns not be mowed any closer than 10 feet from the river's edge (defined as the ordinary highwater mark). By not mowing within this *suggested setback*, the flow of runoff into the White River can be slowed by vegetation and pollutants can settle out before entering the river.

50'

NATURAL VEGETATION STRIP (*Restricted cutting belt*)

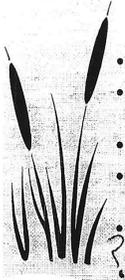
Prohibited within Natural Vegetation Strip

- Clear-cutting trees and shrubs
- Camping
- Off-road operation of non-emergency or non-utility motorized vehicles



Allowed within Natural Vegetation Strip

- Pruning trees and shrubs for a **filtered view** of the river, defined as maintaining or establishing woody vegetation of sufficient density to screen development from the river; provide stream bank stabilization and erosion control, aid infiltration of surface runoff, and provide cover to shade the water.
- Removing dead, diseased, unsafe or fallen trees and noxious plants and shrubs.
- Selectively removing or trimming trees for timber harvest, woodlot improvements, landscaping or public utility lines—as approved by the zoning administrator.
- Agriculture—unless the Department of Environmental Quality determines it contributes to stream degradation.
- Placing structures on top of a bluff—a steep bank rising sharply from river's edge—on stream's **cutting edges** (for stream's **non-cutting edges**, minimum setback for such bluffs is 25 feet).
- Locating **septic tanks** and absorption fields away from surface or subsurface drainage systems emptying into the river or its designated tributaries.



100'

- Minimum setback for **new buildings**, including appurtenances and accessory buildings, along specifically designated river sections (see rules)—except for every foot of bank height over 7 feet above normal river flow new structures can be placed 5 feet closer to river to a minimum setback of 75 feet (also see 150').
- Setback for locating **septic tanks** and absorption fields from the ordinary high-water mark.



Note: Other setbacks apply to rental cabins, campgrounds, and watercraft liveries plus mining and extracting industries. This outline focuses on residential uses. However, some of these other uses require access to the river through a single designated footpath that minimizes disruption of the natural vegetation strip. It is recommended that residential uses similarly establish a single footpath as access to the river.



150'

Minimum setback for **new buildings**, including appurtenances and accessory buildings, along OTHER specifically designated river sections (see rules)—except for every foot of bank height over 7 feet above normal river flow new structures can be placed 5 feet closer to river to a minimum setback of 75 feet (also see 100' setback).



400'

NATURAL RIVER DISTRICT is established on each side of, and parallel to, the White River and its designated tributaries. New development and use is regulated in this district through state or local zoning and is limited to single-family residential dwellings (no *new* industrial uses or buildings allowed). Specified commercial uses and buildings can be located within this district by special use permits (such as campgrounds, watercraft liveries, and rental cabins).



Notes: Setbacks are defined as the "required horizontal distance between any portion of a structure and the river's edge, measured at the structure's closest point to the river's edge". The source of these setback requirements are the **White River Natural River Zoning rules**, effective July 18, 1992. Consult township zoning ordinances for more protective setbacks. If you have questions about the Natural Rivers Program, contact the Department of Environmental Quality in Lansing (517-373-6868).

NOW HIRING: Newaygo County Environmental Coalition (NCEC)

NCEC is seeking a part-time Healthy Habitats Coordinator. The successful candidate will have a high school diploma or GED; 1 year related training, work or volunteer experience in outdoor field work, environmental education, volunteer recruitment, community development, or related fields. Excellent computer and communications skills are needed.

If interested, please send resume by 1/30/2025 to: linda.s@nc-ec.org or mail to Newaygo County Environmental Coalition, 432 Quarterline Street, Newaygo, MI 49337



NCD Program Updates

Michigan On-Farm Produce Safety - Become a participating farm!



Working with your local Produce Safety Technician is voluntary, free, and confidential! Completing a Produce Safety Risk Assessment this off season will help you ensure you are ready for any food safety audits or inspections that may be on the schedule during the upcoming harvest season. Display the **MIOFPS Participating Farm** logo on your website, at your farm store, or the market to show customers you

have practices in place that make the food you grow safe for them to eat.

Also, if you are already making your supply orders for the season, working with your tech on the assessment also gives you the opportunity to take advantage of cost-share funds that are meant to help the farm purchase supplies related to food safety practices on the farm. For more information please contact Allissa Conley at allissa.conley@macd.org or 989.295.5661.



Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) - Signup Deadline Announced

The NRCS works one-on-one with producers to create a conservation plan that enhances their existing conservation practices. This tailored plan introduces new conservation practices based on an operation's specific goals.

The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) provides technical and financial assistance to private forestland and farmland owners. It offers an annual minimum payment of 4,000 dollars for continued practice and enhancements of conservation practices on their land. Additional funding for the program through the Inflation Reduction Act or the participants is historically underserved.

The program offers several benefits, including higher crop yields, lower input costs, better wildlife habitats, and greater resilience to extreme weather. It applies to working

lands such as cropland, pastureland, and non-industrial private forests.

CSP remains available year-round; however, for this selection period, applications must be submitted by February 14th, 2025.

Kelly Bishop, USDA NRCS District Conservationist

Email: kelly.bishop@usda.gov

Phone: 231-924-2060 x3

Jen Burfield - Outreach Coordinator

Email: jen.burfield@macd.org

Phone: (231) 225-3201

More about CSP

Forestry - Spotted Lanternfly (SL) Update



Eggs



Early Nymph



Late Nymph



Adult



The Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD), the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and local and regional partners have completed monitoring efforts for 2024. Unfortunately, new detections have occurred and the insect continues to spread across southeast Michigan. To date SL has been found in Monroe, Oakland, Wayne, Macomb, and Lenawee counties.

The spotted lanternfly (*Lycorma delicatula*), an invasive plant hopper from eastern Asia was first detected in Oakland County in 2022. Detection and treatment activities will be ongoing in Michigan for 2025.

In the winter, putty gray egg masses are visible on trees and any type of man-made object. In April and May, the early nymph will hatch. To report it see www.michigan.gov/invasives/id-report/insects/spotted-lanternfly or contact our District Forester.

Rod Denning, District Forester

Email: rod.denning@macd.org

Phone: [231-861-5600](tel:231-861-5600)

Outreach - Events & Workshops Coming Soon

Vernal Pools Patrol Workshop

Coffee & Conservation: Sip and Share

Stewardship Week: Home is Where the Habitat is

Farm Field Fest: A Day of Sustainable Ag

Invasive Species Awareness Workshop



Exciting things are on the horizon! Stay tuned for all the details and information about our upcoming events and workshops.

Newaygo Conservation District is always seeking input from our community for 2025 events and workshops. If you have an idea for a conservation based event or workshop, please let us know!

Jen Burfield - Outreach Coordinator

Phone: (231) 225-3201

Email: jen.burfield@macd.org

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Newaygo Conservation District
940 Rex Street
Fremont, MI 49412

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