

Natural Area Preservation

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VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

What does Natural Area Preservation do?

Natural Area Preservation (NAP) is a unit of the City of Ann Arbor. Our mission is to protect and restore Ann Arbor’s natural areas and foster an environmental ethic among its citizens. Natural areas are undeveloped parcels of land, such as woodlands, wetlands, and prairies. The City of Ann Arbor has 1,200 acres of natural area set aside to preserve natural features and open spaces within Ann Arbor and to provide a green corridor for wildlife. NAP works to protect areas with high species diversity from degradation. In disturbed areas, often dominated by non-native plants, NAP works to restore native plant communities.

Why volunteer with NAP?

Community involvement is vital to the success of NAP’s conservation and education efforts. NAP projects take volunteers well beyond the realm of litter clean-up into broader areas of concern, such as maintaining biodiversity and restoring damaged ecosystems. Through the combination of hands-on involvement and scientific understanding, we hope to encourage and support a connection between individual volunteers and their surrounding natural environment. By sharing this experience with friends and neighbors, volunteers also play an important role in fostering an environmental ethic in their community.

What can volunteers do with NAP?

- **Stewardship Workdays:** Join us at these public workdays to remove invasive species, install native plantings, improve trails, and collect and disperse native seeds. Workdays are conducted on most weekends during the spring, summer, and fall months at a variety of park sites. To join in simply meet us at the pre-scheduled site. Call the NAP office and get on the mailing list to receive our quarterly newsletter, which includes our workday schedule. Our events are also listed locally in the *Ann Arbor News*, the *Ann Arbor Observer* and on our website, or you can call our Volunteer Stewardship Hotline at 734•794 •6627.
- **Burn Crew:** We conduct prescribed burns in natural areas for a few weeks in early spring and fall. We rely on volunteers in this limited time frame. To join the crew, attend our annual burn crew training session held annually in early March. Participants have the opportunity to engage in all stages of a prescribed burn from burn prep and tool maintenance to laying down fire and fire control. This is our most physically demanding activity. Please contact our office for more information.

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F A C T S H E E T

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- **Natural Features Inventory:** Join us at the spring kickoff sessions to learn about inventory procedures, routes, and training sessions. We currently have four surveys to participate in: Frogs and Toads, Salamanders, Mudpuppies and Breeding Birds. Surveying is done three to six times each in spring and summer with every site visit taking a few hours, but time and number of visits may vary depending on the type of survey performed. Frog and Toad Surveys do not require and previous experience, the other surveys require some previous identification experience.
- **Park Stewardship:** We are looking for individuals who have an ongoing interest in volunteering in a particular park and would like to participate more in planning or leading volunteer workdays.
- **Photo Monitoring:** We need people who like to take pictures! Help us document our restoration activities by taking pictures in the parks. We ask that Photo Monitors supply their own digital camera.
- **Skilled Hands:** We also need volunteers who have office and publicity skills, especially in graphic and database design. We do accept a limited number of interns, primarily in the fields of biology and ecology.

Can I get my group involved?

NAP welcomes community groups. We will either schedule the group to work at one of our public stewardship workdays, or depending on the group's size and needs, we may schedule a special event. We work with scout troops, community organizations, church groups, businesses, and schools on restoration projects throughout the city. Please call the NAP office well in advance of your event to make arrangements.

How can I learn more about restoration and stewardship?

There are many ways to learn more about restoration and stewardship. A good place to start is at home: learn what plants are considered native to our area. Check out NAP publications including the quarterly newsletter, the brochure series on native plants and home landscaping, and the book *Along the Huron*, which highlights the natural history of Ann Arbor natural areas along the river. NAP staff can also recommend other publications and organizations that focus on natural areas, native plants, or restoration and stewardship. Join in with our volunteer activities and you are sure to learn more!

When and how can I start?

Start as soon as possible! Our quarterly newsletter contains an event calendar. To get on the mailing list call our Outreach Coordinators at 734•794 •6627. Or you can visit our website at: www.a2gov.org/nap.