

St. Clair County Parks



www.stclaircountyparks.org

May Newsletter

A Successful Earth Day Fair Returns to Goodells County Park



St. Clair County Parks was proud to once again host the annual St. Clair County Earth Fair at Goodells County Park on April 24 and 25, continuing a long-standing tradition of environmental education and community engagement that has been enjoyed for decades.

This year's free event welcomed school children from across the county on Friday, along with members of the public, for a full day of hands-on learning and outdoor exploration. Students had the opportunity to participate in a variety of interactive stations, demonstrations, and exhibits focused on conservation, wildlife, and sustainability. Saturday's event remained open to the public, offering families and visitors another chance to experience the many educational activities, vendor booths, and nature-based programs that make the Earth Fair a favorite annual tradition.

From live animal presentations and environmental exhibits to crafts and outdoor learning experiences, there was something for everyone to enjoy while celebrating our natural resources.

We hope you had a chance to stop by the St. Clair County Parks booth, where staff offered free kids activities and shared information about the parks system and upcoming projects and events.

Thank you to all who attended and helped make this year's Earth Fair a success. We look forward to seeing you again next year!



Sun, Sand, and Summer at Fort Gratiot County Park



As summer approaches, St. Clair County Parks is excited to announce the seasonal opening of the beach at Fort Gratiot County Park beginning Memorial Day Weekend. The park's beautiful 852-foot shoreline offers the perfect spot to relax, swim, and enjoy the start of the warm-weather season along Lake Huron.

Visitors are reminded that there is a \$20 daily parking fee for out-of-county residents. St. Clair County residents, however, can continue to enjoy free parking by displaying a valid Fort Gratiot County Park window sticker. If you do not already have a sticker, one can be obtained at the parking booth with proof of residency.

With its accessible beachfront and scenic views, Fort Gratiot County Park continues to be a premier summer destination within the St. Clair County Parks system. Whether you're planning a full day at the beach or a quick stop to take in the shoreline, the park offers a convenient and enjoyable way to experience the natural beauty of Lake Huron all season long.

Grasslands Project Continues at Columbus County Park

Forestry mulching has been completed, and all trails are currently open. This important first phase focused on removing woody and invasive shrubs and trees to help restore the land to a more natural grassland environment.

For the safety of all park users, active work zones will be temporarily closed to both vehicular and foot traffic as the project continues this summer and fall. Active work zones will be clearly marked with flagging, barricades, and/or signage. Visitors are asked to respect all closures and posted warnings while work is underway.

Forestry mulching was a critical first step in preparing the site for the establishment of native grasses and wildflowers. These plantings will create high-quality habitat for a wide range of pollinators, including Monarch butterflies, as well as grassland-dependent bird species such as Grasshopper Sparrow, Henslow's Sparrow, and Dickcissel. Many other native wildlife species will also benefit from this habitat improvement.

Next steps in the project include additional invasive species removal this summer and fall, and native seed collection and sowing later in the fall and early winter. This ongoing effort represents a significant investment in the ecological health of Columbus County Park and will provide long-term benefits for both wildlife and park visitors alike. Get involved! Volunteer opportunities including photo, insect, bird and plant monitoring, invasive species removal, public education, and seed collection and sowing, are available for the grassland project. Reach out to Kirsten Lyons at klyons@stclaircounty.org or 810-989-6317 to lend a hand.

GRASSLANDS PROJECT

From Meadows to Mosaic: Improving Grasslands for Birds and Butterflies in Columbus County Park



Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) grant funding will help St. Clair County Parks establish over 100 acres of grassland habitat in former farm fields. These areas will be transformed into songbird and pollinator habitat.

For more information:
www.stclaircountyparks.org



UPCOMING EVENTS

Blue Water Building Trades Career Fair



VIP Tour

You're invited to join us for a guided VIP tour of the region's largest hands-on career event, connecting more than 1,000 students with in-demand careers in the skilled trades.

Wednesday, May 13, 2026

10:00 a.m. arrival

Goodells County Park

RSVP by Friday, May 8

Email Cris Robson at Cristine.Robson@msc-mw.org



MICHIGAN WORKS! MACOMB/ST. CLAIR IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER/PROGRAM, SUPPORTED IN PART BY STATE AND/OR FEDERAL FUNDS. A PROUD PARTNER OF THE AMERICAN JOB CENTER NETWORK. AUXILIARY AIDS AND SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES. TTY #711.

Blue Water Builder Trades Career Fair

Wednesday, May 13, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

The Blue Water Building Trades will be at Goodells County Park for their annual Trades Fair on Wednesday, May 13th for an opportunity for students from across St. Clair, Macomb, Lapeer and Sanilac counties to explore career opportunities for students in rural areas.

Event Details:

- **When:** Wednesday, May 13, 2026
- **Where:** Goodells County Park, St. Clair County
- **Who:** Grades 9–12 & Adult/Alternative Education

2025 Impact at a Glance:

- **Career Discovery:** 96% of students learned about entirely new career paths.
- **Pathways to Success:** 98% of attendees learned about apprenticeship opportunities.
- **Informed Decisions:** 88% of students said the event helped with their future education decisions.
- **Future Workforce:** 88% of students can now see themselves working in the construction trades.

- **Exhibitor Confidence:** 100% of exhibitors agree the fair positively impacts workforce development.



Thursday, May 14 | 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Volunteer Tree Planting

North Channel County Park
2431 Pointe Tremble | Clay Twp. MI 48001
www.stclaircountyparks.org



North Channel County Park Tree Planting

Thursday, May 14, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Help us plant trees at the new North Channel County Park! Work alongside our planting day sponsors at KW Platinum to learn and share proper planting and

care techniques while we install native and adapted trees to beautify the park, provide shade and shelter, and benefit wildlife. All instructions and tools will be provided. You may wish to bring your own gloves, shovel, and pruning tools. Enjoy free refreshments compliments of KW Platinum as you work and learn. You can drop in for an hour or so or stay for the whole day. Up to six Master Gardener volunteer hours are available for this opportunity. Contact Kirsten to sign up, klyons@stclaircounty.org or 810-989-6317.

Kirsten's Korner

Spring 2026 Volunteer Stewardship Workdays and Programs

Wildflower Wednesdays with Master Gardener Jeanne Mackay – Goodells County Park – Wednesdays 1-3pm

May: 5/6, 5/13, 5/20, 5/27

June: TBD

Meet at the office - 8254 County Park Dr., Goodells 48027.

Habitat types: Native plant gardens, riparian and forested areas.

Wild Fridays – Columbus County Park – Fridays 10am-12pm

May: 5/1, 5/8, 5/15, 5/22, 5/29

June: 6/5, 6/12, 6/19, 6/26

Meet at the Lodge – 1670 Bauman Rd., Columbus 48063.

Habitat types: Forested, wetlands, riparian, and grassland ecological restoration areas.

Garlic Mustard Pull - Fort Gratiot County Park

May 21, 10 a.m.-12 p.m.

This may be the easiest Garlic Mustard Pull you ever volunteer for! Over many years, volunteers, visitors, and park staff have been removing this invasive plant from the wooded dune and swale habitat and now workdays are more like a scavenger hunt with a conservation conversation and wildflower walk. Join St. Clair County Parks staff and the Lake St. Clair CISMA to cruise the trails, listen for birds, and explore nature. And pull Garlic Mustard, if we can find it.

SAVE THE DATES!

Dame's Rocket Pull with the Lake St. Clair CISMA

Woodsong County Park - June 4 - 10 a.m.-12 p.m.

Join the Lake St. Clair CISMA and St. Clair County Parks staff to admire the wildflowers and protect them from invasive species in this wooded, rustic and rugged park along the Black River. We'll be cutting and/or pulling an invasive plant called Dame's Rocket to prevent it from seeding and spreading in the park. Gloves, long sleeves, and long pants recommended. We suggest pruning and digging tools and we will have extras.

Streambank Invasive Species Workshop with the Lake St. Clair CISMA and St. Clair County Trailblazers

Columbus County Park - June 11 - 9-11 a.m.

We're about to embark on a streambank study and restoration project in this park and you can help! Join the St. Clair County Parks staff, the Lake St. Clair CISMA, and the St. Clair County Trailblazers to search for and assess invasive species and conditions along the banks of the Belle River in the park. Water shoes, waders, or tall boots are recommended and there will be plenty to see on dry land for those who prefer.

Master Gardeners of St. Clair County Garden Tour and Plant Sale














































Sat. June 27 – 10 a.m.-4 p.m. – Marysville Area – [Tickets on sale NOW!](#)

Know Before You Go - No prior experience is required, and we will have extra tools. Dress for the weather in layers that can get wet, dirty, and snagged and wear eye protection/safety glasses, gloves, insect/tick repellent and boots for off-trail work. Optional: Bring your own loppers, pruners, and garden tools. All workdays qualify for Master Gardener volunteer hours, report under the St. Clair County Parks activity. We strongly suggest you email Kirsten in advance at klyons@stclaircounty.org, especially for your first workday with us.

Visit www.stclaircounty.org/offices/665
for more info on these and other upcoming
events with St. Clair County Parks

St. Clair County Parks Spring and Summer Activities

Summer Activities in St. Clair County Parks

Location	Summer Activities Guide								Amenities		
	Picnic Facilities	Playground	Swimming Beach	Splashpad	Bird Watching	Fishing	Fat Tire Biking	Trails	Equestrian Riding	Disc Golf	Restroom Facilities
 Blue Water River Walk County Park											
Columbus County Park											
Fort Gratiot County Park											
Fort Gratiot Light Station											
Goodells County Park											
North Channel County Park	Coming This Summer										
Wadhams to Avoca Trail											
Woodsong County Park											

PLEASE CHECK OUR FACEBOOK PAGE FOR UPDATES ON BEACH AND SPLASHPAD CLOSURES. FGCP BEACH AND GCP SPLASHPAD OPEN FOR THE SEASON MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND. FOR RENTAL INFORMATION CALL (810) 989-6960. *MUST HAVE VALID MICHIGAN FISHING LICENSE. VISIT OUR WEBSITE: WWW.STCLAIRCOUNTYPARKS.ORG OR OUR FACEBOOK PAGE FOR MORE EVENTS AND PROGRAMS.

Click for a downloadable version of the Winter Activities chart or visit www.stclaircounty.org/offices/665



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ST. CLAIR COUNTY PARKS HOURS

Columbus County Park

May through September 8 AM - 9 PM

October through April 8 AM - 8 PM

Fort Gratiot County Park

Memorial Day through Labor Day 8 AM - 9 PM

Labor Day through Memorial Day 8 AM - 8 PM

Goodells County Park

April through October 8 AM - 10 PM

November through March 8 AM - 9 PM

Blue Water River Walk, Fort Gratiot Light Station & Woodsong County Park are open from dawn to dusk year round

Sign up here to receive St. Clair County Parks monthly newsletter



St. Clair County Parks and Recreation Commission

8254 County Park Drive Goodells, MI 48027
United States of America



(810) 989-6960

countyparks@stclaircounty.org

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