

Michigan Coalition for Clean Forests Adopt-a-Forest Spring/Summer 2015 Newsletter

Need to contact us?

Call the DNR at 231-534-5569 or USFS at 1-800-821-6263

E-mail us at cleanforests@cleanforests.org

Send a note to Adopt-a-Forest, 3730 Mill Rd, Grawn, MI 49637

Visit us at www.cleanforests.org

If you received this newsletter in hard copy, you've been missing out on important Adopt-a-Forest mail! Most of our communications are by e-mail. If you want to receive the latest program information for your area, please e-mail takacs@mi.gov and ask us to update our records.

We Appreciate Your Efforts!



Thanks a ton to Jeff Brokaw from forestryforum.com. He continues to volunteer his webmaster skills and server space for

the program. Be sure to check out our new and improved website at www.cleanforests.org

The Adopt-a-Forest program is a success in large part due to a majority of cleanup costs being absorbed by volunteer organizations and local businesses. We would like to give those groups a BIG thank you!

There are currently 603 known illegal dumpsites in 61 counties in the State of Michigan. New sites found daily. Are any near you? You can search the list at <http://www.cleanforests.org/search2.shtml>

Many sites get cleaned up but never reported. If you are interested in volunteering to scout the sites AND REPORT BACK on what you find, contact Ada Takacs at takacs@michigan.gov for individual site maps specific to your area.

Public land in Luce County is getting a face lift this season! Community corrections leader Eric Gravelle will be working with crews to clean up at least twelve known illegal dumpsites in the county. If you see them working in the woods, let them know we appreciate their efforts.

SAFETY ALERT:

A homemade bomb was recently found at the Allegan Dam. This bomb included liquid in a gallon-sized plastic jug hooked to an explosive device.

Please watch for suspicious looking debris during cleanups, leave potentially dangerous items where you find them, and contact local law enforcement immediately.

The Natural Resource Commission is honoring Norm Fred and the Boardman River Cleansweep volunteers with a Partner's in Conservation Award in July. Norm and his army of volunteers have been cleaning up our rivers for years and expanded their good deeds to public land and trail maintenance. We appreciate their on-going efforts and dedication.

CONGRATS!

DTE Energy offers \$50 to consumers who recycle their old (still working) fridge or freezer - and they'll haul it away for free! That old appliance could be using up to \$150 a year in wasted energy costs. Schedule your free pickup today. Call 866.796.0512 or visit dteenergy.com/recycle

Be "ember aware" and make sure all debris piles and campfire embers are completely out before leaving your fire.



www.michigan.gov/preventwildfires

BENZIE COUNTY

Benzie County started the year with 26+ known illegal dumpsites...the third "trashiest" county in the state.

Thanks to the County Recycling Coordinator Marlene Wood and their trustees, more than half those sites have been removed!

One exciting cleanup involved a mama skunk and her babies living under a shower insert. Volunteers were able to pick up some of the stuff around it, but left the unnatural habitat in place. When they returned to pick it up a couple of weeks later, the babies had grown up enough to move on to more natural surroundings.

Welcome New Partners!

Welcome to AmeriCorps members Alexis DeGabriel (Grayling) and Tressa Hubbard (Gladwin) who have joined our team for the year! Both ladies will be working with volunteers and on educational programming in their coverage areas which includes a total of eight counties. The partnerships they create today will likely last for years after they move on to permanent positions. Best of luck with your assignments Tressa & Alexis!

RETIRED, BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

Congrats to *Kimberly Lentz*, DNR Forester, who recently retired after 26 years of service. Many know Kim as an Adopt-a-Forest champion from the Grayling and Gaylord offices where she worked over the years. We appreciate all that Kim has done for the program and look forward to hearing about her new adventures as a retiree!

Volunteer?

- Are you planning an upcoming cleanup and need more volunteers? If so, let us know about it. Click here http://www.cleanforests.org/index.php?app=cms&ns=dynform&ref=event_announcement
- DNR sponsors many conservation projects across the state. If you're interested in doing more, visit www.michigan.gov/dnrvolunteers

RED HANDED

Major littering/theft bust...what at first appeared to be someone illegally dumping out of the back of a moving van ended up being a major scrap metal theft that led to two men facing 10-15 years in prison. A long-time Adopt-a-Forest supporter and DNR field forester came across the truck on a two-track in Wexford County with cardboard and other debris actively being dumped out of the back. Law enforcement was contacted and determined that the van was full of metal car parts that were recently stolen from a warehouse.





Litter Arrests

We often get questions asking if illegal dumpers ever get caught and what happens to them. Here are a few tidbits from Conservation Officer reports. To find out more, visit: www.michigan.gov/dnr under *Law Enforcement and Bi-weekly CO reports.*

FALL/WINTER 2014:

CO Brian Bacon was conducting a patrol of state lands in Dickinson County when he came across an antifreeze bottle and pop bottle on the side of the road. There was liquid spilling from the containers and fresh shotgun shells on the road. CO Bacon returned to the same area the following day and located a vehicle near the scene of the litter from the day before. A check of the subjects and vehicle found matching shotgun shells and a similar antifreeze bottle in the back seat. A quick interview resulted in confessions to shooting the antifreeze and pop bottle the day before, then leaving the litter in the roadway. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Robert Crisp received a complaint of garbage dumped in the Autrain area. The complainant stated that they knew the suspect. CO Crisp went to the suspect's house where he interviewed the suspect and two other persons who were with him at the time of the dumping. The suspect admitted to dumping a smoker and water softener in the woods. CO Crisp asked the suspect why he dumped things in the woods when he had free garbage pickup. The subject stated that he had put out a lot of stuff the week before and did not think they would take it. Enforcement action was taken.

GIVE A HOOT – DON'T POLUTE!

While patrolling the Pigeon River Country state forest, Sgt. Greg Drogowski found a large amount of trash dumped in the woods. A search of the litter resulted in evidence that led to a suspect. An interview resulted in a confession and a ticket for littering. The litter has been cleaned up by the suspect.

CO Mike Wells received a Newaygo County complaint of a vehicle pulling a trailer loaded with tires back onto public land and returned empty. The complainant obtained registration plate and vehicle description and also advised CO Wells of another tire dump site that was in the same area but believed to be separate from the current tire dumping. CO Wells located the suspect in the tire dumping and through an interview determined that the other tire pile was also dumped by this suspect at an earlier time. Enforcement action was taken with orders to clean up the dump sites.

CO Rich Nickols received a complaint of a subject dumping garbage in the Rose Lake Wildlife Area and that the person was still in the area looking to dump more. CO Nickols was close to the area and responded to find the subject in a parking area shoveling dirt out of the back of his pickup. The subject felt that it was not a big deal since it was just dirt. The subject was able to shovel most of the dirt back into his truck in about the same time it took CO Nickols to write him a ticket.

CO Dan Walzak responded to a complaint of an individual dumping a large quantity of trash on state land. The complainant had observed a truck with a trailer in tow that was full of trash and debris. Several minutes later the complainant watched the vehicle leave the area with an empty trailer. The complainant was able to provide the officer with the license plate from the trailer and a very good description of the vehicle towing it. Arriving at the location CO Walzak found two large piles of trash consisting largely of construction debris with some household trash. The officer was able to find several documents in the trash with a local address on it and one document that was torn into pieces with a different address which matched the address of the registered owner of the trailer. CO Walzak was able to make contact with the trailer owner and the subject confessed to the dumping of the trash. Enforcement action was taken.