

The Volunteer

Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore's Volunteer in Parks Newsletter

April 2013

We can use your help at West Beach this summer



As volunteers, many of you know the Indiana dunes can look tough, but in reality they are delicate. It does not take much to start a blowout, and it is pretty easy to trample on a Pitcher's thistle just when it blooms for the first, and only, time at the age of seven. Our interdunal pannes, exist in very few places on earth. Unfortunately West Beach dunes are showing the ugly signs of off trail activity.

There are trails and then there are social trails. Social trails are the cause of the spider web scars across the dunes. It may be that people do not know the difference between the designated trails and social trails. Last

fall staff members set up fencing to help identify the social trails and stop access. We want people to enjoy the dunes, but not damage this world class resource. Help us help the general public to stay on the designated trail.



Good news, the shortest way to the beach is a designated trail! When you take social trails you are going up and down, in some areas sliding on sand, and you risk trampling plants. Obviously taking a social trail is a longer, more arduous hike to the beach. The best route is the paved path. Some of the advantages of the designated trail are it is gradual change in elevation and the trail is paved which gives you firmer footing. The best part of using the designated trail is you are helping protect the



dunes on your way to a day at the beach.

When you follow the paved path, you will pass through the bathhouse where you can make a bathroom stop before you hit the sand.

When you reach the lake side of the bathhouse, you experience a beautiful vista of the beach, Lake Michigan and off to right a lovely



view of an interdunal panne. At the end of the path, you are right next to the lifeguard stations. So when you use the paved path, you are not only saving yourself energy getting to the beach, you are helping save the dunes. Be sure to take the paved path back to your car so you can stop at the bathhouse for showers, water and a place to change out of your wet suit at the end of the day.



Now you know the best way to get to the beach! There is one more way you can help save the dunes while you are enjoying your day at the beach: bring your own shade. The trees on the beach have a tough life which is made even tougher when their roots are trampled and exposed by people seeking shade. You can help by bringing a beach umbrella or other shade structure when you visit Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore.

Enjoy your summer at the dunes, and thanks for volunteering.



The effects of Stewardship Days



If you have been to Mt. Baldy lately, you may have noticed something missing in and around the parking lot. Yep, there is less and less Oriental Bittersweet! Ranger Ted Winterfeld has been leading an army of volunteers out into the park on the third Saturday of each month and we are all now seeing the fruits of their labor. You can see a lot more of the native plants starting to thrive not only at Mt. Baldy, but throughout the park. But wait, that is not all the Stewards do. The Saturday Stewards helped get the Sugar Bush ready for Maple Sugar Time, and they helped clean the Bailly Cemetery. They are doing wonderful work! There is still more to do, and Ted could use your help. If you would like to become one of the Saturday Stewards, drop Ted an e-mail at Ted.Winterfeld@nps.gov and he will let you know where they are going to be next.

Got time Saturday April 20? Why not kick off National Park Week by helping all those beautiful wildflowers at the Heron Rookery? Meet at the parking lot on County Road 600 E at 9:00a.m., dress for the weather and bring some water. Ted will provide safety equipment and tools. Work will continue until noon.



Join the 2013 Teen ParKids Program



This year-round youth volunteer program links area teens to Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore and the great outdoors. Kids age 13-18 have the unique opportunity to safely take a one of a kind outdoor adventure that includes behind the scenes hikes in the park, camping, fishing, kayaking and awesome stewardship activities.

Participants must commit to assisting in at least two volunteer projects a year and attend at least one kayak training session. (These hours can count for service project hours.)

The 2013 Summer Camp cost \$50.00 to cover food and transportation.

To join go to www.duneslearningcenter.org Once you are at the Dunes Learning Center site click on summer camps. Scroll down to Teen ParKids "Summer Camps" and follow the instructions. Or contact Gail Cross at (219) 395-9555 ext: 7



Want to help Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore? Go to www.volunteer.gov, click on the state of Indiana and pick the volunteer opportunity that appeals to you. Thanks





Can You Dig It?

The National Parks Service Midwest Archaeology team is partnering with Notre Dame and Indiana University this year to do some excavations around the park. They are looking for a few good diggers. They are looking for help on any of the days below:

You will be asked to do a variety of activities associated with archaeological investigations at prehistoric sites, including assisting with excavations, screening or flotation processing soils, recording data (notes, maps, forms, logs), explaining field activities to site visitors, and/or back filling. Archaeology field work is an outdoor activity that requires physical labor. We need help Tuesday, June 14- Friday, June 28 (see below).



Monday		June 17,	June 24,
Tuesday	June 14,	June 18,	June 25,
Wednesday	June 15,	June 19,	June 26,
Thursday	June 16,	June 20,	June 27,
Friday	June 17,	June 21,	June 28,

If you are interested contact Professor Mark R. Schurr, Professor of Anthropology College of Arts and Letters, University of Notre Dame at Mark.R.Schurr.1@nd.edu



Got a service club, youth group, scout group, corporate care team, or other group looking for a service project? We can use your help! Especially during the week, (though we do have some weekend projects too).

Go to www.volunteer.gov click on the state of Indiana and select **Group Spruce up the Park**

Let us know how many are in your group and when you want to come. All volunteers must either be over 18, or have their parent or guardian sign our Volunteer Services Agreement.



Park Neighbors

People who live outside the park have an impact on the resources inside the park. Park neighbors have identified themselves, by their actions, to be people who make choices that have a positive impact on park resources.

How do I become a Park Neighbor?

How are you helping the park resources? Drop me (Lynda_Lancaster@nps.gov) a note to tell me what you are doing and I will send you a Park Neighbor widow cling to proudly display. No membership, no meetings, just a sticker.

Need some ideas? A few examples of good neighbors are:

- Volunteering at any Stewardship Day activity or Group Spruce Up the Park
- NWF Wildlife Habitat designation for your property
- Participation in the Indiana Wildlife Federation program
- As a Master Gardner plant or help others plant native plant gardens
- Landscape with native plants in your yard
- Regularly maintain your septic tank



It is Official: Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore is a Climate Friendly Park



The Climate Friendly Parks program stems from a partnership between the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the National Park Service to educate, communicate and mitigate climate change and air pollution. Climate change is a complex and easily misunderstood issue. The National Park Service at Indiana Dunes is committed to play an integral role in educating our vast audience about this subject.

Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore belongs to a network of national parks putting climate friendly behavior at the forefront of sustainability planning. The park's Green Team members, made up of employees in NPS, United States Geological Survey, and the Dunes Learning Center, have been busy developing Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore's sustainability plan. They conducted an emission inventory, set an emission reduction goal, and developed a Climate Friendly Action Plan. Now they are working to communicate the plan to educate park staff, visitors, and community members about climate change. Through the actions of the Green Team, Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore provides a model for climate friendly behavior within the National Park Service.

The park is working to get the sustainability word out in a variety of ways. The park conducted four educator workshops in partnership with the Learning Center Camp and the Chicago Wilderness Task Force focusing on climate change. All are open to the general public through advanced registration. Information on future workshops can be found at www.nps.gov/indu in the 'For Teachers' section.

Teachers and workshops are not the only way to get the word out. The park educators present programs to thousands of school children annually. Every program offers a chance to not only share information about this wonderful place, but the students can begin to understand what they can do to help. Through these educational endeavors, it is hoped that an informed public, staff, and community will join in incorporating these measures while visiting and also while at home.

For more information on the Climate Friendly Parks, visit: <http://www.nps.gov/climatefriendlyparks>.



Save the Date

Annual Volunteer Appreciation Picnic

Bailly/Chellberg Picnic Area

July 20, 2013 Noon to 3:00pm

Meet other INDU volunteers; enjoy some fun in the sun and a great potluck meal! Hope to see you there.

