

OUR COMMON GROUND

HEART OF
THE LAKES



PLACES CREATE STORIES



THURSDAY: MAY 30, 2019
PIERCE CEDAR CREEK INSTITUTE

10:30 AM – 3:30 PM
HASTINGS, MI

Our Common Ground: A Gathering of Michigan's Nature Centers and Land Conservancies

The Association of Nature Center Administrators in partnership with Heart of the Lakes invite you to join us on May 30, 2019 in Hastings at the Pierce Cedar Creek Institute. Our Common Ground will showcase how Michigan's nature centers and land conservancies are creating a lasting conservation legacy. We'll highlight examples of programming and partnerships that invite all people to benefit from and learn about the outdoors.

Join us to explore creative approaches for connecting youth to the outdoors, examples of innovative partnerships, state level planning efforts, and more! We all have a stake in learning from each other and addressing challenges cooperatively where possible.

This gathering is designed for the board, staff, and volunteers from Michigan's nature center, land conservancies, and other organizations around themes of commonality and collaboration.

Time	Agenda Item
10:00 – 10:30 am	Registration
10:30 – 10:45 am	Welcome & Introductions - Auditorium Michelle Skedgell: Pierce Cedar Creek Institute Jonathan Jarosz: Heart of the Lakes
10:45 – 11:00 am	Abby Mahan-Gartland Award Paula Dreeszen – Presented by Vic Lane and Angie Lucas
11:00 – 11:30 am	Increasing the Impact of Outdoor Active Experiences Chris Lampen-Crowell: CEO, Gazelle Sports
11:30 – 11:45 am	Break
11:45 – 12:30 pm	<p>Breakout Session #1 – 45 mins</p> <p>a. Calling All Defenders: What Do You Stand For? – Ed Classroom Jonathan Jarosz: Executive Director, Heart of the Lakes Alyssa German: Outreach Coordinator, Heart of the Lakes</p> <p><i>Join Heart of the Lakes' staff for an overview and breakdown of the state's most current and pressing policy issues including: Michigan's Natural Resource Trust Fund, farmland preservation, and conservation defense issues. Highlights will include: how our organizations can affect outdoor access, responsible recreation, and conservation leadership.</i></p> <p>b. Citizen Science: Water Resource Management - Auditorium Erick Elgin: Water Resource Educator, MSU Extension</p> <p><i>Conservation organizations rely heavily on volunteers to achieve their conservation goals. In this presentation Erick will discuss the use of citizen science as a broad strategy to accomplish the goals of both the organization and volunteers. He will also cover ongoing lake, stream and wetland citizen science programs that are great program examples that can be used by conservation organizations to address their aquatic management needs.</i></p> <p>c. Facilitating Research in Natural Areas - Dining Room Matt Dykstra: Field Station Manager, Pierce Cedar Creek Institute Nate Fuller: Conservation and Stewardship Director, Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy</p> <p><i>Natural areas at nature centers and conservancies can be conducive for a variety of research projects and research methods. These could include internal monitoring, citizen science projects, and professional researcher led projects. Learn from a nature center and a land conservancy about their experiences with conducting and facilitating onsite research.</i></p>
12:30 – 1:15 pm	Lunch & Networking (includes 30 mins for lunch and 15 mins transition time)
1:15 – 2:15 pm	<p>Breakout Session #2 – 60 mins</p> <p>a. DNR Recreation Grants Scoring Criteria Reviews & Updates - Auditorium</p>
	Field Experi ence: Property & Research

Dan Lord: Grants Section Manager, DNR
Jon Mayes: Recreation Grants Manager, DNR
Tamara Jorkasky: Recreation Grant Coordinator, DNR

The Department of Natural Resources is currently undergoing a review and update of the scoring categories and criteria utilized for several recreational based grant programs including the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund. This session will serve as an update to the process, and a stakeholder input session for Heart of the Lakes and other interested individuals.

b. Open Discussion: Benefits from a Staff Perspective - Ed Classroom

Dennis Pilaske: Executive Director, Chippewa Nature Center
James Dake: Education Director, Grass River Natural Area

Take a fresh look at staff benefits in an open discussion to see how other organizations are being creative in order to attract and retain quality staff. A facilitated conversation on going beyond the traditional paid time off, sick leave, or healthcare to create an attractive staff benefit package for part-time and full-time staff. What trends are you seeing? What can your organization offer? And what perks and benefits would personally appeal to you as a staff member to make your employment even more satisfying?

2:15 – 2:30 pm
2:30 – 3:30 pm

Break

Breakout Session #3 – 60 mins

a. Dune Preservation Through Citizen Science - Auditorium

Tom Zimnick: Policy Specialist, Michigan Environmental Council
Robert Richardson: Associate Professor, MSU
Alan Arbogast: Professor of Geography, MSU

Since 2013, MEC has been seeking out the most knowledgeable experts to improve our understanding of Michigan's dunes -- how they came to be, how they change and evolve naturally, and what is at risk if we continue to lose dunes to new development and continued mining.

b. Enhancing Engagement with Nature - Ed Classroom

Carol Hendershot: Co-founder, Grand Rapids Center for Mindfulness

Being mindful of nature and our place in it is a doorway to greater happiness, peace, and contentment. And yet, in this fast-paced auto-pilot world, it is becoming more and more difficult to experience nature directly. Mindfulness provides tools to help each of us reclaim our innate ability to see, hear, touch, and taste the present moment - an ability many have lost. Join Carol to practice mindfulness, explore what

mindfulness is, the research that supports it, and how mindfulness programs could benefit your organization.

3:30 pm

Closing & Take Home Refreshments