

NEW SIGNAGE COMING TO THE RRC



Goodbye old friend... keep your eyes open for the new sign to be installed in the coming months.

WILDLIFE

The annual Nest Box Cleanout Day took place on March 27 this year. We had a great turnout despite changes due to COVID. There were 23 volunteers, including members of the Grand Rapids Audubon Club and Muskegon County employees from various departments. Nest boxes were cleaned and repaired or replaced if necessary. Ten nest boxes along the White Road Trail and LaPres Trail were removed from electric poles and placed on free standing poles with predator guards. Our Wildlife Team evaluated past nesting data to determine which 10 boxes had low nesting success, no nesting observed, or were in poor habitat. Past data has shown that nest boxes on free standing poles with predator guards have improved nesting success. We're grateful to all of our volunteers for their continued support!

GULL COLONY RESEARCH

Dr. Gordon Atkins of Andrews University continues his monitoring of the ringed bill gull colony on the center dyke of the storage lagoons after last year saw a complete collapse of the colony. His original hypothesis for the collapse implicated increased activity from birdwatchers in 2020 combined with our departure from protocol of barricading the center dyke. The new data that he has collected this season has greatly added to his knowledge of the colony and has led him to some new hypotheses which he hopes will be confirmed by the findings of his proposed research for next season.

TIMBER STAND IMPROVEMENT

This year saw a timber harvest on an 87-acre tract of our property west of Maple Island Road. All timber harvests are for the purpose of timber stand improvement. Our guidance document for timber stand improvement is our Forest and Wildlife Management Plan, which you can view on our website at www.mcrecoverycenter.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Forest-Management-Plan-2016.pdf.

The 87-acre tract contains 9 acres of diseased, non-native red pine that will be clear cut, thus allowing the native trees, which are already present in the understory, to grow up and take over. The remaining 78 acres will undergo a shelterwood cut. The portion of the tract that gets the shelterwood cut should have a pleasant park-like appearance when the harvest is complete.

MOSQUITO CREEK TRAILS

Despite delays from rainy weather, crews worked to complete the Mosquito Creek Trails for the Michigan's Edge Mountain Biking Association (MEMBA) on the northern part of RRC property. Dirt Artisans, the contractor putting in the trails, has a gallery of photos from the construction on their website at www.dirtartisans.com/projects/page/2/.

They've truly created a gem in Muskegon County for mountain bikers, hikers, trail runners, and, in the winter, fat tire bikers. The beauty changes with each turn of the trail and each turn of the seasons.



GVSU COVID SEWER EPIDEMIOLOGY STUDY

Last year our laboratory and IPP staff were the samplers for GVSU's COVID-19 sewer epidemiology research in Muskegon County, which was headed by Dr. Richard Rediske and was part of a larger effort by the State of Michigan to see if COVID outbreaks could be detected in sewage before they could be detected by clinical testing. It's based on the observation that infected people shed the virus in their waste before they come down with symptoms that would prompt them to go in for clinical testing. Though we are no longer project samplers, we're still involved in the project in that we contribute samples of our plant influent for testing. We also advise the project on the logistics of collecting samples throughout the sewer collection system. The sampling for the next two years is being done by Muskegon's Trace Analytical Laboratories. The testing also is done in Muskegon, at GVSU's Annis Water Resources Institute.

THE NEW EQUESTRIAN TRAILS AT RRC

The Muskegon County Trail Riders Association celebrated the grand opening of their new equestrian trails at the RRC with a trail ride fundraiser on July 10. The club was ecstatic that the event drew people from surrounding counties as far away as Mecosta County. Feedback from participants has been very positive.



ARCHERY HUNTING PASSES

This year there were 117 archery permits available, down from the 151 available in 2020. A shift in hunting zones was necessary to accommodate other organizations use of RRC property. The last pass was purchased at 1:40pm on the first day of sales. That is certainly a record fast sell-out!

NEW FACES AT RESOURCE RECOVERY

New Laboratory Technicians Staci England, who started in August, and Kari Visser, who started in November 2020



Jon Shellenbarger joined the team as the Fleet Maintenance Supervisor in June.

Mike Hart is the Operations Maintenance Supervisor beginning in August.



Christine Morris recently graduated from the Michigan Public Service Institute. This is a three-year program which provides instruction designed expressly for public works supervisor, managers, and directors. Congrats!