

AGENDA

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

February 2, 2022 7 pm

Town Hall Meeting Room, 5151 Marsh Rd, Okemos

- 1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
- 2. APPROVAL OF/ ADDITIONS TO AGENDA and CONSENT AGENDA (Committee <u>Updates</u> and <u>Goals</u>)
- 3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES
- PUBLIC REMARKS
 (ZOOM 867 3903 8953 Password: 5151 (click here or phone 646 558 8656 or 301 715 8592)
- 5. NEW & OLD BUSINESS
 - A. World Wetland Day Kick-Off
 - B. 2022 Goals: https://docs.google.com/document/d/10aCDbqQA3c7qk8 STKGArYzb4Qe5xL7J6J3FbQgERkI/edit
 - C. 5-Year Review: Climate Sustainability Plan Review & Update (see Sarver's plan attached)
 - -McConnell proposed discussing one topic per meeting (energy, water, waste, etc.)
 - -This month it is suggested that we start with "energy"
 - -See the full plan here https://bit.ly/climatesustainabilityplan)
 - D. Silverleaf Development Discussion, Brian Shorkey (see attached Memo)
 - E. Timely Environmental Topics
 - F. Commission/Committee Dialogue
 - G. Nominations and Elections (Chair and Vice Chair)
 - H. New Commissioners Appointments/Openings
 - I. Other
- 6. COMMISSIONER & STAFF NEWS (personal updates and additions to bit.lv/EC-update)
- 7. OTHER
- 8. PUBLIC REMARKS
- 9. ADJOURNMENT



Attachments

- Agenda
- Minutes
- Updates
- Goals
- Floodplain Memo
- Annual Report
- Wetland Walks

Also see January 2022 Packet

Environmental Commission Meeting: December 1, 2021 (corrected)

Condensed Summary

The Environmental Commission discussed potential next steps to support green infrastructure, welcomed new Senior Planner Brian Shorkey, pondered commission expansion, and considered goals for 2022.

Welcome Brian Shorkey

The Commission welcomed Brian Shorkey, Meridian's new Senior Planner. Brian has been a planner for about 20 years and has served on Meridian's Zoning Board of Appeals. Part of his experience was in Georgetown, which had a stringent stormwater ordinance utilizing green infrastructure.

Green Infrastructure Audit

Harvey mentioned possibilities of moving forward on a regional and local level. Shorkey mentioned that the Planning Staff are discussing utilization some of the ideas in the months to come, especially in parking. He also has experience working with permeable pavement. The Land Use Lunch (mid-MEAC) might be one forum to launch the regional conversation. The Land Use and Health Resource Team, Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, the Drain Commissioner, and surrounding governments may all be interested in regional progress. There is interest in a conversation with the Drain Commissioner and Tim Schmitt about collaboration possibly at the Dec. 15 Green Dialogue. Frazier suggested permeable pavement as a potential focus. Wisinski suggested that we include this in our goal and visioning discussion.

Timely Environmental Topics

Grasseschi has talked with Kurt Armbruster with the Lake Lansing Advisory Council. Harvey has also been discussing one or more shoreline restoration projects with Younes Ishraidi, Chief Engineer. Jackson suggested the Lake Lansing South might be a good location. Lafferty mentioned that the Ingham Parks Commission and MSU might be a potential partners. Harvey asked about Federal infrastructure dollars that might be used for green infrastructure and mentioned a Township property. C. Wisinski mentioned that the \$ may be available in January and she will discuss further with Harvey and Manager Walsh.

Commission and Committee Discussion

Lafferty expressed a desire to explore ways to get more people involved. L. Wisinski echoed a desire to involve more. Frazier asked about how the size of the Environmental Commission compares to other Commissions and suggested that task forces and subcommittee provide involvement opportunities. McConnell said the number varies. C. Wisinski suggested that goals dictate our people needs. Lafferty mentioned a "panel of experts" role that might be called upon as needed.

Commission Opening

Harvey mentioned Graham Dietrich has applied. Sarver suggested that we invite him to the January meeting and the desire involve a student from Haslett schools. Frazier mentioned that Diedrich is running for the House of Representative which might demand most of his time. C. Wisinski asked about the process. Sarver mentioned that the commission receives applications, invites them to attend meetings, and then recommends appointments to Supervisor Styka who makes the appointments. Harvey mentioned that he receives the application, invites them to attend, and encourages involvement on a committee. Grasseschi and Colby expressed appreciation student involvement and an interest in Haslett student involvement.

Meeting Schedule

The E.C. approved the meeting schedule for 2022. (1st Wednesday of each month at 7pm)

Goals for 2022

Harvey shared an outline of current initiatives.

Topic	Committee
Green Grants	Green Grant Committee (John,LeRoy, Kendra, Courtney)
Wetland Education/Outreach	Wetland Education Committee (Kendra, Courtney, Emma, LeRoy, Brandie, Paige)
Food, Food Waste, and Organics Recycling	Food Team (Valerie, Anna, Tom, Nevin, Anne, Dave +)
Climate Action	Energy Team, Food Team, and Others (John, Roger, Valerie, LeRoy, Heidi)
Recycling Events	Green Team (Ellen, Tom, Dave, Elaine, Sarah, LeRoy, Luca)
Green Neighbors Network	GNN Committee (John, LeRoy, Kendra, Sarah)
Student Action	Earth Club/Action (Bernadette, Audrey, Luca, Annaka)
Environmental Justice	EJ Study Group (Courtney, Kendra, Sarah)
Green Infrastructure Policy Improvements	E.C. plus (Cliff, Tim, Brian, regional collaborators, others)

Members suggested some additions. The Climate Sustainability Plan offers a good framework. Lafferty suggested working with ordinances (the Capital Area Sustainability Planning – CASP might offer guidance). The Green Infrastructure Audit and code suggestions should be added. Grasseschi suggested equity, environmental justice, and the need for consistency and protocol for existing policies and procedures. Colby mentioned exploring policies related to food procurement an increase food resilience. Jackson mentioned packaging (especially COVID-related topics like on-line ordering, fast food, masks, etc.). He mentioned "atom economy." Lafferty mentioned that there is crossover between goals such as food audits and student involvement (guest speaker will discuss this at the Food Group meeting this week). C. Wisinski mentioned that it would be helpful to have a list of the members of each committee and a "point person" or reporter for each. She also asked about mentioning staff that are involved in each of the goals and echoed interest in litter reduction. Grasseschi suggested that communication and collaboration between commissions might be a goal as well. Harvey suggested that each committee provide more detail for each topic. Colby agreed that this would provide the opportunity for non-EC committee members to weigh in. McConnell suggested that the specific sections in the Climate Sustainability Plan could be a framework for future agendas.. i.e. energy, water, waste, etc. and provide an opportunity appreciate progress and future opportunities. Grasseschi mentioned that the Climate Sustainability Plan, the Master Plan, and the Code provide a roadmap. Sarver suggested that members visit the google doc https://bit.ly/22goals and add more detail about each goal. C. Winsinki offered to keep the EC updated on the Master Plan Updates. Frazier asked about adding the Environmental Stewardship Awards. Jackson supported. McConnell noted the very broad involvement and partnership in environmental stewardship (Conservation Corps, Recycling volunteers, Tree Planting, etc. C. Wisinski also suggested the possibility of honoring everyone. Grasseschi invited Audrey, Annaka, and Bernadette to share their wetland infographics.

Individual Updates:

Grasseschi mentioned that Land Preservation Board met and discussed protecting the bio diversity of Davis Foster and purchase of additional properties. The Wetland Education group will meet in December. She spoke with the Lake

Lansing Advisory Committee and shared with the Green Neighbor Network and provided some edits on the Green Grants request for proposal. She's given some presentations on Environmental Justice and will share more later.

Frazier mentioned the Coat Drive and the Green Team's progress in planning events for next year. He also encouraged us to explore future involvement with the Green Community Network. There will be awards and this might be part of our future goals.

Harvey asked for clarification about Graham Diedrich. He will invite him to the January meeting. He also mentioned an upcoming meeting with the Haslett Climate Action club. Other updates can be found in the consent agenda.

Lafferty mentioned an upcoming tour of Hammond Farms composting facility next week and extended the invitation to others. She also mentioned upcoming grants through NextCycle and EGLE. Collaboration between governments is encouraged.

Jackson mentioned that the Brownfield Redevelopment Committee did not meet. He expressed interest in the idea of "Be an Eco-Tourist in Your Own Town" which could be a bike tour. He also like the idea of a resource team of experts and offered to create space on the Commission if it's the will of the EC.

C. Wisinski mentioned that she'd like to work with LeRoy to highlight some of the accomplishments of the E.C. She'll check with LuAnn Maisner about volunteer recognition and desire to be involved with the Green Community designation and the Eco-Tour idea.

Osborne mentioned the clothing upcycling of outdated OHS clothing with the old "Chiefs" logo.

Hirschert-Walton is exploring availability of native plants for their greenhouse as well as invasive species eradication.

Sarver mentioned the Solarize Meridian Project, next steps for solar, and progress on our renewable and efficiency progress. We are doing well on our goal! We are over halfway toward solar goal!

Harvey also mentioned recent receipt of our Electric Vehicle Assessment. Contact him if you'd like a copy of the results.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Updates (https://bit.ly/EC-update)

January/February 2022

GROUP	Update, Next Steps, and/or Potential Discussion Topic(s)
Earth Club/Student Groups (Bernadette, Luca, Annaka)	Our Treeplenish Tree Planting Event website is up!! The link is: http://tpevents.org/school/2219 Please buy a tree if you're interested and share with people you know! The last day to order saplings is March 30th, the event will be on April 30th. OHS also now has a mascot, so we would like to have a new logo to replace the "Chiefs" labeled merchandise. Any help with this would be useful.
Energy Team (John, Roger, Valerie, Heidi, LeRoy, Bill David Arnosti)	Discussions about the 2022 Solarize Meridian project and the Public Safety Building carports solar project continue. Recommendations from an Electric Vehicle Assessment will be considered as we budget for 2023. Solarize Meridian - an organized opportunity for interested property owners to learn about the process of going solar from fellow, experienced Township residents and now have solar systems starting very soon. Group discounts are available.
Environmental Justice (Courtney, Kendra, Sarah Allen)	Ongoing work on equity issues continues.
Food & Organic Waste Study Group (Anna, Valerie, Tom Cary, Tom Frazier, Dave Batten, Nevin Brittain, Elaine Putvin, & Gabi Mayer from Williamstown Twp)	December: Two meetings - the EGLE Composting specialist presented, including a description of a Lansing elementary school cafeteria food audit which educated students/staff about food waste and ways to improve recycling. Then an EGLE Recycling Specialists for our area encouraged us to apply for one of several grants. We toured Hammond Farms composting operation in Dimondale. Anna did a goal setting exercise. Starting small with a gleaning program & working with schools scored highest, followed by food scrap collections for composting. Studying/Recommending/Updating Twp food & recycling policy is an aspiration. January: Two meetings: Allen Bryant, Environmental Coordinator for Delhi Twp, discussed their program which channels food scraps into their digester for electricity. Lori Welch, Sustainability Mgr of Lansing and Steering Committee member of CASP (Capital Area Sustainability Partnership), discussed Lansing's recycling program and the revived regional CASP effort which was just approved for an EGLE grant to do a recycling feasibility plan for our region with City of Lansing as the fiduciary and Ann Erhardt, Public Sector Consultants and fellow CASP Steering Committee member, as the grant consultant. Feb 4, Dr. Liao, Director of MSU Anaerobic Digestion, will address our group. Results/focus to date of the group: (1) Gleaning - Southside Community Soup Kitchen will partner with the Meridian Farmers Market and F-C to accept surplus produceplan is to work out the kinks and then expand. Meridian Twp has pledged refrigeration space that is available for surplus produce during the warm months (alternately used by the Parks' Dept for deer culling venison for food pantries) that makes this possibility a reality! (2) Increase residential composting and res/commercial food scrap collection through education, outreach and perhaps pursuing a grant with the Twp to expand food scrap collection. (3) School outreach. Given complications of COVID and short staffing, minimally one event later in the year like a food audi

Green Neighbors (John, Kendra, Sarah, LeRoy)	Chief Plaga has offered to mention the Green Neighbors Network to the Neighborhood Watch Group.
Green Team (Tom, LeRoy, Ellen, Elaine, Sarah, Dave, Luca)	The Green Team is planning for a pop-up recycling event on 2/26 at the Marketplace on the Green (pots, pans, possible compost bins and the sale of upcycled clothing). A large recycling event is planned to take place on April 30 (paint, metal, documents, clothing, bikes, etc.).
Tree Team (Emma, Jane, Kati, Derek, Michelle Beloskur, Kendra)	
Wetland Education & Outreach (Kendra, Courtney, LeRoy, Emma, Brandie)	The goal is to start rolling out the educational outreach plan for World Wetland Day on 2/2/22. A draft of the Wetland Outreach Plan is under construction. January draft. Several wetland educational walks are planned with Emma Campbell.
STAFF (LeRoy)	 Director of our DPW has been offered a new position as City Manager in Marshall Michigan. Please wish him well. He has been very supportive of our efforts for over half a decade! Green Infrastructure Grants are open. Latest draft here. January Green Gazette distributed to 2020 individuals. Green Dialogues on Wednesdays at 9am. Recent salt brine discussion Continued exploring a natural shoreline restoration on Lake Lansing. Prepared 2021 annual report. New template for Green Gazette is being developed Graham Diedrich has been helpful in researching student environmental groups and interested teachers. Our Grant Team debriefed with EGLE on our 2021 Recycling Infrastructure Grant Proposal
STAFF (Planning, etc.)	Senior Planner Brian Shorkey is presenting a site plan from Silverleaf PUD to collect comments from the Environmental Commission.

2022 Environmental Commission Goals

Topic	Committee	Description
Green Grants	Green Grant Committee	Assist with Green Grants Program Select projects that will highlight green infrastructure opportunities
Wetland Education/Outreach	Wetland Education Committee	 Create and Conduct a comprehensive Wetland Outreach Educational Campaign Collaborate with township, state, and community partners
Food, Food Waste, and Organics Recycling	Food-to-Compost Committee	 Develop Food – Waste Opportunities Include food issues in Climate Action Plan Food procurement - best practices
Climate Action	Energy Team and Others	Review, Revise, and Pursue Climate Action Plans (add green infrastructure, food topics, etc.)
Recycling Events	Green Team	 Conduct large events in the spring and fall Conduct events at the Farmers Market Consider other recycling opportunities and improvements.
Green Neighbors Network	GNN Committee	 Continue to expand Green Neighbor Network Use GNN for wetland education, Solarize Meridian 2.0, and other initiatives
Student Action	Student Commissioners	Facilitate collaboration between schools & Environmental Commission
Ordinance Changes (Green Infrastructure)	Environmental Commission	Implement green infrastructure audit recommendations
Environmental Justice/ Equity	EJ Study Group	Create/Implement consistency in policy, protocol, and procedures
Other?		 Hold Environmental Stewardship event to recognize volunteers and staff Identify a point person for each topic Discuss staff assignments/roles Discuss Commission roles Improve communication/collaboration

Ongoing

- Participate in regional collaboration
- Continue Study Groups on Environmental Justice and other topics
- Host Green Theme Presentations
- Review Wetland Permits
- Communicate with other Commissions, Boards, Trustees, and the Public
- Adapt and revise goals as needed
- Strive for consistency in policies and procedures



To: Environmental Commission

From: Brian Shorkey, Senior Planner

Date: January 21, 2022

Re: Floodplain Permit #22-01 (Bennett Road Holding, LLC), to build a drain into a

protected wetland at the Silverleaf PUD on Bennett Road.

Bennett Road Holding, LLC has submitted a site plan for approval to build the first three phases of a 150-unit Planned Unit Development (PUD) on Bennett Road. The PUD, named Silverleaf, is proposed to be constructed on a property that is made up of five parcels totaling approximately 76.5 acres in size and zoned RAA (One-Family/Low Density Residential). There is a sixth northern parcel, approximately 22 acres, that is being conveyed to Meridian Township as permanent greenspace.

The subject property is located on the north side of Bennett Road, east of South Hagadorn Road and west of Hulett Road. The Board voted to approve Planned Unit Development #20014 to construct the PUD at its regular meeting held on October 6, 2020. The construction plan that was submitted showed two wetlands on the subject property, as well as five stormwater basins. Detention Basin 3 requires the excavation of 14,100 cubic yards of excavation, 2,900 cubic yards of fill, and the construction of a 27-inch storm pipe that is proposed to cross two floodplains and drain into a protected wetland.

Staff has determined that the drain from Bason 3 requires permission from the Township to cross the regulated floodplains. As a result, a public hearing will be held to approve of the floodplain construction, as the regulated floodplains will have to be partially dug up for the installation of the Basin 3 drain. The project received approval for the floodplain construction from the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) on December 6, 2021. It was noted that EGLE saw no impact to any protected wetlands. The township's wetland consultant was contacted on December 9, 2021 and subsequently reported that, according to her, there are no impacts to any protected wetlands.

2021 Annual Report



Environmental Commission

(draft - 12/21/21)

Introduction

2021 was an active year for the Environmental Commission. While COVID presented some challenges, Zoom and other virtual platforms offered an increased ability to meet, communicate, and connect. Virtual meetings saved time, space, money, energy, and tax dollars. Student involvement on the Environmental Commission also increased. The outdoor Marketplace on the Green also provided many opportunities for safe educational opportunities and recycling events.

This report provides an overview of activities related several subcommittees including the:

Energy Team
Food-to-Compost Group
Green Team
Wetland Education Team
Green Grants Team
Green Dialogue
Environmental Justice Study Group
Green Neighbors Network

MEMBERS OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION IN 2021

John Sarver, Chair Anna Colby, Vice Chair Tom Frazier, Commissioner

Kendra Grasseschi, Commissioner, Liaison to Land Preservation Advisory Board Ned Jackson, Commissioner, Liaison to Brownfield Redevelopment Authority Bill McConnell, Commissioner, Liaison to Planning Commission Bernadette Osborn, Student Commissioner Annaka Saffron, Student Commissioner Rose Vadnais, Commissioner Luca Wisinski, Student Commissioner

STAFF TEAM MEMBERS

Courtney Wisinski, Trustee Liaison

LeRoy Harvey, Environmental Programs Manager

Derek Perry, Deputy Township Manager/Director of Public Works

Emma Campbell, Land Stewardship Coordinator

Denise Green, Administrative Assistant

with support from Rob MacKenzie, Stephen Gebes, Cara Maney,

Brandie Yates, Andrea Smiley, Tom Cary and others.

Energy

The Energy Team provided support for several Township initiatives including expansion of Meridian's renewable energy usage. Solar photovoltaic systems were installed at the Service Center and the Marketplace on the Green.

Factoring increased energy efficiency of Township operations, increased utility-supplied renewable, and on-site solar generation, Meridian is approaching the halfway point towards its 2035 Climate Sustainability Goals. View Meridian's real-time solar output at <a href="https://bit.limatescolor.org/bit.

Energy Team members helped organize a Solar and Sustainable Tour which featured a dozen solar installations as well as other "green" sites. Video documentaries of sites and a full list can be found at <a href="https://bitallow.nic.google.com/bita

Meridian participated in PowerMIFleet, a program designed to help fleet owners and operators reduce operating costs, eliminate emissions, and simplify vehicle maintenance by transitioning to electric vehicles. This study will help with planning for future charging station priorities and vehicle purchase.

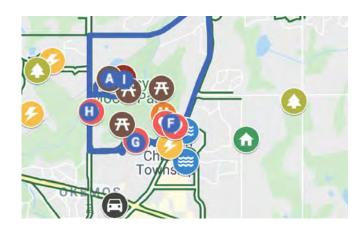
Energy Team
Roger Eberhardt
LeRoy Harvey
Rob Kaercher
Valerie Lafferty
Rob MacKenzie
Derek Perry
Heidi Porter
JoAnn Render



Meridian Township Climate Sustainability Plan 100% Renewable Energy Goal for Electricity for Township Operations Status Update – 2018 to 2020

Baseline is 2018	2035 Goal	Status at end of 2020
Consumers Energy	40%	11%
Energy Efficiency	30%	14%
On-Site Solar	30%	17%*
Total	100%	42%
	1	Status at end of 2021
On-Site Solar kW's	406	202

*On-site solar includes actual and projected kWh's based on 202 kW





Water & Green Infrastructure

A Wetland Education Committee was created in 2021. Initial outreach included distribution of a letter and brochure to 1400+ individuals that either reside or own property on or adjacent to a wetland. A factsheet on the "8Rs of Fall Yard Care" was also distributed.

Green Infrastructure Grants were awarded to two local schools. Projects included an outdoor courtyard renovation at Haslett Middle School and a nature trail, signage, and greenhouse renovation at Montessori Radmoor in Okemos.

Over 500 tree saplings were distributed at the Marketplace on the Green with help from the Green Team, staff, volunteers, and the Ingham Conservation District.

Eight sealcoat contractors applied to provide environmentally-friendlier sealcoating services in the Township.

Several work days were held at the Hidden River Rain Garden (Burcham and Park Lake) which included planting, weeding, and pet rocks painted by residents of Burcham Hills Senior Living.

The Township Board of Trustees budgeted \$5000 to support a wetland education and outreach plan in 2022.

Wetland Education Committee

Emma Campbell
Paige Felice
Kendra Grasseschi
LeRoy Harvey
Rose Vadnais
Courtney Wisinski

Green Grant Committee

Kendra Grasseschi LeRoy Harvey John Sarver Rose Vadnais Courtney Wisinski







Recycling & Waste Reduction

Several recycling events were held during 2021 in partnership with Okemos Schools, Okemos Action, Meridian Farmers Market, Okemo Earth Club, Granger, Delta Dental, Meridian Cares, and others. Over 100 volunteers assisted in recycling electronics, bicycles, eyeglasses, plastic utensils, styrofoam, and coats/clothing.

Other events were also held by the Green Team including a Green Fair, a medicine collection, and a tree distribution.

A Food-to-Compost Committee was launched in 2021 and had explored possibilities for reducing food waste, a gleaning initiative, composting alternatives, and local partnerships. A tour of Hammond Farms' composting operation was held.

A plan and proposal to improve and expand the Meridian Recycling Center was developed in partnership with Reclaimed by Design, Spicer Group, Mid-Michigan Environmental Action Council and others.

Twelve issues of the Green Gazette were published in 2021 (185 issues to date) filled with local, regional, and other environmental news. To subscribe, visit http://bit.ly/gg-directory

Food-to-Compost Committee
Dave Batten
Nevin Brittain
Tom Cary
Anna Colby

Tom Frazier
Valerie Lafferty

Gabi Mayer Elaine Putvin











Sarah Allen Dave Batten Ellen Dillman Tom Frazier LeRoy Harvey Audrey Herchert-Walton Bernadette Osborn Anne Perkins Elaine Putvin Luca Wisinski

Green Team

Other Collaborative Initiatives

Green Neighbors Network

Kick-off of the Green Neighbors Network (GNN) began in January. This is a grassroots movement tha allows neighbors to share green topics, practices, knowledge and expertise with neighbors and the greater meridian community. Over 25 neighborhoos are currently represented in this network. For more information, visit https://bit.ly/greenneighbor

GNN Organizers
Sarah Allen
Kendra Grasseschi
LeRoy Harvey
John Sarver



Environmental Justice Study Group

The Environmental Commission's Environmental Justice Study group attended a 3-day conference entitled: "Michigan Environmental Justice: Building Trust, Reimagining Justice, and Removing Barriers." The study group's work has centered on the equitable treatment of all including residents, staff, and the implementation of environmental policies.

Environment Justice Study Group
Sarah Allen
Kendra Grasseschi
Rose Vadnais
Courtney Wisinski

"Environmental Justice is the equitable treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of race, color, national origin, ability, or income and is critical to the development and application of laws, regulations, and policies that affect the environment, as well as the places people live, work, play, worship, and learn."

-MI Office of the Environmental Justice Public Advocate



Wetland Walks

As part of the Meridian Wetland Education & Restoration Program, tours will be offered the first Wednesday of every month featuring wetlands in the Township.



February 2nd 5 - 6:30 PM

March 2nd 5 - 6:30 PM

April 6th 5 - 6:30 PM

May 4th 5 - 6:30 PM Nancy Moore Park
Get an introduction to wetland ecology &
take in the winter scenery!

Tihart Preserve

Observe the effect agriculture has had on our wetlands historically, & how to begin restoration.

Lake Lansing North Preserve Explore the springtime stirrings of Vernal Pools, our smallest & most precious wetlands!

Davis-Foster Preserve
Explore the wonderous diversity of wetland species,

explore the wonderous alversity of wetland spec & what to look for throughout the season.