

BREAKING NEWS» U.P. among areas to receive part of \$40 million for Michigan conservation projects

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Earth Day activities set for area

April 19, 2013

By JACKIE STARK - Journal Staff Writer (jstark@miningjournal.net) , The Mining Journal

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MARQUETTE - A number of Earth Day activities are taking place over the next three days, offering area residents a chance to show their appreciation to Mother Nature.

The Superior Watershed Partnership and Land Trust is encouraging area residents to "Unplug and Go," encouraging families to get outdoors this Earth Day weekend.

According to a press release from the partnership, the group has, on previous Earth Days, collected 47 tons of hazardous waste, collected 312 tons of electronic waste and distributed 100,000 energy saving light bulbs.

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This year, however, the partnership is looking to simply get people away from their electronic devices and back into nature.

"In short, get away from electronic devices, go outside and take a hike, paddle or bike ride," the release states. "It's not just a free way to improve your physical health it can also improve your mental health."

The release cites studies that show a rapidly increasing obesity rate in this country - especially among children - and the overall health and wellness benefits of spending more time outside.

The MooseWood Nature Center is hosting an Earth Day Fair and Art Contest Saturday, which will offer cash prizes for local artists and will also have pieces from local schools on display. The fair will include an open house featuring hands-on activities offered by several local organizations.

St. Vincent de Paul of Republic, along with Republic-Michigamme Schools, is hosting an Earth Day festival Saturday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Republic-Michigamme School.

The event, which is in its second year of operation, will feature several local vendors, some of whom will have repurposed or environmentally friendly merchandise for sale.

Northern Michigan University students are also getting in on the action, albeit in a less conventional way.

The Upper Peninsula Wild Land Guardians, along with NMU's Students for Sustainable Living group and Superior Edge, is hosting a writing workshop entitled "Letters from a Pleasant Peninsula" from 1 to 4 p.m. in the Upper Level of the Ore Dock Brewing Company.

The groups are hoping to educate the public on how to write effective, concise and informed letters during three sessions set for 1:30 p.m., 2:30 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. Saturday.

The workshop will also include guest speakers with knowledge on two bills in the Michigan Senate - SB 78 and SB 288, which would prohibit the Department of Natural Resources from designating land for the purpose of achieving biological biodiversity and could hinder the efforts of animal rights activists to block a potential Michigan wolf hunt.

"Both of these bills have the potential to create far reaching consequences in regard to the health of our ecosystems," said land guardians Director Adam Robarge. "It's absolutely essential that the public be informed and effectively make their opinions heard."

State Sen. Tom Casperson, R-Escanaba, a sponsor of the bills, says they will prevent bureaucrats from precluding human activity on public and private land, and will place the responsibility to designate game species with the Natural Resources Commission and the Michigan legislature.

Rounding out local Earth Day activities, Switchback Gear and Outfitters, the Noquemenon Trail Network and Northern Michigan University hospitality management are combining forces to host an NTN trail cleanup Monday from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Participants should meet at the Tourist Park Trailhead on CR 550. Prizes will be awarded for things like most dog poop, heaviest load and most unique piece of trash.

Refreshments will be provided.

Jackie Stark can be reached at 906-228-2500, ext. 242.

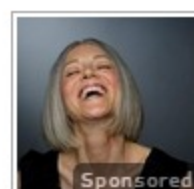
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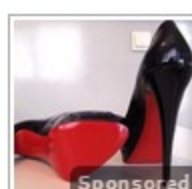
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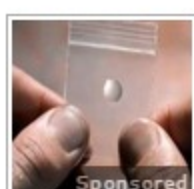
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