FEATURED UPDATES

2020 EnviroFest
This year will be our 25th EnviroFest! We’re hoping to celebrate our big jubilee with a fantastic event--and we need YOUR help! Find out what you can do to make our 25th EnviroFest a special success on page 3.

New Intern!
We are very excited to welcome Sarah Gothe, who will be working with us on select dates from late November into mid-December! Sarah will be primarily working on removing invasive honeysuckle around the site. We welcome and encourage volunteers to sign up to work with her! You can sign up ahead of time at signup.com/go/qngtXMD, or you can just show up between 9:30 AM - 4 PM on the dates listed on the SignUp page!

NEW: Permaculture Workshop Series
Justin Joy, Certificate of Permaculture, will be leading a new workshop series on permaculture! Check out the Permaculture Open House to learn about permaculture and what it can do for you! More details on page 2.

New EEC Gate
We have recently installed a new gate! We are excited to announce that this gate has been moved up the drive, closer to the cabin so that after-hours visitors can still access our canoe launch and have closer access to our trails—open dawn to dusk all week long!

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WHAT'S NEW

HOLIDAY HOORAH!

We are looking forward to leading our 2nd annual Holiday Hoorah! This year, we are excited to announce that we will be partnering with the Elkhart Public Library and tying into the City's WinterFest Celebration in Downtown Elkhart! Stop by the Elkhart Public Library between 12 PM - 3 PM on Saturday, December 7 for FREE, fun, environmentally-friendly crafts and activities!

VOLUNTEER

We could always use some extra help! If you are interested in helping us lead the crafts and activities, please let us know! Volunteers can sign up for partial shifts or the entire event--whichever works best for your schedule, just let us know! You can sign up online at signup.com/go/pkOkhBZ, email EECmail@coei.org, or call (574) 293-5070.

DONATE

We are collecting burnt-out light bulbs, empty paper towel rolls, clean soup cans, and puzzle pieces for our Holiday Hoorah! crafts. If you have any of these items that you would like to donate, please feel free to drop them off at the EEC anytime Monday - Friday between 8 AM - 5 PM before December 7.

PERMACULTURE WORKSHOP SERIES

Open House

Come learn about permaculture! Justin Joy, Certificate of Permaculture, will be leading a short open house to introduce the subject of permaculture and to preview his upcoming Permaculture Workshop Series. Come learn what permaculture is and what it could mean for you!

Workshop Series

Justin will be leading a 10-month series of hands-on workshops about permaculture, starting in February. You can sign up for one session or the whole series! Find more details on our website.

ECO-VALENTINE’S DAY

Join us for a fun, new, family-friendly holiday program! Our Eco-Valentine’s Day will start off with a craft inside (10 AM - 11 AM) and then head out for a holiday scavenger hunt (11 AM - 12 PM weather permitting).

Come make a holiday-themed recycled planter from old soup cans, jars, and plastic bottles. We will also provide herb seeds, for anyone who would like to make their decorated planter into an indoor herb garden!

This event is completely free and open to the public. Families welcome! Please register ahead of time so we can get an estimate for supplies (register at signup.com/go/thJpXJt)

VOLUNTEER

We could always use some extra help! If you are interested in helping us lead the crafts and activities, please let us know! You can sign up online at signup.com/go/thJpXJt, email EECmail@coei.org, or call (574) 293-5070.

DONATE

We are collecting clean, empty: soup cans, jars, and plastic bottles. If you have any of these items that you would like to donate, please feel free to drop them off at the EEC anytime Monday - Friday between 8 AM - 5 PM before February 14.

Indiana Forest Alliance Meeting

Come learn about and get involved in:

- IFA’s efforts to protect forest ecosystems, wildlife habitat, and backpacking trails in our state forests.
- Legislation that IFA is working on getting passed at the state house in 2020
- Efforts to protect northern Indiana’s only two State Forests: Salamonie River and Frances Slocum from proposed logging projects
- AND MORE--find details here.
- PLUS showing of Tear Drop Pictures short film "Snag in the Plan" that documents IFA’s search for the Northern Long-Eared bat during the Ecoblitz in Hoosier National Forest.
2020 will be the 25th annual EnviroFest event and we are looking forward to celebrating the milestone with an amazing event! This year, we are looking for more involved volunteers to help us plan all of the different event components. We will need both committee chairs--to take the lead on planning things like our Kids Area and Music Tent--and regular committee volunteers who can support the committee chairs in making things happen.

If you are interested in volunteering as a committee chair, please submit an application to EECmail@coei.org. If you are interested in being a regular committee volunteer, just attend one of our EnviroFest Committee Meetings!

Join us for our first EnviroFest Committee Meeting on Monday, December 16 from 6 PM - 7 PM at the Elkhart Environmental Center! Feel free to bring a friend and a snack to share.

**COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

What does it mean to be an EnviroFest Committee Chair? Each Committee Chair focuses on one aspect of the event (see below), and takes the lead on planning out the area and delegating support tasks to committee volunteers. EEC staff work closely with the Committee Chairs to coordinate their areas and the event as a whole.

**Kids Area Chair**
Determine crafts/activities, volunteer and material needs, the hired entertainment, and oversee this area during the event.

**Music Tent Chair**
Coordinate stage needs before and during the event: take lead on finding appropriate bands/musical acts, coordinate stage schedule and setup, determine material and volunteers needs, and oversee this area during the event.

**Zero-Waste Chair**
Work closely with the EEC and Borden to establish parameters for booths and food vendors, determine acceptable materials, determine material and volunteer needs, and oversee the Zero-Waste Stations during the event.

**Raffle/Silent Auction Chair**
Work closely with the EEC and Donations Chair to divide donations into Raffle or Silent Auction packages before the event, lead overall setup of this station at the event, recruit volunteers specifically for the Raffle or Silent Auction, and oversee this station during the event.

**Volunteer Chair**
Assist the EEC with volunteer management: recruit and train event volunteers before the event and coordinate volunteers during the event.

**Educational Speakers Chair**
Take lead on finding appropriate environmental education speakers for the event, work closely with the Music Tent Chair to determine the stage needs and schedule, and work closely with the EEC to recruit speakers and informational booths for the event.

**COMMITTEE VOLUNTEERS**
If you would like to help plan our 25th EnviroFest jubilee, but don’t want to be a committee chair or would like to help out with more than one part of the event, join the EnviroFest Planning Committee! We could always use extra support from volunteers during the planning stages, from brainstorming, to collecting donations, recruiting volunteers, and more.

Join us for our first general committee meeting on Monday, December 16 from 6 PM - 7 PM!

Volunteers not only make EnviroFest successful, they help make the event what it is. Put your mark on our milestone event this year by joining our EnviroFest Planning Committee!
PAST EVENTS & PROGRAMS

ELKHART RIVER CLEAN UP

Our 2019 Elkhart River Clean Up (ERCU) was a wonderful success! This year, the EEC partnered with the Elkhart County Waterways Alliance who received a Little Big Idea Grant from the Community Foundation of Elkhart County to support the event. Two groups of City staff and volunteers traveled up the Elkhart River (one by canoe, one by foot on the River Greenway Trail) from the Elkhart Environmental Center to Elkhart Central High School. A total of 51 volunteers gave 236 hours to remove almost 2,000 pounds of trash from the Elkhart River.

The Elkhart County Waterways Alliance used the Little Big Idea Grant to provide our volunteers with donuts and breakfast snacks, free goodies, and a waterproof survey that volunteers filled out throughout the day. While canoeing/hiking and picking up trash, volunteers recorded what they found throughout the day. We hope to continue collecting this data during future River Clean Ups, to get a better idea of what is being thrown away and what we can do to mitigate the waste.

If you are interested in participating in future River Clean Ups, be sure to follow us on Facebook or check in with our website! Our goal is to do a St. Joseph River Clean Up in the summer and an Elkhart River Clean Up in the fall. Updates will be provided online and in our upcoming volunteer newsletter and event flyers.

FIELD TRIPS

This fall our educational programming has been taking off! Goshen Middle School brought the entire 7th grade (a total of about 200 kids!) out over 2 days for an environmental science field trip. Students learned about the history and nature of the EEC on a hike; got to see aquatic life from the Elkhart River up close with the City’s Aquatic Biologist, Daragh Deegan; investigated micro and macroinvertebrates from our wetlands; learned about habitat evaluation; and helped us remove invasive honeysuckle shrubs from our forest ecosystem!

Sixth graders from Mary Feeser Elementary and ninth graders from Central High School also came out for similar field trips and also helped remove several trees of honeysuckle!

The EEC is looking forward to facilitating many more of these types of field trips in the future with any schools who are interested. We could always use extra help, especially with the larger field trips! If you would be interested in volunteering during one of these days, please let us know! We will add you to our contact list and let you know when the next field trip has been scheduled.

ERCU FINDINGS

These are the survey results from our Elkhart River Clean Up volunteers regarding what they found in the river:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Items</th>
<th>Unique Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>166 plastic bottles</td>
<td>Plastic swan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>143 glass bottles</td>
<td>Stove</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>132 cans</td>
<td>Base to basketball hoop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 plastic bags</td>
<td>Traffic cone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>112 food wrappers</td>
<td>Bicycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shopping cart</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

Interested in volunteering? We’d love to work with you!
Email Annie.Klehfoth@coei.org or call (574) 293-5070.
You can also sign up to volunteer online at http://signup.com/go/CbUzCsH.

**Holiday Hoorah**

**Saturday, December 7**  
**12 PM - 3 PM**  
**at the Elkhart Public Library**

Help us lead the holiday crafts and activities at our Holiday Hoorah! Sign up for partial shifts or the entire event—whichever works best for your schedule, just let us know! Sign up online at signup.com/go/pkOkhBZ.

**Adopt-A-Trail**

**Thursday, January 2**

Enjoy spending time on our trails? Adopt one! Adopt-A-Trail volunteers keep our trails in good shape for visitors and wildlife for the year. Trails are available for adoption by groups AND individuals! Check out more details on our website at elkhartindiana.org/eecvolunteer.

**Eco-Valentines’s Day**

**Friday, February 14**  
**10 AM - 12 PM**

Help us with a fun holiday craft (10 AM - 11 AM) and/or Valentine’s Day-themed scavenger hunt hike (11 AM - 12 PM)! Sign up to volunteer or just to attend at signup.com/go/thJpXJt.

**Invasive Species Removal**

**Multiple Dates**  
**Flexible Times**

We’ll be working on tackling some of our invasive species. Help us make our ecosystems healthier! Tools and gloves will be provided. Sign up at signup.com/go/qngtXMD or signup.com/go/gSJVvXS.

**SNEAK PEAK: New Volunteer Opportunities**

New in 2020: Our Adopt-A-Trail and Adopt-A-Plot programs have been so successful, that we have decided to expand! Volunteers and volunteer groups will soon be able to adopt our herb spiral, rain gardens, pollinator garden, and more! Adopters will work with staff to create a layout and get the plants and seeds they need to make and keep our gardens looking great! Like our other adoption programs, adopters will sign up to take care of a space for the length of one year, and commit to regular maintenance. This project is great for groups large and small! We are looking forward to working with adopters and seeing what they do with their space! Check out elkhartindiana.org/eecvolunteer for more info.

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Indiana Arborist Association Annual Conference**

**Tuesday, Jan 21 - Thursday, Jan 23**  
**Indianapolis Marriott East Conference Center 7202 E 21st St, Indianapolis, IN 46219**

The 72nd Annual Conference offers 28 continuing education units for the credentialed arborist and applicators. Visit indiana-arborist.org/annual-conference for information about costs and the session lineup.

**Teaching Phenology and Climate Change Course**

**Friday, Jan 24 - Sunday, February 23**  
**Online**

Discover how studying the life cycles of plants (phenology) reveals some consequences of climate change with this month-long, facilitated, online course. Learn tips and activities to help you incorporate an observation-rich citizen science project (Budburst) into your lesson plans. Visit chicagobotanic.org/teacher_programs for more information.

**Sustainability Lecture Series**

**Wednesdays (Jan 25 - Apr 5)  
7 PM - 8:30 PM**  
**Wiekamp Hall, Room 1001, at IUSB**

Free and open to the public, this series features sustainability and innovation leaders in South Bend and the region. Learn about the importance of preserving ecosystems, electronics recycling, climate change, and the several facets of sustainability! Click clas.iusb.edu/centers/cs-future/events for more information.
The Elkhart Environmental Center is an environmental education facility that opened in 1991 on a remediated city dump. We have over 33 acres of dedicated trails, prairies, wetlands, and river access. Trails are open to the public dawn through dusk; please feel free to park at the black gate (if it is closed) and walk in to enjoy the trails. The Center offers educational programs, events, and volunteer opportunities for the public. Information about the Center’s programs and events can be found online at www.elkhartindiana.org/eec or on our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/elkhartenvironmentalcenter. Feel free to also stop by and say hi!

CONTACT INFO

(574) 293-5070  
www.elkhartindiana.org/eec  
www.Facebook.com/ElkhartEnvironmentalCenter

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GREEN DRINKS

Join this environmentally-minded networking group for drinks and snacks at local pubs around Elkhart. Elkhart’s Green Drinks meets every third Wednesday from 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM to discuss “green” topics and meet new people.

The dates for the upcoming meetings are December 18, January 15, and February 19.

Updates and details regarding the location of each meeting and the expected speaker/topic can be found online at the Green Drinks website, www.greendrinks.org/Elkhart, or on the Elkhart Green Drinks Facebook page.

Open to newcomers and those who haven’t been to a meeting in a while!