

Dept. of Natural Resources: Celebrate Earth Day with the Wisconsin DNR

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MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) invites Wisconsinites to celebrate Earth Day on Saturday, April 22 by getting outside and finding an adventure in Wisconsin's great outdoors. With 50 state parks, 15 state forests, 44 state trails, over 5,000 campsites, 15,000 lakes and thousands of acres to explore, there are plenty of ways to celebrate.

Earth Day was founded in 1970 by Wisconsin Gov. Gaylord Nelson to raise awareness about air and water pollution. Today, Earth Day is observed around the globe and is commemorated as a month of recognition, stewardship and celebration of the natural environment. And getting outdoors is great for improving mental and physical health.

This week, the DNR encourages Wisconsinites to get out and give back to the Earth in any way they can, including [spring cleaning old unused electronics](#) from their home, [making a plan to reduce food waste](#), participating in a garbage clean-up or tree planting event or simply going for a hike to enjoy the fresh air.

“Wisconsin truly has something special to celebrate this and every Earth Day. Our state is unique due to its abundant natural resources. I encourage everyone to get outdoors and enjoy some peace and quiet or time with family and friends,” said Wisconsin DNR Secretary Adam N. Payne. “There is something for everyone here, and on behalf of all the staff at the Wisconsin DNR, we are honored and proud to be charged with protecting and enhancing our state's natural resources now and for future generations.”

The DNR is hosting or participating in a wide variety of events around the state the public can get involved in. Find a list of events below or [visit the DNR Events Calendar](#) to discover all the opportunities to participate in an Earth Day celebration.

Electronics Recycling

TVs, laptops, cellphones and other electronics are made of valuable materials that can be reused through recycling. Some electronics contain hazardous materials, such as lead and mercury, that can harm human health and pollute the environment if not properly managed. Scour your closets and drawers, and then find an E-Cycle Wisconsin location near you to dispose of your old, unused items. [Learn more and find recycling options near you on the DNR's E-Cycle Wisconsin webpage.](#)

Drug Take Back

Reducing or safely disposing of household pharmaceuticals protects the environment. It's not recommended to flush or pour drugs down drains as most water treatment systems do not treat for pharmaceuticals, and septic tanks can leach chemicals into the environment. Join our partners at the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) and Wisconsin Department of Justice for this year's Drug Take Back Day on April 22. Participating is easy – stop by any of 157 collection sites across the state and drop your items, including pet medications and vaping devices with the batteries removed, into a bin. [Learn more and find a collection site near you on the DHS website.](#)

Work Play Earth Day

Join us on April 22 at various properties across the state for family-friendly activities that help enhance public lands. These Work Play Earth Day events lead to lasting enhancements, increased awareness and continued support for Wisconsin's state parks. Activities may include planting trees, installing benches, removing invasive plants and more. [Find a Work Play Earth Day event happening in your part of the state](#) – we'll see you there!

Horicon Marsh Open House

Travel back in time this Earth Day with reduced rates at the Horicon Marsh Explorium. The family-friendly fun continues from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. Featured

activities include:

- A self-guided scavenger hunt with hands-on activities in and around the education center.
- Examine animal artifacts, meet hard-to-find critters in person and even look under the water as you learn about all kinds of Wisconsin wildlife.
- Learn about the water cycle on the short-loop trail or join a guided hike at 11 a.m. or 1 p.m.
- Make a sun paper craft, solve a nature mystery or two or build your own bird nest.

[Find the full details on the DNR's Events Calendar.](#)

Mead Science Symposium

DNR staff and volunteers in central Wisconsin are hosting the 1st Annual Mead Science Symposium to celebrate Earth Day on April 22 from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Stanton W. Mead Education and Visitor Center. This free event will be an opportunity to learn about the science and management happening at the property from the researchers themselves. From bees, birds, and bucks, there will be presentations and posters that are sure to capture your interest. All ages are welcome.

Crex Meadows Clean Up

In the Northwoods, join DNR staff at the Crex Meadows Wildlife Area for a volunteer property clean-up from 8:00 a.m. to noon. Participants can arrive at any time during the 4-hour clean-up window, and lunch will be provided in the Mess Hall free of charge for all clean-up participants. For more information, visit the [Friends of Crex Meadows webpage](#).

Happy Little 5K

Lace up your sneakers or skates and hit the trails. This virtual “race for the trees” has three rules for your race: it must be outside, completed between April 22 and 28 (Earth Day and Arbor Day), and you must have fun. If you didn’t sign up in advance, there are still ways to participate. Get out and do your 3.1 miles and send a message of appreciation to the trees. If you’re looking for some suggested 5K routes, [check out the map on our webpage](#) or head to [Mirror Lake State Park](#), where

there will be a 5K loop flagged and a life-sized cutout of Bob Ross, the inspiration for the Happy Little 5K! The 5K route at Mirror Lake will be up through April 28.