



News from the Office of
ERIE COUNTY EXECUTIVE MARK POLONCARZ

NEWS RELEASE

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ERIE COUNTY, PARTNERS JOIN FORCES ON TIMES BEACH NATURE PRESERVE RESTORATION PROJECT

Volunteers to Plant Pollinator Conservation Area, Remove Invasive Plants

ERIE COUNTY, NY— A partnership between the Erie County Department of Environment and Planning, Friends of the Times Beach Nature Preserve, the Alliance for the Great Lakes, and Capco will bring over 20 volunteers to the Preserve on Thursday to implement a restoration project designed to both help restore the ecological integrity of the Preserve and provide educational opportunities for visitors to the site. The project will enhance habitat protection at the Preserve and attract native pollinators that make their home there through the removal of invasive plants, which will be replaced with native plants in a Pollinator Conservation Area.

“This project continues the transformation of the Times Beach Nature Preserve and also underscores the importance of pollinators to a healthy ecosystem. Invasive plants are more than a nuisance, they are a threat to native species that must be eradicated wherever possible,” **said Erie County Executive Mark C. Poloncarz.** “Significant progress has already been made in the control and management of invasives at the site, and this renewed effort with an added focus on attracting pollinators fits perfectly with the work that’s already been done. I thank the Department of Environment and Planning and their partners for their continued work on restoring the Preserve into a natural area for all to enjoy.”

The restoration project will build on the progress being already made by the Times Beach Aquatic and Riparian Invasive Plant Species Control Demonstration Project, an ongoing five-year project conducted jointly by the Friends of Times Beach Nature Preserve, Ecology & Environment, and the United States Army Corps of Engineers. This project is designed to test various methods of control and management of invasive species and is funded through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. Thursday’s volunteer project, a concept designed by Friends of Times Beach Nature Preserve, will augment this larger restoration planting project.

"We appreciate the continued support of Erie County and Ecology and Environment, and we welcome the new partnership between the Alliance for the Great Lakes and Capco for our work at Times Beach. Our overall restoration project will help to promote ecological stability on the Buffalo Outer Harbor and this demonstration pollinator conservation area will help to educate a lot of people about the importance of pollinators and their impact on our local and regional ecosystems," **said Jay Burney, Chair of Friends of Times Beach Nature Preserve.**

During Thursday’s restoration project, volunteers will remove invasive Japanese Knotweed, Garlic Mustard, Mugwort, and other non-native plants from an area along the nature trail and replace them with native plants in a Pollinator Conservation Area. Native plants, such as New England Aster and Native Milkweed, will help attract important pollinator species, including threatened species such as Monarch Butterflies, native bumblebees, and humming birds. In addition to the pollinator conservation area, volunteers will help collect trash and litter as part of the Adopt-a-Beach™ program, tag pollinator plant species such as Milkweed throughout the nature preserve, build and install a native American Bumblebee condo, and perform other maintenance projects at the preserve.

“Great Lakes protection relies on partnerships like this,” said **Nate Drag, Watershed Project Coordinator for the Alliance for the Great Lakes**. “It’s exciting to see business partners like Capco join forces with nonprofit and government partners to protect and restore special places like the Times Beach Nature Preserve. Times Beach is a unique, special place in the City of Buffalo and our community and volunteers are witnessing the positive benefits of restoring the Great Lakes firsthand.”

Partnerships provide the funding, coordination, and labor for the project. Capco committed \$500 for the purchase of healthy top soil, native plants, and native seeds as well as the volunteer labor; Ecology & Environment provided native plants and expertise; the Erie County Department of Parks, Recreation & Forestry provided labor and equipment; Friends of Times Beach Nature Preserve provided guidance and site knowledge; and Alliance for the Great Lakes provided coordination for the event.

For more information:

On the Erie County Department of Environment and Planning, visit <http://www2.erie.gov/environment/>

On the Erie County Department of Parks, Recreation & Forestry, visit <http://www2.erie.gov/parks/>

On the Friends of Times Beach Nature Preserve, visit www.friendsoftimesbeachnp.org/

On the Alliance for the Great Lakes, visit www.greatlakes.org

On Capco, visit <http://dev.capco.com/about-capco/corporate-social-responsibility>

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