

TREE CORPS INITIATIVE FOR BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL & MCLEAN COUNTY



ANNUAL 2024 REPORT

THE ECOLOGY ACTION CENTER HAS COMPLETED THE FOLLOWING TASKS AS PART OF THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TOWN OF NORMAL, THE CITY OF BLOOMINGTON, MCLEAN COUNTY, AND BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL WATER RECLAMATION DISTRICT.

TREE PLANTING PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

Tree Planting

- Held 5 tree prep events and 7 volunteer planting days, engaging 131 volunteers.
- Planted 1625 trees at BNWRD Heyworth plant.
- Planted 250 seedling trees at the Interstate Center.
- Planted 50 trees at the Rhymer Nature Preserve.
- Planted 650 trees at Parklands Kenyon-Baller Preserve.
- Planted 12 tree saplings at the Interstate Center as part of West Bloomington Free Tree program to improve air quality.

Tree Maintenance

- Took steps to protect tree inventory from cicada emergence.
- Continued regular watering, mulching, and maintenance of trees at the Jefferson St. Nursery.
- Completed identification of surviving tree species on hand in nursery beds.
- Completed fall inventory of trees at the Nursery, totaling 1,200 on hand for 2025 season.
- Mulched and watered tree saplings for the Constitution Trail and BNWRD Center and Main location.
- Partnered with Friends of the Constitution Trail to complete regular watering and maintenance for our trees on Route 66.
- Conducted two major tree mulching installations for moisture retention and overwintering at the nursery.
- Conducted an assessment of trees planted at BNWRD.

West Bloomington Free Tree (WBFT) Program

As part of the Tree Corps initiative to plant 10,000 trees a year in McLean County, the Ecology Action Center is providing free native tree saplings to income-qualifying residents of West Bloomington.

- Purchased and acquired 16 native tree saplings for the program.
- Planted 12 trees with residents for WBFT program.

- Conducted 14 property assessments and utility checks for WBFT program.
- Conducted 3 tree check up's and offered mulch delivery to residents.

COMMUNITY-WIDE OUTREACH EFFORTS

Community Events

- Attended the Bloomington Public Library's Juneteenth event and talked to 60 people about our WBFT program.
- Spoke with families about our West Bloomington Free Tree Program at Irving Elementary School free lunch event.
- Spoke with residents at the August First Friday event about our West Bloomington Free Tree Program.
- Spoke with residents at Bloomington Pride event about Tree Corps and our West Bloomington Free Tree Program.
- Spoke with residents at West Bloomington Revitalization Project Veggie Oasis event about our West Bloomington Free Tree Program.
- Attended WBRP's West Fest/Harvest Fest event and talked to 36 people about WBFT.
- Posted WBFT flyers around downtown Bloomington and other key locations.
- Partner meeting - Met with West Bloomington Revitalization Project to talk about promotion of WBFT program.
- Partner meeting - Met with Bloomington Revivalists to talk about WBFT program.
- Partner meeting – Discuss tree planting at Comlara Park.
- Partner meeting – Discuss tree planting at Lake Bloomington.
- Partner meeting – Discuss tree planting at Village of McLean.
- Site visit at Glenn Elementary to discuss tribute tree planting.

Training

- Attended the Midwest Climate Summit in Indianapolis.
- Completed CPR certification class.
- Completed 10hr General Industry Safety and Health OSHA training.
- Attended U of I Extension Woodland Restoration Webinar.
- Attended U of I Extension Tree ID Walk in Monticello.
- Attended the 2024 State Master Naturalist conference in Macomb.
- Attended Partners in Community Forestry Conference in Chicago.

Social Media

- Facebook and Instagram posts promoting Plant a Tree for Christmas and Tree Cards fundraisers -PTC getting 52,442 engagements.

Websites ecologyactioncenter.org and tree-corps.org

- The Ecology Action Center promoted tree planting benefits, projects, and programs that had 5,454 visits to the sites.

Newsletters

- Sent the December quarterly issue of the Member newsletter to 261 households to promote Plant a Tree for Christmas fundraiser.