

Ira Township Park Pollinator Meadow Caryn Frazier

The Pollinator Meadow at Ira Township Park is a multi-year ecological restoration project designed to transform an open field into a thriving native habitat that supports pollinators, wildlife, and the surrounding community. The meadow will be planted exclusively with native Michigan species appropriate to USDA Zone 6B, ensuring ecological integrity, long-term sustainability, and compatibility with local soil and climate conditions.

This project incorporates a diverse range of native flowering plants, grasses, and shrubs selected to provide continuous blooms from early spring through late fall. These plantings will support essential pollinators such as bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds, while also improving soil health, increasing biodiversity, and enhancing natural water management across the site.

A key feature of the meadow is the integration of a naturally occurring wet area within the field. This space will be developed into a functioning wetland microhabitat using water-tolerant native species. In addition to supporting specialized pollinators, this area will help absorb excess water, reduce runoff, and improve overall site resilience.

The meadow will be thoughtfully designed to coexist with existing park features, including the disc golf course, by maintaining open sightlines and incorporating natural walking paths. Plant placement will balance ecological function with public safety and accessibility, ensuring the space remains welcoming for visitors of all ages.

This is a phased project expected to establish over a period of approximately 2-4 . Initial efforts will focus on site preparation, early plantings, and foundational species establishment. In subsequent years, the meadow will continue to fill in, with increasing plant density, biodiversity, and ecological function. As the system matures, it will require less maintenance while providing greater environmental benefits.

Beyond its ecological impact, the Pollinator Meadow will serve as a space for community engagement and environmental education. It will support children's programming, volunteer involvement, and opportunities for visitors to learn about native plants, pollinators, and conservation practices.

Ultimately, this project aims to create a sustainable, living landscape that benefits both people and nature-enhancing the beauty of Ira Township Park while contributing to the health of the local ecosystem for years to come.

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