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## **Developing Middle/High School Students as Forest Stewards in Urban Detroit**

Michigan Technological University and MAEOE have received a 2-year grant from the U.S. Forest Service to work with secondary teachers (Grades 5-12) to enhance knowledge of Michigan forests amongst urban students in Detroit, and to develop their sense of forest stewardship by engaging them in projects on Belle Isle.

The goal of the project is to Build Local Community Capacity to Manage Urban Forest Resources. Michigan Tech, MAEOE, and six partner organizations will build youth and community capacity to manage and steward the urban forests on Belle Isle in the City of Detroit. The 2-year project will engage 20 Detroit middle/high school teachers each year in attending a year-long teacher professional development program focused on forest ecology, management and stewardship. Each group of 20 teachers will attend three workshops during the school year, followed by a 5-day summer teacher institute. Most of the workshops will take place on Belle Isle within the city of Detroit. Teachers will receive classroom/field supplies and a field trip budget to: (i) design and conduct a service learning forest stewardship project on Belle Isle with their students; (ii) create a schoolyard natural area at their school using Belle Isle native tree stock, and (iii) plan and conduct a family/community event on Belle Isle to showcase their students' stewardship work to parents and the community. Foresters, ecologists, wetland and soil scientists, invasive plant specialists, and environmental educators will assist teachers and students in designing and implementing their stewardship projects, community workdays, and outreach events. The project will take place: from July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2013.

### **Project objectives are to:**

- i. Provide urban teachers with the training and resources to be able to integrate forestry into their curriculum
- ii. Guide urban middle/high school students in planning and conducting hands-on forest stewardship projects.
- iii. Enhance the ecological health and accessibility of the urban forests on Belle Isle by engaging urban Detroit students in forest stewardship activities.

### **Project Partners are:**

1. Michigan Alliance for Environmental & Outdoor Education (Michelle Arquette-Palermo)
2. Hawk Woods Nature Center (Mike Mansour)
3. Belle Isle Nature Zoo (Mike Reed)
4. Michigan Forest Foundation (Bill Botti)
5. Build On (Keisha Brooks)
6. Detroit Public Schools (DPS) Math/Science Center (Alycia Meriweather)
7. Michigan Project Learning Tree (Ada Takacs)

**Project Team Members are:** Joan Chadde (Michigan Technological University), Mike Mansour, Mike Reed, and Lisa Perez (U.S. Forest Service Urban Connections). For more information, contact Joan Chadde at 906-487-3341 or by email [jchadde@mtu.edu](mailto:jchadde@mtu.edu).