

This Earth Day, Make a Difference in your own Backyard

Earth Day encourages us to think not only about endangered species or recycling, but the resources in our own backyards. Think back over the past year. Have you gone swimming, fishing, or boating in a local lake? Taken a walk around a scenic reservoir?

Over 160 lakes, ponds, and reservoirs are scattered throughout the MetroWest area. They support diverse natural ecosystems and provide drinking water and recreation for thousands of people. However, many are threatened by invasive weeds, stormwater runoff, and other factors that degrade water quality.

Luckily, there are many individuals in MetroWest who care deeply about these bodies of water, and take an active role in preserving their wellbeing. They act as stewards, caretakers, and advocates, promoting weed control, water quality monitoring, and community education.

At Foundation for MetroWest, your local community foundation, we are always working to strengthen the organizations that serve the MetroWest region, and on April 2, we held our first convening for those involved in their local lake and pond associations. This convening was very successful as we were able to share ideas, challenges, and identify points of collaboration in the area.

As a MetroWest resident, you can have a positive impact by learning more about the issues faced by our lakes and ponds. Your decisions have an impact on the watershed and our community drinking water. Actions such as cleaning your boat to prevent the spread of invasive weeds, proper use of fertilizer and other chemicals, and awareness of no-dumping areas (such as storm drains) can help to ensure the health, safety, and beauty of our water resources.

As Earth Day approaches, let's all try to make a conscious effort to support those working to protect and preserve our environment. You can visit our website, www.foundationformetrowest.org, for a complete listing of MetroWest lakes and ponds by town and the associations working hard to support them. We encourage you to connect with yours to see how you can help make a difference in your own backyard.