



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**Metroparks partners with REI to encourage stewardship and recreation in the outdoors**

*Skip the stores on Black Friday and instead #OptOutside*

**BRIGHTON, Mich.** — The Huron-Clinton Metroparks is proud to partner with REI Co-Op as a destination to #optoutside on Friday, November 29.

Five years ago, REI made a made the decision to close its doors on Black Friday and instead encourage employees, members and the public to spend the day with family and friends outdoors. The movement has grown over the years, and this year it expands to challenge people to #OptOutside by Opting to Act.

Opting to Act asks not just its employees and members, but everyone to make a deliberate act to better the environment. Starting October 23 and until Black Friday, REI will be redoubling their volunteer commitment to park and trail clean ups. "As a single company, our impact is limited, but as a community, we can drive change that powers meaningful action beyond our walls," Artz wrote. "As a co-op, we know that many people taking many small steps together can add up to big changes. Collective intention will drive collective impact."

The Metroparks has committed to supporting REI's initiative and has volunteer opportunities available to #OptOutside and Opting to Act. "Partnering with REI for volunteer opportunities is a perfect match for the Metroparks. We are able to share our knowledge, enterprise and passion for natural spaces and stewardship of our natural resources," said Katie Kowalski, Huron-Clinton Metroparks Volunteer Services Supervisor. One option for volunteers is to work side-by-side the natural resources staff on invasive shrub removal at the Metroparks.

Invasive shrubs, brought to the United States for landscaping and wildlife habitat, have now taken over many prairies, wetlands, and forest understories. They have become a detriment to our ecosystem by crowding out native plants. Native biodiversity is extremely important to support wildlife, native bees, and other insects. Volunteers are a critical part of positively impacting natural areas we wouldn't be able to otherwise! Your help allows the Metroparks to protect unique ecosystems that will be enjoyed for generations to come.

Your Metroparks also offers opportunities to #OptOutside on Black Friday. The Metroparks invite you to explore, experience and enjoy the many trails, nature and farm centers, and activities available this season. Stony Creek Metropark and Hudson Mills Metropark have guided and self-guided hikes specific to #OptOutside on November 29 (Black Friday). You can

learn about the volunteer opportunities and hikes by visiting,  
[https://www.metroparks.com/events/list/?tribe\\_eventcategory=196](https://www.metroparks.com/events/list/?tribe_eventcategory=196).

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### **About Huron-Clinton Metroparks**

One of America's premier metropolitan park systems, the Huron-Clinton Metroparks have served the people of Southeast Michigan since 1940. Managed by the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority, the Metroparks are made up of 13 properties in Livingston, Macomb, Oakland, Washtenaw, and Wayne counties. Available activities include fishing, swimming, boating, hiking, nature study, biking, golf, winter sports and more. The Metroparks also provide educational resources on science, nature, history and the environment. Learn more at [Metroparks.com](http://Metroparks.com).

### **About the REI Co-op**

REI is a specialty outdoor retailer, headquartered near Seattle. The nation's largest consumer co-op, REI is a growing community of more than 18 million members who expect and love the best quality gear, inspiring expert classes and trips, and outstanding customer service. REI has 157 stores in 37 states and the District of Columbia. If you can't visit a store, you can shop at [REI.com](http://REI.com), [REI Outlet](http://REI Outlet) or the free [REI shopping app](#). REI isn't just about gear. Adventurers can take the trip of a lifetime with REI's active adventure travel company, a global leader that runs more than 250 itineraries across all continents. In every community where REI has a presence, professionally trained instructors share their expertise by hosting beginner-to advanced-level classes and workshops about a wide range of activities. To build on the infrastructure that makes life outside possible, REI invests millions annually in hundreds of local and national nonprofits that create access to—and steward—the outdoor places that inspire us all.