

Earth Day 2021 will be a three day celebration



By Kristena Schutt-Moore

The lock down may be in effect, and it may make a lot of things difficult to do or enjoy, but it offers a unique opportunity when it comes to celebrating Earth Day on Thursday, April 22.

Started in 1970 by United States Senator Gaylord Nelson to force environmental issues into the national agenda, Earth Day has since become a celebration and demonstration that over one billion people and 193 countries participate in every year. Its events are now coordinated by EARTHDAY.ORG, which was formerly known as the Earth Day Network.

EARTHDAY.ORG is planning a series of events that will cover three days leading up to April 22 on their website to honour Earth Day 2021. The first will be a global youth climate summit led by the organizations Earth Uprising, My Future My Voice, OneMillionOfUs and it is open to all youth climate activists. This event will include panels, speeches, discussions, and special messages with today's youth climate activists including Greta Thunberg, Alexandria Villaseñor, and Licypriya Kangujam.

In the evening of April 20 the Hip Hop Caucus will be presenting a virtual summit called 'We Shall Breathe.' This online event will enable youth to examine climate and environmental justice, and find connections from climate crises to issues such as pollution, poverty, and even the pandemic.

On Wednesday, April 21, Education International will lead the 'Teach for the Planet: Global Education Summit.' This summit will focus on the role that educators play in combating climate change and how climate education is important. The summit is designed to help educators of all kinds find ways to include climate and environmental studies into their every day class structure. On Earth Day itself, Thursday, April 22, EARTHDAY.ORG will host its second Earth Day live digital event on its website <https://www.earthday.org/earth-day-2021/> at 12 p.m. Eastern Time. This event will feature workshops, panel discussions and special performances, all fitting the theme Restore Our Earth. Topics will include natural processes, emerging green technologies, climate and environmental literacy, climate restoration technologies, reforestation efforts, regenerative agriculture, equity and environmental justice, citizen science, cleanups, and more.

All of EARTHDAY.ORG's events over the three days can be found at their website. However the public are invited to make their own Earth Day events, like tree planting workshops, litter cleaning events, making art from recycled or found material, or creating reusable items such as grocery bags or water bottles to help limit waste. Event organizers are invited to get creative and register their event on the website so that others can find it and participate. These events can be just to celebrate Earth Day on a local level and raise awareness about environmental issues or as fundraisers for local environmental organizations.

No matter what, be sure to get out and enjoy some time in North Hastings' beautiful nature this Earth Day.