

Amy Barnes

Lakeshore EcoTrek Series

How long have you been doing EcoTrek?
I've been attending EcoTrek sessions since May 2007.

What personal goals have you reached since beginning EcoTrek Fitness?

When I started EcoTrek my biggest goal was to finish a 5K, I completed the Irish Jig in March 2008, boy was I nervous, but it was a lot of fun. I continue to compete in 5K's but have been pondering longer distances, maybe a 10K next year. After watching some fellow EcoTrek peeps run 10K's, half marathons and such, I've been inspired to run more. Heck, last summer I did the GR Mud Run, how crazy is that? Maybe the 5/3 Riverbank Run will call my name next year, we'll see.

Which EcoTrek Series route is your favorite?

I attend the Lakeshore Series and sometimes I catch a North Muskegon route. My most favorite route is Little Black Lake (@ Hoffmaster Park). The park is so amazing, I never get tired of it; forests, dunes and the beach all wrapped into one route. Seeing the park during all four seasons makes you feel so connected to nature. Also, it's close to my house!

Many people find the thought of trying EcoTrek rather intimidating. What advice would you give to someone who is hesitant about working out, outside, in all kinds of crazy weather?

You have to be prepared, have the right attitude and the right clothing. If it's raining like crazy, you're not going to be out there for hours, it's only for 75 minutes, there will be a warm shower at home. The

discomfort of the weather is only temporary (mainly when you get out of your car and want to get back in immediately). The communal experience of nature, in all of it's forms, with some great EcoTrek leaders and peeps makes you forget that the weather might be less than stellar. It also doesn't mean spending a ton of cash on clothing, there are discount retailers that carry workout clothing. Get a few good pieces that will keep you warm and dry and use them, they do you no good sitting in your closet.

What activities have you been inspired to try since you started EcoTrekking?

I'm running more now. Once you hit a certain amount of physical activity, running isn't too hard, it's not easy, but I know that I can push myself farther. I was pretty much a outdoor person before starting EcoTrek. I grew up in Northern Michigan and outdoor activities are the norm; skiing, snowshoeing, trail running and hiking have always had a place in my heart.

Some of the side effects of EcoTrek fitness are fantastic. Climbing stairs at work easily when the elevator is out of service is priceless. Running up the dunes with younger relatives is fun, running down is even funner. Being able to say that I workout in that < insert crazy Michigan weather forecast > kind of weather makes me feel all warm and fuzzy. Lastly, the peeps you meet just may impart some positive peer pressure on you, and you will be all the better for it.



**Are you an avid EcoTrekker?
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EcoTrekker of the Month by emailing your nomination
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