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## Sustainability

In 2005, Nishihara and the surrounding area were officially ushered into the 21st century sustainability movement with the installation of 10 windmills on the Tawarayama mountainside. The place is aptly positioned to harness the ample wind power, which blows through the Aso region. The company that runs this power station works with the nearby elementary school to teach children the fundamentals of environmental protection and sustainability. In addition, Nishihara Village has installed PV systems, or solar panels, into several

public facilities, such as the nursery school and the community center. The administration continues to work with local residents in reducing its carbon footprint on the environment. Today, the Tawarayama windmills remain a beautiful and iconic symbol of the village and its dedication to environmental sustainability.









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とボランティアの方々の協力で野焼きの作業を行い、次第に山々が緑の 駆除と草地の再生を促すために行われます。西原村の原野は約1、 じゅうたんを敷いたように覆われていきます。 植生しており、これらの保護のために欠かせないものです。 春の訪れをつげる野焼きは、雑草が繁茂するのを防ぎ、原野 ルあり、ユウスゲ、オキナグサ、マツムシソウなど希少植物 '地元住! の害虫 0 5 民

横に炎が走り、夜空を赤く染めます。その壮大な光景を一目見ようと 」を開催しており、日没とともに火がつけられると、暗闇の原野を縦





## 内外から大勢の観光客が訪れます。 また、3月下旬には全国的にもめずらしい夜の野焼き、「山ノ神まつ



Each village or township has a different way of keeping its roads clean and clear of garbage. In Nishihara, villagers partake in a "Street Fair" twice a year in autumn and spring. Along over 120 km of village roads, grasses are mowed, trash is collected, and streets are swept by at least one member of each household, each assigned a particular segment of road. The tradition officially began in 1951, though many believe that it goes back even further. In 2005, the Japanese Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism awarded Nishihara the Regional Community Activity Award for its ongoing traditional beautification efforts.

And what do the citizens of Nishihara get in return for their hard work? They are rewarded with stronger community ties, deeper friendships, and pride for contributing to village life.



## 道路愛護活

全体で『道路品評会』という村独自の行事があります。 道路愛護活動は村内地区ごとにさまざまな形で行われていますが、村

この『道路品評会』は、毎年春と秋に行われており全長約120キロ

うと以前から行われているという話もあります。 「道路品評会」 については昭和26年以降からの資料が残っていますが

しさを競い合います。

トルある村道等を地区ごとに草刈・清掃を行い、得点をつけて道の

構築に重要な役割を担っており、今後も地域の伝統として受け継がれる 内での交流が生まれ、住民相互の親睦が深まることで地域づくりにも寄 地域住民が道路清掃という一つの目的を持った活動を行うことで地区 り郷土(ふるさと)賞~地域活動部門~』を受賞しました。 長い歴史があるこの活動に対し、平成17年度に国土交通大臣より『手 しています。この『道路品評会』による清掃作業は地域コミュニティ

**Facilitating the Environment** To encourage the regeneration of healthy grasses and local vegetation and to help prevent the growth of weeds and pasture pests, the grassy hillsides are burned every year in late March. Fire marshals, many of whom are volunteers from the community, partake in this burning ritual, which covers about 1050 hectares of land around Nishihara. Part of this tradition takes the form of the beautiful Mountain Festival, which takes place at night. As the sun sets, the grasses on the mountain are set aflame, as though touched by the fires of the sun. Many tourists from outside the prefecture come to catch a glimpse of this spectacular scenery.

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