



Board Work Session

Mill Creek MetroParks Land

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Last Edited: 2.13.17

- Why Preserve Land?
- MetroParks Mission Statement
- Strategic Master Plan
- Legal Power to Acquire Land
- Early History of MetroParks Land Acquisition
- Properties/Facilities
- Conservation Easements
- Land Acquisition 2007-2017
- Sale of Lands



- Common Ground – Land Protection Report for Northern Ohio (2012)

- Land is a finite resource -- this is the only land we have.
- Land preservation provides a healthy place for plants and wildlife. Without protection, important habitats are lost forever.
- Land preservation is good business, as it contributes to the local economy.
- Land preservation creates a healthy environment for people (physical, mental, spiritual).



Link for Land Protection Report:

<http://www.wrlandconservancy.org/articles/2013/01/25/common-ground-the-regional-land-protection-report-for-northern-ohio/>

Mission Statement

The mission of Mill Creek MetroParks is to provide park, recreational, and open space facilities of regional significance. In fulfilling this mission our objectives are:

- To be responsive to community needs
- To be environmentally sound
- To be adaptable
- To be economically feasible

Link to Mission Statement:

<http://www.millcreekmetroparks.org/contact/about/mission-statement/>



Strategic Master Plan

To be responsive to community needs

- “Studies and surveys direct the MetroParks to preserve appropriate natural and cultural areas....”

Link to Strategic Master Plan:
<http://www.millcreekmetroparks.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Mill-Creek-MetroParks-Strategic-Master-Plan-FINAL.pdf>



Ohio Revised Code Section 1545

1545.11 Board of Park Commissioners - Power to Acquire Lands

- The board of park commissioners may acquire lands either within or without the park district for conversion into forest reserves and for the conservation of the natural resources of the state, including streams, lakes, submerged lands, and swamplands, and to those ends may create parks, parkways, forest reservations, and other reservations and afforest, develop, improve, protect, and promote the use of the same in such manner as the board deems conducive to the general welfare. Such lands may be acquired by such board, on behalf of said district, (1) by gift or devise, (2) by purchase for cash, by purchase by installment payments with or without a mortgage, by entering into lease-purchase agreements, by lease with or without option to purchase, or, (3) by appropriation. In furtherance of the use and enjoyment of the lands controlled by it, the board may accept donations of money or other property, or may act as trustees of land, money, or other property, and use and administer the same as stipulated by the donor, or as provided in the trust agreement. The terms of each such donation or trust shall first be approved by the probate court before acceptance by the board. In case of appropriation, the proceedings shall be instituted in the name of the board, and shall be conducted in the manner provided in sections [163.01](#) to [163.22](#), inclusive, of the Revised Code.

Early History of MetroParks Land Acquisition

- Volney Rogers decided that Mill Creek and adjacent lands should not be industrialized but rather protected for all to enjoy
- Volney wrote the groundbreaking legislation and persuaded the Ohio legislature to pass an act authorizing the creation of park districts
- Youngstown voters passed a levy for such a park district, establishing the Youngstown Township Park District in April 1891; first park district in the state; no land holdings
- Volney's initial focus was on the northerly end of Mill Creek and directly adjacent lands totaling approximately 400 acres

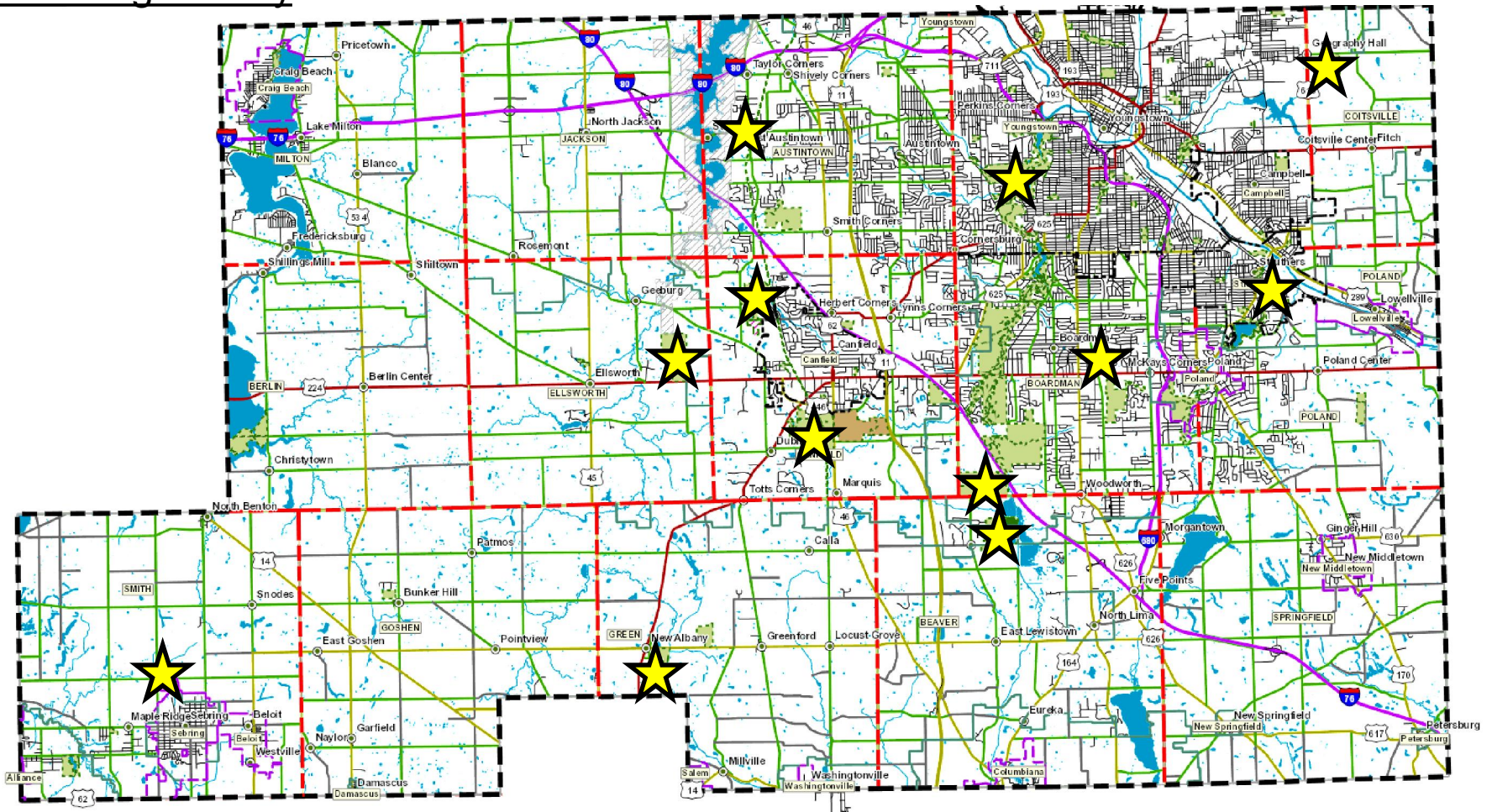


Early History of Land Acquisition

Early History of Land Acquisition

- Volney began the process of “persuading” 196 land owners to sell their private property for creation of the park
- First two properties were acquired in July 1891 (6.23 acres, David & Hannah Houston, \$326) and (17.73 acres, Nancy Smith, \$886)
- Not all of the property owners were “willing” sellers; March 1892 six parcels were appropriated through the Probate Court; August 1892 four parcels were appropriated; March 1894 six parcels were appropriated

Mahoning County



- **Properties/Facilities**
 - Twelve (12) separate locations
 - 7 Townships
 - 3 Cities
 - 1 Village
- **Acreage**
 - 4,462 acres owned
 - 343 acres leased
 - 527 acres under Conservation Easement
- **Land Uses**
 - Active Recreation
 - Passive Recreation
 - Preserves
 - Working Farm
 - Bikeway
 - Equestrian



Mill Creek Park

■ General

- Established 1891
- City of Youngstown & Boardman Township
- 2,657 acres

■ Major Facilities

- Fellows Riverside Gardens
- James L. Wick, Jr. Recreation Area
- Lily Pond
- Mill Creek Golf Course
- Ford Nature Center
- Lakes (Glacier, Cohasset & Newport)
- Volney Rogers Field
- Scholl Recreation Area

■ Notable Structures & Features

- Suspension Bridge (1895)
- Parapet Bridge (1913)
- Volney Rogers Statue (1920)
- Pioneer Pavilion (1821/1893)
- Lanterman's Mill (1845/1985)
- Log Cabin (1816/1863/1934)



MetroParks Properties/Facilities

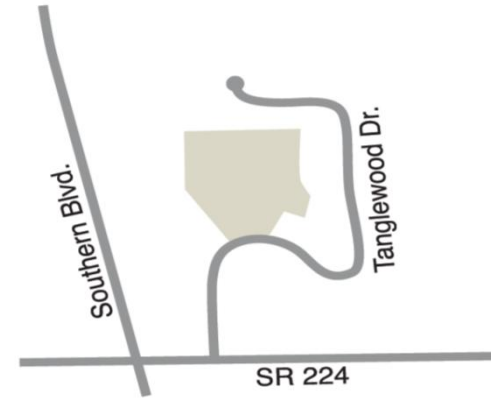
Cranberry Run Headwaters

■ General

- Boardman Township
- Tanglewood Drive
- Established 2003
- 26.19 acres
- Acquired by the Mahoning River Consortium through the Clean Ohio Conservation Fund and Mahoning County Land Bank

■ Notable Features

- Headwaters of Cranberry Run (tributary to Mill Creek)
- Preservation Area
- Wetland Habitat
- Currently no improvements



MetroParks Properties/Facilities

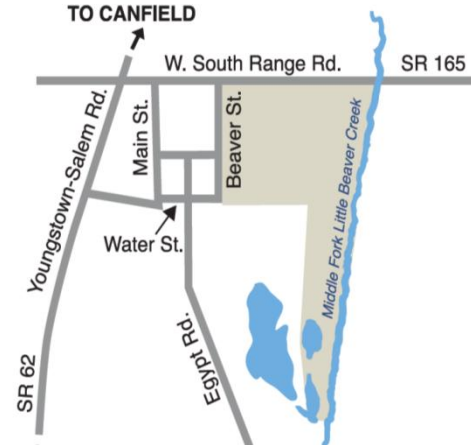
Egypt Swamp Preserve

■ General

- Green Township
- West South Range Road (SR 165)
- Established 2013
- 76.51 acres
- Acquired by Western Reserve Land Conservancy through the Clean Ohio Conservation Fund; donated to the MetroParks at no cost

■ Notable Features

- Middle Fork Little Beaver Creek
- Preservation Area
- Wetland Habitat
- Currently no improvements



MetroParks Properties/Facilities

MetroParks Farm

■ General

- Canfield Township
- Established 1990
- 407.07 acres
- 268.28 acres leased from Mahoning County Commissioners
- 138.79 acres owned by MetroParks
- Majority of owned property was acquired through Clean Ohio Conservation Fund grants

■ Notable Features

- Administration Office
- Education Building
- Agricultural Fields
- Woodland Habitat
- Wetland Habitat
- Two Ponds
- Natural Playground
- Trailhead for MetroParks Bikeway
- Hiking Trails
- Recycling Center (partnership with Mahoning County Green Team)



MetroParks Properties/Facilities

MetroParks Bikeway

■ General

- Austintown Township, City of Canfield, Canfield Township, Green Township
- Established 1999
- 136.37 acres
- Majority of property acquired through a 100% federal Surface Transportation Program grant (no cost to the MetroParks)
- 10.6 miles of asphalt paved trail
- Trumbull County line south to Western Reserve Road

■ Notable Features

- Kirk Road Trailhead
- Mahoning Avenue Overpass
- I-80 Tunnel
- Spur trail connections to four residential neighborhoods
- Spur trail to Canfield High School

■ Proposed Extension

- Western Reserve Road to the Village of Washingtonville
- 6.4 miles of asphalt paved trail



MetroParks Properties/Facilities



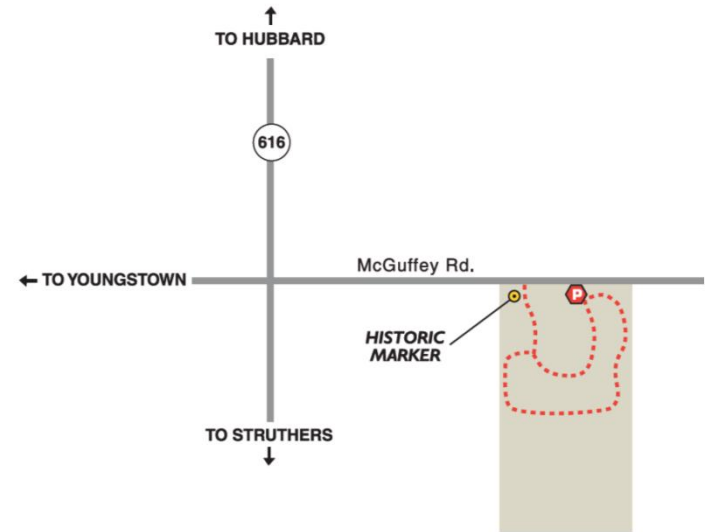
McGuffey Wildlife Preserve

■ General

- Coitsville Township
- McGuffey Road, east of SR 616
- Established 1998
- 78.52 acres
- Donated by the William Holmes McGuffey Historical Society

■ Notable Features

- National Historic Landmark -- McGuffey Historical Monument
- Woodland Habitat
- Grassland/Meadow Habitat
- Wetland Habitat
- Pond
- Glacier Drumlin
- Hiking Trails



MetroParks Properties/Facilities

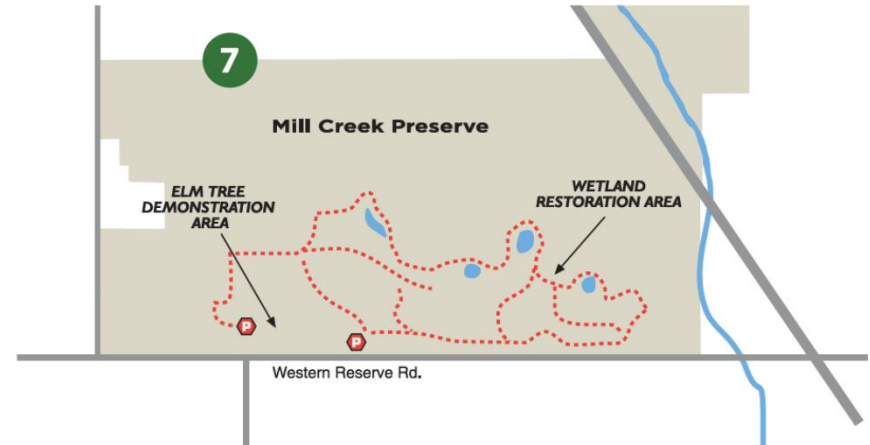
Mill Creek Preserve

■ General

- Boardman Township
- Western Reserve Rd. and Tippecanoe Rd.
- Established 2005
- 328.29 acres
- Acquired through the Clean Ohio Conservation Fund and the Water Resource Restoration Sponsor Program (no cost to the MetroParks)

■ Notable Features

- Woodland Habitat
- Wetland Habitat
- Grassland/Prairie Habitat
- Multiple Ponds – Aquatic Habitat
- Elm Tree Demonstration Area (partnership with the Men's Garden Club of Youngstown)
- Hiking Trails



MetroParks Properties/Facilities

Mill Creek Wildlife Sanctuary

■ General

- Beaver Township
- Calla Road
- Established 2004
- 264.23 acres
- Acquired through the Clean Ohio Conservation Fund and ODNR NatureWorks (minimal cost to the MetroParks)

■ Notable Features

- Bald Eagle Nest
- 22 Ponds (160 acres) providing a diverse Aquatic and Wetland Habitat
- Managed for ecological biodiversity, specifically targeting shore birds
- Over 240 species of birds identified, 47 of which listed as endangered, threatened or species of concern
- Woodland Habitat
- Grassland/Meadow Habitat
- Observation Deck



MetroParks Properties/Facilities

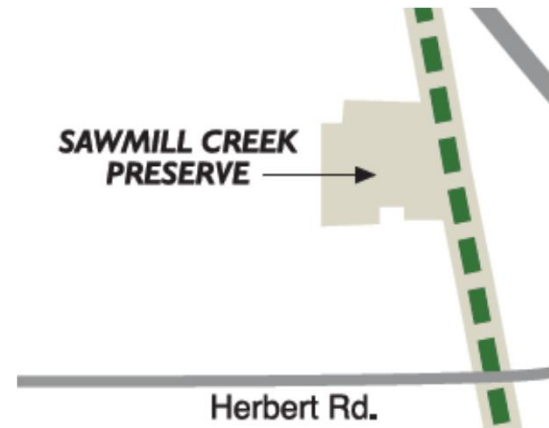
Sawmill Creek Preserve

■ General

- Canfield Township
- South Turner Road; MetroParks Bikeway
- Established 2001
- 153.88 acres
- Acquired through the Water Resource Restoration Sponsor Program (no cost to the MetroParks)

■ Notable Features

- Sawmill Creek (stream habitat) with exposed sandstone/shale rock formations; a tributary to Meander Reservoir
- Woodland Habitat
- Wetland Habitat
- Grassland/Meadow Habitat



MetroParks Properties/Facilities

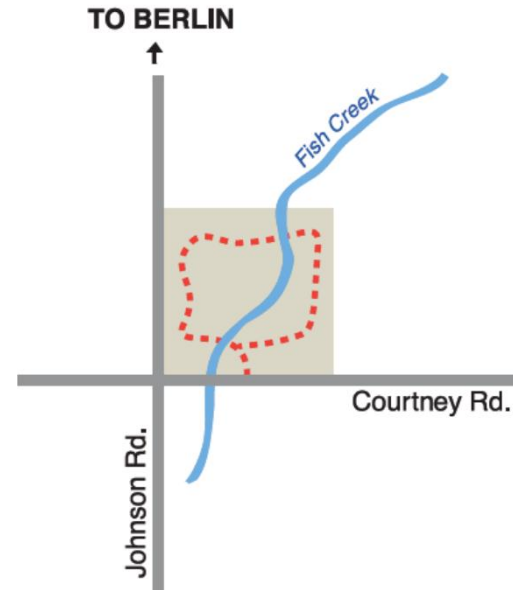
Sebring Woods

■ General

- Village of Sebring
- Courtney Road and Johnson Road
- Established 2010
- 39.00 acres
- Acquired through the Clean Ohio Conservation Fund (no cost to the MetroParks)

■ Notable Features

- Fish Creek (stream habitat)
- Woodland Habitat
- Forested Wetland Habitat



Vickers Nature Preserve

■ General

- Ellsworth Township
- US 224
- Established 1992
- 261.65 acres

■ Notable Features

- 47 acres leased to the Buckeye Horse Park Association for equestrian activities
- Pond Habitat
- Woodland Habitat
- Wetland Habitat
- Grassland/Meadow Habitat
- Equestrian/Hiking Trails



MetroParks Properties/Facilities

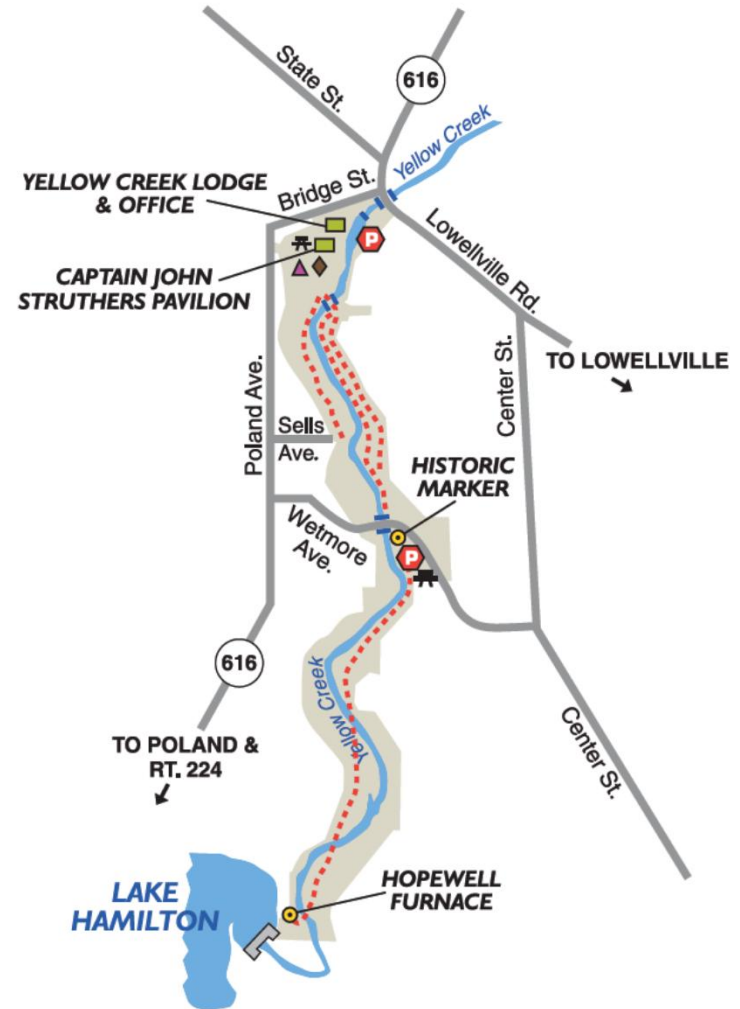
Yellow Creek Park

■ General

- City of Struthers
- Established 1991
- 76.00 acres
- 38.84 acres leased from the City of Struthers
- 36 acres leased from Aqua Ohio

■ Notable Features

- Yellow Creek (stream habitat) with exposed sandstone/shale rock formations
- Hopewell Furnace
- Yellow Creek Lodge
- Active Recreation (tennis courts, basketball court, playground, horseshoe courts)
- Woodland Habitat
- Hiking Trails



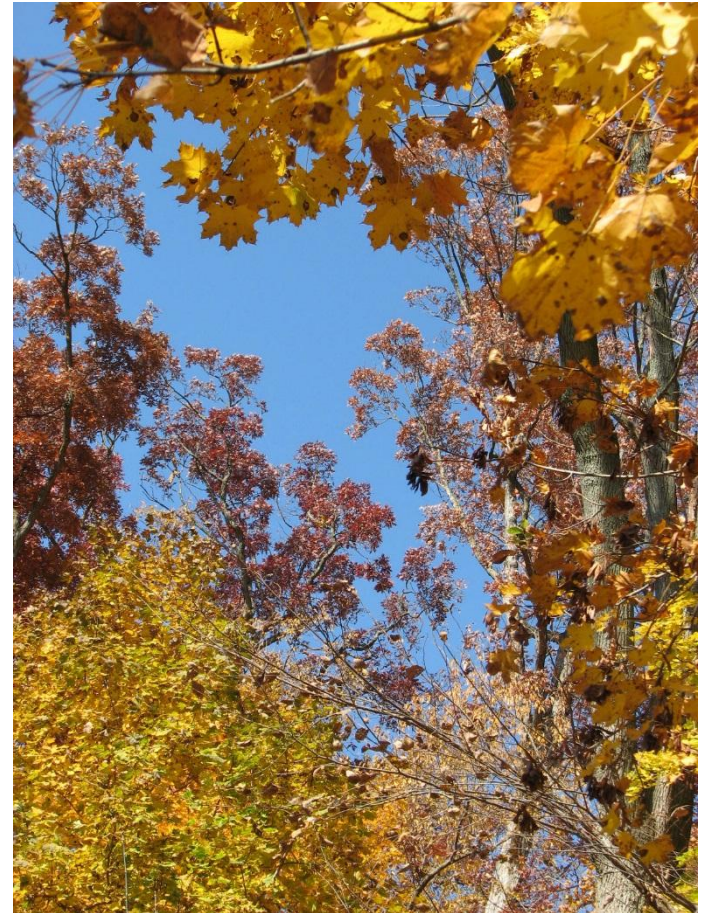
■ Conservation Easements

- 527 acres
- 12 Riparian Easements on Mill Creek, Yellow Creek, and various tributaries of Mill Creek, including Indian Run, Cranberry Run and Axe Factory Run
- 3 Wetland Easements
- Easements acquired through the Clean Ohio Conservation Fund and Ohio EPA Clean Water 319 grants
- Most of the easements are co-held by the Mahoning County Soil & Water Conservation District and Mill Creek MetroParks



Land Acquisition 2007-2017

- Donations
 - 88.64 acres
 - Private Estates, Corporations, Western Reserve Land Conservancy, Youngstown Neighborhood Development Corporation, Friends of Fellows Riverside Gardens
- Mahoning County Land Reutilization Corp.
 - 5.81 acres
 - 29 separate property parcels
 - Adjacent to existing MetroParks properties/facilities
- Clean Ohio Conservation Fund
 - 144.85 acres
 - 9 separate property parcels
 - All adjacent to existing properties/facilities with the exception of Sebring Woods



Ohio Revised Code Section 1545

1545.12 Sale or Lease of Lands - Notice - Approval by Probate Court

(A) Except as provided in division (B) of this section, if the board of park commissioners finds that any lands that it has acquired are not necessary for the purposes for which they were acquired by the board, it may sell and dispose of the lands upon terms the board considers advisable. The board also may lease or permit the use of any lands for purposes not inconsistent with the purposes for which the lands were acquired, and upon terms the board considers advisable. **No lands shall be sold pursuant to this division without first giving notice of the board's intention to sell the lands by publication once a week for four consecutive weeks in a newspaper of general circulation in the district or as provided in section 7.16 of the Revised Code.** The notice shall contain an accurate description of the lands and shall state the time and place at which sealed bids will be received for the purchase of the lands, and the lands shall not thereafter be sold at private sale for less than the best and highest bid received without giving further notice as specified in this division.

(B) (1) After compliance with division (B)(2) of this section, the board of park commissioners may sell land upon terms the board considers advisable to any park district established under section 511.18 or Chapter 1545. of the Revised Code, **any political subdivision of the state, the state or any department or agency of the state, or any department or agency of the federal government for conservation uses or for park or recreation purposes** without the necessity of having to comply with division (A) of this section.

(B) (2) Before the board of park commissioners may sell land under division (B)(1) of this section, **the board shall offer the land for sale to each of the following public agencies** that is authorized to acquire, develop, and maintain land for conservation uses or for park or recreation purposes: each park district established under section 511.18 or Chapter 1545. of the Revised Code or political subdivision in which the land is located, each park district that is so established and that adjoins or each political subdivision that adjoins a park district so established or political subdivision in which the land is located, and each agency or department of the state or of the federal government that operates parks or conservation or recreation areas near the land. The board shall make the offer by giving a written notice that the land is available for sale, by first class mail, to these public agencies. A failure of delivery of the written notice to any of these public agencies does not invalidate any proceedings for the sale of land under this division. Any public agency that is so notified and that wishes to purchase the land shall make an offer to the board in writing not later than sixty days after receiving the written notice. If there is only one offer to purchase the land made in that sixty-day period, the board need not hold a public hearing on the offer. The board shall accept the offer only if it determines that acceptance of the offer will result in the best public use of the land. If there is more than one offer to purchase the land made in that sixty-day period, the board shall not accept any offer until the board holds a public hearing on the offers. If, after the hearing, the board decides to accept an offer, it shall accept the offer that it determines will result in the best public use of the land.

(C) **No lands shall be sold under this section at either public or private sale without the approval of the probate court** of the county in which the lands are situated.

Questions or Comments?



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