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## **SPECIAL GORGE DAM PROGRAM SERIES KICKS OFF NEXT MONTH**

Beginning in February, Summit Metro Parks will host special programs every month in or about Gorge Metro Park, located in Cuyahoga Falls and Akron, where there is a push to remove an obsolete 105-year-old concrete dam.

The "Free the Falls" series already includes a number of hikes and talks through May, and more will be scheduled for summer and fall. The series name refers to the city's namesake falls, which have been buried beneath the dam pool for generations.

Said to be the biggest impediment to a cleaner and healthier Cuyahoga River, the 429-foot-wide and 57-foot-tall Gorge Dam was built in 1911 and 1912 to generate power. Hydropower operations ceased in 1958, and the dam pool last provided cooling to a nearby coal-fired plant until 1991. Meanwhile, dams in Kent, Munroe Falls and elsewhere in Cuyahoga Falls have been removed or modified in recent years.

Unless otherwise indicated, the following events will begin in Gorge Metro Park, at 1160 Front St., Cuyahoga Falls:

Saturday, February 18, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

### **GEOLOGY OF THE GORGE**

Join a naturalist to learn how the different rock layers in the park were formed, and about the forces that have shaped those rocks ever since.

Thursday, February 23, 1 - 3 p.m.

### **CRYSTAL PALACE HIKE**

Every year beautiful, colorful icicles form along the Cuyahoga River, creating a "Crystal Palace." Join a naturalist and discover first-hand the beauty of water in winter. We'll still hike if there's no snow or ice.

Sunday, February 26, 1 - 3 p.m.

CRYSTAL PALACE HIKE

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Thursday, March 16, 2 - 3:30 p.m.

GORGE HISTORY HIKE

Hike with a naturalist and learn about the history of the Gorge.

Thursday, March 30, 6 - 7 p.m.

BRINGING DOWN THE DAM

Hear the interwoven story of the Gorge Dam, the Cuyahoga River and Gorge Metro Park. The power of gravity, scenic beauty, competing economies, contamination and restoration – this tale has it all.

*LOCATION: F.A. Seiberling Nature Realm / Visitors Center: 1828 Smith Rd., Akron.*

Saturday, April 8, 1 - 3 p.m.

GEOLOGY OF THE GORGE

Join a naturalist to walk Gorge Trail and learn how the Gorge was formed, including the different types of rock layers found there.

Wednesday, April 12, 1 - 3 p.m.

HIKE THE GORGE

Hike the rugged Gorge Trail and learn about the nature and history of the Cuyahoga River.

Saturday, April 22, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

THE CUYAHOCA RIVER: A FIERY PAST

Many people recall the Cuyahoga River catching fire in 1969, but did you know that the river burned many times throughout history? Walk along the Crooked River and learn its story of pollution and redemption.

Thursday, April 27, 6 - 7 p.m.

THE HISTORY OF GORGE METRO PARK

Join historians to learn about the exciting history of Gorge Metro Park. From roller coasters to dance halls, this park once had it all. You'll also learn about plans to remove the Gorge Dam and restore a free-flowing river. *LOCATION: F.A. Seiberling Nature Realm / Visitors Center: 1828 Smith Rd., Akron.*

Thursday, May 18, 2 - 3:30 p.m.

GORGE HISTORY HIKE

Learn about past hidden treasures of the Gorge and discover some that are still here today.

Saturday, May 20, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

GEOLOGY OF THE GORGE

Join a naturalist to walk Glens Trail and learn how the Gorge was formed, including the different types of rock layers found there.

Saturday, May 20, 2 - 3 p.m.

A RIVERDAY WALK THROUGH TIME

Enjoy an easy hike in the Upper Gorge. We will meet at the restored site of a 19th Century park that was once Northeast Ohio's most-visited attraction, and see the results of dam removal elsewhere on the Cuyahoga River. *LOCATION: High Bridge Glens Park: 1817 Front St., Cuyahoga Falls.*

For more information about these programs, call 330-865-8065 or visit [summitmetroparks.org](http://summitmetroparks.org).

To schedule a program or presentation about the Gorge Dam for your civic, school or church group, email Elaine Marsh, watershed specialist, at [emarsh@summitmetroparks.org](mailto:emarsh@summitmetroparks.org).

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Summit Metro Parks manages 14,300 acres, including 16 parks, several conservation areas and more than 125 miles of trails, with 22.4 miles of the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail. Annual attendance averages 5.2 million visits.

-[summitmetroparks.org](http://summitmetroparks.org)-



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