

Metro Parks, Serving Summit County
ANNUAL REPORT



50th Fall Hiking Spree

2013
Two Thousand and Thirteen

MetrO Parks
SERVING SUMMIT COUNTY

2013 ANNUAL REPORT

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330-865-8060

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330-865-8047

summitmetroparks.org

PARKS & MULTIPURPOSE TRAILS

Cascade Valley Metro Park
Deep Lock Quarry Metro Park
F.A. Seiberling Nature Realm
Firestone Metro Park
Furnace Run Metro Park
Goodyear Heights Metro Park
Gorge Metro Park
Hampton Hills Metro Park
Liberty Park
Munroe Falls Metro Park
O'Neil Woods Metro Park
Sand Run Metro Park
Silver Creek Metro Park
Springfield Bog Metro Park

Bike & Hike Trail
Freedom Trail
Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail

*Visit our website for addresses
and directions.*

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Our Mission

The mission of
Metro Parks,
Serving Summit
County is to
acquire, conserve
and sustainably
manage natural
resources to provide
the public with
passive outdoor
recreational
and educational
opportunities
through a regional
system of natural-
area parks.



Metro Parks, Serving
Summit County manages
11,500 acres, including 14
developed 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.

Welcome



(l-r) Park commissioners:

Roland H. Bauer, **Jane E. Bond** and **Mark A. Spisak**

Board of Park Commissioners

On November 5, 2013, three quarters of Summit County voters approved a renewal of the 1.46-mill Metro Parks real-estate tax. We are grateful for the support and the belief in our mission.

With your investment, we will continue to offer clean and safe trails, educational programs and special events, and natural-area parks in which to view wildlife and explore the outdoors.

This report is a brief summary of accomplishments in 2013. We invite you to see more examples of your public dollars at work, in person in the Metro Parks.

Thank you for your continued support.

We're Your Back Yard

Senior Staff



Keith D. Shy Director-Secretary

Loretta Bowers Chief of Human Resources & Administration

Nathan Eppink Chief of Marketing & Communications

Shannon Hasenstab Executive Secretary

Neal Hess Chief of Special Projects

Michael Johnson Chief of Natural Resources

Lisa King Chief of Planning & Development

Robert Peters Chief of Operations

Douglas Shepard Chief of Rangers

Economic Impact

A 2013 study conducted by The University of Akron and Lux Research, LLC revealed the park district's annual economic impact:

- Increase property values by nearly \$42 million
- Up to \$17 million in health benefits to residents
- Up to \$3 million in Summit County tourism

Improvements

The following is a partial list of projects completed in 2013.

FIRESTONE METRO PARK | 44319

- Removed old boardwalks, improved the shoreline and constructed a new T-dock for youth fishing at Little Turtle Pond



FREEDOM TRAIL | 4 miles

- Opened Phase I — between Middlebury Road and Tallmadge Circle — of this planned eight-mile trail that will connect Akron and Kent

FURNACE RUN METRO PARK | 44286

- Installed new tile in Brushwood Pavilion

GOODYEAR HEIGHTS METRO PARK | 44305

- Planted trees, replaced cooking grills and made repairs to the Alder Trail boardwalk



HAMPTON HILLS

METRO PARK | 44223

- Opened a new public archery range with six shooting stations

F.A. SEIBERLING NATURE REALM | 44313

- Planted new trees and perennials, and installed a butterfly garden behind the visitors center

MUNROE FALLS METRO PARK | 44262

- Constructed a new boardwalk in the Lake Area, replaced the bathhouse roof and built a new open-air shelter in the Tallmadge Meadows Area



SAND RUN METRO PARK | 44313

- Replaced windows in the 1930s-era Mingo Pavilion

SILVER CREEK METRO PARK | 44203

- Opened a new public archery range with six shooting stations and built a new footbridge on Chippewa Trail

OHIO & ERIE CANAL TOWPATH TRAIL | 22.4 miles

- Resurfaced several miles of the trail and installed 10 historic mileposts

DISTRICT-WIDE

- Completed boundary surveys and bridge inspections, installed new traffic counters, removed hazard trees and repaired storm damage

Programs & Events

EDUCATION

Naturalists led 979 programs, teaching 32,338 visitors of all ages about environmental education, recreational activities and the park district's natural and cultural history.

Scouts earned badges and students met Ohio's science

standards through experiential learning in an outdoor setting.



More than 66,000 visitors learned about nature with educational exhibits, native live animals, events and naturalist interactions at

F.A. Seiberling Nature Realm. Gift shop sales increased by 32 percent.

SPECIAL EVENTS

In 2013, more than 2,000 visitors earned rewards during the 10th annual **Spree For All** hiking event (May-June) on flat, easy trails. More than 650 runners participated in the 2nd annual **Mother's Day 5K** at Munroe Falls. Nearly 1,000 riders completed the inaugural **Summer Biking Spree** (July-August) on multipurpose trails. More than 12,000 people earned rewards during the 50th annual **Fall Hiking Spree** (September-





November) on easy, moderate and difficult trails. Thousands of visitors enjoyed free hayrides and more at the **Fall Family Outings**, held at Goodyear Heights and Silver Creek in October.

**SPREE
FOR ALL**

**SUMMER
BIKING
SPREE**

**FALL
FAMILY
OUTINGS**

**Mother's
Day 5K**

**FALL
HIKING
SPREE**

Resource Management

CITIZEN SCIENCE

- Established a new web-based program allowing visitors and volunteers to upload wildlife sightings on iNaturalist.org

COYOTE RESEARCH

- Concluded a three-year research project, made public presentations and published a short documentary on YouTube



STREAM RESTORATION

- Completed design and engineering for the continued restoration of Pond Brook in Liberty Park

Safety & Security

- Rangers tallied 10,900 hours of foot patrols and 625 hours of bicycle patrols, resulting in more than 59,000 contacts with visitors.
- The Bike Patrol, which consists of more than 80 volunteers, rode the Bike & Hike and Towpath trails to offer assistance to visitors.
- Thirty-five lifeguards kept watch during the swim season at Munroe Falls and Silver Creek.



Volunteers

More than 1,000 volunteers gave 32,422 service hours. Roles included support of customer service, resource management, interpretation, rangers and operations.



Financial Summary & Fund Balance

2013

Fund Balance on January 1 \$16,485,380

Resources

Taxes \$15,922,673

Grants*/Special Revenue.....\$915,491

Donations.....\$24,539

Investment Income.....\$24,354

Swimming Fees\$182,999

Merchandise Sales & Concessions.....\$114,089

Programs & Services\$22,809

Pavilion/Shelter/Property Rentals \$177,568

Other Receipts \$486,992

Total Resources **\$17,871,512**

Total Resources & Fund Balance \$34,356,892

Expenditures

Wages & Salaries.....\$6,185,282

Employee Benefits\$2,432,990

Administration/Operations.....\$3,304,416

Development & Capital Improvements.....\$432,233

Other Expenses\$583,922

Equipment\$473,115

Land Acquisition \$13,166

Total Expenditures **\$13,425,123**

WHY A FUND BALANCE?

Metro Parks, Serving Summit County has received nearly \$20 million in grants — for various projects — since 2007. The district is leveraging tax dollars to expand the protection of natural resources and your enjoyment of the outdoors.

*** A number of projects, programs and initiatives would not have been possible without grants from the following:**

F.W. Albrecht Family Foundation • Clean Ohio Trails Fund • Federal Highway Administration, Transportation Enhancement Program • Northern Ohio Golf Charities Foundation • Ohio Department of Natural Resources • Ohio EPA Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance • Ohio EPA Division of Surface Water • Ohio & Erie Canal Association • Summit County Community Grant Program



YOUR PUBLIC DOLLARS AT WORK

Your Metro Parks are funded by a small Summit County real-estate tax.

MetroParks

SERVING SUMMIT COUNTY

975 Treaty Line Rd.
Akron, OH 44313-5837



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