



Your Back Yard for 100 Years

NEWS RELEASE

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SMP CHIEF OF CONSERVATION MICHAEL JOHNSON WINS PRESTIGIOUS NATIONAL AWARD

Summit Metro Parks Chief of Conservation Michael Johnson has received a conservation commendation award from The Garden Club of America. Johnson accepted the honors locally on June 28 at Portage Country Club in Akron during a ceremony of the Akron Garden Club.

“Mike’s unparalleled passion for conservation can be seen in his commitment to the dozens of projects he has successfully completed in his career,” said Summit Metro Parks Executive Director Lisa King. “His work has had an immeasurable benefit to the residents of Summit County and beyond, and we’re thrilled to see him recognized at the national level.”

Johnson was nominated for the commendation by The Akron Garden Club. From there, he was selected by the Club at the national level through a competitive process for recognition of non-members throughout the country who have made significant contributions to advancing the Club’s mission.

Among his numerous achievements, Johnson has guided endangered species recovery projects for over 1,150 populations of 226 rare, threatened or endangered species, including the federally listed Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat and northern monkshood. In one of the state’s largest stream restoration projects, he recently completed the final stage of a 15-year effort to restore five miles of stream and 100 acres of wetlands at Pond Brook in Liberty Park (Twinsburg) – a project almost entirely funded by external grant funding that Johnson secured.

Johnson joined Summit Metro Parks in 2002 as the park district's first natural resource management specialist. Johnson's deep understanding of how land conservation and resource preservation are interwoven with the human experience guides his leadership of an 11-person staff of natural and cultural resource specialists. In 2019, Johnson was honored with the Jack Hanna Resource Conservation Award from the Ohio Parks and Recreation Association (OPRA).

For more information about Summit Metro Parks, visit summitmetroparks.org. For more information about the Garden Club of America, visit <https://www.gcamerica.org/>.

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Established in 1921, Summit Metro Parks is celebrating its centennial anniversary in 2021. The park district manages more than 14,000 acres throughout 16 parks, several conservation areas and more than 150 miles of trails, including 22 miles of the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail. Annual attendance in 2020 was 6 million visits. Visit us online at summitmetroparks.org.



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