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PARK DISTRICT'S CHIEF OF CONSERVATION RECOGNIZED WITH PRESTIGIOUS JACK HANNA AWARD

Summit Metro Parks Chief of Conservation Mike Johnson has received the 2019 Jack Hanna Resource Conservation Award from the Ohio Parks and Recreation Association (OPRA). This prestigious statewide award is presented to an OPRA member who has dedicated his or her career to the conservation of natural resources, both in their career in parks and recreation and in other areas.

“Mike is a teacher, collaborator and connector with unparalleled passion for conservation,” said Summit Metro Parks Executive Director Lisa King. “He is a treasured member of our leadership team and his work has had an immeasurable benefit to the residents of Summit County and beyond.”

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.

Johnson will accept his award on February 4, 2020 at the OPRA annual conference in Sandusky.

For more information about the OPRA Awards of Excellence, visit <https://opraonline.org/opra-awards-of-excellence/>.

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Summit Metro Parks manages more than 14,000 acres, including 16 parks, several conservation areas and more than 150 miles of trails, with 22 miles of the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail. Annual attendance averages 5 million visits. Visit us online at summitmetroparks.org.



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