

A hiker wearing a green shirt, brown pants, and a tan cap is crossing a stream using a fallen log. He has a large green backpack and is using trekking poles. The background is a dense forest with green foliage.

FIVE RIVERS
METROPARKS



2015 ANNUAL REPORT

DESTINATION: OUTDOORS

CREATING A WORLD-CLASS PARK SYSTEM FOR THE COMMUNITY



World-class communities include world-class parks, trails, natural areas and park-related attractions. People who live in world-class communities have a high quality of life, along with diverse opportunities to connect with nature and enjoy active, healthy outdoor lifestyles. In addition, world-class communities understand these outdoor amenities are key to creating the type of vibrant place where people want to live, work and play.

During 2015, Five Rivers MetroParks worked to ensure residents' and stakeholders' voices were heard as the organization developed its first community-driven 10-year comprehensive master plan. The community provided valuable input for the plan through a statistically valid survey, public meetings, interviews, focus groups, intercept surveys and online comments.

Throughout this community input process, residents and leaders consistently stated they value MetroParks and the benefits it provides. This support mirrors a recent study conducted by the National Recreation and Park Association, which found that 83 percent of Americans personally benefit from local parks.

This comprehensive master plan will guide MetroParks for the next decade and beyond. It's a long-term vision created by the community, for the community. It ensures your park system is addressing community priorities and operates as efficiently as possible. The plan also continues MetroParks' focus on protecting the region's natural heritage and providing outdoor experiences that inspire a personal connection with nature.

As you read this 2015 annual report, you'll learn about many accomplishments and improvements already completed or underway as part of the implementation of MetroParks' strategic plan, now in its third year. MetroParks completed enhancements to its trails, one of the primary ways our community experiences the outdoors. MetroParks continued its focus on conservation efforts, fine-tuned programs that help you connect with nature, began construction on new outdoor facilities, and partnered with a variety of organizations to extend its mission and vision.

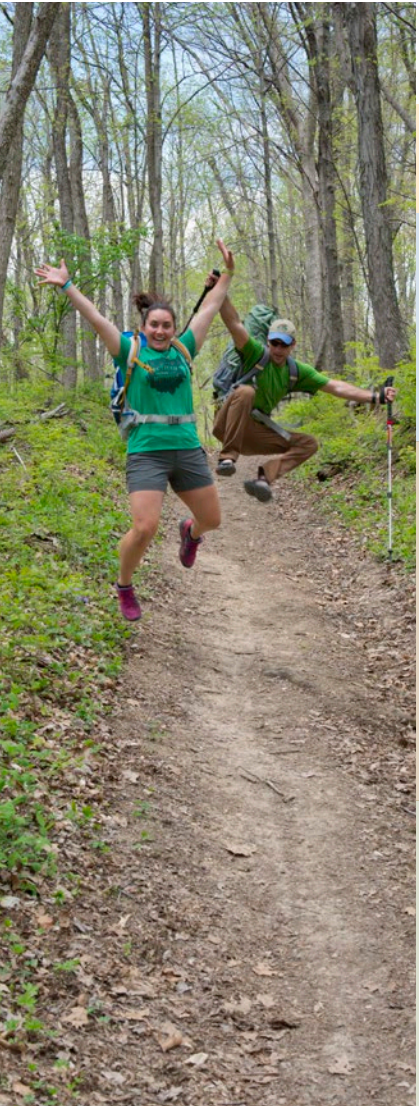
Also in 2015, MetroParks applied for CAPRA accreditation. CAPRA is the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies, which oversees a systematic evaluation of management and operation practices in 10 major categories of best practice standards. It is a quality assurance and improvement process that demonstrates the commitment to the agency's community, volunteers, partners and employees. We look forward in 2016 to joining the short but prestigious list of park systems nationwide that have successfully completed CAPRA accreditation!

All of this is part of providing the world-class park district this community deserves. For more than 50 years, Five Rivers MetroParks has provided the Dayton region with high-quality outdoor experiences, thanks to support from the citizens of Montgomery County. MetroParks is proud to continue this long tradition and looks forward to implementing the plans developed in recent years to make our community even better — and ensure it remains a world-class home for generations to come.

Rebecca A. Benná
Rebecca A. Benná
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Cover Photo:
Jordan Hart

DESTINATION: OUTDOORS



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MISSION

To protect the region's natural heritage and provide outdoor experiences that inspire a personal connection with nature.

VISION

To be the conservation leader of a vital, active, nature-based community.

PURPOSE

To protect natural areas, parks and river corridors and promote the conservation and use of these lands and waterways for the ongoing benefit of the people in the region.

OUR VALUES

- Excellence
- Community
- Innovation
- Fun
- Integrity
- Commitment
- Fiscal Responsibility
- Respect
- Collaboration
- Professional Growth
- Diversity
- Sustainability



Photo by Jan Underwood



SECTION

OVERVIEW

Your Parks by the Numbers

OVERVIEW

BY THE NUMBERS

FIVE RIVERS METROPARKS INCLUDES:

15,833	Acres
90%	of the land is maintained in its natural state, meaning the land is managed so habitat for plants and wildlife is a priority. Doing so preserves clean water and air, supports plant and wildlife biodiversity, and provides beautiful places where people can connect with nature.
2,800	Acres in Conservation Easements
12	Conservation Areas
25	Facilities
42	Miles of River Corridor
160	Miles of Managed Trails (hiking, biking, mountain biking and horseback riding)
5	Outdoor Recreation Facilities (MoMBA Mountain Biking Area, Carriage Hill Riding Center, Twin Valley Trail, Mad River Run, Disc Golf Course)
8	Park Features (Inventors Walk, Ice Rink, Butterfly House, Tree Tower, Historical Farm, Twin Valley Welcome Center, Possum Creek Edible Farm)

IN 2015, FIVE RIVERS METROPARKS SUPPORTED

3.3	Million Visitors Five Rivers MetroParks was named the No. 1 most visited attraction in 2015 by the <i>Dayton Business Journal</i> .
735	Public Programs
2,022	Shelter and Camping Permits
9,085	Children Served Through Tours
253,290	Participants in Five Rivers MetroParks Programs and Events
183	Speaking Engagements and Tours, Reaching 15,750 Participants
640	Nature Programs, Reaching 13,881 Participants
1,086	Programs Targeted Specifically at Youth and Their Families, Reaching 45,179 Participants

THE METROPARKS RANGER DEPARTMENT

Includes **33** Sworn Rangers, all commissioned by the State of Ohio with the same authority as any police officer or state trooper. Rangers patrol the parks 24 hours a day, seven days a week, including holidays, and work with other local law enforcement agencies to ensure your parks and surrounding areas are safe for all visitors to enjoy.

IN 2015, PARK SERVICES STAFF SPENT MORE THAN:

32,608	Hours Opening and Cleaning Parks
15,598	Hours Maintaining Facilities
7,834	Hours Maintaining Vehicles and Equipment
2,912	Hours Maintaining Your Recreational Trails
2,773	Hours Maintaining Your Natural Surface Trails (Hiking, Horse and Mountain Biking)
3,241	Hours Planting and Maintaining Trees
12,398	Hours Enhancing the Parks' Horticulture
2,160	Hours Talking to the Public About Your Parks
2,604	Hours Working with Volunteers
6,265	Hours On Animal Care and Agriculture



SECTION

THE THREE PILLARS OF FIVE RIVERS METROPARKS

- Conservation
- Education
- Recreation

THE THREE PILLARS OF THE FIVE RIVERS METROPARKS

CONSERVATION

LAND MANAGEMENT 101

Natural beauty actually takes a lot of work. You have to trim, spray, fertilize, mulch and sometimes even burn to reveal the healthy glow and promote growth. In 2015, MetroParks staff was busy with a variety of land management strategies as part of its commitment to conserve 90 percent of the land it manages in its natural state.

2015 HIGHLIGHTS:

170 Acres Where Invasive Plants Were Controlled to Promote Native Species

502 Acres of Prairies and Meadows Managed to Preserve Grassland Habitat

20 Acres of Edge Thicket Managed to Provide Foraging Areas for Wildlife

90 Acres of Prairie Burned to Stimulate Native Plants and Control Invasive Plants

15,000 Trees Planted

400 Shrubs Planted

1,000 Wetland Plugs Planted

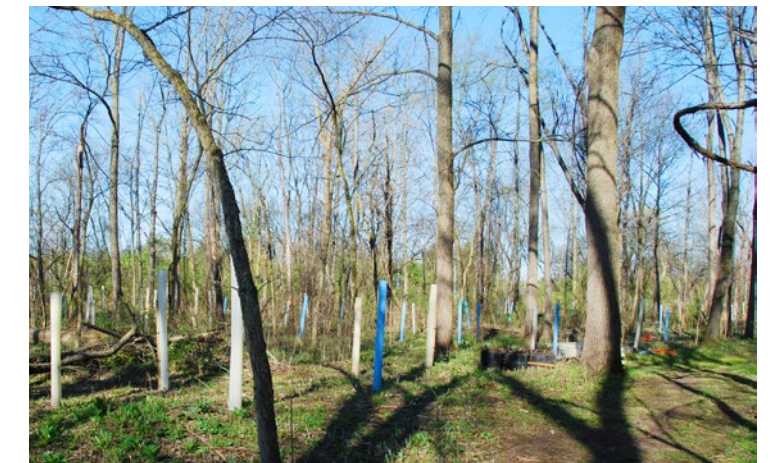


HUFFMAN PRAIRIE STATE NATURAL LANDMARK UPGRADES

Huffman Prairie has seen some rare flyers in its day – from the only place (in the world!) where the Huffman moth has been found to the Wright brothers, who tested their planes in the adjacent field.

In July 2015, Five Rivers MetroParks celebrated this significant natural landmark with a grand opening of the Discover Huffman Prairie Project. The project includes interpretive signs, plant markers and brochures that add a rich layer of educational information about the 112-acre conservation area. Discover Huffman was made possible by an \$11,700 grant from the Ohio Environmental Education Fund and collaboration among MetroParks, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base and the National Park Service.

Five Rivers has been working with these partners to restore and conduct research at the prairie for 25 years. Huffman is now one of the only remnants of original prairie in the country and home to several unusual species of plants and wildlife.



VOLUNTEERS TAKE TO THE FORESTS

An army of volunteers took on the emerald ash borer, honeysuckle and other environmental enemies in 2015.

Community members worked with MetroParks staff in the ongoing campaign to reforest land compromised by invasive plant and insect species. Volunteers collected nuts and seeds for planting, tended to young trees on Seedling Saturdays, and planted 15,000 trees and 400 shrubs. The shrub plantings were made possible by a \$5,000 grant from Sylvia Koons, through The Dayton Foundation, and provide habitat for songbirds and caterpillars, a major food source for the birds.

Some of the seeds collected will be planted on former farmland Five Rivers MetroParks purchased near Germantown MetroPark in 2016. The 107 acres are being transformed into a prairie of plants, many of them milkweed, a favorite of the monarch butterfly. This will attract and sustain pollinators such as bees, bats and butterflies. The project is funded by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and the Clean Ohio Green Space Conservation Fund to protect the dwindling monarch population.

SUSTAINABILITY PLAN COMPLETED

MetroParks is adding some blue to be greener. In summer 2015, a five-year agency-wide Sustainability Plan was completed, and one of the first projects is putting well-marked blue recycling bins at five parks: RiverScape, Wegerzyn, Wesleyan, Hills & Dales and Island. In addition, all staffed facilities were certified as Dayton Regional Green (DRG) businesses. The certification provides guidelines for adopting sustainable workplace practices. Both are part of MetroParks' growing commitment to operating more sustainably and creating a conservation culture.



EDUCATION

GARDENERS SPOKE, METROPARKS LISTENED

Your seeds of inspiration have taken root. After an extensive community survey, MetroParks made some improvements to its gardening programs to give new and experienced gardeners more of what they want. Programs now include a beginner gardening series, presentations on such topics as sustainable gardening and using Ohio's native plants, and activities for the whole family. In addition, garden tours show people how to use MetroParks for inspiration and education.



YOUTH PROGRAM CONTINUES TO THRIVE

Classroom. Community center. Job site. Adventure Central – a youth development program focused on science, nature and healthy lifestyles – was all of these things and more in 2015. Through unstructured time outdoors and structured group activities, participants and their families experience nature in ways that make them happier and healthier. Programs include after-school sessions, day and overnight camps, evening activities for teens, and paid employment. Adventure Central is funded and supported by Five Rivers MetroParks, The Ohio State University Extension, 4-H, University of Dayton, Mathile Family Foundation, Buckeye Health Plan, and other grants and contracts.



KIDS FLOCK TO CONSERVATION PROGRAM

What exactly do you wear to a moth party?

Just ask one of the participants in Five Rivers MetroParks' Conservation Kids program. The two-year-old program continues to attract budding environmentalists with innovative outdoor activities. In addition to hanging out at moth windings, kids ages 3-13 monitored bird nest boxes, tagged butterflies, collected seeds and grew plants. The program helps youth feel more comfortable in nature and gives them tools to protect their planet.

ADVENTURE CENTRAL'S 2015 HIGHLIGHTS:

- More than 225 youth ages 5 through 18 and more than 90 parents and guardians participated in 69,000 hours of programming.
- 19 teenagers held volunteer or paid summer positions at MetroParks as part of the Job Experience and Training (JET) program.
- Older youth helped grow 500 trees and shrubs as part of MetroParks' conservation efforts. Throughout the process teens learned how to identify, collect, prepare, germinate and grow a variety of native species.
- Nearly 200 volunteers contributed 15,000 hours to Adventure Central.

RECREATION

BIKES AND BREAKFAST

Depending on which end of the trip they were eaten, pancakes were either the fuel or the reward for 600 local cyclists on National Bike to Work Day. Cycling enthusiasts converged at RiverScape MetroPark on May 15 for a free breakfast, a tour of the MetroParks Bike Hub and bike talk with lots of cycling-related exhibitors. The bike love didn't stop that day, though. The whole month was devoted to promoting the health and community benefits of getting from here to there with pedal power.



2015 NATIONAL BIKE MONTH HIGHLIGHTS:

- Bike Bucks at the Market: Cycling to the 2nd Street Market gave riders a chance to win \$50 in Market Money.
- Bike for the Health of It: Organized rides on the region's more than 300 miles of bike trails, the nation's largest paved trail network
- Fundamentals of Bicycle Commuting: A nuts-and-bolts lecture on the terminology, laws and equipment every cyclist must know before biking to work
- Wegerzyn Bike Rodeo: Kids learned safety rules, were fitted for free helmets, and received free bike checks from a professional cycle technician.

FIVE RIVERS METROPARKS MARKS A DECADE OF OUTDOOR RECREATION

MetroParks' outdoor recreation initiative celebrated its 10th birthday in 2015 – and, like most 10-year-olds, it's growing like crazy.

The goal to become a leader in outdoor adventure began in 2005, with the outdoor equipment expo known then as GearFest. Now the Midwest Outdoor Experience, this two-day festival draws thousands of outdoor enthusiasts who

come for competitions, demonstrations and connections with other adventure lovers.

Five Rivers MetroParks has defied skeptics who thought it would be a stretch to transform the Miami Valley into the Outdoor Adventure Capital of the Midwest. But MetroParks has launched a mountain biking trail (MoMBA), added a 22-mile backpacking trail, and worked with partners to expand and improve the region's paved trail network, among other things. Outdoor recreation programs offer a progression of skills development and the means to use those skills independently.



MIDWEST OUTDOOR EXPERIENCE THRIVES

Nearly 15,000 people flocked to Five Rivers MetroParks' 10th

Midwest Outdoor Experience in October – and they played hard.

Families showed up at Eastwood MetroPark to inline skate, stand up paddleboard, zip-line, slackline and boulder. They cheered for stunt bikers and freestyle kayakers, competed at disc golf, and shopped for new outdoor gear. Then they relaxed with food and drink and live music from local bands. Wagner Subaru and a host of other local businesses and organizations sponsored the event.

2015 HIGHLIGHTS:

- Nearly 1,700 individuals tried at least one experience area.
- 241 individuals joined the club membership drive and made a commitment to pursue their love of outdoor recreation.
- 448 volunteers gave 1,120 hours of service to set up, tear down and help the event run smoothly.

ADVENTURERS SPEAK

Four outdoor gurus shared inspiring stories of climbs, rides, hikes, snorkels, runs and more at the Adventure Speaker Series in 2015, presented by Five Rivers MetroParks and Wright State University. More than 400 people attended the series, held in January and February.



SECTION

WORK COMPLETED AS PART OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

GOALS:

- Create Great Parks
- Engage the Community
- Be a Model of Fiscal Responsibility and Integrity
- Achieve Operational Excellence
- Empower and Prepare Our Team

WORK COMPLETED AS PART OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

CREATE GREAT PARKS

OBJECTIVES: CREATE DESTINATIONS AND ENSURE HEALTHY BIODIVERSITY



RIVERSCAPE RIVER RUN CONSTRUCTION BEGAN

A \$4 million project is transforming the Great Miami River into a regional recreation destination. Urbana, Ohio, contractor J & J Schlaegel began work on RiverScape River Run in 2015 and nearly completed work to transform the low dam between I-75 and Monument Avenue. Work will begin in summer 2016 on the second similar structure, which will be located near RiverScape MetroPark. A mussel survey was completed in fall 2015 with help from scores of volunteers, relocating these freshwater creatures to new homes. Once complete, RiverScape River Run will feature a recreational passage for novice boaters and a whitewater play chute for experienced kayakers, creating a vibrant scene along the downtown riverfront and bikeway.

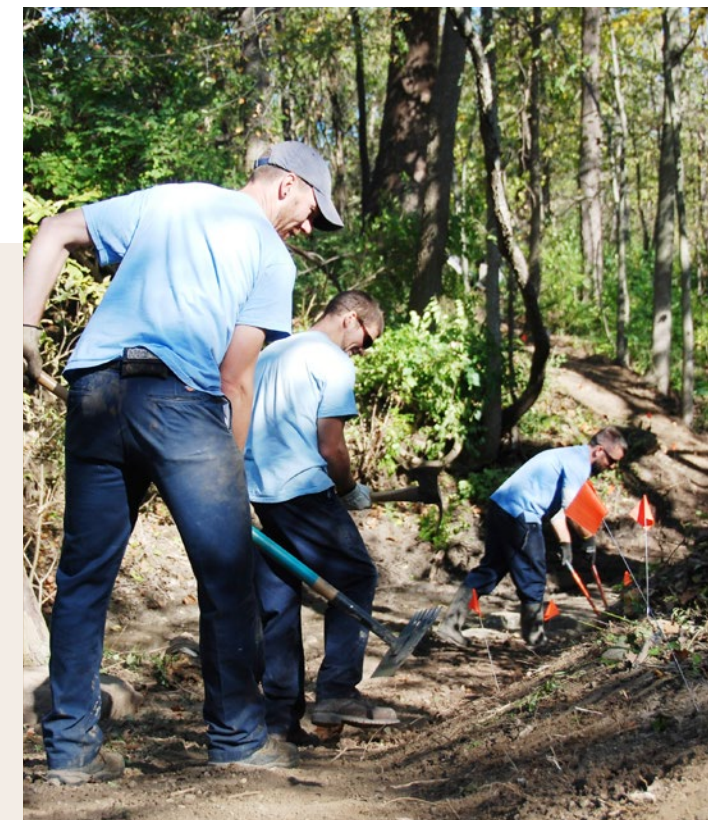


HAPPY TRAILS TO YOU

You can get there from here more easily now, thanks to the trail work completed in 2015, from mowing alongside bike paths to opening passageways between some of the most popular park areas.

2015 TRAIL HIGHLIGHTS:

- Opened a trail connecting Argonne Lake and Possum Creek MetroPark Farm
- Built a beginner loop, the Hillside Flow trail, and a Tot Track for young riders and completed work on the Talon Trail at MetroParks Mountain Biking Area (MoMBA)
- Cleared bikeways of encroaching vegetation
- Opened a bridge over the lagoon at Eastwood MetroPark that's part of the Mad River Trail bikeway and Buckeye and North Country National Scenic trails
- Established a trail crew and trail standards to maintain high-quality trails



ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY

OBJECTIVE: CREATE A COMMUNITY CONSERVATION CULTURE



THE OLYMPICS COME TO DAYTON

In 2015, Dayton Regional Rowing was launched. It's the nation's only Community Olympic Development Program for rowing, a partnership between USRowing, Five Rivers MetroParks, the Dayton Boat Club and Greater Dayton Rowing Association. The United States Olympic Committee-designated Dayton Regional Rowing provides athletes new opportunities and enhances the Dayton region's outdoor recreation offerings.

The mission of Dayton Regional Rowing is to provide lifelong personal development and active lifestyles for Miami Valley youth through the sport of rowing. Dayton Regional Rowing collaborates with the USOC and USRowing to offer a community-based rowing program that helps athletes develop their performance, thus enhancing the Olympic sports feeder system.

GROWING GARDENERS

Sixth graders at Belle Haven Elementary and Kiser Elementary in Dayton got to eat the fruits of their labor last year as partners in Five Rivers MetroParks' Green Schoolyards program. Students started vegetable seeds in the classroom and transplanted them outdoors – all while completing gardening-related experiments and learning activities. Green Schoolyards not only connects students to nature and teaches them where food comes from, it engages their minds in positive ways.

TRAILING AHEAD

All roads will lead to Dayton when the Gem City hosts the International Trails Symposium in May 2017.

Trail enthusiasts, planners and managers – as well as tourism and business pros – will come from all over the world to share ideas and best practices for strengthening trails and promoting outdoor lifestyles. American Trails, the national nonprofit that created the event, announced last year it chose Dayton because of its rich, diverse system of trails for everything from hiking to horseback riding, as well as its convenient location. The event will showcase not only the Dayton region but the Midwest as a destination outdoor recreation.

Dayton trail culture is so hardcore, local trail lovers didn't even let the dark and cold of winter keep them inside last year. Starting in November, hikers from all over the area completed the MetroPark Every Trail Hiking Challenge, hiking every trail in the Five Rivers MetroParks system.

BRINGING WORLDWIDE ADVENTURERS TO DAYTON

Five Rivers MetroParks again partnered with the Victoria Theatre Association in 2015 to present the National Geographic Live! series. Adventurers who take photos and videos for National Geographic shared the stories of how they captured their amazing images. The series has continued to grow in popularity since it was launched in 2014 and provides the community a way to experience the outdoors – albeit vicariously – and inspiration for planning their own adventure in nature.



THE WALL

Fall 2015 brought downtown a major addition to a growing outdoor art collection: the River Run mural, which covers a 1,000-foot stretch of floodwall at RiverScape MetroPark. Oakwood resident Amy Deal created the mural design, which blends Dayton's culture of innovation, adventure and love of the outdoors and features 16-foot kayakers, cyclists and runners amid images of local wildlife and graphic elements that honor the Wright brothers. The Miami Conservancy District and Downtown Dayton Partnership were MetroParks' partners on the mural project, which was funded by CareSource, Cox Media Group Ohio and the state of Ohio.



LEAVE NO CHILD INSIDE PROGRAM GROWS

Miami Valley Leave No Child Inside (MVLNCI), a chapter of the statewide Leave No Child Inside initiative, continued to engage the community in 2015. Participants worked to connect children and families with nature and gain new resources, action steps and connections.

2015 HIGHLIGHTS

- An executive board to increase MVLNCI's capacity and community connections was created and includes eight representatives from local youth, public health and community organizations.
- MVLNCI joined Dayton Regional Green to chair the Connection To Nature Task Force Group and will be creating and measuring certifications of parks, schools, libraries and churches that endorse the Ohio Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Five Rivers MetroParks is fortunate to receive help meeting its mission from many organizational partners. Working together, our resources stretch further toward the larger, shared goal of making the Dayton region a better place to live, work and play for everyone in our community.

OBJECTIVE:

Protect, Restore, Preserve and Promote the Region's Environmental and Agricultural Resources

PARTNERS INCLUDE:

Partners for the Environment, The Ohio State University Extension, Montgomery County Solid Waste District, Miami Conservancy District, Dayton Regional Green, Montgomery County Soil and Water District, University of Dayton, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Three Valley Conservation Trust, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio Natural Resources Assistance Council, Sunwatch Indian Village/Archaeological Park, Boonshoft Museum of Discovery

OBJECTIVE:

Build Active, Healthy Communities

PARTNERS INCLUDE:

Greater Dayton RTA, Dayton Regional Rowing, Greater Dayton Rowing Association, Dayton Boat Club, City of Dayton, YMCA of Greater Dayton, Wright State University, Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission, Bike Miami Valley, Link Dayton Bike Share, UD Rivers Institute, Get Up Montgomery County, Victoria Theatre Association, Dayton Hikers, Ohio River Road Runners Club

OBJECTIVE:

Improve Regional Economic Standing and Quality of Life

PARTNERS INCLUDE:

Dayton Development Coalition, UpDayton, City of Dayton, Downtown Dayton Partnership, Dayton-Montgomery County Convention and Visitors Bureau, Greater Downtown Dayton Plan

OBJECTIVE:

Promote Positive Youth Development, Education and Leadership Skills

PARTNERS INCLUDE:

The Ohio State University Extension, 4-H Youth Development, University of Dayton, YMCA of Greater Dayton

BE A MODEL OF FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY AND INTEGRITY

OBJECTIVES: ENSURE FINANCIAL STABILITY, DEVELOP ALTERNATE FUNDING RESOURCES AND COMMIT TO FINANCIAL TRANSPARENCY



The majority of Five Rivers MetroParks’ funding comes from a property tax levy supported by Montgomery County taxpayers. Five Rivers MetroParks takes its responsibility as steward of the public’s funds very seriously and is committed to providing quality and value for the community.

Like so many organizations, it has become increasingly critical that Five Rivers MetroParks diversify its revenue streams to fill the gap created by the permanent elimination of state funding and by eroding property tax revenues. In 2015, MetroParks experienced additional mid-year reductions in its state funding – yet the agency was able to adapt and remain fiscally sound for the year.

Five Rivers MetroParks continues to focus on developing new partnerships and a new foundation that maximize levy dollars and create more balanced and sustainable finances, implementing efficiencies and reducing costs, and implementing fees for programs and services that benefit small groups or individuals.

2015 REVENUE AND SUPPORT

Levy Income:	\$16,126,373
State Income:	\$629,913
Grants, Donations & Sponsorships:	\$188,539
Program/Facility Fees & Charges:	\$686,853
Other Income:	\$763,835
MetroParks Operating Subsidy: *	\$1,063,359
TOTAL REVENUE AND SUPPORT:	\$19,458,872

2015 EXPENSES

Personnel:	\$12,385,664
Operating:	\$6,125,578
Capital Improvements & Equipment:	\$947,630
TOTAL EXPENSES:	\$19,458,872

*As part of its levy funding cycle, Five Rivers MetroParks budgeted to supplement revenues with reserves.

For more on the agency’s funding, visit metroparks.org/funding.

ACHIEVE OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

OBJECTIVES: WORK TOGETHER, IMPROVE BUSINESS PRACTICES AND PROVIDE EXCEPTIONAL CUSTOMER SERVICE

Five Rivers MetroParks manages year-round enterprises such as the 2nd Street Market, along with seasonal businesses such as RiverScape Rentals and the MetroParks Ice Rink. These businesses help MetroParks meet its mission by providing opportunities to connect to the outdoors through various activities. The 2nd Street Market, for example, provides convenient access to locally grown and produced food, which is less taxing on our environment and often healthier. These businesses are part of Five Rivers MetroParks’ cost recovery model, helping the agency achieve financial sustainability.



IN 2015:

- Five Rivers MetroParks added the RiverScape ice skating rink to its online booking system, with 85 percent of customers booking their rental online.
- The 2nd Street Market was again named the Best Farmers Market in Ohio by *Ohio Magazine* and by *Dayton Magazine*.
- Cox Arboretum MetroPark was named best park for the second year in a row by *Dayton Magazine*.



COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN GUIDES THE FUTURE

In 2015, Five Rivers MetroParks developed a 10-year comprehensive master plan that will guide the future of the agency. An extensive community input process was completed, including public meetings, focus groups with users and non-users of the park system, interviews with community leaders, intercept surveys, online surveys and a statistically valid survey of Montgomery County residents. Research included a demographic and trends analysis; parks, facilities and program needs analysis; operational and maintenance analysis; and other research.

That data was used to develop recommendations, a financial and capital improvement strategy, and an implementation plan. The comprehensive master plan, completed in spring 2016, includes an approach for accomplishing short and long-term goals, objectives, initiatives, tactics, and measurements to ensure Five Rivers MetroParks continues to protect the region’s natural heritage and provide world-class services, programs, parks and facilities to the community for many years to come.

EMPOWER AND PREPARE OUR TEAM

OBJECTIVES: BE ACCOUNTABLE TO CUSTOMERS, DEVELOP LEADERS, AND ENCOURAGE CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION



EXAMPLES OF STAFF ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND AWARDS

- **Brent Anslinger**, outdoor recreation manager, completed the National Outdoor Leadership School's risk management administrative training.
- **Tim Clark**, IT manager, completed the National Recreation and Park Association's Supervisors' Management School.
- **Erik Dahlstrom**, outdoor recreation coordinator, became an American Canoe Association Level 1 intro to kayaking instructor trainer.
- **Amy Dingle**, director of outdoor connections, completed the National Recreation and Park Association's Director School.
- **Mickey Fornes**, facility program support specialist for outdoor connections, became a certified fitness trainer from the International Sports Sciences Association.
- **Sidney Gnann**, facility program manager for outdoor connections, became a Certified Festival and Event Associate (CFEA) from the International Festivals and Events Association and National Recreation and Park Association.
- **Pat Kelleher**, park manager at RiverScape, completed the North Carolina State University/National Recreation and Park Association's Maintenance Management School.
- **Randy Ryberg**, outdoor recreation coordinator, became a League of American Bicyclists certified instructor and wilderness first responder and received an instructor program level 1 certification from the International Mountain Bicycling Association.
- **Bill Tschirhart, CPRP**, director of business services, was elected to the Ohio Park and Recreation Association's board of directors.
- **Kristen Wicker**, marketing manager, earned the Accreditation in Public Relations (APR) professional credential from the Public Relations Society of America.
- **Paul Williams**, regional park manager, became certified through the National Recreation and Park Association as a Certified Park and Recreation Professional (CPRP).
- **Joshua York**, education supervisor, received the Outstanding Individual at the Local Level Award from the North American Association for Environmental Education, Outstanding Non-formal Environmental Educator Award from the Environmental Education Council of Ohio, and completed the National Recreation and Park Association's Certified Park and Recreation Professional (CPRP).
- **Michael Osborne**, park manager at Possum Creek, completed the North Carolina State University/National Recreation and Park Association's Maintenance Management School.



OPRA AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE

Five Rivers' bike patrol officer training program and its Huffman Prairie Project both won Ohio Parks and Recreation Association (OPRA) Awards of Excellence in 2015.

The bike patrol program, open to any local law enforcement agency, certifies officers in a method of patrol that makes them more accessible to the community and creates relationships that help deter crime.

The Huffman Prairie project added educational signs, brochures and plant markers to this historically significant landmark.

Park districts submit their best projects from the previous year, and leaders from park districts statewide judge the OPRA awards.



SECTION

WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITY

- Community Support
- Volunteers
- How to Get Involved
- Leadership

WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

FIVE RIVERS METROPARKS FOUNDATION



The foundation was created in 2014 to provide Five Rivers MetroParks with a 501(c)3 entity for securing philanthropic funding for special projects, programming and an endowment. Momentum continued in 2015. A board of directors was formed and plans set for future projects. This new foundation provides a way for donors to support Five Rivers MetroParks with charitable contributions that benefit all parks or a specific park. Donations also can be directed to support our educational and recreational services, as well as conservation initiatives.

Five Rivers MetroParks is grateful to receive support from other partnering nonprofit foundations and organizations led by volunteer boards. These foundations are passionate about our mission and help raise funds for programs, services and special projects.

FUNDING IN 2015 INCLUDED:

THE JAMES M. COX, JR. ARBORETUM FOUNDATION

- Barbara Cox Center for Sustainable Horticulture construction
- Loop Path phase 1 installation
- Water garden improvements
- Monet Bridge replacement
- HVAC repair at Zorniger Education Center
- Conservation Kids and Leave No Child Inside sponsorships
- Support of education programs and interpretive signage in gardens
- Interactive displays in education hub

WEGERZYN GARDENS FOUNDATION

- “Spooky Evening in the Garden” and “What’s New @ 2” program sponsorships
- Purchase of urn and pedestal for north plaza
- English garden arbor repairs
- Replacement of arbor garden urn and pedestal
- Purchase of an AED unit in Wegerzyn Children’s Discovery Garden
- Replacement of the splash pad in Wegerzyn Children’s Discovery Garden

FRIENDS OF CARRIAGE HILL

- Purchase of materials and equipment for historical education activities
- Funding for animal care

LEAD CORPORATE & PRIVATE SUPPORTERS

Robert & Lois Anderson	Mechanical Systems of Dayton Inc.
Bonbright Distributors	Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission
Buckeye Health Plan	Mikesell’s Snack Food
The Dayton Power & Light Co.	Osprey Packs, Inc.
Dayton Rotary Club Foundation	PNC Foundation
Field & Stream	REI
Great Lakes Brewing Company	Subaru of America
Jane B. & Horace M. Huffman Jr.	Thompson Hine LLP
Trees for the River Fund	Wagner Subaru
The Kettering Fund	Whole Foods Market
Kind LLC	Zukes
Paul & Carol Lamberger	
Julian G. Lange Family Foundation	

For more information: Visit metroparks.org/donate or contact Beth Redden, Five Rivers MetroParks director of development, at (937) 277-4369 or beth.redden@metroparks.org.

WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITY

VOLUNTEERS



Volunteers make parks possible. Thousands of dedicated volunteers are the very heart of efforts to promote and accomplish MetroParks’ mission and vision. Working side-by-side with staff, volunteers make tax dollars go farther.

Five Rivers MetroParks’ mission and vision also are supported by the hard work of volunteers at the Five Rivers MetroParks Foundation, The James M. Cox, Jr. Arboretum Foundation, the Wegerzyn Gardens Foundation and the Friends of Carriage Hill.

IN 2015:

- Total number of permanent volunteers: 1,111
- Estimated number of episodic volunteers: 4,800
- Volunteer Hours: 40,597
- Value of Volunteer Service: \$745,000

VOLUNTEERS MARK EARTH DAY BY ADOPTING A PARK

For almost 30 years, MetroParks volunteers have been gathering on Earth Day to do a little spring cleaning. In 2015, more than 2,000 people gathered at more than 24 sites across the Miami Valley to pick up litter, plant trees, check on seedlings and remove invasive species. The annual event is a time to connect with other park enthusiasts and pitch in to make our parks clean and enjoyable. Adopt-A-Park is open to volunteers of all ages and abilities and supports Five Rivers MetroParks’ conservation and environmental improvement goals.

For more on volunteering, visit metroparks.org/volunteer.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

FOUNDATIONS AND FRIENDS

The following foundations support conservation efforts, educational and recreational services, and help guide continued development:

- Five Rivers MetroParks Foundation
- Wegerzyn Gardens Foundation
- The James M. Cox, Jr. Arboretum Foundation
- Friends of Carriage Hill

PARTNER WITH US

Along with individual donors who support MetroParks, many area organizations and businesses partner with us to provide financial support, sponsorships and in-kind services.

TRIBUTE PROGRAM WITH COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUES

Honor a loved one or celebrate a holiday, birthday or other special occasion with a unique, lasting gift located at your favorite MetroPark. We offer a range of options that include benches, trees and, in some locations, swings.

GENERAL HONOR AND TRIBUTE GIFTS

Honor someone special and commemorate a special event by making a general donation to the Five Rivers MetroParks Foundation.

MEMORIAL FUNDS

Establish a memorial fund in honor of a loved one to which others can contribute. We are happy to provide contribution envelopes that you can distribute at a memorial service or other commemorative event.

DONATE

Support our mission and your favorite MetroPark by making a donation to the Five Rivers MetroParks Foundation. Your tax-deductible gift will be used to support programs and special projects. Donations (made payable to Five Rivers MetroParks Foundation) can be mailed to:

Five Rivers MetroParks Foundation
409 E. Monument Ave., third floor
Dayton, OH 45402

To learn more about how your company or organization can get involved, contact the Five Rivers MetroParks development department at (937) 275-PARK (7275).

VOLUNTEER

Whether it's a year, a month, a week or even a few hours — there's a place for you as a MetroParks volunteer! Call (937) 275-PARK (7275) for more information or download and print the volunteer application at metroparks.org/volunteer.

LEADERSHIP



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

By Ohio law, Five Rivers MetroParks is governed by a three-member volunteer Board of Park Commissioners who are appointed by the probate judge of Montgomery County. The board establishes all policies and rules, approves developments and land acquisitions, and controls all funds. Each commissioner serves without pay for a three-year term, with one member's term expiring each year. Commissioners can be reappointed for successive terms. Board meetings are held monthly and are open to the public.

2015 PRESIDENT

Irvin Bieser Jr. is an attorney, supporter of the arts and nature-lover.

2015 VICE PRESIDENT

Alan Pippenger is a local businessman, supporter of open-space preservation and community leader.

2015 COMMISSIONER AT LARGE

Karen Davis is a health care professional, community volunteer and family advocate.

STAFF LEADERSHIP TEAM



Becky Benná
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Carrie Scarff
DEPUTY DIRECTOR



Nate Arnett
DIRECTOR OF
ADVENTURE CENTRAL



Trish Butler
DIRECTOR OF
MARKETING AND
PUBLIC INFORMATION



Amy Dingle
DIRECTOR OF
OUTDOOR
CONNECTIONS



Mike Enright
INTERIM DIRECTOR
OF CONSERVATION



Mark Hess
CHIEF OF RANGERS



Karen Hesser
DIRECTOR OF PARKS
AND LEGISLATIVE
SERVICES



Debra Jackson
DIRECTOR OF HUMAN
RESOURCES



Beth Redden
DIRECTOR OF
DEVELOPMENT



Bill Tschirhart
DIRECTOR OF
BUSINESS SERVICES



**FIVE RIVERS
METROPARKS**



It's our nature™

409 E. Monument Avenue, third floor, Dayton, Ohio 45402
937-275-PARK

metroparks.org