

CONSERVATION & ENVIRONMENT

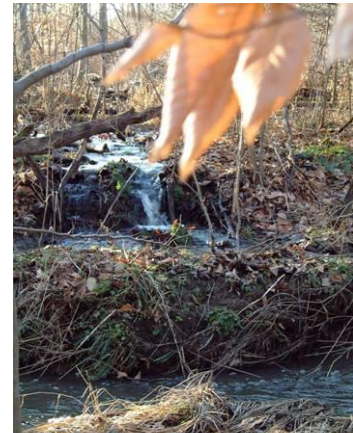
Introduction • Service Area Environmental Features • Conservation Considerations & Opportunities

Introduction

Conservation is perhaps the greatest responsibility that any park district is charged with. Among the park district's obligations to conservation is the preservation of critical natural resources, educational outreach, and enhancement of Trumbull County's overall natural environment for the health, intellectual, and recreational benefits of area citizens. Though the aesthetic benefits are popular, preservation of the natural environment in key locations serves to provide a critical ecological balance between human development and nature. Natural areas provide habitats for a variety of animal and insect species that work to provide equilibrium to the overall environment in many ways from controlling the spread of disease to aiding in food production. The preservation of wetlands is of particular importance as they support a vast array of wildlife and help to prevent flooding with their ability to process and hold excess water. Trees and other vegetation help to clean pollutants from the air and, when placed within or near urban areas, serve to minimize urban heat islands.

MetroParks Conservation

- Due to its relatively flat landscape and soil compositions, Trumbull County has ample wetland environments that can support an abundance of animal life.
- The natural environment is a critical component to adding to the quality of life for Trumbull County residents through cleaning the air, enhancing agricultural output, and minimizing flooding.
- Trumbull County MetroParks' conservation goals include protecting sensitive and high-quality environment landscapes and providing the public an opportunity to learn about nature and the life sciences.
- Future conservation projects in the MetroParks may include the development of a green bulkhead, water education spots, wetland mitigation banking, detailed educational signage and conservation trails, and wildlife restoration areas that could entail native plantings and the establishment of bird houses in key areas.



West Farmington Nature Preserve

This section will offer a brief overview of Trumbull County's primary environmental features. While detailed environmental analysis may be required in order to provide specific developments at existing or future parklands, this section serves to display general environmental features throughout Trumbull County, including those locations that should be targeted for preservation or restoration by conservation organizations such as the Western Reserve Land Conservancy, the Mahoning River Consortium or by MetroParks.

Service Area Environmental Features

The following segments provide an inventory of Trumbull County's basic environmental features, including soils and landscapes as well wetlands and flood hazard areas. This overview is intended to serve as a guide for future conservation opportunities and prioritizing park projects



from a conservation standpoint. However, further detailed environmental assessments may be required at certain parks for specific developments.

Soils & Landscapes

Soil is one of Ohio's most priceless natural resources. It is an essential link between the parent material below and the life above. Most land-dwelling organisms (such as plants, animals, and humans) are dependant on soil for their existence. Most of the soils in Trumbull County are comprised of Inceptisols and Alfisols. Inceptisols are characterized by their capacity to hold moisture and for leaching qualities. Alfisols are somewhat similar and are known for providing native nutrients. Sound land use and land management are dependent upon a thorough understanding of soils and their properties. Soils, not unlike varieties of plants and breeds of animals, differ considerably from one another. Many soils in Trumbull County have poor natural drainage and remain wet for long periods of the year. Some of these extremely wet soils are known as hydric soils and it is within the vicinity of these soils that wetlands are likely to be encountered. Floodplains develop in the soils along streams, which are usually level and naturally subject to flooding. Deep, level, and well-drained soils are suited for many uses. Because soil differences can mean success or failure in our use of the land, it is important that these differences can be recognized before installing structures such as parking lots, restrooms, and even nature trails. This plan offers a brief overview of the major soil types present in Trumbull County. However, as part of the park district's on-going development, individual soil reports may be performed for each individual park. Completed soil reports are located in the appendix.

Primary Types

Soils in Trumbull County are generally of two types, residual and transported. The residual soils are those formed through the weathering or breaking down of the parent rocks in the area, which are sandstones and shales. Transported soils are those formed in other localities and carried to areas of deposition by water, wind, or ice. In some places, the soils have been modified or even created by human activities. These soils have been separated and grouped together to become the "urban soils" theme on some of the Environmental GIS maps that are displayed in this chapter.

Slopes

Specific soil types are defined, in part, by their slope, or angle of the ground. Slopes are measured in degrees, whereas a 10% slope would infer that the elevation would drop 10 feet over a 100-foot horizontal distance. Slope measurement range from above 0 percent, where the ground is perfectly flat, up to a measurement of 90 percent, which indicates a vertical cliff. Most of Trumbull County is devoid of slopes, or steep terrain. However, many area landscapes, such as those at Riverbend Nature Preserve, have very steep slopes. It is along these hillsides that water will drain the fastest, and threats of erosion are severe. These areas are typically found sloping down into rivers, streams, and smaller drainage ways. The steepest slopes occur wherever the creeks have cut relatively deep incisions through the land surface during the process of erosion. Trails and other structures, including homes and commercial buildings, can be built along steep slopes; however, great expenses can be incurred in construction in relation to building on more level land. Due to higher costs associated with developing on steeper slopes, for water



quality protection and safety hazards associated with building in such areas, it is generally recommended to avoid any major development along drainage ways. In order to prevent erosion, which in turn would threaten the integrity of the ground itself, these areas are generally best left protected and covered with natural, native vegetation. Additionally, wider trails through these areas may require certain improvements in order to protect the environments around them.

Soil Maps

The following soil maps of Trumbull County were created based upon, at least in part, the knowledge of various soil characteristics. These ‘soil-based’ maps, which are intended to show an overview of the county’s environmental features, include Slopes, Wetlands & Hydric Soils, Flooding Soils and the map of Detailed Soil Groups. Other ‘soil-based’ themes included on the maps are the urban soils theme and the shallow depth-to-bedrock theme. Customized soil reports may be sought for each of the district’s individual parklands.

Watershed Drainage Basins

Trumbull County has several major watersheds, including the Grand River, Mahoning River, and Shenango River watersheds. A watershed is an area defined by hypsography or landscape contours that work to capture all of the surface water which falls within its bounds and funnels it into a specific point of exit. For instance, if a bucket of water were to be spilled on a sidewalk in downtown Warren, gravity would force the water to flow downwards through cracks, then into ditches, and eventually into the Mahoning River. Watersheds essentially define where and how surface water ultimately flows. Additionally, Trumbull County is also located along the intercontinental divide, a boundary line between those watersheds which take water to Lake Erie and eventually to North Atlantic, and those that funnel water to the Gulf of Mexico. For instance, when precipitation falls into the Mahoning River Watershed, which is south of the intercontinental divide, it then flows to the southeast in Pennsylvania where it eventually combines with the Shenango River to create the Beaver River, which discharges into the Ohio River and eventually empties into the Gulf of Mexico by way of the Mississippi Watershed Drainage Basin. In very simple terms, a drop of rain that falls as precipitation onto the ground anywhere in the area south of the intercontinental divide has the potential to become a part of the water in the Gulf of Mexico. Likewise, any rain which falls in West Farmington Village has the possibility of becoming part of the North Atlantic when it exits the St. Lawrence Seaway. It is important to note, however, that that same drop of rain also has the potential to filter through the soil, seep into the bedrock and end up in a groundwater aquifer. The growing concern about water quality issues often focus on how the county’s potable and recreational water resources can be protected for safe future usage and highlights the ever-increasing need for protection of watersheds and restoration of the parts that may already be damaged or contaminated.

Wetland Environments

Almost eight percent of Trumbull County is comprised of wetlands, a unique combination of soils and water that is capable of supporting terrestrial and aquatic life. Wetlands can also be referred to as bogs, mudflats, marshes, and swamps. The presence of hydric soils, hydrophytic vegetation and hydrology make up the three criteria necessary for an area to be considered a wetland. Different soils with similar characteristics form the soil pattern for hydric soils.



Additionally, the same hydric soils work in combination with diverse plantlife to provide a natural stormwater retention area, reducing the frequency and severity of flooding. In Trumbull County, most of these lands tend to be relatively flat, wooded, and generally located alongside or within close proximity to streams and creeks. Wetlands provide many benefits, including food and habitat for fish and wildlife; flood protection; shoreline erosion control; natural products for human use; water quality improvement; and opportunities for recreation, education, and research. Wetlands typically feature a special combination of vegetation and fauna which work to not only support very diverse animal life, but also to minimize erosion and recycle nutrients.

EPA Regulatory Statement

For regulatory purposes under the Clean Water Act, the term wetlands means “those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs and similar areas.” [Taken from the EPA Regulations listed at 40 CFR 230.3(t)]

Wildlife

Wetlands are among the most biologically productive natural ecosystems in the world. They can be compared to tropical rain forests and coral reefs in the diversity of species they support. Wetlands are vital to the survival of various animals and plants, including threatened and endangered species. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service estimates that up to 43 percent of the nation’s threatened and endangered species rely directly or indirectly on wetlands for their survival. For many other species, wetlands are primary habitats. For others, wetlands provide important seasonal habitats where food, water, and cover are plentiful. Part of this is due to the wetland’s ability to produce great volumes of food as leaves and stems break down in the water; this enriched material is called detritus. Detritus is food for insects, shellfish, and forage fish, and it provides nutrients for wetlands plants and algae. Recreational fish such as bluefish and striped bass, as well as mammals, reptiles, and amphibians, eat the aquatic invertebrates and forage fish. Wetland plants provide shelter and food to diverse species.



Turtle

Water Absorption & Filtration

Non-point source pollution is the nation's leading source of surface water and ground water quality impairment. When properly managed, wetlands can help prevent non-point source pollution from degrading water quality. Wetlands help improve water quality, including that of drinking water, by intercepting surface runoff and removing or retaining its nutrients, processing organic wastes, and reducing sediment before it reaches open water. Wetlands often function like natural tubs or sponges, storing water (floodwater or surface water that collects in isolated depressions) and slowly releasing it. Aside from



helping to slow floodwaters, trees and other wetland plant life are able to filter out many harmful organic and inorganic materials from the water that passes through the wetland.

Aesthetics & Recreation

Additionally, wetlands provide opportunities for popular activities such as hiking, sightseeing, fishing, and boating. As mentioned above, the rich aquatic environment supports are often able to support ample amounts of game fish. Also, given the rich diversity of animals and plants, wetlands are optimal resources for educational exhibits and land laboratories. It is also important to note that nationwide, an estimated 50 million people spend approximately \$10 billion each year simply observing and photographing wetland-dependent birds.

Flood Mitigation

Wetlands reduce the likelihood of flood damage. As discussed, the hydric soils found in wetland environments have the ability to absorb very large quantities of water in a short period. The same soils release the stored water over time when surrounding areas become less saturated. This process is what makes wetlands crucial in flood prevention and mitigation. However, the realization of the significant impact wetlands have on flood mitigation is relatively recent. Only a few decades ago, wetlands were viewed as unpleasant mosquito habitats and were deemed nuisances. With no prohibitions on development, many wetlands were annihilated for large-scale real estate projects. Without the wetland environments, however, the sites of the development projects and many areas around them began to experience flash floods during heavier rains. The loss of wetlands also presented a severe impact upon animal life within the area, in some cases effectively altering the local ecosystem. Since science has uncovered the importance of wetlands, the State of Ohio has enacted laws which protect the state from suffering a net loss of wetlands from watersheds.

Wetland Mitigation Banking

Sometimes wetlands must be destroyed in order to accommodate crucial transportation and utility developments. Other times, wetland areas may be needed for certain real estate development projects. Ohio's laws that protect the loss of wetland areas require that all destroyed wetlands be replaced by an equal or greater amount of wetlands somewhere within the same watershed. In many cases, the amount of land which must be replaced is double the amount destroyed. Many non-profit wetland mitigation banks exist in northeast Ohio to help real estate developers building upon wetlands to enhance their watershed's environment by creating twice the acreage destroyed. In turn, developers pay a fee for receiving wetland or streambank mitigation credits that cover the cost of wetland mitigation bank development. Trumbull County MetroParks has also been exploring possibilities for creating wetland mitigation banks at its Riverbend and West Farmington nature preserves.

Special Flood Hazard Areas

Floodplains play an integral part in the function of the county's river systems. The improper alteration or development of the floodplains eliminates or degrades these vital values and resources. By planning wisely and affording protection to natural floodplains, communities can



balance economic growth and urbanization. MetroParks will work and advocate for the protection of floodplains' functions and processes in order to create and maintain a better quality of life and living environment for the future generations that will work and live in the Mahoning Valley.

Natural events such as heavy precipitation during storms or snow/ice melt in the spring produce large volumes of water which are released onto the land surface. Once the soil becomes saturated and excess water can no longer be absorbed into the ground, it then becomes surface runoff. This runoff then accumulates in streams and rivers. Sometimes the volume of the water is so large that it actually exceeds the capacity of the stream or river channel. It is at this point that flooding occurs. The water spills over the banks and onto the low-lying land immediately surrounding the course of the channel. This land is referred to as the floodplain, a natural safety valve to relieve the channel of its excess burden. In other words, the floodplain is the nearly flat plain along the course of the stream that is usually dry and naturally subject to flooding. Floodplains are found in valley and low-land areas along the major streams and stream tributaries. Without trees in these land-water transition zones, streams typically become wide and shallow, habitats are degraded and water quality drops.



July 2003 Floods - Front Street, Girard, Ohio

Riparian Buffers

According to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, riparian ecosystems with forest vegetation remove pollutants from stream flows during periods of over-bank flow, reduce water temperatures by sheltering and shading, provide wildlife habitats and protect and create aquatic habitats. Additionally, wooded riparian ecosystems provide detritus (leaves and woody debris), which is the basic source of energy for the stream ecosystem, and reduce stream bank erosion through the high durability of tree root mass. Riparian

areas are definitive landforms. They are transition zones between channels and uplands where the land influences the stream, and the stream influences the land. It is in this zone that buffer strips of forest vegetation have special importance for the quality of streams. Riparian areas correspond very well with the active floodplain. Estimations of riparian area boundaries may also be based on floodplains identified on Federal Flood Insurance Rate Maps. Lastly, county soil survey reports list soils subject to frequent flooding and steep slopes which may help delineate some riparian areas. It is not always feasible to base buffer strip width on the riparian area alone. For example, highly entrenched channels may have a riparian area hardly wider than the channel itself, and in other places floodplains and riparian areas may be so extensive that encroachment is inevitable. For these conditions a generic minimum standard may be useful. One such standard, according to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, is based on a dimension equal to two and one-half times the bank-full channel width or 50 feet.



Conservation Considerations & Opportunities

Trumbull County MetroParks is charged with the responsibility of furthering conservation for the benefit and prosperity of Trumbull County residents. The following are key concepts and ideas that MetroParks may pursue over the next several years in order to preserve and enhance Trumbull County's environment.

Window of Opportunity

Timing is important in any project. When it comes to preserving Trumbull County's most precious natural landscapes, a number of factors come into play. Perhaps the most significant element is demand for land. Unfortunately, Trumbull County has been facing a difficult economic decline for the past several years. With large cuts in employment by



Cardinal – State Bird

businesses based outside of the region, there has been little demand for new housing or real estate for industrial and commercial projects. The lack of business growth and wealth among the populous is quite problematic for the economic welfare of residents and their quality of life. While the county could continue to see population loss for decades to come as businesses and industries move out of the Mahoning Valley, it could also witness the development of new businesses as today's entrepreneurial efforts grow into sustainable companies, creating jobs and a renewed demand for real estate development. At that time, as demand for land renews, development will take place on unprotected land. In some cases, however, lands may be developed that should be left untouched because of their value in providing flood control and wildlife habitats, in spite of regulations and planning. The opportunity for all conservation agencies to create a network of preserved lands is the present, when land demand is low and the region is in need of such amenities.

Education

Public awareness and education is a critical goal for any public organization, particularly for park districts determined to serve their residents with quality information about nature ranging from animal life to geologic processes. Any park or nature preserve offers its visitors a unique opportunity to study and experience the biological and earth sciences unlike any other place. With ample and well-researched educational signage, nearly any trail can become an educational exhibit. MetroParks should take advantage of its rich and diverse landscapes by enhancing parks and preserves with ample signage in order to transform nature trails through gardens, wetlands, and forests into outdoor educational exhibits. In order to accomplish this, MetroParks may coordinate with its volunteers, conservation groups, and academic institutions to create sets of educational signs that provide detailed information about wildlife and natural resources as well as recreation, promoting healthy lifestyles, and geology.



Outreach

In order to further conservation and to bring natural world closer to citizens, MetroParks may provide the public with the most up-to-date information about current environmental and scientific issues ranging from air quality to animal population growth. In particular, MetroParks may work to advocate for alternative transportation opportunities, such as trails and the establishment of bike lanes in new road construction projects. MetroParks may also advocate the creation of environmentally friendly energies, such as solar, hydroelectric, and wind power generation.

Inventories

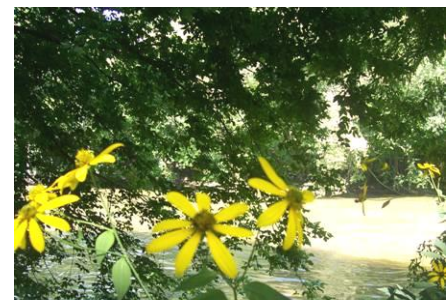
MetroParks may work to conduct wildlife inventories when new properties are acquired. Information gathered from such inventories would better help with future planning and with the creation of educational exhibits. At certain sites, such as at the Riverbend Nature Preserve in Weathersfield Township, archeological inventories may be ideal. Many areas of Trumbull County have historical significance, from the Salt Springs area which has returned Native American artifacts to a Native American burial ground in Newton Township. MetroParks may seek the help of area conservation groups and individual naturalists that may be able to provide inventory assistance.

Increase Land Laboratory Opportunities

Several years ago, the Trumbull County Educational Service Center was able to provide area schools an opportunity to explore nature and conservation at land laboratories in Howland Township and at Lordstown through the Trumbull Area Multi Purpose Environmental Education Lab (TAMPEEL) Program. After several years of success, financial complications forced the cancellation of the program. MetroParks may collaborate with other agencies to investigate the possibility of re-establishing land laboratories for the region's students. Additionally, the former TAMPEEL properties could be utilized once more to provide the same service, either under a re-established TAMPEEL Program or through inter-agency collaboration with area school districts.

Investigate Undeveloped Lands

While working with the public to create this plan, it was suggested that MetroParks investigate several specific locations to protect existing habitats. These areas have remained undeveloped, although some purportedly served as arboretums or other natural areas at one time. The majority of these sites, each comprising a few acres, were located in the southeastern portion of the county. A comprehensive listing of these sites is available in the appendix. MetroParks should continue to solicit and review suggestions from citizens about areas in need of conservation.



Along the Mahoning River

RECREATION

Present Conditions & Needs • Future Expansion Opportunities

Present Conditions & Needs

Trumbull County hosts an assortment of recreational amenities. From fishing opportunities to game hunting, from sprawling playgrounds to swimming pools, from boating to flying model airplane airports, and from the Canoe City Regatta to the seasonal outdoor movie nights, area citizens have a variety of healthy and interesting activities from which to choose. Trumbull County MetroParks is committed to increasing such opportunities with the development of its newest parklands and its efforts to further the development of regional trail networks.



Bicycle – Image taken from Microsoft Office ®

This chapter summarizes Trumbull County’s recreational opportunities and MetroParks’ overall goals in providing better opportunities to promote active and healthy lifestyles for area residents. Most specific recreation recommendations are incorporated into the individual park chapter following this section. For the most part, deed restrictions on existing park properties dictate that all forms of recreation be passive. In order not to duplicate the many active forms of recreation already provided by local parks and recreation departments, including but not limited to playgrounds, ball fields, and golf courses, MetroParks will focus the majority of its efforts on increasing passive recreation opportunities. Passive recreation includes nature trails, educational exhibits, mountain bike paths, bridal routes, sightseeing points and observation decks, water trails, and other forms of recreation that do not require a major impact upon the natural landscape. Passive recreation opportunities are very limited in Trumbull County in comparison to other counties with similarly sized populations.

MetroParks Recreation

- Because of the types of lands it has available to the public, Trumbull County MetroParks will focus primarily on providing passive recreation opportunities, such as hiking and mountain biking trails, education paths and exhibits, water trails, and observation areas.
- However, certain parklands lend themselves well to active recreation, such as at Clarence Darrow which is home to Young’s Run Disc Golf Course and is proposed to become the site of the county’s first dog park.
- Many Trumbull County MetroParks properties are not able to accommodate certain recreational activities because deed restrictions limit the development of structures and certain amenities.
- MetroParks will work to provide and advocate for Trumbull County’s many recreation opportunities and needs, including providing spaces for kite flying, skiing and sledding, model airplane flying, dog runs, paintball courses, areas and trails for all-terrain vehicles, additional bicycling and hiking routes, swimming, and camping.



Trumbull County's largest recreational amenity is Mosquito Lake, attracting nearly two million visits per year. The region also boasts among the highest concentration of golf courses in the nation. Passive recreation opportunities, however, remain somewhat limited to the Western Reserve Greenway, MetroParks three open parks, and a handful of city and township parks, none of which feature substantial nature trails. Until recently, the opportunity to create additional recreational amenities has been limited.

River and Land Trail Development

Though Trumbull County has several miles of trails available through the MetroParks as well as state, local, and federal governments, many areas remain in need of recreational and conservational resources. Trail development is perhaps one of the best ways that MetroParks can offer value to communities, particularly those townships and villages in the eastern portion of the county. Whether a water trail along the Mahoning River or a land trail stretching across the length of the Pymatuning Creek, regional trail routes are becoming ever popular means of exercise, recreation, and increasingly transportation. These important types of trails could best be developed along the Mahoning River, Mosquito Creek, and Pymatuning Creek Corridors. In addition, MetroParks has detailed 12 land routes that could be developed in the future. All of these routes are detailed in the proceeding Water Trails and Regional Land Trails chapters.

Creating New MetroParks

With the development of its existing parks, MetroParks intends to bring the public miles of new inter-park nature trails, a variety of educational exhibits that highlight the biological and earth sciences, river trails that traverse the cores of the county's population centers, land laboratories, specialized gardens, and mountain biking routes. In addition, MetroParks will be working with its partners to extend the Western Reserve Greenway as well as promote the development of future regional trails.

Recreational Needs

During the planning process, MetroParks discovered that citizens desired a variety of activities across all seasons. Certain amenities presently exist in ample numbers, others could be expanded to additional communities, and yet others do not exist in any organized form. Specifically, springtime through autumn recreational needs for Trumbull County included golfing, tennis, reenactments, bicycling, mountain biking, model airplane flying, paintball games, skate boarding, horseback riding, dog parks, hiking, ATV operations, and radio-controlled car racing. Kite flying and bird watching were other forms of recreation in need of promotion. Wintertime brought its own set of activities, including skiing, cross-country skiing, sled riding, snow mobile operations, snow shoeing, and dog sledding. MetroParks will advocate and work for the establishment of spaces and resources to accommodate such recreation.

Additional Expansion Opportunities

When exploring how MetroParks could best serve the recreational needs of Trumbull County residents, all avenues and ideas were examined. Certain concepts are well-suited for the park



district because of its resources and abilities. Other ideas, while important to enhancing Trumbull County's quality of life, were outside the scope of the MetroParks. Nevertheless, as conditions change, MetroParks believes that the concepts presented should be made part of the county's recreational goals. This is not to suggest that MetroParks will take the responsibility of providing these forms of recreation solely upon itself, but rather the park district should collaborate with other organizations, governments, and clubs to advocate for, promote, and create additional recreation opportunities. In addition to the creation of trails, which are addressed in later chapters, these concepts are:

Construct Airport

Given the interest in model aircraft aviation, Trumbull County MetroParks could work with local model-airplane flying clubs in order to establish a permanent aviation park complete with a miniature airport with an improved runway. Such an airport could be complimented with a paved remote-control racecar track. MetroParks may advocate for the preservation of an existing model airplane runway that exists on Trumbull County property opposite of the fair grounds.



Kite – Image taken from Microsoft Office®

Establishment of an ATV Park

The popularity of ATVs has risen dramatically in recent years; however, there are few places where people can go to use their vehicles without trespassing or damaging fragile ecosystems. The creation of an ATV Park would help to alleviate illegal ATV operations by providing ATV owners with a place to recreate safely in lieu of traversing private property. Such a park could be comprised of trails as well as open fields with obstacles. Distance from residences would be ideal due to the substantial amount of noise ATV machines create, which would make the establishment of such a park in Trumbull County difficult, particularly south of Mosquito Lake.

Establishment of Winter Recreation

There are few areas where residents can safely sled ride in Trumbull County during the wintertime. Snow is prevalent throughout the county; however, with a relatively flat landscape, most slopes that are able to accommodate sledding exist near rivers and creeks, locations that are not always ideal or safe. In its planning process, MetroParks found demand for sledding hills, artificial mounds of earth that can be built to accommodate sledding and snowboarding during the colder months. Such sledding hills could be complimented with outdoor ice skating that could double as playing fields during warmer months. Dog sledding and snowmobiling are also popular. It is also important to note that almost any nature trail can be converted into a cross-country skiing trail with minimal signage. MetroParks' plans for the West Farmington Nature Preserve may be able to provide many of these amenities for Trumbull County residents. However, it is unlikely to meet all of the demand. Many areas in central and southern Trumbull County could also be enhanced with such improvements.



Events

Trumbull County is in need of more events which are oftentimes integral to encouraging recreation. MetroParks will work to provide greater opportunities to bring people together in order to exercise and explore the natural world around them. Although implementation of events will depend upon interest and assistance from volunteers, MetroParks could seek to coordinate historical reenactments pertaining to the lifestyles of Native Americans and early western settlers. Other events should include dog sledding, bird watching, bicycling tours, and fall foliage walks. Certain events require a tremendous amount of coordination, such as a dog sled race or the annual World of Wildlife Tour. Others events, such as weekly nature tours, could be developed with just a few volunteers. MetroParks will continue to search for additional events to offer.

Skate Board Parks & Playgrounds

Trumbull County has a variety of parks that feature playgrounds and play areas, a few of which have only recently been built. Nevertheless, there remain areas with high concentrations of families that do not have playgrounds located in easy distance from their homes. Additionally, skateboard parks have been increasingly popular forms recreation; however, Trumbull County has very few of these facilities.

Land for Active Recreation

The majority of MetroParks' recently acquired lands were purchased with Clean Ohio Funds, which restrict recreational developments to ecologically-friendly passive recreation amenities, such as pervious hiking trails, boardwalks, and pervious parking lots. While this satisfies a huge recreational need in Trumbull County, particularly in the western half of the county, there is still a need for lands that permit permanent developments for active recreational uses, such as skate parks, all-terrain vehicle tracks, museums, model airplane runways, ice-skating rinks, dog parks, sledding hills, and paved trails. Although MetroParks' concentration is focused on providing passive recreation, there is a need for active recreation in certain areas where local park districts are non-existent. Therefore, MetroParks may actively pursue donations of land that permit structures to be built for active recreation.

Increase Mosquito Lake Access

Trumbull County's most popular tourist destination is Mosquito Lake Park as well as the State of Ohio's second largest inland lake. However, the actual park area surrounds the lake somewhat thinly, and the majority of access points are geared towards boating. A few separate trail systems collectively provide 25 miles of hiking trails; however, it may be possible to extend these trails and possibly create connections. MetroParks may seek to establish a presence along Mosquito Lake in order to provide additional recreation opportunities along the lakefront, including hiking, nature exhibits, and picnic areas.