

Ohio State Parks

2009 ANNUAL REPORT



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

When our state park system was established 60 years ago, the first park managers faced the familiar challenge of building a world class park system with boundless ambition, but limited resources. Over the years, our park system has continued to grow steadily in size and popularity, while economic cycles have risen and declined. Over the generations, our park managers and staff have become very accomplished at creating opportunities from challenges, and making the most of limited resources.

With so many families and communities struggling through the nationwide economic downturn, our state parks provided relaxing retreats where Ohioans could spend quality time with family and friends. Free admission, affordable overnight stays, and plenty to do in the parks and surrounding areas bolstered our reputation as ideal “staycation” destinations. Despite the overall decline in leisure travel, our state parks experienced a 9.1% percent increase in camping, and an additional 3.7% increase in getaway rentals, which have grown in popularity every year. More than 93% of our customers who responded to the customer satisfaction survey rated their visit as “excellent” or “good.”

With the help of volunteers, friends groups and community partners, and despite fewer staff and limited resources, the parks hosted more than 390 special events, plus thousands of family reunions, fishing tournaments, school and church outings. The list of new recreational offerings continued to grow with more archery ranges, disc golf courses, dog parks, picnic facilities and recreational trails. We continued to accommodate customers’ needs and preferences with operational adjustments, such as offering more pet friendly cottages and dog swim areas.



We expanded the scope of our services and stewardship responsibilities with the integration of the canal lands and recreational services programs. Our stewardship efforts were bolstered by the Recovery Conservation Corps (RCC) program, which provided employment opportunities for youth through federal stimulus dollars. The RCC program was a tremendous success in our parks, and a great benefit for the local communities.

In addition to maintaining our focus on current needs and programs, we also looked to the future. Twenty-five employees attended the third Flickinger Leadership Academy, to help provide them with the skills, knowledge and abilities they will need to become tomorrow's successful managers. To help retain our loyal customers and attract new campers, we introduced a customer rewards program that promises to keep them coming back often for overnight stays.

In Ohio State Parks' 60th year, we have upheld many great traditions from the past, and made a few changes that will carry our park system through today's challenges. Thanks to the perseverance and ingenuity of our staff, the generosity of our partners, and the dedication of our volunteers, we are protecting and improving our great natural legacy for future generations to enjoy.



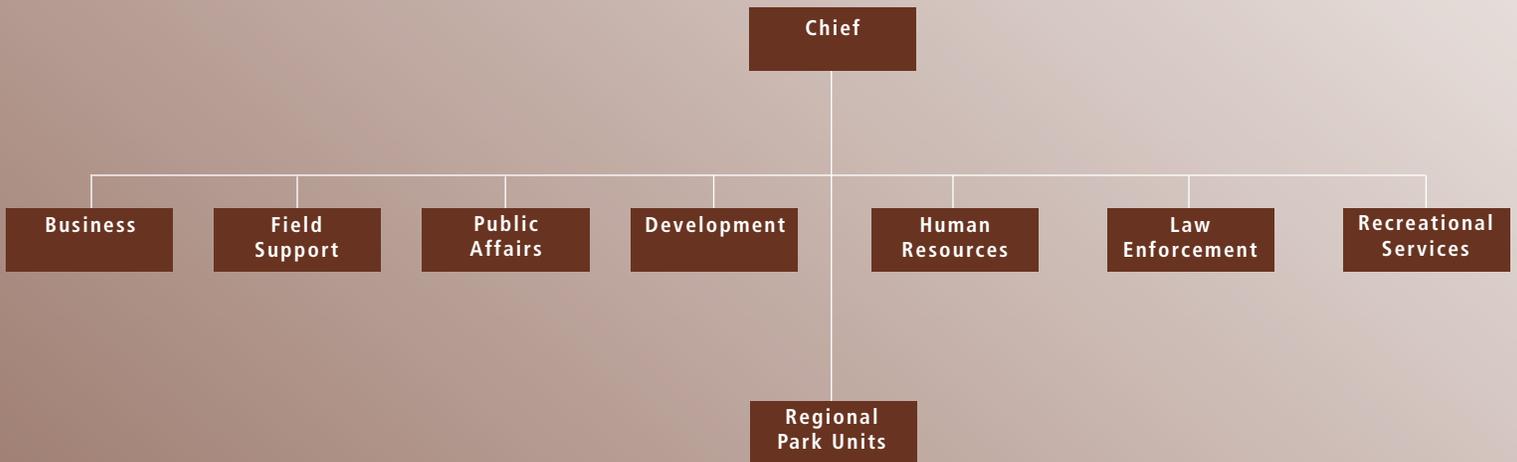
John Hunter

ACTING CHIEF, OHIO STATE PARKS



Table of Organization

The organization of Ohio's 74 state parks into regional units continued, with the total number of regional units reduced to 24. The regional units consist of two to seven parks in close proximity. Each region works together as a team, sharing financial and human resources as necessary for better economy and efficiency.



Customer Service

Providing fun experiences in beautiful natural surroundings with clean and safe facilities is the vision of our dedicated staff and volunteers. Making visitors feel welcome, and enhancing their outdoor adventures with interesting activities and educational programs is our top priority.



Kids digging into science at Caesar Creek

CUSTOMER FOCUS

The statistics demonstrate that our state parks are more important than ever for affordable family vacations and relaxing getaways. Camping increased by 9.1% and getaway rentals were up by 3.7%, despite the economic downturn. Customer satisfaction with our facilities and programs remained high, with 93.8% of survey respondents rating their visit as “excellent” or “good.” Despite the increasing challenges of limited resources and reduced staffing, our employees and volunteers maintained their keen focus on providing hospitality and excellent customer service.

SPECIAL EVENTS AND TOURISM INITIATIVES

Ohio State Parks hosted a total of 393 special events, from campouts and guided hikes to nature workshops and park clean ups. Many of these events were made possible through friends groups and community partners.

Nature tourism remained a focus for parks with strong naturalist programs, along with cottages or lodges for overnight stays. Hueston Woods hosted the second annual Queen City Bird Festival in conjunction with the Miami Valley Chapter of the National Audubon Society, and the Avian Research and Education Institute. The two-day event included bird walks and canoe excursions, bird banding demonstrations, seminars on identifying and attracting birds, and activities for children.

For the fourth year, Shawnee partnered with the Arc of Appalachia Preserve System to present the Southern Ohio Wildflower Pilgrimage. Shawnee was a featured destination, and park staff assisted with the series of naturalist-led hikes through wildflower hot spots in the region. Two of Ohio State Parks’ oldest nature tourism events, the Mohican Wildlife Weekend and the “Shoot the Hills” Nature Photography Weekend at Hocking Hills, continued for the eighth year. Lake Hope’s handfeeding hummingbirds program also continued for the eighth year.

Capitalizing on its history and strength as an agricultural tourism destination, Malabar Farm offered a series of breakfast seminars regarding gardening, animal care, and the park’s innovative farming operations. The Mohican Lodge and Malabar Farm teamed up to provide a “Maple Syrup Experience” weekend offering lodge guests hands-on opportunities to produce their own maple syrup at Malabar Farm’s sugar camp. Caesar Creek offered canning workshops and cast iron cooking classes. Both Caesar Creek and Malabar Farm held workshops and guided hikes to identify edible mushrooms.



Naturalist program

Heritage tourism initiatives include the new Lake Loramie Heritage Museum, which offers historical exhibits on the development of the lake and on local cultural aspects. The fifth annual “Sights and Sounds of Euclid Beach” event at Cleveland Lakefront, which coincided with the 40th anniversary of the closing of the Euclid Beach Amusement Park in 1969, received a great deal of local publicity, including an article in *Cleveland Magazine*. Buckeye Lake hosted a well-attended Big Band concert that is likely to become an annual event.

Fitness and outdoor adventure remained a popular theme for events. The Northeast Ohio Geocaching Challenge provided incentive for high-tech treasure hunters to visit 19 state parks in northeast Ohio between Memorial Day and Labor Day. Pike Lake hosted an Outdoor Adventure Weekend featuring disc golf, canoeing and hunter education courses. East Fork continued its fall Backpack Trek weekend for aspiring backpackers and added a spring backpacking event, while Hueston Woods introduced an Orienteering Weekend event. A new Bike Day event was held on the Little Miami Scenic Trail. Cowan Lake offered canoeing as part of its summer naturalist program, Portage Lakes offered canoeing excursions on moonlit nights, Van Buren held a fall color canoe tour, and Cleveland Lakefront continued the Adventures in Canoeing series. Cleveland Lakefront also offered well-attended fishing charter programs through a grant from the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation. Geneva hosted a successful “Women in the Outdoors” event in January in conjunction with the Lodge at Geneva and the Wild Turkey Federation.

Burr Oak hosted the first Bobcat Trail Marathon sponsored by Ohio Outdoors and Ohio University. The event organizers and participants were very pleased with the park facilities and lodging, and plan to return to Burr Oak for future marathons. Buck Creek served as the venue for HFP Racing’s “Great Buckeye Challenge” triathlon for the second year. Several other parks hosted triathlon events including Caesar Creek, Deer Creek, East Fork, Hueston Woods, Maumee Bay, Portage Lakes, Shawnee, and West Branch. Beaver Creek, East Fork, East Harbor, Mosquito Lake, and Pymatuning also hosted popular 5K run events, Mohican hosted the 20th annual Mohican Trail 100 marathon, and Hocking Hills hosted the annual Indian Run with 5, 10, 20, 40, and 60K courses. Ohio Mountain Biking Championship series races were held at Alum Creek, Caesar Creek, Dillon, East Fork, Lake Hope, Mohican, and West Branch.

INTERPRETIVE SERVICES

Over a quarter million park visitors participated in summer naturalist programs offered in 50 state parks. For the eighth year, the “Wildlife in the Parks” program provided funding support from the Division of Wildlife for interpretive programs and naturalists’ efforts to promote fishing, hunting and wildlife observation. The \$50,000 grant for FY 10, combined with \$34,000 remaining from the FY 09 grant, supported 5,600 hours of naturalist programming and served an estimated 88,477 visitors at 41 state parks.

Ohio State Parks observed Earth Day by hosting celebrations across the state featuring nature-themed events including guided wildflower walks and birding hikes, family fishing derbies, and a nature photography workshop. Park cleanups were held at Buck Creek, Buckeye Lake, Caesar Creek, Cleveland Lakefront, Dillon, East Fork, Geneva, Grand Lake St. Marys, Lake Alma, Maumee Bay, Portage Lakes, Stonelick, Sycamore, and West Branch. Thousands of pounds of trash and recyclables were collected and removed from the parks.

Interpretive facility improvements included installation of a new roof on the nature center at Hueston Woods, a classroom addition at the Lake Hope nature center, and new raptor enclosures at Hocking Hills. Pocket Naturalist Guides were developed by the Hocking Hills and Shawnee park naturalists to provide park visitors with a handy photo reference to identify species they might see at the respective parks.

Park naturalists from Buck Creek, Caesar Creek and Hocking Hills supported the Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalist (OCVN) program by serving as instructors for their local university extension offices. The OCVN program continued to enhance campground nature programs and school programs at Caesar Creek. With assistance from OCVN volunteers, the park naturalists developed a 2-mile interpretive trail along existing hiking trail segments connecting the Caesar Creek Nature Center and pioneer village to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Visitor Center. As part of an OCVN class project, the volunteers provided an informational kiosk at Caesar Creek’s 50 springs area. At Buck Creek, John Bryan and Madison Lake, OCVN volunteers performed landscaping projects. Hocking Hills’ ongoing partnership with Hocking College continued to be another important tool to leverage local resources to provide assistance with interpretive programming, raptor care, and biological field work in the park

including habitat and vegetation mapping, nest surveys, and amphibian surveys.

In partnership with the lodge concessionaire, Xanterra Parks and Resorts, three of the division's naturalists provided educational programs for dozens of American Automobile Association agents in southern Ohio as part of Xanterra's tourism marketing training. At Mohican and Shawnee, naturalists have partnered with the lodge staff to provide programming for lodge guests.

Cleveland Lakefront's School Days program served nearly 1,900 students from 12 area schools, with participation by more than 30 environmental, educational and community organizations. In the Cowan Lake region, the naturalist staff teamed up with Butler and Warren Counties' Soil and Water Conservation District staff to offer programs at schools in Butler County's mobile laboratory, the "soil trailer."

GETTING KIDS OUTDOORS

ODNR's Explore the Outdoors program continued for the second year, with 49 parks featured as recommended locations for the various activities. The program was simplified to include all of the activity codes on a single poster displayed at prominent locations throughout the parks. In addition to distribution of the Explore the Outdoors activity guide booklets through the public schools, a small supply of booklets was made available to park visitors at the parks during naturalist programs.

In addition to the hundreds of kid-friendly naturalist programs at state parks during the summer months, outdoor programs offered especially for children included Easter egg hunts at six parks, 20 fishing derbies at 17 parks, and beach treasure hunts at Caesar Creek and Maumee Bay. Educational events included the Kids' Endangered Species Festival at Kiser Lake, Grossfest at Alum Creek, and Back-to-School weekend at Portage Lakes.

In addition to these park-based programs, the Ohio State Park lodge concessionaires also offered special incentives for families with children to visit and stay at state parks. For the second year, the Lodge at Geneva offered a Kids Grape Camp package with special activities for children staying with parents. For the second year, Xanterra Parks and Resorts offered its "Stays for A's program," featuring a \$10 discount for each "A" on a student's current report card on the regular rates for the state park lodges and cottages operated by Xanterra.

RECREATIONAL OFFERINGS

A number of new and improved recreational facilities were offered at various state parks through special projects initiated by park staff, and through cooperative projects with park friends groups, community partners, and sister agencies. Examples include:

- 2-mile interpretive trail at the Caesar Creek nature center
- 2-mile bike path at Geneva
- 4-mile mountain biking trail at Hocking Hills
- 17-mile Mohican-Malabar Farm trail corridor
- Amphitheater and Nature & Arts stage at Lake Milton
- Amphitheater at Jackson Lake
- Archery ranges at Alum Creek, Dillon, Geneva, and Sycamore
- Boat lunch ramp at Guilford Lake
- Campers' beach at West Branch
- Disc golf courses at Alum Creek, Dillon, John Bryan, Punderson, Van Buren, and the Hueston Woods lodge
- Dog parks at Grand Lake St. Marys, Mosquito Lake, and Salt Fork
- Electrical hookups at 6 campsites at Beaver Creek
- Electrical hookups at 10 equestrian campsites at Hueston Woods
- Event shelter at Deer Creek's campground
- Fish cleaning station at Pymatuning's campground
- Two group camps at Cowan Lake
- Heritage Museum at Lake Loramie
- Interpretive displays in renovated CCC cabin at Shawnee

(list cont.)

Summerbridge Dayton at Buck Creek



Picnic area at Hueston Woods

Renovation of historic mile markers along the Little Miami

Shelterhouses at Burr Oak's equestrian camp and at Shawnee's golf course

Splash pool and play area at Maumee Bay lodge

Tepee Getaway Rental at Portage Lakes

Wildlife observation blinds at Barkcamp, Deer Creek, and Hocking Hills

Yurt Getaway Rental at Mosquito Lake

The policy of offering designated pet friendly cottages at state-operated cottages was expanded to include a minimum of four cottages at each of the state-operated cottage locations. This increased the number of pet-friendly cottages from a total of 19 cottages at five parks, to a total of 45 cottages at eight parks.

Getaway rentals were offered for the first time at Mosquito Lake and Portage Lakes. Mosquito Lake added two yurts to the getaway rentals program, and Portage Lakes added one tepee.

The 10 horsepower limit at Burr Oak Lake was repealed and replaced with a policy prohibiting jet drive motors and stipulating that any watercraft with a motor over 10 hp must operate at idle speed only, with no wake.

CENTRALIZED RESERVATION SYSTEM

Customers continued the trend of opting for the convenience of on-line transactions, making 62% of advance reservations for camping, getaway rentals and state-operated cottages through the centralized reservation system website versus the call-center.

The centralized reservation system was improved with user-friendly enhancements to the reservation website developed cooperatively with the reservation system provider, Active Network. The interactive maps on the reservation website were upgraded to provide a better overview of the campground area, and a "check availability" feature was added so that customers can check the occupancy at any campground in the system for any date range in the future. On-line and call-center reservations for shelter houses and other day-use rentals were added to the reservation system for the first time.

Other customer amenities related to overnight stays were also improved through modifications to the centralized reservation and point of sale system. The Ohio State Parks gift card was offered for sale on-line for the first time in November. In the first six weeks the on-line sales were offered, more than 550 gift cards were purchased through the reservation website. In addition, the lodges operated by Xanterra Parks & Resorts agreed to accept the Ohio State Parks gift cards for the first time in January. Applications for the new Ohio State Parks Rewards card were also made available on-line through the reservation website.

The point of sale system was improved with upgrades to the retail inventory process. The upgrades allow for easier product entry and more efficient completion of physical inventories through the use of barcode scanner technology. Satellite connectivity was replaced by 3G air cards provided by Active Network at 25 point-of-sale locations. The 3G cards allowed park staff to use virtual private networking (VPN) to establish secure connections to the ODNR network for email, OAKS, etc. In most cases, these connections are nearly twice as fast and more reliable than satellite.

PUBLICATIONS

For the second year, the division partnered with Government Solutions Group (GSG) to produce Ohio State Parks "Welcome Kit" brochures free of charge to the division. The welcome kit included the state park directory chart and a locator map, along with recommendations of top parks for various activities; a three-day "road trip" to several parks; tips on outdoor activities for kids; a sampling of state park events; and sponsor pages from several of the corporate sponsors who underwrote the welcome kits. Sponsors included Geico, Burt's Bees, Odwalla Inc., Airstream, Subaru, and Clorox "Greenworks." A total of 200,000 copies of the welcome kits were printed for distribution through the parks, information requests generated through the division's website and print advertising, ODOT Travel Information Centers, Travel & Tourism's 1-800-BUCKEYE fulfillment center, American Automobile Association outlets and various visitor and convention bureaus, travel shows, and the Ohio State Fair.

The number of key promotional pieces printed remained at reduced levels as a cost savings measure. In addition to annual updates of the brochures promoting getaway rentals and listing overnight facilities fees, the camping and golf brochures were updated and reprinted. In its fifteenth year of production, two issues of *Ohio State Parks* magazine were published and direct mailed to some 59,000 subscribers.



Lake Loramie 60th Anniversary Celebration

The total number of magazines printed was reduced by 10 percent to 153,000 copies as an additional cost savings. In the fall/winter issue, magazine subscribers were offered the option to opt out of their subscription for the printed piece and view future issues of the magazine on-line, instead.

MARKETING AND ADVERTISING

Print advertising was placed in a number of publications that provide reader response service, generating over 15,500 requests for general information about Ohio State Parks. The number of requests increased significantly compared to 2008, demonstrating the ongoing value of print advertising for raising the traveling public's awareness of state park facilities.

Advertisements were placed in the "Great Vacation Getaways" travel brochure insert in the travel sections of the Sunday newspaper in all the major Ohio cities as well as over 30 other Midwest and eastern cities. The division participated in the Ohio Department of Development, Division of Tourism's Discover Ohio and Ohio Golfers Guide, and partnered with the Division of Tourism for inclusion in special travel sections focused on Ohio destinations in *Midwest Living*, AAA's *Michigan Living and Home and Away*, *Reader's Digest*, and *Scholastic Parent* magazines distributed throughout the Midwest. Additional exposure in travel publications included advertisements in *Pittsburgh Magazine*, and *Over the Back Fence* magazine. Ads were also placed in publications targeted to campers, including *Woodall's Campground Directory*, *Ohio Camper*, *Camping Life* magazine, and *Trailer Life* magazine.

Ohio State Parks continued its participation in the annual travel shows and golf shows held in Cincinnati, Cleveland and Columbus, as well as many other locally-sponsored shows. In addition, through the Ohio Travel Pavilion, brochures were distributed at travel shows in surrounding states.

WEBSITE

The Ohio State Parks website continued to increase in popularity as a promotional and informational outlet, with 8.7 million page views, a 24.2% increase over 2008. The home page recorded 641,648 views. Internal pages viewed most frequently were "Camping Intro," "Check Rates," "Hocking Hills," "Campground Locator Map," and "Find A Park locator map." The top five park pages viewed were Hocking Hills, Hueston Woods, Lake Erie Islands, Alum Creek, and Salt Fork.

The Internet was an increasingly important component of the division's marketing mix, and a primary vehicle for public outreach campaigns, including "Explore the Outdoors." Internet marketing consisted of tile ads on the Woodall, Trailer Life, Discover Ohio, and Midwest Living websites that linked back to the Ohio State Parks website. Two issues of "E-News from Ohio State Parks" were sent to more than 14,900 subscribers, and over 186,000 other visitors. The electronic newsletters highlighted special offers and discounts, new programs and recreational offerings, and upcoming events in the parks.

The Centralized Reservation System website was enhanced with new services including reservations for shelter houses and calendar searches, as well as improved campground maps. For the first time, Ohio State Parks gift cards were offered for sale through an on-line storefront hosted by Active Network, prompting a 50% increase in gift cards sold.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Ohio State Parks expanded its outreach to online communities through the Facebook and Twitter social networking sites. Ohio State Parks' presence on these sites has helped foster a relationship with younger customers and technology enthusiasts who may not be reached as effectively by conventional means. By communicating directly and instantly with these users, Ohio State Parks has created an interactive experience that solicits feedback, ideas, and content such as pictures and anecdotes while at the same time promoting special events, new recreational offerings, and programs.

PROMOTIONAL PROGRAMS

To increase cottage usage during the off-season, special rates were offered at all state-operated cottage locations January through March, with some locations offering extended time periods. For the fifth consecutive year, the discount offered at each location was \$20 off the regular nightly rate Sunday through Thursday, and \$10 off on Friday and Saturday nights.

Ohio State Parks "Welcome Kit"



In observance of the Ohio State Parks system's 60th anniversary, a special discount was offered at all state park campgrounds during Earth Week, April 19 to April 23. Walk-in campers and campers who made reservations through the call-center received a discount of 60% off the regular camping rate during the period.

The Ohio State Parks Rewards Program was introduced in December. This customer incentive program, which is offered free of charge, replaces the Cardinal Camper Club, which offered camping and getaway rental discounts for campers who purchased the Cardinal Camper card. Participants in the Ohio State Parks Rewards Program earn points for every dollar spent on overnight facility fees for camping, getaway rentals and state-operated cottage rentals. The points can be redeemed for free camping, getaway rentals, or state-operated cottage stays when enough points have been accumulated.

New enrollees in the Ohio State Parks Rewards Program were given the opportunity to claim points for stays during 2009 prior to the introduction of the program. In the first month, more than 2,200 customers enrolled in the program. Although the concession operated facilities were not included in the Rewards Program, Xanterra Parks & Resorts offered rewards card holders 50% off the regular rate for lodge room rentals during the non-peak season.

Other promotional programs that were continued included the Passport America Card, Golden Buckeye Card, and VA Disability/POW program. As in previous years, select state park campgrounds honored the Passport America Card offered for sale by a private vendor. Card holders received a 50 percent discount, Sunday through Wednesday at select state park campgrounds, and for the first time, a 10 percent discount at select state-operated cottages on Sunday through Wednesday. The Golden Buckeye discounts (50 percent off camping on weekdays; 10 percent off camping on weekends; and 10 percent off getaway rentals, cottage, and lodge stays daily) and the free camping program for disabled veterans and former POWs remained the same.

OTHER PUBLICITY

Several parks received favorable publicity from major national media outlets. Punderson was among ten state parks across the country featured as a volunteer vacation destination on the USA Today website. The state park beach on Kelleys Island was ranked among the ten healthiest beach vacations by *Health Magazine*, and was featured on NBC's Today Show. Salt Fork was also featured on the Today Show during a segment on the Bigfoot legend. Burr Oak was highlighted in an article in the June/July issue of *National Geographic Adventure* magazine as one of the season's best weekend trips. Little Miami was featured as the trail of the month on the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy website. Louis Bromfield's Malabar Farm was the topic of a video feature on Monsanto Corporation's website, "America's Heartland," which included interviews with Malabar Farm staff. Lake Hope's "Handfeeding Hummingbirds" program was the subject of a lengthy feature article in the *Washington Post*.

As part of the ongoing partnership with the Division of Travel & Tourism, Ohio State Parks was featured in three of Travel & Tourism's "Discover Ohio" travel segments aired monthly on WCMH Channel 4's Noon News program, including the "Summer Travel Preview," "Fall Foliage," and "Winter Fun" segments. Green practices at Mohican Lodge and Malabar Farm were the subject of an Ohio News Network (ONN) segment that was broadcast on WBNS Channel 10 in Columbus and WEWS Channel 5 in Cleveland, and featured on the 10TV website. Buck Creek was also featured by ONN as an affordable vacation destination. Fox 28 broadcast their Good Day Columbus show from Alum Creek prior to the Memorial Day weekend. Prior to the July 4th holiday weekend, WKBN in Youngstown broadcasted the morning news from Mosquito Lake to promote camping and boating.



Arts & Crafts Festival at Hueston Woods Pioneer Farm

Customer Service - Surveys

Feedback from our customers continues to guide our operations, help us allocate our resources wisely, and make sound decisions that will shape our future.



CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY

Customer satisfaction surveys were conducted for the 18th consecutive year to gauge customers' overall satisfaction with their experiences, as well as collect specific feedback on park operations and identify where improvements are needed. Once again, the survey instrument focused on customer satisfaction with various aspects of overnight and day-use facilities, such as cleanliness of a specific building or area, the condition of that building or area, and helpfulness of the employees at those facilities.

The survey was conducted during the primary operating season, May through October. Visitors were asked to rate their satisfaction with various facility and service categories on a five point scale ranging from excellent (5) to poor (2). A total of 9,722 surveys were returned, with 93.81% of respondents rating their overall visit as excellent or good. (See Table 1, below)

Parks that received outstanding customer ratings for the various park facilities were recognized for their achievement with the Service Excellence Award. The award program was restructured to reflect the basic types of parks based on overnight facilities (i.e., lodge parks, campground parks, day-use only parks) and to recognize the lodge and conference center with the highest customer ratings for the year. To be eligible for an "overall" award, the park must have received a minimum of 100 surveys, and have the highest calculated overall rating for all applicable areas in the category. (See Table 2, below)

Visitors were also asked to provide comments on facilities and services. This valuable feedback allows park managers to make continuous improvements throughout the season, and provides insight on customer needs and wants for future planning. Demographic information was also collected to help determine visitor characteristics. This information can be used for targeted marketing efforts and planning for future amenities and services.

Of those visitors who responded to the survey, 68% were repeat visitors to a specific state park, 80% had visited other state parks, 83% would return to that specific state park, and 80% would visit other state parks. In addition, 57% of respondents were between 31 and 60 years of age, 45% had one or more children, 86% were in groups of two or more people, 69% stayed more than one night on their visit, and 38% visited one to three times per year, while 48% visited more than four times.

TABLE 1: OVERALL AVERAGE RATINGS FOR FACILITY AREAS

Facility Area	2009	2008
Campground Operation	4.465	4.408
Resort Lodge Operation	4.438	4.448
Cottage Operation	4.380	4.316
Getaway Rentals	4.478	4.440
Golf Course	4.780	4.700
Beaches	4.181	4.047
Boating Facilities	4.452	4.354
Trails	4.302	4.108
Picnic Areas	4.388	4.318
Visitor/Nature Centers	4.575	4.489

TABLE 2: SERVICE EXCELLENCE AWARD RECIPIENTS

Facility	Park	Average Rating
Lodge & Conference Center	Mohican Lodge	4.407
Overall Day-Use Park	Lake Milton	4.716
Overall Campground Park (<100 sites)	Jackson Lake	4.688
Overall Campground Park (100-199 sites)	Harrison Lake	4.542
Overall Campground Park (>200 sites)	West Branch	4.599
Overall Lodge Park	Geneva	4.608



Fishing Derby at Lake Alma

Customer Service - Partnerships

Our parks have continued to make improvements and offer new facilities and services, thanks to a variety of community support groups, and generous public and private partners.

FRIENDS GROUPS AND SUPPORT GROUPS

Members of 54 friends' groups were actively involved raising funds, planning and building improvement projects in parks. Fundraising efforts included grant writing, auctions, car shows, providing food at special events, etc. to help fund the following projects:

- Amphitheater at Jackson Lake and amphitheater improvements at Stonelick
- Amphitheater and Nature & Arts stage at Lake Milton
- Archery range at Sycamore
- Disc golf courses at Alum Creek, Punderson, and Van Buren
- Dog parks at Grand Lake St. Marys and Mosquito Lake, and dog park improvements at Alum Creek
- Nature center improvements at Lake Hope
- Pioneer village improvements at Mohican
- Playgrounds at Caesar Creek campground and Harrison Lake
- Safety improvements on bridges and erosion control at Little Miami
- Shelterhouse at Burr Oak and shelterhouse improvements at Maumee Bay
- Shuffleboard courts at Delaware
- Trail signage at John Bryan
- Weed control at Jackson Lake
- Welcome center at Rocky Fork campground.

Total donations of cash and in-kind services from the community to friends groups and volunteer groups through the year are estimated at more than \$566,000.

The Friends for the Preservation of Ohio State Parks (FPOSP), the nonprofit advocacy and umbrella organization for individual park groups, marked its sixth year by hosting two statewide meetings. The Spring Symposium at Mohican Lodge offered sessions on how to plan and fund park improvement projects, recruiting and retaining members, fundraising strategies, and an update on FPOSP legislative advocacy program.

The FPOSP continued to serve in a leadership role with the Ohio Natural Resources Stakeholder Group, a coalition of more than 20 statewide conservation, sportsmen, recreation, environmental, tourism and labor organizations that advocate for stable and sustainable funding for Ohio State Parks, as well as the divisions of Forestry, Natural Areas and Preserves, and Soil and Water Conservation. The Stakeholder Group hosted the Outdoors Ohio Legislative Summit in February with nearly 50 legislators and aides in attendance. Sessions on state park funding models were presented by a researcher from the University of Indiana, and the directors of the Idaho and Missouri state park systems.

In its fourth year, the Ohio State Parks Legacy Foundation was given nearly \$30,000, the largest single donation yet received, from Macy's Department Stores division of Federated Stores Corp. Legacy foundation grant recipients included the Findley and Punderson state park friends' groups.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

In the Ohio State Parks Volunteer Program's 27th year, more than 7,000 volunteers contributed a total of 350,000 hours of service to their local parks. More than 300 volunteers attended the division's annual statewide volunteer campout, hosted for the first time at Hocking Hills.

The annual Volunteer Park-of-the-Year Award was presented to Hocking Hills with recognition for volunteer involvement in trail improvements, nature programs, special events, and assisting campers. Quail Hollow earned honorable mention.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

The Lake Milton amphitheater and Nature & Arts stage was a collaborative project with the Lake Milton Nature Arts Council Inc., Craig Beach Village, Milton Township, and the Ohio Arts Council. The new 3.7-acre dog park at Grand Lake St. Marys was developed through a partnership with Celina Rotary Club, while Mosquito Lake's new 3-acre dog park was constructed in conjunction with the Trumbull County MetroParks Board.

Buck Creek hosted camporee events for four area Boy Scout councils, who performed service projects at the park in addition to enjoying educational and recreational programs offered by park staff. East Fork hosted week long summer day camps for cub scouts and boy scouts. Other scout projects in state parks include a new amphitheater stage at Findley, a beach shelter at Grand Lake St. Marys, a footbridge and erosion control on a hiking trail at John Bryan, park benches at West Branch's campground, and trail improvements and landscaping, along with recycled lumber benches and trash bins at Lake Loramie.

Cowan Lake partnered with a local private campground to co-host a 60th Anniversary celebration event for the benefit of the local community devastated by the closure of the DHL hub in Wilmington. In addition to hundreds of campers, more than 1,000 local citizens attended the event. For the eighth year, Cowan Lake hosted the annual "Fishing Has No Boundaries" event in partnership with the Cincinnati Chapter of Fishing Has No Boundaries.

In partnership with the physical education department at Troy High School, more than 200 students attended a 3-day physical education event at Hueston Woods including service projects and outdoor activities. For the second year, more than two dozen at-risk middle school students visited Buck Creek as part of the Summerbridge Dayton enrichment program sponsored by Wright State University and Dayton Public Schools.

CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS

In addition to producing 200,000 copies of the Ohio State Parks Welcome Kit (valued at \$30,000) free of charge to the division, the partnership with Government Solutions Group (GSG) yielded cash donations, as well. Ohio State Parks received a donation of \$1,965 for purchasing and planting trees, courtesy of one of the Welcome Kit corporate sponsors, Odwalla Inc.

For the second consecutive year, Paddle Quest events were held at ten parks in partnership with Gander Mountain and the Division of Watercraft. The series promoted canoeing and kayaking, which are among the fastest growing segments in outdoor recreation. Watercraft officers offered brief boating safety presentations at the start of each event.

INTER-AGENCY PARTNERSHIPS

As part of the ongoing partnership between Malabar Farm and the Mansfield Correctional Institute (MANCI), the MANCI inmates tilled, planted and harvested three acres at the park to provide vegetables for a central Ohio food bank. MANCI provided the seed and fertilizer, as well as most of the labor for the project, which yielded 9,795 pounds of squash to feed an estimated 14,700 Ohioans.

Several other parks benefited from the ongoing partnership with MANCI for vehicle and equipment renovations. MANCI projects included a refurbished pontoon boat for Dillon, turf mower repairs for Hueston Woods, rebuilt golf course mowers for Salt Fork, restoration of a flail chopper for Malabar Farm, a rebuilt tractor and boat renovations for Alum Creek, and a rebuilt tractor for Mohican.

Cleveland Lakefront partnered with the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation for funds to continue fishing charter programs as part of the park's naturalist programming, and worked with the City of Cleveland's Neighborhood Connections grant program to secure funding for park events during National Clean Beaches Week.



MANCI Squash Harvest at Malabar Farm



Fishing Derby prize winners at Grand Lake St. Marys

Customer Service - Visitor Safety and Protective Services

Of the 59,720 visitor contacts by commissioned law enforcement personnel, more than one third (34%) were visitor assists. Of the visitor contacts for law enforcement actions, 89% were friendly warnings.

LAW ENFORCEMENT GRANTS & FUNDS

A \$58,988 grant from the Department of Public Safety, Governor's Highway Safety Office provided funding for 13 state parks to participate in speed, adult and child restraints and DUI enforcement. A \$29,567.25 grant from the Division of Watercraft, matched with \$9,855.75 from the parks, assisted with lake patrols on the waters of Lake Milton, West Branch, and Mosquito Lake.

The Drug/DUI account received \$ 15,824.07 in fines resulting from O.R.C. Title 4511.19, Operating under the influence and O.R.C. Title 2925, Drug abuse.

Tar Hollow partnered with the Ross County Sheriff's Office to offer Project Lifesaver transmitter bracelets for overnight visitors with Alzheimer's disease or other conditions that may cause them to wander or become disoriented. Park staff received training for effective use of the Project Lifesaver equipment, and successfully piloted the program in the campground.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

In addition to receiving the Meritorious Lifesaving Award and a special resolution from the Ohio Senate for his valiant efforts to rescue two boaters from the hazardous waters of Lake Milton after their boat overturned during a severe wind storm, Park Officer **Al Campana** received the Distinguished Law Enforcement Valor Award during the Ohio Attorney General’s Law Enforcement Conference in October.

PROTECTIVE SERVICES

Commissioned law enforcement personnel provided an array of protective services including assisting park visitors, issuing visitor warnings, conducting investigations and making arrests. The law enforcement statistics that were reported by the park regions are itemized in Table 1 below.

RESPONSE TO RESISTANCE

There were 42 instances in which park officers were required to respond to resistance while performing law enforcement duties, down from 50 in 2008. All reported incidents were reviewed for appropriateness and in every incident, park officers were found to have acted in accordance with department policy and training standards. Fifty-two park officers reported the need to use some level of force and, in some instances, multiple tactics, to respond to these incidents. This number continues to be reflective of the ever increasing dangers that officers face in the course of promoting public safety in Ohio State Parks. (See Table 2 below)



Officer Campana and Ohio Attorney General Cordray

PROTECTIVE SERVICES

TABLE 1: ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITY

	2009	2008	2007
Visitor Assists	20,296	24,364	28,130
Warnings (written or verbal)	35,223	40,717	45,360
Misdemeanor Citations/Arrests	4,065	4,803	6,050
Felony Arrest	136	214	183
Outside Agency Assists	365	402	564
Property Stolen	\$85,453	\$172,040	\$412,275
Vandalism	\$5,839	\$9,259	\$9,676
Investigations	2,268	2,596	3,893

TABLE 2: TYPE OF RESPONSE TO RESISTANCE USED

Unholster Weapon	30
Bodily Force	7
Chemical Agent	0
Vehicle Pursuit	3
Injury to Officer	0
Road Block	0
Display Shotgun	3
Suspect Injury	0
Baton	0
Canine	0
CEW	2
Unholster CEW	17
Patrol Rifle	0

Visitor Occasions

Visitor occasions for day use and overnight stays increased by 6.1%, overall. Good weather, special events and new recreational offerings helped boost visitation. Camping increased by 9.1%, and getaway rentals were up by 3.7%, reflecting customers' desire for affordable overnight stays, close to home. Cottage rentals decreased slightly, and lodge stays also declined, due to the economic downturn.

State Park	2009 Total Visitor Occasions
Adams Lake	158,475
Alum Creek	2,375,786
AW Marion	454,047
Barkcamp	257,601
Beaver Creek	289,662
Blue Rock	162,458
Buck Creek	529,043
Buckeye Lake	352,636
Burr Oak	400,808
Caesar Creek	2,749,782
Cleveland Lakefront	8,430,273
Cowan Lake	1,753,262
Deer Creek	1,006,630
Delaware	522,565
Dillon	683,767
East Fork	1,002,661
East Harbor	1,471,570
Findley	622,756
Forked Run	195,351
Geneva	959,983
Grand Lake St Marys	687,017
Great Seal	12,554
Guilford Lake	154,696
Harrison Lake	307,948
Headlands Beach	3,150,730
Hocking Hills	2,928,184
Hueston Woods	2,911,659
Independence Dam	62,870
Indian Lake	1,780,733
Jackson Lake	38,637
Jefferson Lake	96,964
John Bryan	252,002
Kiser Lake	486,971
Lake Alma	111,260

State Park	2009 Total Visitor Occasions
Lake Erie Islands	770,191
Lake Hope	680,593
Lake Logan	220,254
Lake Loramie	524,143
Lake Milton	672,128
Lake White	24,440
Little Miami	263,470
Madison Lake	151,445
Malabar Farm	175,718
Marblehead Lighthouse	1,194,564
Mary Jane Thurston	145,197
Maumee Bay	1,080,404
Mohican	630,173
Mosquito Lake	1,855,466
Mt Gilead	68,904
Muskingum River Parkway	308,648
Nelson Kennedy Ledges	30,900
Paint Creek	496,610
Pike Lake	121,831
Portage Lakes	1,031,368
Punderson	614,574
Pymatuning	575,944
Quail Hollow	267,346
Rocky Fork	792,973
Salt Fork	1,472,117
Scioto Trail	34,282
Shawnee	258,372
Stonelick	235,136
Strouds Run	637,732
Sycamore	254,287
Tar Hollow	133,128
Tinkers Creek	14,175
Van Buren	107,381
West Branch	502,534
Wolf Run	59,907

TOTAL

53,767,676

Resource Management

Energy conservation, sound resource management, and initiatives to maintain and encourage biological diversity remain important components of Ohio State Parks' resource stewardship efforts. Our stewardship responsibilities and opportunities have expanded with the adoption of programs to develop recreational trails and manage lands that were once part of Ohio's historic canal systems.



Volunteer park clean-up

LAND TRANSACTIONS

Land purchases, sales, easements and trade agreements help satisfy the needs of Ohio's individual citizens as well as the state's private and public organizations, while protecting the resource base and public trust concerns. The requests of ten adjacent land owners were satisfied through the sale of .9837 acres of surplus property at three state parks. These parcels were sold for a total of \$51,650. A 5.065-acre parcel adjacent to the Hocking Hills campground was purchased for \$139,290. A 1-acre parcel with a structure at Salt Fork was sold for \$75,000. A 0.897-acre parcel on the Muskingum River Parkway was transferred to the City of Marietta. As a result of these transactions, Ohio State Parks gained a net total of 2.9916 acres at a net cost of \$12,640.

A number of easements were acquired from private landowners on Middle Bass Island to allow for construction of a water line. These easements total approximately 1.19 acres and cost \$34,690. In addition, a parcel of 23.42 acres was applied to wetland mitigation requirements through an environmental covenant.



Vernal pool

Following the Division of Wildlife's acquisition of the Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company's 690-acre "Wingfoot Lake" property in Portage County, a portion of the property was transferred to Ohio State Parks. The property includes a 540-acre lake that is suited to the Division of Wildlife's mission; however, much of the surrounding property, with its recreation facilities, is less suited to being a state wildlife area. Consequently, approximately 86 acres of land was journalized as a state park in October, and added to the Portage Lakes Region. It includes roadways, parking lots, several picnic shelters, play courts, playgrounds, ball fields, a miniature golf course, boathouse, restroom buildings, canteen building, office/meeting facility, residence, water/wastewater plants and other support facilities. Approximately 34 additional acres will be added to the state park in 2010 as the Division of Wildlife finalizes its acquisition of the former Goodyear property.

CANAL LANDS

With the transfer of the ODNR Canal Lands Program from the Division of Water in March, Ohio State Parks has assumed responsibility for the operational management of the canal lands, including real estate sales and leases. The day-to-day operations of the watered sections of the historic Miami and Erie Canal are managed through Grand Lake St. Marys, while the Ohio and Erie Canal sections are managed through Portage Lakes. The Division of Soil & Water Resources retained responsibility for the water sales and water leases, while oversight of hydraulic operations was transferred to the Division of Engineering. The Canal Lands Program is funded through the GRF, land and water lease revenues, and approved canal land sales. Receipts from 280 active leases, 13 royalty payments and two approved sales totaled \$326,845.

WETLAND PROJECTS

Shoreline stabilization measures were expanded at Grand Lake St. Marys to protect wetlands at the Anderson area on the north central portion of the lake.

At Caesar Creek, park staff continued their collaboration with the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, Louisville District, to create vernal pools. The vernal pools are strategically located to provide valuable seasonal wetland habitat while improving the drainage on the park's bridle trails.

Wetland determinations were conducted at Delaware, Grand Lake St. Marys, Indian Lake, and Shawnee in preparation for various park improvement projects.

WATERWAY IMPROVEMENTS

The focus of dredging and other waterway improvement projects is the enhancement of harbors, channels, and waterways to foster vessel safety. Approximately 498,000 cubic yards of sediment were dredged from Ohio State Park waterways, including Buckeye Lake, Delaware Lake marina, Grand Lake St. Marys, Indian Lake, Lake Loramie, Rocky Fork Lake, the Muskingum River Parkway, and the Maumee River at Independence Dam. Dredge projects were completed at Independence Dam, the Delaware marina basin, and the Lowell Canal along the Muskingum River Parkway. The entrance channel to Cleveland Lakefront's Wildwood Marina was dredged from the launch ramp to the marina basin opening by a private contractor removing approximately 6,800 cubic yards of sand.

The nuisance aquatic vegetation harvesting program provided safe access for boaters into waterways otherwise choked with vegetation and not navigable. Approximately four million pounds of nuisance weeds were removed from 14 state park waterways.

Ongoing annual projects to maintain launch ramps and clean silt traps were accomplished along the Muskingum River Parkway, and at Hueston Woods' Acton Lake, Portage Lakes, Pymatuning Lake, Rocky Fork Lake, and Shawnee's Roosevelt Lake.

BEACH SAMPLING AND RECREATIONAL WATER QUALITY

Throughout the swimming season, Ohio State Park beaches were monitored for bacterial contamination by *E. coli* in accordance with guidelines established by the Ohio Department of Health. Advisories were posted at beaches where the total amount of *E. coli* was found to exceed 235 colony forming units per 100ml of sample. Twelve advisories were issued at 10 of 67 inland state park beaches and 104 advisories were issued at 10 of the 12 Lake Erie beach sampling locations in

state parks. Many of these advisories were single-day postings, although longer postings occurred at Indian Lake's Fox Island Beach, where advisories continued for 15 days.

In cooperation with the U.S. Geological Survey, Cleveland Lakefront's Edgewater Beach served for the second year as the site of a new water quality forecasting system called "Nowcast." Nowcast uses a statistical model that considers currents, rainfall, winds and wave action to predict local E. coli levels. The model proved to be successful in predicting bacterial levels that might present a health hazard.

Mohican conducted three public stream water quality monitoring seminars to equip volunteers with the skills to collect baseline data for the Mohican Clear Fork River. The beaches at Maumee Bay are expected to benefit from a riparian corridor restoration project on Wolf Creek initiated by the City of Oregon through a Coastal Management Assistance Grant.

Grand Lake St. Marys was the focus of increased public concern due to identification of harmful algal toxins produced by blue-green algae in the lake. Ohio EPA announced having found the toxin just days before Memorial Day weekend. The toxin, microcystin, can cause rashes and skin irritation. Prolonged exposure to the toxin in high levels can cause liver damage. Advisories that cautioned the public to limit contact with the water and to avoid ingesting lake water were posted throughout the summer. As a result of the water issue, camping and dock rentals at the park declined significantly.

RECREATIONAL TRAILS

The Recreational Trails Program provided grant funding for several trail improvements and new trails. Work was completed on a mile-long multiple-use trail at Geneva that skirts the Lake Erie shoreline and connects the lodge to the park's interior trails. The Recreational Trails Program provided \$105,000 for construction of two bridges along the trail. At Indian Lake, work was completed on restoration and enhancement of 1.25 miles of bike path funded through a \$32,500 Recreational Trails Program grant. At Lake Milton, work was completed on two miles of paved nature trail made possible through an \$80,000 grant. Caesar Creek was awarded a \$26,901 grant for rehabilitation and clearing of equestrian trails; Lake Milton was awarded a \$25,000 grant for trailhead development including an ADA restroom and trails information center; and Maumee Bay received a grant award of \$150,000 for reconstruction and resurfacing of 4.6 miles of paved jogging and bicycling trail.

Through the Recreational Services program, which was incorporated in the division in March, division staff worked closely with the Ohio Motorized Trail Association (OMTA) and the Ohio State Snowmobile Association (OSSA) to identify needs and priorities for use of the State Recreation Vehicle Fund (SRVF). The SRVF receives a portion of the vehicle registration fees for snowmobiles, off-highway motorcycles (OHMs), all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), and 4X4 vehicles. The fee was increased, at the request of the motorized community, from \$8.50 every three years to \$31.25 every three years, to provide additional funding for the eventual development of motorized trails.

Public forums were held around the state to gather input for a new motorized trails plan that will provide a blueprint for the eventual placement and development of public motorized trails. Work began on updates to the statewide trails plan originally compiled in 2005 for non-motorized trails. The public input component was completed through survey work conducted by Wright State University.

The first phase of a project to develop a multiple-use trail linking East Fork with the neighboring community of Williamsburg was completed. The 2.5-mile trail begins in Williamsburg and ends at the Harsha Lake overlook on the north side of the lake. The project partners include East Fork, the Division of Wildlife, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Clermont County Park District, and the Villages of Williamsburg and Batavia. The first phase of the project was funded through various grants, and additional grants have been secured for the second phase, which will extend the trail to the East Fork campground.

Improvements to the Little Miami Trail include the repair and repaving of 11 wooden bridges undertaken by the Friends of the Little Miami, and a riverbank restoration project near Corwin undertaken by the Warren County Soil and Water Conservation District with grant funding from the OEPA.



Recreational Trail Users



RCC group painting cottages at Lake Hope

In a cooperative project with the Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District, Mohican State Forest, and the Mohican Trails Club, 17 miles of multi-use trail were developed to connect the existing bridle trail systems at Mohican, Malabar Farm and the conservancy district's Pleasant Hill Lake Park. As a complement to the trail project, Pleasant Hill Lake developed 37 primitive equestrian campsites. The Mohican Trails Club also collaborated on the production of a Mohican Regional Trails Guide that features maps and descriptions of the hiking, bridle and mountain biking trails in the state parks and forest. The Mohican lodge and Columbia Gas provided funding assistance for publication of the trails guide, with proceeds from sales of the guides to be used for future reprints as well as trail maintenance.

Volunteers from the Buckeye Trail Association and the North Country Trail Association built a boardwalk to improve a poorly drained section of trail linking the Burr Oak backpacking trail and the Wayne National Forest's Wildcat Hollow Trail. At Hocking Hills, a new volunteer group, the Hocking Hills Trail Trolls, was organized to help restore and maintain trails that were not included in the 1998 capital improvement project to repair flood damage from Old Man's Cave to Cedar Falls.

RECOVERY CONSERVATION CORPS

The Recovery Conservation Corps (RCC) was created through funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to provide employment opportunities with public benefit for young Ohioans ages 16 to 24. Ohio State Parks partnered with the Department of Jobs and Family Services as well as local and regional non-profit service agencies that focus on teens and young adults to match the RCC labor force with appropriate projects. A total of 358 RCC workers were employed in 59 state parks, natural areas, state forests and wildlife areas.

Examples of projects undertaken by the RCC crews include cottage improvements at Buck Creek and exterior cottage painting at Lake Hope; brush removal and trail improvements at Burr Oak, Mohican, Nelson Kennedy Ledges, Punderson and Tinker's Creek; installation of a basketball court at Forked Run, and site preparation for a new archery range at Lake Hope.

BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

Four osprey nesting poles were installed at Burr Oak Lake in collaboration with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. At Punderson, 20 duck nesting boxes were installed around the park's lake and wetland areas.

East Fork collaborated with the Wild Turkey Federation, Quail Forever, and the Division of Wildlife on a prairie planting project to enhance the overall habitat and create corridors for turkey and quail.

Buck Creek initiated a cooperative project with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Division of Wildlife, and friends of C.J. Brown Reservoir to place fish attracting structures in the lake.

Monarch butterfly tagging programs were held at Cleveland Lakefront, East Harbor, Maumee Bay, and Van Buren. Shawnee hosted the North American Butterfly Association's 18th annual butterfly count.

For the fourth consecutive year, a loop of Pymatuning's campground in the vicinity of a bald eagle nest was closed temporarily during nesting season, affecting 154 campsites. Unfortunately, the nesting pair did not produce any fledglings.

SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES AND GREEN INITIATIVES

After a successful pilot year, the "Carry In Carry Out" program was expanded to include more day-use areas in participating parks as well as ten additional parks, bringing the total number of participating parks to 32. The program is designed to encourage park users to help the environment and keep parks clean by taking their trash home with them after visits to some picnic areas, beaches, boat launches, and trailheads. Immediate benefits of the program were elimination

of the mess and pests associated with trash containers. The annual cost savings from reduced trash collection in remote areas of parks is estimated at \$54,000, in addition to freeing up park staff to focus their effort and attention on other important projects.

Malabar Farm developed a livestock manure compost facility with a \$50,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and assistance from the Division of Soil & Water Resources and the Richland County Soil and Water Conservation District. In addition to improving animal waste management at the park, the compost facility serves as a demonstration project to educate the public about agricultural practices and stream water quality issues.

Solar tubes were installed at Hueston Woods' nature center as part of a roof replacement project. Solar lighting has been installed at boat launch ramps at Adams Lake and Shawnee, and solar technology was incorporated in outdoor lighting improvements at the Shawnee lodge.

"No Heat/No Cool" policies to conserve energy at park office and maintenance buildings were observed during mild spring weather at Burr Oak, and for the third consecutive year during the month of May at Lake Hope.

Burr Oak relocated its park office, and the Deer Creek park maintenance staff moved into the golf course maintenance shop to reduce the number of buildings maintained for park operations. Buckeye Lake replaced a 50-gallon gas water heater at the maintenance shop with an energy efficient on-demand electric water heater. Other energy saving measures adopted by various parks included placing thermostats on timers, turning off unnecessary lights, replacing bulbs with compact fluorescents, increasing building insulation, installing heat blankets on hot water tanks, carpooling and consolidating trips, and seasonally closing select office buildings, cottages, campground showerhouses and other buildings.

MANAGEMENT OF NUISANCE SPECIES

Ashland, Green, Morrow, Pike, Richland, Scioto, and Summit counties were added to the Emerald ash borer (EAB) quarantine area by the Ohio Department of Agriculture, bringing the total number of parks in the quarantine zone to 37, including John Bryan, Lake White, Malabar Farm, Mohican, Mt. Gilead, Pike Lake, Portage Lakes and Shawnee. Several parks in infested areas continued to remove ash trees and replace them with other species. For the second year, EAB detection traps were placed in parks and other areas where EAB is suspected, as well as in non-infested areas, to determine the extent of the infestation. Ohio State Parks continued to support the Department of Agriculture's public education campaign discouraging the movement of cut firewood through the state parks website, publications, and personal contacts with customers. The firewood production operations at Barkcamp remain outside the quarantine area, and are not significantly impacted by the quarantine.

Ohio State Parks continued to cooperate with the Ohio Department of Agriculture's ongoing efforts to control the gypsy moth, a non-native invasive species that defoliates trees in its caterpillar phase, causing permanent damage or death. The gypsy moth attacks some 300 species of trees and shrubs, particularly oaks, and was first detected in Ohio a decade ago. ODA's gypsy moth control program consisted primarily of spot treatment of infested areas with either a chemical insecticide (Dimilin), and bacterial agent (*Bacillus thuringiensis*), or a pheromone which disrupts the mating process (SPLAT, Gypchek).

Efforts to control non-native invasive plant species include an intensive program at Mohican to eliminate garlic mustard and knotweed. The Athens Forest Stewardship Club assisted with a garlic mustard removal plan at Burr Oak, and Cleveland Lakefront and the Cuyahoga Soil and Water District co-sponsored a garlic mustard pull at the park. With assistance from the Division of Forestry, Maumee Bay developed a burn plan to control phragmites and enhance 20 acres of native prairie.



Garlic Mustard

NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLANS

Natural resource management plans were completed and approved for the following 18 additional state parks, bringing the total number of parks with plans to 42: Caesar Creek, Cleveland Lakefront, Cowan Lake, Delaware, Dillon, East Fork, East Harbor, Grand Lake St. Marys, Headlands Beach, Hocking Hills, Lake Hope, Lake Loramie, Marblehead Lighthouse, Mohican, Pike Lake, Pymatuning, Shawnee and Strouds Run. Every region now has at least one state park with a completed natural resource management plan and seven regions have completed natural resource management plans for all of their parks.

FLOODING AND STORM DAMAGE

An ice storm in late January damaged trees and caused extensive power outages in southern Ohio, affecting 20 parks. The total cost of debris removal and repair to facilities damaged by power loss was estimated at \$60,000.

Headlands Beach was closed for two days in February after heavy rain and snow melt flooded the Grand River, leaving the park entrance and west end parking lots underwater. Due to late summer flooding and resulting debris following severe storms, East Fork's camper's swimming beach closed for the season in August.

SPECIAL DESIGNATIONS

Hueston Woods has been featured as an attraction along the Presidential Pathways Scenic Byway, newly designated by ODOT. The designated area was significant in the lives of U.S. Presidents William Henry Harrison and Benjamin Harrison.

Shawnee has been included as a major destination in the Scenic Scioto Heritage Trail auto tour as part of a Scioto County tourism initiative.

Mohican's mountain biking trail, which spans 25 miles of state park and state forest land was voted the number one mountain bike trail in Ohio by *Mountain Bike Action* magazine, and recognized by *National Geographic Explorer* magazine as a "must ride."



Resource inventory field work

Professional Development

Ohio State Parks' workforce continued to be reduced, with 23% fewer employees in less-than-full-time positions, primarily in the field. Despite this downsizing, however, employees continued to provide excellent service for customers. Programs like the Flickinger Leadership Academy and Ohio Certified Public Manager Program helped to prepare the workforce for the future.



Flickinger Academy

PERSONNEL

During the peak season, Ohio State Parks employed a workforce of 438 permanent and 767 less-than-full-time employees. Within the workforce, there were 210 new hirings of permanent or seasonal employees, 45 reclassifications or promotions, 201 resignations and 32 retirements.

Consolidation of park regions continued with the merger of the Lake Erie Islands within the East Harbor region, reducing the total number of park regions from 25 to 24.

Ongoing review and monitoring of information captured in the Ohio Administrative Knowledge System (OAKS) resulted in adjustments and corrections. For example, more than 250 errors were detected in employees' advancement steps during a four month research project. As a result, employees who had not been awarded timely step advances received more than \$29,000 in back pay, while more than \$1,500 was recovered for step advances awarded too soon.

The statewide cost savings day program was implemented with "black-out" days designated for applicable staff at each field location to minimize the potential impact on customer service. The black-out days included summer holidays and times of peak visitation at the parks, such as special event weekends.

Personnel

Numbers of permanent employees by general job categories are:

Administration	8
Professional and Technical	116
Clerical/Office Support	34
Skilled Craft	127
Protective Services	91
Operational Support	62
Total Permanent Employees	438

Employee Development Programs

TRAINING

The third Flickinger Leadership Academy was offered to employees in a variety of jobs who aspire to management and leadership positions. Like the previous academies, the program focused on developing leadership skills, building knowledge of agency processes and business practices, and establishing a network for future leaders. To complete the program, each participant was tasked with developing and carrying out a project that is aligned with the division's Service & Stewardship strategic plan. The academy was divided into two one-week sessions held in the spring and fall. Twenty-five employees were selected from a pool of more than 60 applicants.

After a one-year interruption, the Ohio Certified Public Manager Program (OCPM) was reintroduced to government employees. The retooled program continues to address the core competencies of management, with additional emphasis placed on developing budget priorities and spending plans, and monitoring and controlling expenditures to ensure that resources are expended in ways that support the organization's mission. Since its inception in 1998, 62 division employees have graduated from, or are currently enrolled in the OCPM program.

For the fourth year, hospitality management training was offered at the beginning of the summer season for front-line staff who provide direct service to customers. One-day sessions were held at five locations around the state for 77 park employees. Participants received training in providing exceptional customer service and managing difficult situations.

As part of the department's ongoing focus on emergency preparedness, permanent employees received a basic level of training in the Incident Command System (ICS), at a minimum. In addition, supervisory employees and commissioned officers received advanced ICS training.

Three administrative support meetings were held in conjunction with monthly regional management meetings to allow the parks' management and support staff to carpool, reducing overall travel time and expense. Meeting topics included worker's compensation and disability issues, cost savings days, seasonal interruptions, health insurance, coding of payroll, and centralized reservation and point-of-sale system updates.

Waterway and Construction employees received CPR refresher training, as well as mobile crane operations training, at their annual meeting.

Representatives from parks with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers lakes in southwest Ohio attended a seminar regarding enforcement of the federal Archaeological Resource Protection Act as part of the parks' obligation as lease holders of land owned by the Corps of Engineers.

Training for all commissioned officers included the annual in-service training, fall firearms training, and conducted energy weapons (CEW) training. During the in-service training, held at the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy in London, all commissioned officers qualified with the handgun and received training in responding to active shooter incidents. Officers also received refresher training in OC chemical aerosol, ASP Baton, first aid, and legal update training. All officers were also fitted for a respirator as part of Homeland Security requirements. Fall firearms training entailed shotgun qualification, various handgun and shotgun shooting drills and live fire shooting scenarios that reinforce the active shooter training. Ohio State Parks again partnered with Hocking College by providing traffic stop instructors who trained students in basic peace officer classes at the Natural Resources Ranger Academy.

The Internal Investigative Unit attended specialized training involving a scenario that required the state park officers to work with the ODNR Office of Law Enforcement, Communication Center, and other ODNR law enforcement divisions. The scenario was the investigation of a mock officer involved shooting. This was the first department wide training scenario of its kind.

A total of 55 commissioned officers participated in the annual physical fitness assessments and testing, 29 of whom were hired after January 1, 2004 and are required to pass an annual fitness test. The vast majority of commissioned officers passed the test, including 27 of the 29 officers for whom the test was mandatory, and 26 officers who took the test voluntarily.

IN MEMORIAM

We are deeply saddened by the loss of our friend and coworker, Michael Grammer, Assistant Park Manager 4 at Mosquito Lake, who passed away on April 11.

Employee Recognition Programs

TEAM AWARD PROGRAM

The Team Award Program was designed to acknowledge teams of division employees or volunteers who work together to complete a specific project or accomplishment. A total of 11 teams comprised of 116 individuals were recognized during the program's eleventh year. They are:

- Buck Creek 2009 Flower Team
- Buck Creek Conestoga Camp Store Team
- Buck Creek Cottage Brochure Team
- Buck Creek Dock Renovation Team
- Buck Creek Employee Centered Learning Team
- Buck Creek Maintenance Procedure Manual Team
- Buck Creek Marina Dock Renovation Team
- Buck Creek Water Emergency Team
- Indian Lake Blackhawk Bridge Repair Team
- Indian Lake Blackhawk Marina Team
- Pymatuning Water Supply Malfunction Team

DIVISION LIFESAVING AWARDS

Sixteen individuals were recognized for their participation in lifesaving actions of a distinguished nature. Fifteen of these are Ohio State Parks employees, and one is a marina concession operator.

The Meritorious Lifesaving Award was presented to the following employees whose actions saved or attempted to save the life of another, putting their own lives at risk to an extraordinary degree:

- Albert Campana**, Park Officer, Lake Milton
- Michael Grammer**, Assistant Park Manager, Mosquito Lake
- Barbara Neill**, Park Manager, Lake Milton

In addition to receiving Ohio State Parks' highest lifesaving award, **Albert Campana**, **Michael Grammer**, and **Barbara Neill** were recognized by the Ohio Senate in March with a special resolution honoring their heroism and public service.

The Lifesaving Recognition Award was presented to the following employees whose actions saved or attempted to save the life of another, putting their own lives at risk:

- Patrick Boryca**, Assistant Park Manager, Hueston Woods
- Shawn Conner**, Naturalist, Hueston Woods
- Daniel Cox**, Parks Officer, Hueston Woods
- Thomas Gabbard**, Treatment Plant Operator, Hueston Woods
- Perry Gordon**, Park Officer, Hueston Woods
- Jason Lagore**, Park Officer, Caesar Creek
- Thomas Lorenz**, Park Officer, Hueston Woods
- Adam Martin**, Park Officer, Alum Creek
- Joseph Schriever**, Maintenance Repair Worker, Hueston Woods
- Lonnie Snow**, Park Manager, Hueston Woods
- Kimberly Woods**, Natural Resources Worker, Scioto Trail
- David Worischek**, Natural Resources Worker, Hueston Woods



The Team of the Year Award was presented to the Buck Creek Region for multiple team projects in which they worked cohesively on a variety of projects with diverse partners including the Division of Engineering, South Construction Crew, Volunteers-in-Parks and the Ohio Handicapped Sportsmen. Eight separate team projects involved a total of nearly 50 individuals, including employees in the region and partners from other agencies and the community.

EMPLOYEE OF THE QUARTER

In its 17th year, the Employee of the Quarter Award program recognized four employees each quarter for outstanding performance and service to the division. To date, 258 employees have been nominated by their peers, selected by committee, and recognized for exceptional characteristics. The Employee of the Quarter Award recipients were:

Winter Quarter

Deborah Dykes, Hueston Woods - Admin. Support
Bradford Crossan, Buckeye Lake - Maintenance
Jeffrey Thompson, Hocking Hills - Law Enforcement
Edward Frank, Central Office - Management

Spring Quarter

Johnnie Irvin, Pike Lake - Admin. Support
Jason Marion, East Fork - Maintenance
Albert Campana, Lake Milton - Law Enforcement
Philip Hoffman, Central Office - Management

Summer Quarter

Eloise Hostetler, Portage Lakes - Admin. Support
Gregory Boone, Deer Creek - Maintenance
Adam Martin, Alum Creek - Law Enforcement
Alan Ferguson, Caesar Creek - Management

Fall Quarter

Kimberly Woods, Scioto Trail - Admin. Support
Paul Cable, Maumee Bay - Maintenance
Robert Houston, East Fork - Law Enforcement
Patricia Barnett, Central Office - Management

Professional Recognition



DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

Chief **Daniel L. West** was presented with the *Distinguished Service Award* for his leadership, dedication and support to the law enforcement program and officers of Ohio State Parks.

GAZELLE AWARD

The **Salt Fork Region** received the *Gazelle Award* for pioneering in-house industries and new programs, such as the Barkcamp firewood operation and the on-line tee time reservations at Salt Fork's golf course, as well as responding quickly and professionally to challenges, such as the urgent dam issues and long-term water quality concerns at Salt Fork.



CUTTING EDGE AWARD

The **Rocky Fork Region** received the *Cutting Edge Award* for their creative approaches to solving problems and adding value for customers. Accomplishments in the region include cost-effective showerhouse renovations that serve as a model for all parks; low-cost, high-value amenities including two new mini golf courses and two disc golf courses; ADA accessible playgrounds and beaches; and a partnership with ODOT for campsite improvements.

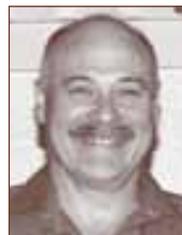
BILL PRICE AWARD

Patrick Quackenbush, naturalist supervisor at Hocking Hills, was awarded the annual *Bill Price Award* for his exceptional public programs, broad range of knowledge and interpretive skills, and commitment to customer service.



PARKS LEADERSHIP AWARD

Maumee Bay Regional Manager **Scott Doty** received the peer-driven *Parks Leadership Award* for demonstrating the dedication, ethics, and positive attitude that are the hallmarks of effective managers and respected leaders. Scott's excellent rapport with employees and the community have proven to be tremendous assets as he has taken the helm of one of the largest and most complex regional operations.



SERVICE & STEWARDSHIP AWARD

Portage Lakes Regional Manager **Bruce Carpenter** received the *Service & Stewardship Award* for providing well-rounded leadership for one of the largest regions in the state, while fostering community involvement, spearheading innovative projects, capitalizing on the parks' natural assets, and managing the region with efficiency and resourcefulness.



Infrastructure Improvements



Renovated docks at Middle Bass Island

Accommodating visitors of all abilities, making campers more comfortable with new and upgraded electrical service and new restrooms, providing improved facilities for boaters and swimmers, and working behind-the-scenes to protect water quality and improve dams were the focus of projects undertaken through various facility improvement funds at an estimated total cost of \$19.7 million.

NATUREWORKS - OHIO'S NATURAL INVESTMENT

In its 15th year, the NatureWorks program provided partial funding for a number of facility rehabilitation projects. Completed projects include the Hocking Hills Dining Lodge renovations and Middle Bass Island marina docking. Construction work was nearly completed on a project to connect Mosquito Lake's wastewater system to a county wastewater system.

Construction work commenced on improvements to the utility system infrastructure at Middle Bass Island to support current and projected future development, including the recently renovated marina basin. Major items of work include a new elevated water tank, along with new water and sewer lines to connect the park to existing treatment facilities; proper abandoning of two existing groundwater wells that are no longer used; an expanded electrical distribution system; and miscellaneous minor site improvements. Water supply and wastewater treatment will be provided through a previously executed agreement between ODNR and a local utilities company, who is in the process of upgrading their treatment plants.

Site improvements began at Tar Hollow's resident camp. The project includes a wooden swimming pier and boat dock, installation of a water slide and water recirculation system at the new beach, a new restroom building to serve the area, and relocation and upgrades to site utilities. All work on the project is projected to be completed by May 2010.

Progress was made on the third and final phase of campground electrical upgrades at Indian Lake. The project entails replacement of 30-amp power supply pedestals with new 50 amp pedestals at 236 campsites; installation of new electrical distribution equipment; upgraded electrical service to restrooms, shower buildings, the camp commissary and other structures within the campground. All work on the project is scheduled for completion by June 2010.



Docks at Delaware

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Several renovation and improvement projects were undertaken using capital funding sources other than, or in addition to, NatureWorks.

At Kelleys Island, the existing wastewater treatment plant was replaced. The project included the construction of a new chemical storage/lab/equipment building along with other system improvements.

Work began on rehabilitation of the Delaware marina facility, which entails replacement of all floating docks and gangways, new dock anchorage piles, new boat fueling and sewage pump-out systems, a prefabricated restroom building to serve the marina area and various utility (water/sanitary sewer/electric) site upgrades as needed to support the renovated facility. All work on the project is scheduled to be completed by May 2010.

Construction work commenced on projects to improve boating facilities at Hueston Woods and Paint Creek with funding assistance from the Division of Watercraft's grant program. Items of work at both sites include replacement of floating docks and gangways, new dock anchorage piles, and upgrades to electrical, sewage pump-out and boat fueling systems. Work at the Hueston Woods site also includes a new picnic shelter and accessible restroom. At Paint Creek, a new floating concession building is slated for construction. All construction at both sites is projected for completion by May 2010.

Work was completed on the first phase of improvements at Buckeye Lake's North Shore launch ramp, including reconstruction of the existing boat ramp and reconfiguration of the entrance roads to the facility. Work began on the second phase of the project, which entails an asphalt overlay of the existing parking areas and travel lanes, construction of three accessible parking spaces for fishermen, and installation of floating courtesy docks, four of which will be dedicated for use by personal watercraft. A portion of the funding for the project was provided through a grant from the Division of Watercraft.

Phase 2 refinements were made to boat launch facility projects at Caesar Creek and East Fork. At Caesar Creek's North Pool launch ramp, an ADA accessible courtesy dock was built, new sidewalks were installed, and a new restroom was equipped with ADA accessible features. At East Fork, an additional 400 feet of accessible walkway was added to the new docks at the Reisinger launch ramp, and the roof of an existing restroom building at the campground launch ramp was replaced.

At Pymatuning, existing boat launch ramps were rehabilitated, and courtesy docks were installed at the cabin beach and birches launching areas. Improvements were also made to associated facilities, including new restrooms and upgrades to water and wastewater services, exterior lighting, and sidewalks. The project was funded in part through a grant from the Division of Watercraft.

As part of the incorporation of the canal lands program within Ohio State Parks, several canal projects in progress were included in the capital improvements program. At Portage Lakes, a total of six dams and water control features associated with the series of lakes and canals that make up the Portage Lakes system were under various stages of investigation, design and rehabilitation. The final design has been completed, and construction bidding documents were prepared for the West Reservoir Dam and the Tuscarawas Diversion Dam. Investigation work commenced for the Long Lake water control structure, and for incremental improvements at both the North and East Reservoir dams.

PROJECT DESIGN

A professional services contract was executed for design and construction oversight of a new dining lodge at Lake Hope to replace the 1950-era stone and timber structure that was completely destroyed by fire in 2006. The contract includes site surveys and geotechnical investigations, preliminary and final design, generation of construction/bidding documents and estimated costs of construction for the project. A primary goal of the design effort is to create a facility that has the appearance and character of the original, but meets current building codes, complies with barrier-free access requirements, and reflects modern usage demands. Design work is scheduled for completion in 2010.

At Burr Oak, preliminary investigation and preliminary design were undertaken to evaluate the wastewater treatment plants and associated sewage collection systems serving the various park facilities. As a result of this work, it was determined that the best approach was to replace the five existing plants with four new plants, three of which will be on-site treatment plants, and rehabilitate the sewage collection system.

Progress was made on design for a project to improve the water and wastewater systems at Hueston

Woods. Design project work includes evaluation of the current water supply, geotechnical investigations and topographic surveys, and an alternatives analysis, recommendations and cost estimates for system modifications that will meet current and foreseeable future regulatory requirements, as well as reduce energy usage and operational costs. Preparations were made for connection to an outside water provider as an interim measure.

Projects in the design phase at Alum Creek, Geneva, Guilford Lake, Harrison Lake, Paint Creek and Portage Lakes focused on boating facilities. At Alum Creek, the design work involved expansion of the parking area and reconstruction of the upper portion of the New Galena launch ramp, along with installation of accessible floating boarding docks at the Howard Road launch ramp. The design project at Guilford Lake was for security lighting in the boat ramp and marina area. The Geneva project involves installation of transient docks. The Harrison Lake and Paint Creek projects are for launch ramp renovations. The Portage Lakes design project entailed reconstruction of the below-water portion of three launch ramps serving Nimisila Reservoir. Additional considerations at each site included area lighting, shoreline erosion protection, improvements to traffic flow and signage, and accessibility upgrades.

EXAMPLES OF NATUREWORKS/CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

The following summary is a sampling of projects under construction or design in 2009 with funding released for design and/or construction.

Park	Project	Cost
Buckeye Lake	North Shore parking overlay and PWC docks	\$205,500
Burr Oak	Design wastewater system improvements	\$149,987*
Caesar Creek	North Pool restroom and courtesy docks	\$294,900*
Delaware	Marina improvements	\$1,809,300*
East Fork	Restroom roof and ADA walkway	\$60,800*
Hueston Woods	Construction admin. for water & wastewater improvements/ Rehab. boat race start dock system	\$182,758*
Indian Lake	Campground electric upgrade	\$789,000
Kelleys Island	Wastewater treatment plant & collection system	\$1,450,000*
Lake Hope	Consulting services for dining lodge reconstruction	\$481,463
Little Miami	Inspect bikeway bridges	\$120,000
Middle Bass Island	Utility upgrades, roads & parking lots, maintenance yard, floating docks, regulatory compliance	\$1,961,598
Middle Bass Island	Summer staff housing, winery bldg. review, harbor master facility & showerhouse, various construction admin. services	\$429,035
Mosquito Lake	Sanitary sewer improvements	\$187,280*
Mt. Gilead	Lower lake drain replacement	\$43,600
Portage Lakes/Canal	Investigation of 6 dams, security improvements for water level control equipment facilities	\$599,429
Portage Lakes	Regional office facility	\$273,088
Punderson/Nelson Kennedy	Pre-cast restroom building & utility system improvements	\$279,030
Pymatuning	Two boat launch ramps and upland facilities	\$93,100
Tar Hollow	Resident camp improvements, incl. construction admin.	\$457,200*
Various Parks	Engineering services for watercraft access facilities: Alum Creek, Delaware, Hueston Woods, Portage Lakes, Guilford Lake	\$300,450
Various Parks	Marina improvements: Hueston Woods & Paint Creek	\$2,723,898*
Various Parks	Water storage tank rehab: Harrison Lake, Hueston Woods & Indian Lake	\$888,400
Various Parks	Construction admin. for launch ramp & waterfront improvements, water/wastewater & electrical upgrades, dam safety and other projects	\$960,572
South Fork	Phase 2 project in Licking & Fairfield counties	\$34,759
Licking River	(affects Buckeye Lake & Dillon)	
TOTAL		\$14,775,147

*Additional project costs reported in the 2008 Annual Report



Restroom installation

In addition to the above projects, a number of water and wastewater system improvements were made at 33 park areas. Many parks are struggling with increasing demand for clean water, coupled with the limitations of outdated equipment in a contemporary regulatory environment. The projects varied in cost and complexity from replacement of valves, to lift station repairs, to connections to municipal water supplies. The total cost of the various water/wastewater projects was \$607,800.

A total of 88 work requests were submitted to the Division of Engineering for assistance with a variety of projects at 23 parks, including remodeling work, repairs and upgrades at all types of park facilities including campgrounds, marinas, nature centers, concession buildings and public restrooms, as well as lake drain repairs and electrical service installation. The total estimated value of this assistance is more than \$331,500.

ROADWAY MAINTENANCE, STRIPING AND SIGNAGE PROGRAM

Major projects completed through the Cooperative Roadway Maintenance Program with ODOT included resurfacing and drainage work at East Harbor and Marblehead Lighthouse, as well as striping portions of Rocky Fork with thermoplastic paint. Roadway repair, drainage improvements, resurfacing and striping were accomplished at Maumee Bay’s campground. Riprap was installed along the feeder canal at Kirkersville to help slow erosion at Buckeye Lake’s Lieb’s Island. Expenditures on these projects, along with a small allotment for cooperative projects with other land holding divisions, totaled \$2,325,081. A total of 1,597 regulatory and directional signs were produced by ODOT for the parks and for the divisions of Forestry and Watercraft. The total value of the signage was \$20,923.

MISCELLANEOUS PARK CONSTRUCTION AND IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

A number of repair, replacement and improvement projects at revenue generating park facilities such as lodges, cottages, and marinas were completed using park operating funds and the lodge maintenance, repair and replacement funds.



Completed Romtec restroom

PARK	PROJECT	COST
Burr Oak	Commercial laundry dryers (2)	\$ 9,338
Deer Creek	WiFi installation in lodge	\$ 25,899
	New fitness equipment in exercise room	\$ 32,429
	Renovations of 20 guestrooms	\$ 281,827
Hueston Woods	New bedding packages incl. mattresses	\$ 96,238
	Materials for disc golf course	\$ 6,085
	Cottage exteriors: bleach, power wash & stain	\$ 27,492
Maumee Bay	Indoor pool water feature, soft playground	\$ 522,750
	Painting: guest rooms, lodge exterior, pool area	\$ 182,436
Mohican	PTAC units in guest rooms (16)	\$ 10,695
	Guest room carpet/ceramic tile	\$ 55,973
	Solar trash compacting units (2)	\$ 8,185
Punderson	Guest room drapes	\$ 7,357
	Cottage carpet/replace furnaces (8)	\$ 34,986
Salt Fork	ADA guestroom bathrooms	\$ 51,695
	Carpeting (2nd level), wall art, banquet chairs	\$ 63,976
Shawnee	New bed linens	\$ 46,322
	Indoor pool liner and installation	\$ 16,980
	Edgewater Marina Dock repairs	\$ 35,740
TOTAL		\$ 1,516,403

DAM SAFETY

At Mt. Gilead, a lower lake drain replacement project was undertaken as the first phase of improvements needed to bring the dam into compliance with current dam safety regulations. The project entailed construction of a new siphon-style lake drain, and placement of riprap stone material to prevent erosion at the lake drain location.

At Hueston Woods and Strouds Run, the lake discharge channels were reworked to provide better toe drainage. Additionally, trees and brush were removed from the toes of the dams and the discharge channels. The lake drain at Strouds Run was repaired.

At Buckeye Lake, work was substantially completed on development of an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) for the dam. The EAP is a very detailed version of the basic Emergency Preparedness Plan (EPP) already developed for each division owned dam, and includes flood mapping along with additional information. The EPP includes procedures and communications plans to assist park staff, as well as county and municipal officials, in evaluating critical situations and responding with timely and appropriate measures should issues arise with the dam.

IN-HOUSE CONSTRUCTION INITIATIVES

Statewide, 170 individual projects at over 60 state park locations were completed economically and efficiently with in-house labor and equipment. Internal cost tracking and comparisons using the industry standard RS MEANS Construction Estimating Guidelines, estimate that approximately 1.5 million dollars worth of projects were accomplished. Highlights include construction of new restroom facilities at Barkcamp, Cowan Lake, Findley, and Portage Lakes. Additional new day use facilities constructed through this program include picnic areas, an archery range, horse camp parking areas, bridle and walking trails at locations such as Salt Fork, Beaver Creek, Deer Creek, Grand Lake St. Marys, Mosquito Lake, Paint Creek, Shawnee, and Sycamore. Emergency projects were completed at Buck Creek, East Fork, Geneva, Hocking Hills, Quail Hollow, and Wolf Run. Other services provided include equipment transportation, removal of abandoned or obsolete facilities, shoreline improvements, special event support, brush chipping and stump grinding, mechanical beach cleaning, and incremental improvements at campgrounds and cottages.

IN-HOUSE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

The in-house dock shops in the Portage Lakes region and the South Construction Unit continued to provide refurbished dock structures at considerable cost savings.

The Portage Lakes dock team completed the three year marina renovation project at Buck Creek with 25 refitted dock fingers and 12 mains plus catwalks. Altogether, the Buck Creek project entailed refurbishing 115 dock fingers, 60 dock mains and nine catwalks. The Portage Lakes shop also produced 15 dock fingers and eight mains for installation at Mosquito Lake.

The South Construction Unit dock shop completed the second and final phase of the Deer Creek marina renovation with the installation of 50 rebuilt dock fingers and 25 walkway sections. Other projects undertaken by the South shop included construction of a 48-slip marina and floating courtesy docks at the boat launch ramp at Cowan Lake, and rehabilitation of over 50 slips for reuse at Hueston Woods' Acton Lake marina as part of the marina rehabilitation capital project.

The Trades Unit, comprised of in-house skilled trades employees from around the state who pool their talent and resources, undertook a variety of projects at several parks. Examples include roof and siding replacement, restroom and showerhouse renovations, and shelterhouse construction.

The vinyl graphics shop at Dillon produced a total of 2,041 signs, 3,889 decals/stickers and 127 banners to provide uniform informational signs and markings identifying recreational offerings, overnight facilities and special events. A sample of the signs produced included those for beach safety, carry in/out sites, golf course facilities, hunting areas, ice safety, trail markings, and water quality. Decals and stickers produced included the division arrowhead and ODNR cardinal logos; stripping packages for law enforcement vehicles and watercraft; boundary markers; camp site reservation markings; dock numbers; pet site designations; Muskingum River Parkway lock passes; and "energy saving" stickers placed near thermostats in cottages.

In its third year of operation, Barkcamp's routed sign shop produced a total of 35 park entrance signs. The professional quality signs are custom crafted from two-color HDPE plastic plywood made primarily from recycled milk jugs, resulting in a durable, low maintenance, weather proof product with a clean and professional appearance. The routed entrance signs cost an estimated 20 to 50 percent less than similar signs produced by private companies.

Additional products produced by the Barkcamp enterprise included 460 picnic tables, 340 fire rings, 105 waist-high grills for use in the parks, along with 65,980 bundles of firewood for sales to park customers. Nearly 60% of the firewood was delivered to the parks prior to Memorial Day, allowing the parks to be better prepared to meet demand in the early summer.

Newly installed archery range



ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Additional accessible facilities added to Caesar Creek's newly renovated North Pool launch ramp include an accessible courtesy dock, additional sidewalks, and a restroom renovated with accessible features. At East Fork's newly renovated Reisinger launch ramp, an additional 400 foot accessible walkway was added to the new docks. Foundation work was completed for accessible docks and ramps at Middle Bass Island as part of the marina redevelopment project. Accessible restrooms, sidewalks and courtesy docks were included as part of the boating facility improvement project at Pymatuning's cabin beach and Birches launch ramps.

Accessibility design standards continued to be incorporated into new and rehabilitated park structures in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines. In addition to these major capital projects, park staff continued to improve facility access by widening doorways, toilet compartments and shower stalls; constructing access ramps, modifying campsites and adding handicapped parking spaces. Accessibility also continued to be enhanced through numerous small projects such as removing thresholds, changing door handles and updating plumbing fixtures and drinking fountains.

FLEET MANAGEMENT

With the incorporation of the Canal Lands program and staff, the division's motor vehicle fleet increased by 15 vehicles, to 612 vehicles in service. In spite of the few new vehicle purchases and the acquisition of used vehicles from other ODNR divisions, fleet-wide average vehicle age increased from 9.8 years to 10.7 years, and average vehicle mileage increased from 103,800 miles to 107,106 miles.

Replacement vehicles purchased used from local dealers included one patrol cruiser, one pickup truck, three dump trucks and one refuse packer at a total cost of \$137,000. A total of 27 used vehicles were acquired from the divisions of Wildlife, Mineral Resources Management, and Soil & Water Resources, allowing the salvage of 27 high-mileage vehicles from the division's fleet.

The division's rolling non-vehicle equipment fleet of over 1,000 units includes tractors; riding mowers; utility vehicles; specialized golf course maintenance equipment units; golf carts, including rental carts at the golf courses; trailers; heavy construction equipment such as bulldozers and excavators; and various watercraft, including lake patrol boats, dredges and public rental craft at several marinas. There were no substantial purchases of additional new or used equipment.



Construction at East Fork's Reisinger launch ramp

Fiscal Management



Ohio State Parks expended \$68 million in fiscal year 2009, including \$29.5 million from revenues generated from fees and charges.

Budget

The division's budget is comprised of several funding sources. The primary source is the state's General Revenue Fund (GRF) which accounts for 50.0% of the total funding in FY 09 and 43.7% based on the FY 10 budget.

In FY 09 and again in FY10, the division's GRF was reduced from the original allocation. In FY 09 the GRF was reduced by \$5,766,660. In FY 10, as the result of a budget realignment, GRF was reduced by \$4,313,053. Therefore, the two year GRF reduction was \$10,079,713 or 13.3% less than the original allocation.

The second largest source of operating funds come from fees and charges generated by the state parks and deposited into Fund 5120. This fund accounts for approximately 43.3% of the total budget in FY 09 and FY 10.

Approximately 5.9% of the budget for FY 09, and 5.8% for FY 10, is provided by the Waterway Safety Fund, which is designated for a specific purpose. The balance of the budget comes from several smaller dedicated funding sources.

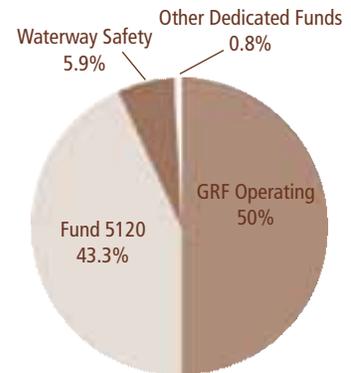
Two new programs, Canal Lands and Recreational Services, were incorporated in the division in FY 10. These two programs accounted for 6.9% of the FY 10 budget.



Actual expenditures for FY 09 and the budgeted amount by fund for FY 10 are indicated in the following charts. In prior annual reports, debt service was included in the total expenditures. However, starting in 2009, debt service is being reported by the department, which will allow Ohio State Parks to more accurately reflect expenditure totals.

FUNDING

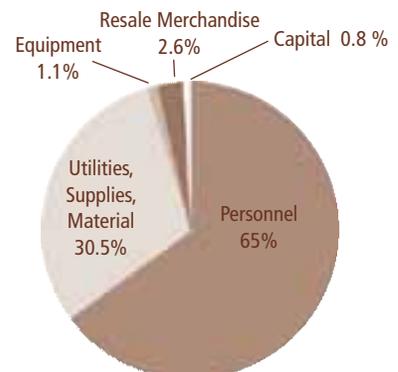
FUNDING SOURCE	FY '09 EXPENDED		FY '10 BUDGETED	
GRF Operating	\$ 34,018,044	50.0%	\$ 32,179,861	43.7%
Fund 5120 (Fees & Charges)	\$ 29,452,193	43.3%	\$ 31,885,528	43.3%
Recreational Services	N/A		\$ 4,303,490	5.9%
Waterway Safety	\$ 4,045,802	5.9%	\$ 4,265,575	5.8%
Canal Lands	N/A		\$ 716,541	1.0%
Other Dedicated Funds	\$ 511,332	0.8%	\$ 212,325	0.3%
TOTAL	\$ 68,027,371		\$ 73,563,320	



EXPENDITURES

An itemization of major expenditures in FY 09 to pay salaries, utility and maintenance costs, resale items, subsidy payments, operating capital and equipment purchases is as follows:

EXPENSES	FY '09 EXPENDED	
Personnel	\$ 44,219,999	65.0%
Utilities/Supplies/Material	\$ 20,776,020	30.5%
Equipment	\$ 720,802	1.1%
Resale Merchandise	\$ 1,782,852	2.6%
Capital	\$ 527,698	0.8%
TOTAL	\$ 68,027,371	



REVENUE

Ohio State Parks generated \$27,602,351 in revenue, a 0.3% increase over 2008. Although the overall revenue generation appears to have remained steady, several categories increased significantly, while others experienced sizable decreases, as illustrated in the table below.

Camping continues to be the revenue driver for Ohio State Parks and generates 43.2% of the total revenue to the division. After camping, self-operated retail, cottage rentals and dock permits account for 35.2% of the total revenue to the division.

The division continues to realize considerable reductions in contracted concession revenue. The majority of this revenue is derived from lodge, cottage, marina, and boat rental concessions, which decreased a total of 27.1% from 2008.

The revenues received in calendar years 2009 and 2008 were as follows:

REVENUE CATEGORY	CY 2009	CY 2008	PERCENT CHANGE
Camping	\$ 11,926,387	\$ 11,125,357	7.2 %
Self-Operated Retail	\$ 3,674,864	\$ 3,700,589	-0.7 %
Cottage Rentals	\$ 3,066,093	\$ 3,142,745	-2.4 %
Dock Permits	\$ 2,979,360	\$ 2,713,911	9.8 %
Concession Agreements	\$ 1,687,902	\$ 2,313,973	-27.1 %
Miscellaneous	\$ 1,515,246	\$ 1,100,155	37.7 %
Golf Greens Fees	\$ 1,390,915	\$ 1,428,744	-2.6 %
Getaway Rentals	\$ 550,777	\$ 496,648	10.9 %
Royalties & Easements	\$ 234,838	\$ 225,102	4.3 %
Group Lodge Rentals	\$ 167,143	\$ 232,118	-28.0 %
Grants	\$ 157,281	\$ 214,203	-26.6 %
State Agency Transfers	\$ 110,645	\$ 1,305,855	-91.5 %
Laundromats	\$ 51,632	\$ 47,271	9.2 %
Donations	\$ 42,855	\$ 81,762	-47.6 %
Pools & Lockers	\$ 27,564	\$ 29,829	-7.6 %
Duck Blinds	\$ 15,785	\$ 16,788	-6.0 %
Fines & Penalties	\$ 3,064	\$ 5,700	-46.2 %
Sales Assets	\$ 0	\$ 65,256	-100.0%
<i>(Lake Hope settlement)</i>	<i>\$ 0</i>	<i>\$ 5,000,000</i>	<i>-100.0 %)</i>
TOTAL	\$ 27,602,351	\$ 33,246,006	-17.0%
		\$ 27,525,407*	0.3%

*AMENDED TOTAL without Lake Hope settlement, and with deposit correction

BUSINESS PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS

In an effort to reduce costs and enhance efficiency, all concession bid packages were posted on the Internet through the division's public website. The first package released on-line was the bid for the operation of the Mohican and Deer Creek state park lodges. Not only did the new procedure reduce overhead, it also allowed the bids to become available to a broader audience, and increased competition among bidders.

GIFT CARDS

A total of 1,106 cards were sold with a combined value of \$112,258, a 49.6% increase over 2008. The significant increase in sales is attributed to the convenience of on-line purchasing, as well as an agreement with Xanterra Parks & Resorts allowing gift card holders to redeem them at most Ohio State Park lodge facilities.

STATE PARKS LICENSE PLATE

In its fifth year, sales of the Ohio State Parks license plate declined 9% to 1,150 plates sold. Revenue from the license plates provided \$17,250 for state park interpretive educational programs and displays.





CANAL LANDS

The Canal Lands Program is funded through the GRE, land and water lease revenues, and approved canal land sales. Annual lease payments including receipts from 280 active leases, 13 royalty payments and two approved sales totaled \$326,845.

GRANT PROGRAMS

With the transfer of the Recreational Services program from the Office of Real Estate and Land Management, Ohio State Parks has assumed responsibility for five popular grant programs, along with statewide comprehensive outdoor recreation planning functions. Four of the grant programs, NatureWorks, Land and Water Conservation Fund, Clean Ohio Trails Fund, and Recreational Trails, are competitive and reimbursement based. The fifth program is the Capital Improvement Grant program.

The NatureWorks program is funded through state bond sales, and allocated to public agencies in each county, based primarily on population. The funding is allocated through the state’s biennium capital budget and has been averaging approximately \$1.5 to \$1.8 million per year. NatureWorks funds may be used for all types of general recreation facilities.

The Clean Ohio Trails Fund (COTF) program is also funded through state bond sales, and is available to all entities, except for state agencies. The Clean Ohio Fund program (which includes green space acquisition, brownfield revitalization and farmland preservation as well as the trails component) was originally passed by Ohio voters in 2000, and reauthorized in 2008. The funding allocated for the program is \$6.25 million per year. The fund is intended to provide for acquisition and development of regional trails toward the ultimate goal of a statewide trail system.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) program is funded through the National Park Service as part of its annual budget process. Funds have been generated from certain federal mineral leasing receipts and offshore oil and gas drilling royalty revenues. Ohio’s share of funding through this program has varied from \$700,000 to \$900,000 per year. Allocations from the LWCF have been split evenly between ODNR and local agencies.

The Recreational Trail Program (RTP) is funded through the Federal Highway Administration as part of its transportation bill. RTP funding is provided by the Highway Trust Fund, which is comprised of a portion of the motor fuel excise tax from non-highway recreational vehicles including snowmobiles, ATVs, off-highway motorcycles, and off-highway light trucks. Ohio’s share of funding through this program has varied from \$1.5 to \$1.8 million per year. The funding in this program is split to provide funding for non-motorized use (30%), motorized use (30%), and diverse use (40%).

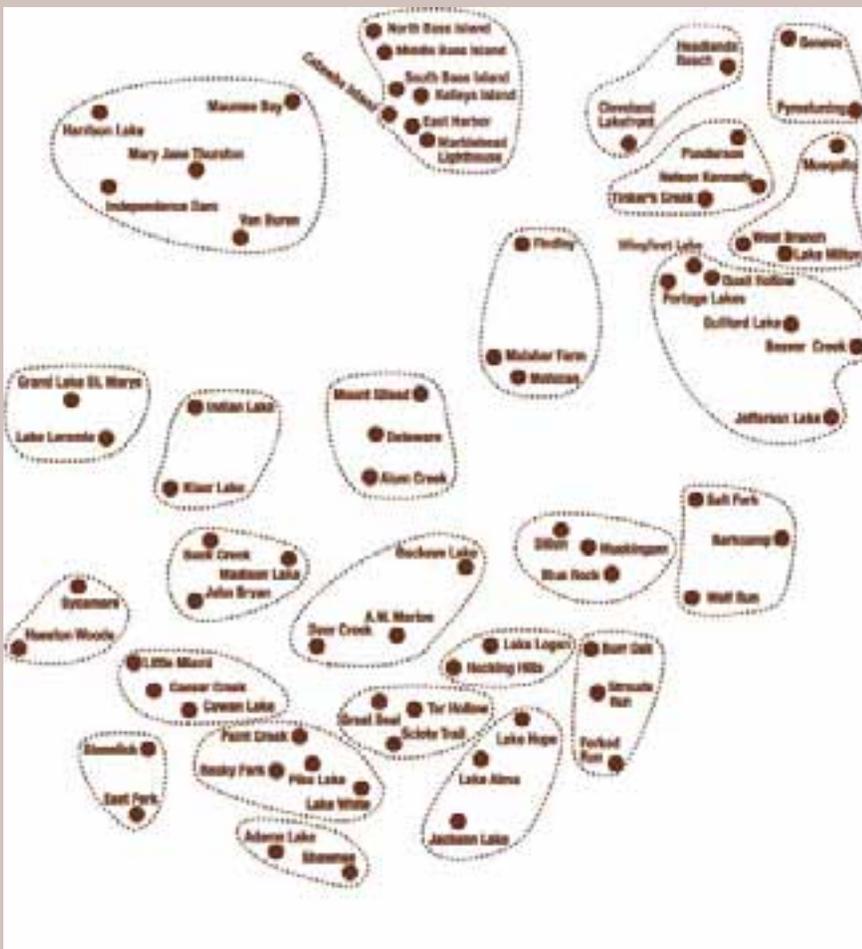
The Capital Improvement Grant program is made up of the local recreation legislative earmarks placed in the state’s biennium capital budget. The number of projects regularly exceeds 100, and they have a combined value of over \$25 million per year. These grants are managed like the competitive grants, and division staff provide assistance to the grant recipients in the development of their project scopes.

COMPETITIVE GRANT AWARDS

A total of 308 grant applications were received for project requests totalling \$31.9 million. Of these, 141 grants were awarded for project requests totaling \$10.6 million, as follows:

FUNDING SOURCE	APPLICATIONS RECEIVED		GRANTS AWARDED	
	Number	Value	Number	Value
NatureWorks	170	\$5.2 million	88	\$2.1 million
Land & Water Conservation Fund	45	\$2.2 million	6	\$363,000
Clean Ohio Trails Fund	40	\$9.5 million	26	\$6.2 million
Recreational Trails Fund	53	\$15 million	21	\$2 million

Map of Regional Park Units





2010 Goals

- Keep the division's successful focus on customer service in all operational facets and continue to provide hospitality and skill development training to staff.
- Continue to examine ways to reduce operating costs and increase revenues while protecting and enhancing our core revenue sources.
- Continue our efforts at the regional and park levels as well as through our in-house industries to provide sustained incremental improvements with low-cost and high-impact innovations to better serve the public.
- Continue the strategic realignment of park regions for greater operational efficiencies while developing a realistic successional management plan as well as exploring added incentives for the law enforcement supervisor positions.
- Incorporate the state's nature preserve program into the division's operations while maintaining their core mission and identity.
- Open Ohio's newest state park, Wingfoot Lake, by summer with a variety of day-use activities and facilities for the general public.
- Actively pursue the documentation of property leases and right-of-ways to generate additional funds collected from the canal lands.
- Work to identify and secure property for the development of an ATV site.
- Collaborate with community and corporate partners, and continue to work closely with the division's volunteers and friends groups.
- Work with the concession operators to enhance marketing and sales strategies.
- Promote connecting children and nature, getting fit naturally and nature tourism themes through our programs, services, public outreach and partnerships.
- Broaden the scope of the naturalist program to include event planning, recreational programs and community outreach as well as nature programs.
- Continue to explore and expand the division's social networking efforts.
- Implement an online dock payment program and the rewards card program.
- Complete the division's next strategic plan (2011-2015) through a simplified team process and with a more user-friendly product for the employees.

Statistical Abstract

Ohio State Park System 2009

GENERAL PARK

# State Parks	74
Total Acreage	174,143 ¹
Acreage -- Land	107,738
Acreage -- Water	66,405
Miles of Shoreline	1,030
% of Land that is Developed	21.2%
% of Shoreline that is Developed	27.1%
Visitor Occasions	53,767,676
# Buildings	2,605
# Water Systems	140
# Sewer Systems	139
# Restroom Buildings -- Water Borne	532
# Restroom Buildings -- Pit Privies	475
Miles of Roads Patrolled	1,858
# Felonies	136
# Citations	4,065
# Visitor Assists	20,296
# Park Residences	58
# Dining Lodges/Restaurants	2

CAMPGROUNDS

# Campgrounds	89
# Family Campsites	9,218
# Full Service Sites	211
# Electric Sites	6,582
# Non-electric Sites	2,074
# General Group Areas	68
# No-fee, Non-group Primitive Sites	75
# Horse Camps	15
# Horse Camp Sites	351
# Showerhouses	115
# Amphitheaters	52
# Camp Store/Commissaries	47
# Campsites Rented	582,269
Campground Occupancy (244 nights)	26.4% ²

GETAWAY RENTALS

# Rent-A-Camp Sites	21
% Rent-A-Camp Occupancy (184 nights)	32.8%
# Rent-A-RV Sites	2
% Rent-A-RV Occupancy (184 nights)	54.9%
# Rent-A-Tepee Sites	3
% Rent-A-Tepee Occupancy (184 nights)	31.3%
# Rent-A-Yurt Sites	13
% Rent-A-Yurt Occupancy (184 nights)	48.5%
# Cabents	2
% Cabent Occupancy (184 nights)	51.1%
# Camper Cabins	41
% Camper Cabins Occupancy (184 nights)	58.1%
# Cedar Cabins	27
% Cedar Cabins Occupancy (184 nights)	65.7%
# Conestoga Cabins	22
% Conestoga Cabins Occupancy (184 nights)	72.8%

LODGES & CONCESSION COTTAGES

# Resort Lodges	9
# Resort Lodge Rooms	818
# Lodge Room Nights Rented	118,780
% Lodge Occupancy	39.8%
# Restaurants in Resort Lodges	9
# Concession Cottages	221

# Cottage Nights Rented	33,067
% Cottage Occupancy	41.0%

STATE OPERATED COTTAGES

# State Operated Cottages	297
# Cottage Nights Rented	42,346
% Cottage Occupancy	39.1%

GOLF COURSES

# Golf Courses	6
# Golf Rounds	123,041

BOAT RAMPS/MARINAS/DOCKS

# Boat Ramps	178
# Boater Occasions	6,634,256
# Marina / Boat Rental Operations	44
# Docks - Concession Operated	1,533
# Docks - State Operated	5,522
# Private Docks Licensed	16,218

BEACHES

# Swimming Beaches	78
# Swimming Occasions	4,502,678
# Beach Concessions	16

GROUP FACILITIES

# Overnight Group Facilities	6
# Overnight Group Facility Users	20,116
# Beds in Group Facilities	309
# Day-use Group Lodges	14
# Day-use Group Lodge Users	43,859

VISITOR/NATURE CENTERS

# Visitor/Nature Centers	37
# Visitor/Nature Center Visitor Occasions	1,289,134

PICNIC AREAS

# Picnic Areas	450
# Picnic Area Visitor Occasions	9,158,390
# Picnic Shelters -- Total	181
# Reservable Picnic Shelters	130

OTHER RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

# Swimming Pools	20
# Tennis Courts	16
# Basketball Courts	82
# Volleyball Courts	99
# Miniature Golf Courses	15
# Disc Golf Courses	15
# Archery Ranges	13
# Dog Exercise Areas	10
# Playgrounds	193
# Parks with Bike Rental Operations	21
# Trails - Total	408
Total Miles of Trails	1,185.3
# Multi-Use Trails	156
# Hiking Only Trails	207
# Mountain Bike Only Trails	24
# Bridle Only Trails	25
# Parks with Snow Mobile Trails	9
# Parks with Cross Country Ski Trails	43
# Parks with Sledding Hills	37
# Shooting Ranges	5

¹ Based on REALM's FY 2009 Land Inventory report, plus current year acquisitions.

² Includes Horse Camp Sites, and excludes 184 volunteer Camper Host sites.

Map of Overnight Facilities

