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Mission

To produce an outdoor recreational experience for Ohio State Park visitors that exceeds their expectations.

Vision

The nationally recognized Ohio State Parks team is committed to service as stewards of the state's most treasured natural resources and tourism destinations.

We will innovate, educate, collaborate, and lead, providing a high standard of quality with our family-oriented facilities, services, and programs.

As ambassadors, we will reach out to build partnerships, involve our communities, and enrich the lives of Ohioans with fond memories of visits to Ohio State Parks.

We will honor our rich natural and cultural heritage to ensure a lasting legacy which will feed the hopes and aspirations of all generations.

Letter from the Director

This annual report for 2003 reflects an exceptional year of challenge and achievement by our Division of Parks & Recreation. Few periods in the 54-year history of Ohio's state park system have presented a more difficult budgetary climate for the operation and upkeep of our parks. Yet those challenges have made the year's achievements all the more notable.



This was a year of complex preparation for the successful launch of a centralized, state-of-the-art reservation system for state park campgrounds and self-operated cottages. It saw an historic partnership with the Ashtabula County Commissioners for development of a lodge and conference center at Geneva State Park - the first state park lodge in Ohio to be built and managed with non-state funds.

A number of important capital projects were completed or were well underway in 2003, including a new campground welcome center and commissary at Hocking Hills State Park. Much progress was made toward development of Ohio's newest state park, on Middle Bass Island, and for the acquisition of North Bass Island in 2004.

This was also a year that saw the retirement of many veteran parks employees - men and women who had long been the backbone of a park system regarded as the nation's finest. For those still serving, and for new members of the Ohio State Parks family, 2003 marked a watershed year for the remarkable recreational resources they sustain for the people of Ohio.

Sam Speck

Director, Ohio Department of Natural Resources

Letter from the Chief

Thanks to the extraordinary efforts of our dedicated staff and volunteers, the generosity of our friends and partners, and the enthusiastic support of park user groups and local communities, our state parks have continued to provide high quality outdoor recreational experiences for our customers.



We celebrated Ohio's Bicentennial with a busy schedule of special events, initiated new recreational offerings, and built new facilities for park visitors.

A major accomplishment that will revolutionize our ability to provide customer service is the development of our new centralized reservation and point-of-sale system. The blend of sophisticated technology and user-friendly features, including interactive mapping and real-time on-line reservations, will enable customers to choose exactly what they want among our more than 9,000 campsites and cottages in the system. The design and implementation of the reservation and point-of-sale system, including the installation of computers and satellite link-ups at scores of field locations, was accomplished without a direct outlay of state tax dollars.

We are improving the present and preparing for the future by developing our valuable human resources with management and specialized skills training. We have implemented new awards to recognize managers who embrace our strategic goals and embody the ideals of leadership. In the second year of our revamped customer survey program, we are collecting meaningful data on our performance, and recognizing parks that excel in providing services and maintaining facilities.

Dan West

Chief, Division of Parks and Recreation

Table of Organization

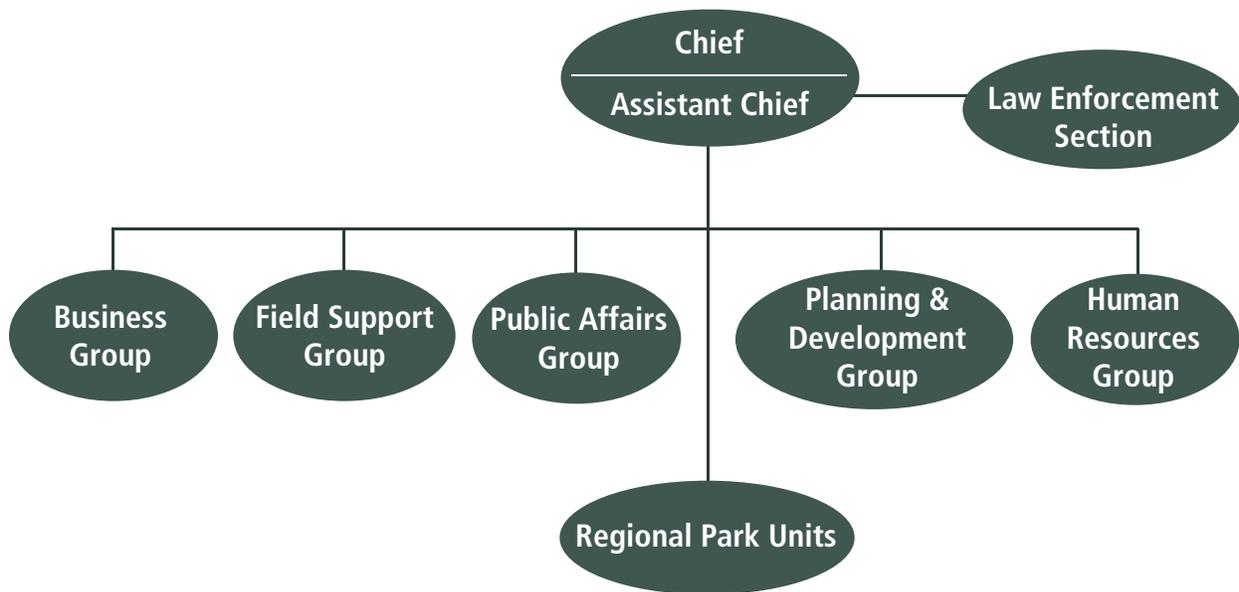
Table of Organization

The organization of Ohio's 74 state parks into 27 regional park units was modified slightly with the addition of a 28th regional unit. The units consist of two to four parks in close proximity. Each region works together as a team, sharing financial and human resources as necessary for better economy and efficiency.

The manager of one of the parks in each unit is designated as the regional manager, and exercises line authority over the other park(s) within the region. The regional manager provides leader-

ship to best utilize resources within the region, and may shift resources to assist the other park(s), thereby ensuring the success of the entire region. In several of the regions, one or more of the smaller regional parks are operated as satellites without a manager on-site.

The central office groups provide support for the field, perform administrative functions and implement statewide programs.



Regional Park Units



Ohio Bicentennial

Ohio State Parks celebrated Ohio's Bicentennial year with a number of special events and activities across the state. Forty-two park events with heritage themes were featured as Bicentennial events. New welcome signs sporting the Ohio Bicentennial logo greeted visitors at several state parks that were designated as "Ohio Natural Wonders" by the Natural Ohio Advisory Council. Both issues of Ohio State Parks magazine featured the Bicentennial theme. Other Bicentennial observations included the following:

A total of 76 entries were received in the "heritage events" and "historic structures" categories of the Ohio State Parks Bicentennial Photo Contest. Winning photographs were published in the Fall-Winter issue of *Ohio State Parks* magazine, featured on the division's website, and displayed at the Ohio State Fair.



The first Muskingum Riverfest held at McConnellsville Lock in July served as the Ohio Department of Natural Resources' flagship event for Ohio's Bicentennial celebration. Activities and attractions included locking demonstrations and free boat rides through the historic lock, canoe classes and boating safety tips, a Civil War encampment and re-enactment, heritage crafts, and old fashioned entertainment.

Four state parks were among the locations selected for historical markers recognizing the finest examples of various aspects of Ohio's natural heritage, including Old Man's Cave at Hocking Hills, the Little Miami River Gorge at John Bryan, the forest at Mohican, and the Lake Erie environment at Marblehead Lighthouse. Local ceremonies were held as the markers were installed in July. The markers were funded through a grant from the International Paper Company.

Historical markers were also installed at Malabar Farm and Pymatuning as a result of cooperative efforts between the parks and local communities. The marker at Malabar Farm commemorates the contributions of author and conservation Louis Bromfield, and was funded through the Longaberger Company of Dresden, the Malabar Farm Foundation and the Ohio Bicentennial Com-



mission. The marker at Pymatuning, which notes the historical significance of the Pymatuning wetlands, was funded through the Andover Chamber of Commerce, the Longaberger Company, and the Ohio Bicentennial Commission.

A series of guided Bicentennial hikes highlighting unique natural features, interesting natural history, historic landmarks and ties to the area's cultural heritage, were held on park trails in September. The hikes were held each Saturday in September, at different parks within each geographic region of the state. A total of 20 parks participated in the program.

The Natural Ohio Advisory Council of the Ohio Bicentennial Commission, which was coordinated by division staff and included representatives from the Ohio Historical Society, Buckeye Trail Association, and several ODNR divisions, completed its Bicentennial preparations with the publication of the "Natural Wanderings" brochure. The brochure highlights 30 outstanding natural destinations including state parks, forests, natural areas and wildlife areas as well as national and metropolitan parks. More than 250,000 copies of "Natural Wanderings" were distributed through the parks, ODOT Travel Information Centers, American Automobile Association outlets, convention and visitors bureaus, the Ohio State Fair, and the ODNR website. The brochure was funded through an Ohio Bicentennial Legacy Grant.



Malabar Farm's historic Inn Barn was selected as the designated Bicentennial Barn for Richland County.

Customer Service

Special events, educational and interpretive programs, and new recreational offerings enhanced the outdoor recreational experience for millions of park visitors of all ages. The advent of camping reservations with the development of a new centralized reservation system will make it easier for campers to make plans to enjoy them.

Centralized Reservation System

An interdisciplinary team including central office and park managers, field personnel who specialize in campground and cottage operations, and division and department staff with expertise in technology, marketing and fiscal operations, recommended specifications and developed business rules for a centralized reservation for campgrounds and state-operated cottages. After reviewing five proposals, the division contracted with Spherix, Inc. to develop and manage the reservation system, along with a point-of-sale system for state park retail operations. The reservation system features real-time transactions over the Internet, as well as a call center for telephone transactions. Development and implementation of the reservation and point-of-sale system, including purchase, installation and maintenance of equipment, along with training and employment of call center staff, is funded entirely through user fees with no state tax dollars expended.

Adopting the on-line component of the reservation system entailed restructuring of the division's website to seamlessly interface with Spherix's database, which contains detailed information about each of the more than 9,000 campsites and 298 state-operated cottages. Spherix provided and installed computerized terminals and satellite link-ups at each campground to integrate each location with the central database. The system went live for campground reservations on December 15. Phase 2 of the project will incorporate a map driven system for campground reservations and include cottage reservations in the system, and Phase 3 will implement the point-of-sale accounting and inventory system at all other state-operated retail facilities, including golf courses, marinas, and beach concession stands.

Special Events

Awide variety of special events held at 48 state parks through the year drew nearly one million visitors. Punderson's annual sled dog classic, which had been cancelled for the past three years because of insufficient snow, was well attended and attracted the attention of local television, print and radio. Nearly 300 events, including theme campouts, helped boost campground occupancy, as well as the economies of the local communities outside the parks. Events with historic themes were identified as Bicentennial events and promoted on the Ohio Bicentennial Commission's website.



A new partnership event held in July on the Muskingum River, the Muskingum Riverfest, celebrated Ohio's Bicentennial with a variety of heritage-theme activities at one of Ohio State Parks' premier historic features, the McConnelsville Lock. Muskingum River State Park teamed up with the Division of Watercraft, Morgan County Chamber of Commerce, Port O' Morgan Boat Club and Morgan County Re-enactors Association to combine events that were held separately in the past into the new weekend celebration.

New events encouraging fitness, including adventures in canoeing at Cleveland Lakefront and Headlands Beach, and cross-country skiing workshops at Malabar Farm, were added to the busy schedule of hikes, square dances and other active events held in the parks.

Interpretive Services

In its second year, the "Wildlife in the Parks" program conducted in partnership with the Division of Wildlife was expanded to include 45 state parks. The Division of Wildlife provided a \$200,000 grant to assist with personnel and materials. The program emphasized aquatic studies, fishing and trapping. To facilitate the programming, the Division of Wildlife provided park naturalists with 23 fur and skull kits containing the pelts of seven mammals that have been significant in Ohio history.



In addition to the estimated 234,200 park visitors who attended summer naturalist programs, tens of thousands of campers and park guests visited nature centers and attended programs conducted during the extended season at several parks including Caesar Creek, Cleveland Lakefront, Dillon, Hueston Woods, Hocking Hills, Indian Lake, Lake Hope, Malabar Farm, Maumee Bay, Mt. Gilead and Quail Hollow.

Customer Service



A special pictorial exhibit depicting historical uses of Ohio's major natural resources was displayed in the historic log cabin at the Ohio State Fair. Demonstrations of spinning, weaving, quilting, woodcarving and laundry washing, as well as performances of bluegrass music, were conducted daily at the cabin.

Environmental Education

Nearly 8,000 students participated in outings to twelve state parks to enhance the environmental education curriculum. The School Days environmental education program continued to be offered at parks that have incorporated school days events in their regular program offerings, including Buck Creek, Cleveland Lakefront, Lake Hope, Lake Milton and Malabar Farm. Malabar Farm received a Friends of Conservation Award along with a \$3,000 grant to purchase equipment for future programs.



The 19th annual Scouting Outing at Burr Oak drew 1,200 boy scouts for a weekend of camping and hands-on educational and outdoor programs. Scouting events at three additional parks brought nearly 900 girl and boy scouts out to the parks for day



camp and overnight camping programs. The division participated in the Girl Scout Camporee with hands-on presentations focused on camping safety, personal safety when outdoors, and emergency preparedness. The event, which was held at Recreation Unlimited facility in Delaware County, was attended by more than 100 girl scouts from the Central Ohio area.

New Recreational Offerings

Several parks initiated projects to expand recreational offerings at little or no cost through the staff's ingenuity, using in-house or volunteer labor and salvaged or donated materials. Some examples include:

Amphitheater at Beaver Creek

Archery range at Burr Oak

Bike rental operation at Middle Bass Island

BMX bike course at Indian Lake

Expanded mountain bike trails at Lake Hope and John Bryan

Boardwalk nature trail at Tinker's Creek

Gazebo at Buck Creek

Mini golf course at Middle Bass Island

Playgrounds at Catawba Island and Middle Bass Island

Sand volleyball court at Lake White

The getaway rentals program was expanded to fill the niche for customers seeking affordable overnight rentals. New offerings were introduced including twelve deluxe cedar cabins at Geneva, the Ranger Point Cabin at Rocky Fork, and two camper cabins at Mary Jane Thurston. Caesar Creek and East Fork replaced Rent-A-RV units with cedar cabins, and Rent-A-Camp tents were replaced by camper cabins at Caesar Creek, East Fork, and Grand Lake St. Marys. To help market the facilities and expand the customer base, the 'camping options' program was renamed 'getaway rentals,' with Rent-A-Camp and similar units designated as 'rustic rentals,' and self-contained units such as Rent-A-RV and cedar cabins designated as 'fully-equipped rentals.'

Publications

In its ninth year of production, two issues of *Ohio State Parks* magazine were published and direct mailed to a subscriber list including more than 38,000 households. A new large-format, four-color brochure promoting getaway rentals at Ohio State Parks was introduced. The getaway rentals brochure is appropriate for a broader audience than the former 'camping options' and 'vacation cottages' brochures it replaces, allowing for considerable cost savings with a single publication. More than one-half million promotional pieces, including the getaway rentals brochure, camping brochure, park directory and overnight facilities fees brochures, as well as the magazine, cottage and golf course brochures, were widely distributed through the parks, travel shows, the 1-800-BUCKEYE operators, the Department of Transportation's Travel Information Centers, American Automobile Association outlets, direct mailings, and requests generated from the division's website.

Website

Total website visits numbered 2.2 million, a 10.1 percent increase over 2002. Navigation within the website underwent significant changes to provide a seamless transition to the new centralized reservation system for campgrounds and state-operated cottages, as well as the existing links to the resort websites maintained by the lodge concessionaires, Xanterra and Delaware North. A link was added to the new Alumni Association web page.

Overall website visits in December increased by 47.8 percent over December 2002, due to the initiation of the centralized reservation system on December 15, as well as the launch of the division's new e-newsletter on December 9. The overall navigation improvements resulted in increased traffic to several sections, including a 173 percent increase in page views of the "For Kids" section, a 132 percent increase in views of the gift certificate page, and a 139 percent increase in views of the calendar of events section.



Marketing and Advertising

Print advertising was placed in a number of publications that provide reader response service, generating over 9,900 requests for general information about Ohio State Parks. Advertisements were placed in "Great Vacation Getaways," a travel brochure insert in the travel sections of the Sunday newspaper in all of the major Ohio cities as well as over 30 other eastern cities. Advertisements were also placed in two AAA publications, *Michigan Living* and *Home and Away* magazines, which are distributed throughout the Midwest, and in the spring and fall travel brochure section of the *Indianapolis Star*. Additional exposure in travel publications included advertisements in Ohio Travel Association's *Long Weekends* magazine, *Ohio Magazine*, *Midwest Living*, *Better Homes and Gardens*, and *Reader's Digest*. Ads were also placed in publications targeted specifically to campers, including *Woodall's Campground Directory*, *Ohio Camper*, and *Trailer Life* magazine.

A new electronic newsletter, "E-news from Ohio State Parks," was developed to tap the growing numbers of potential customers who visit the division's website. The newsletter highlights special offers, discounts, and new programs, as well as events and recreational offerings in the parks. The electronic mailing list includes 8,000 addresses, and was compiled from web users who requested subscriptions to *Ohio State Parks* magazine on-line, as well as survey respondents who provided their e-mail address.

Brochure displays were placed in all twelve of ODOT's Travel Information Centers, as well as the eight Ohio State Park resort lodges. The displays have a locator map of the state with all the state parks and the facilities available, and slots for four brochures.

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

Promotional Programs

The Cardinal Camper Club promotional program for camping continued for a fourth year. A total of 1,946 memberships, including 239 renewals, were sold. Sales of the cards, which are valid for one year from the month of purchase, generated more than \$48,000 in revenue. The price of the card remained at \$25. The program goals included increasing camping occupancy and building a database for targeted marketing activities, which includes 5,000 customers.

The Cardinal Camper Club Sales Award was introduced to acknowledge superior efforts to promote the Cardinal Camper Club. The award was presented to East Harbor for selling the largest volume of the camper discount cards of any location in the state park system.

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. Each location offered four nights for the price of two Sunday through Thursday, and most also offered three nights for the price of two on Friday and Saturday rentals. A new promotion offered in November and December at several parks accommodated customers opting for one- or two-night stays with \$10 off per night on Friday and Saturday, and \$20 off Sunday through Thursday.

In cooperation with the lodge concessionaires, the 'Salute the Troops' promotion was continued through the entire year to honor U.S. military personnel. All active duty members of the armed forces, including National Guard and reserves, were entitled to a 10 percent discount off overnight stays in state park campgrounds, lodges and cottages.

Customer Service

Surveys

Surveys conducted by Ohio State Parks provided valuable feedback from customers on facilities and services, and helped create a profile of state park visitors. Survey data was used to guide incremental improvements in the parks, and provide direction for marketing efforts.

Customer Satisfaction Survey

Customer satisfaction surveys have been conducted each season since 1992. This was the second year of the new program consisting of three surveys geared toward three major facility areas; campgrounds, resort lodge and cottage operations, and day use facilities. The survey instruments focus on customer satisfaction with various aspects of those three major facility areas, such as cleanliness of a specific building or area, the condition of that building or area, and helpfulness of employees at those facilities. This data provides more specific feedback on park operations and identifies where improvements are needed.

The surveys were 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 unacceptable (1). A total of 10,313 surveys were returned, with 91.6 percent of respondents rating their overall visit as excellent or good.

Overall average ratings were calculated for individual facility areas, as shown below:

Facility Area	2003	2002
Campground Operation	4.159	4.202
Resort Lodge Operation	4.210	4.230
Cottage Operation	4.231	4.166
Golf Courses	4.473	4.364
Beaches	4.164	4.102
Lake/Boating Facilities	4.249	4.169
Trails	4.343	4.327
Picnic Areas	4.176	4.167
Visitor/Nature Centers	4.489	4.490

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, 64 percent were return visitors to a specific state park, 82 percent had visited other state parks, 85 percent would return to a specific state park, and 78 percent would visit other state parks. In addition, 52 percent of respondents were between 35 and 60 years of age, 47 percent had one or more children, and 87 percent were in groups of two or more people. Eighty-nine percent of respondents were from Ohio. Of the respondents from other states, 59 percent were from the states bordering Ohio.

Parks that received the highest ratings for each type of facility listed in the surveys were recognized with the new Service Excellence Award. To be eligible for the award, at least 100 surveys had to be completed by park visitors for that park. The ratings for each facility type were averaged, and the parks with the highest average rating from 100 or more surveys received the awards. The award recipients were as follows:

Facility	Park	Average Rating
Picnic Areas	Quail Hollow	4.514
Beach	Headlands Beach	4.398
Boating Facilities	Muskingum River	4.398
Trails	Quail Hollow	4.679
Nature Center	Lake Hope	4.647
Getaway Rentals	Stonelick	4.727
Cottages	Mohican	4.545
Golf Course	Hueston Woods	4.438
Campground	Stonelick	4.568
Resort Lodge	Mohican	4.364

Reader Response Survey

A survey was conducted to determine the effectiveness of our advertising and brochures. Forms were sent to more than 23,400 people who had requested information based on an advertisement they had seen in a newspaper or magazine. Over 4,260 responses were received. Some results are shown below:

- 62% had visited a state park in the past two years
- 77% plan to visit an Ohio State Park within the next year
- 52% were between the ages of 35 and 60
- 79% typically take a family vacation, while 89% enjoy weekend getaways
- 74% usually stay in hotels/motels when traveling
- 64% had no children living with them
- 59% were from Ohio
- 28% were from other states, with 17% from states surrounding Ohio

The top five recreational activities enjoyed were scenic driving, picnicking, hiking, wildlife watching, and swimming.

Partnerships

In addition to providing new facilities and better services for park visitors, partnerships have helped forge closer ties between the parks and their local communities, recruit new volunteers, and garner support from businesses as well as park user groups.

Friends Groups & Support Groups

Park-specific friends groups are now in place or forming at 36 state parks. The friends groups, sponsored by each park, are set up as tax-exempt non-profit organizations for the purpose of fundraising to make improvements at individual parks. Other support groups, including lake advisory councils, civic clubs and Coast Guard auxiliaries, also provided an array of services at several parks such as hosting tours, assisting with special events and lake management initiatives. Many of these support groups also have non-profit status.

Meetings were conducted with key members of individual park friends groups and active park user groups to build the foundation for a statewide friends organization. This future statewide group will link the local organizations to facilitate the exchange of information and ideas, as well as provide public education and advocacy for state parks.

The Marblehead Lighthouse Historical Society received the Chief's Award for positive service in forging strong links between this five-year-old state park and the local community, which actively supports the historic lighthouse. The group recruits volunteers to provide tours for visitors, operates a museum and gift shop in the Keeper's House, and helps with special events at the park.



Marblehead Lighthouse Historical Society receives Chief's Award



Hueston Woods Shelterhouse

The Friends of the Old Grist Mill at Mohican continued with renovations to the historic mill, further improving the historic structure and installing exhibits to facilitate tours. At Salt Fork, the Friends of the Kennedy Stone House added period furnishings and displays to transform the historic structure into a museum and educational center. The Volunteer Association at Quail Hollow provided funding for exterior painting of the Manor House.

Construction commenced on a \$90,000 picnic pavilion at Lake Loramie funded with community donations. At Hueston Woods, the friends group raised funds for the construction of a large shelterhouse in the campground that will serve as the staging area for special events.

Volunteers-In-Parks

In its 21st year, the Volunteer-In-Parks program set an all-time record with 324,479 service hours, an increase of 7,564 over last year. The total number of volunteers declined slightly to 5,818, a drop of 261 volunteers primarily in the group category. However, the number of individual volunteers, who assist throughout the season, increased modestly.



Beaver Creek was selected Volunteer Park of the Year. The park's revitalized volunteer program has broadened its scope to become actively involved in many aspects of the park operations, including the pioneer village, trading post, nature center, campground, trails and special events.

The annual statewide volunteer campout, which was hosted by the Cowan Lake region parks, featured a Bicentennial theme including a fireworks display that was held in partnership with the city of Wilmington and local businesses. A total of 340 volunteers from 38 state parks attended this annual recognition event.

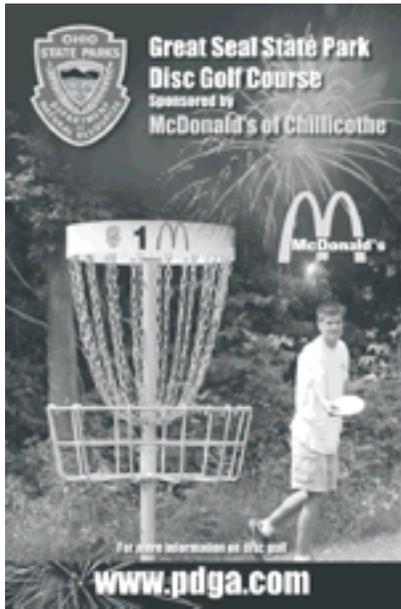
Customer Service

Corporate Partnerships

For the second year, the division conducted a statewide marketing program as part of the five-year vending contract with Pepsi-Cola. Radio advertisements and signage provided by Pepsi promoted family camping, the *SwimSafe!* beach safety program, and the division website.

In partnership with the Shriners Burn Hospital in Cincinnati, Ohio State Parks helped promote the “Circle of Safety” fire safety campaign focused on burn prevention for youth. Ohio State Parks’ participation allowed the scope of the program to be expanded with posters displayed statewide in state parks and campgrounds.

Great Seal partnered with the McDonald’s franchise in Chillicothe to complete the disc golf course at the park with the second set of nine holes, making the course suitable for professional tournament play. McDonald’s promoted the course with a number of in-store displays at the company’s outlets in southern Ohio.



Other Community Partnerships

The division partnered with the Ohio Campground Owners Association to support Governor Taft’s resolution designating April as “Go Camping Ohio” month, and promote camping in Ohio. The division continued to work with the National Association of RV Parks and Campgrounds, Ohio Parks and Recreation Association, and the Ohio Travel Association to promote parks, outdoor recreation, and tourism in Ohio.

For the second year, Mohican and Malabar Farm partnered with other outdoor-oriented attractions in the area, including Fowler Woods State Nature Preserve, Mohican School in the Outdoors, Johnny Applesseed Center, Ohio Bird Sanctuary, Gorman Nature Center, Byers Woods and Kingwood Center, to offer the Mohican Wildlife Weekend in April. Each of these attractions offered special activities and programs for visitors, and a variety of local businesses helped promote this nature tourism venture which attracted thousands of day-use and overnight guests to the area in the off-season.

In its sixth year, the Ohio Trails Partnership provided funds, technical expertise and labor for a number of bridle, mountain bike and hiking trail improvement projects in state parks and state forests. The partnership raised \$45,806 and volunteers

contributed more than 20,000 hours of trail work. The partners include the Ohio Horseman’s Council, the Ohio Mountain Bike Association, the Buckeye Trail Association, the Division of Forestry and Ohio State Parks. The group hosted a work weekend at Caesar Creek in March that attracted 140 volunteers who constructed an environmentally-friendly and sustainable multi-use trail in rugged areas adjacent to the reservoir. The first Ohio Trail Users Symposium (OTUS) was conducted at Salt Fork and provided training in trail design and maintenance among other topics. It was attended by 80 members of various volunteer hiking, horseback riding and mountain bike organizations from around the state.

Buck Creek partnered with the Springfield YMCA to host the Y’s summer day camp for youth ages five to thirteen. Cowan Lake catered to young anglers with special needs by hosting the annual outing of the Cincinnati Chapter of the national “Fishing Has No Boundaries” organization. Shawnee hosted the annual family retreat for members of the Joni and Friends organization, which provides recreational programs for disabled children and their families.

At Tinker’s Creek, students from Hudson High School raised funds and provided volunteer labor to make a number of improvements at the park, including a new boardwalk trail, as part of the school’s Ohio Bicentennial Service Learning Project.

Inter-Agency Partnerships

Ohio State Parks helped promote the Ohio Department of Health’s *Healthy Ohioans* fitness program by identifying and publicizing the many outdoor recreation opportunities in the parks that help people improve their physical conditioning. This was tied into the division’s own “Get Fit Naturally” program.

For the third year, the division partnered with the Department of Health as a participant in the Ohio Kids Card program for families with children under age six. State park campgrounds offered a 10 percent discount on camping and getaway rental fees on Monday through Thursday nights for Ohio Kids Card holders.

The division joined a new partnership with The Ohio State University School of Natural Resources and the Simon Kenton Council of the Boy Scouts of America to restart an Explorer scout post focused on outdoor education and environmental sciences. Many of the Explorer scouts volunteered to work at the division’s log cabin exhibit at the Ohio State Fair as the post’s summer event, helping young fairgoers participate in traditional farm chores.

The division continued to partner with the Department of Development Division of Travel and Tourism to provide information for travelers through Travel and Tourism’s website, ohiotourism.com, the 1-800-BUCKEYE information line operators, and the statewide calendar of events. Ohio State Parks was represented on the Travel Industry Advisory Council, and participated in other Travel and Tourism initiatives including the Great Ohio Adventures in Learning (GOAL) program, Partnership Forum Industry Day, and Discover Ohio specials.

Visitor Safety and Protective Services

Of the 100,728 visitor contacts by commissioned law enforcement personnel, 34 percent were visitor assists. Of the visitor contacts for law enforcement actions, 91 percent were friendly warnings.

In light of homeland security concerns, and to enhance safety in the parks, division policy was revised to require all commissioned officers to be armed while on duty, even when in civilian clothes. To facilitate this policy, all officers received specialized equipment and training in concealed weapons carry.

The division's Situation Investigation Team, which was renamed Internal Investigative Unit, investigated 30 incidents.

An electronic evidence tracking program was developed with assistance from the Division of Information Technology, and field testing of the program was initiated at Alum Creek and Cleveland Lakefront. Upon finalization of the program, it will be made available to all parks with permanent evidence facilities.

Rocky Fork's law enforcement team received two portable automatic external defibrillators (AEDs) from the Highland County hospital to administer first aid to heart attack or near-drowning victims. Pymatuning also received an AED unit from the South Central Ambulance Service in Ashtabula County.

A \$64,944 grant from the Department of Public Safety, Governor's Highway Safety Office provided funding for four moving traffic radar units, as well as overtime pay for increased traffic enforcement at 14 state parks. Lake patrols on the waters of Lake Milton, West Branch, and Mosquito Lake reservoirs were expanded through a \$19,196 marine patrol grant from the Division of Watercraft, an increase of \$8,761 over last year's grant. Court-awarded drug and DUI fine monies totaling \$19,322 were used to purchase a variety of equipment including portable breathalyzers, drug investigation equipment, digital cameras, in-car video cameras, radios, a spotting scope and evidence-property room materials.

Commissioned law enforcement personnel provided an array of protective services including assisting park visitors, issuing visitor warnings, conducting investigations and making arrests. The following are the law enforcement statistics reported through the computerized Law Enforcement Tracking System (LETS) program:



Enforcement Activity	2003	2002	2001
Visitor Assists	35,095	39,242	33,987
Warnings (written or verbal)	59,658	89,399	74,647
Misdemeanor Citations/Arrests	5,849	6,807	7,059
Felony Arrests	126	125	122
Outside Agency Assists	667	718	656
Property Stolen	\$275,730	\$471,034	\$388,616
Vandalism	\$126,900	\$76,231	\$123,275
Investigations	4,690	6,280	5,563

Because of the inherent dangers that exist in law enforcement, park officers occasionally used tactics to establish control of a situation. Statewide, park officers reported using force 49 times. The following is a comparison of use of force incidents reported the last three years:

Type of Force Used	2003	2002	2001
Unholster Weapon	25	45	36
Bodily Force	14	16	14
Chemical Agent	5	4	11
Vehicle Pursuit	7	11	13
Injury to Officer	0	1	2
Road Block	0	0	1
Display Shotgun	3	4	5
Suspect Injury	2	4	0
Baton	2	1	2
Canine	0	1	0

Customer Service

2003 Visitor Occasions

<u>State Park</u>	<u>2003 Total Visitor Occasions</u>	<u>State Park</u>	<u>2003 Total Visitor Occasions</u>
Adams Lake	183,660	Lake Hope	724,249
Alum Creek	3,663,291	Lake Logan	119,856
A.W. Marion	493,817	Lake Loramie	512,304
Barkcamp	83,778	Lake Milton	557,840
Beaver Creek	273,548	Lake White	31,016
Blue Rock	323,775	Little Miami	526,740
Buck Creek	324,043	Madison Lake	248,182
Buckeye Lake	308,570	Malabar Farm	244,406
Burr Oak	363,987	Marblehead Lighthouse	1,340,053
Caesar Creek	1,501,198	Mary Jane Thurston	165,070
Catawba	296,297	Maumee Bay	1,182,468
Cleveland Lakefront	9,068,786	Middle Bass Island	19,069
Cowan Lake	1,596,589	Mohican	413,649
Crane Creek	342,910	Mosquito Lake	1,935,815
Deer Creek	1,444,668	Mt. Gilead	344,704
Delaware	463,957	Muskingum River	389,306
Dillon	908,698	Nelson Kennedy Ledges	36,124
East Fork	955,228	Paint Creek	490,397
East Harbor	1,280,398	Pike Lake	152,775
Findley	531,570	Portage Lakes	1,019,324
Forked Run	245,187	Punderson	671,833
Geneva	1,926,240	Pymatuning	341,028
Grand Lake St. Marys	690,705	Quail Hollow	200,332
Great Seal	167,668	Rocky Fork	832,892
Guilford Lake	136,844	Salt Fork	1,901,745
Harrison Lake	259,303	Scioto Trail	229,935
Headlands Beach	2,150,904	Shawnee	245,565
Hocking Hills	2,067,494	South Bass Island (Includes Oak Point)	393,651
Hueston Woods	2,810,325	Stonelick	471,528
Independence Dam	75,012	Strouds Run	722,969
Indian Lake	1,683,745	Sycamore	210,406
Jackson Lake	38,226	Tar Hollow	105,402
Jefferson Lake	49,895	Tinkers Creek	32,314
John Bryan	361,108	Van Buren	91,295
Kelleys Island	160,872	West Branch	337,188
Kiser Lake	413,405	Wolf Run	73,365
Lake Alma	98,769	TOTAL	55,059,265

Resource Management

As stewards of many of Ohio's finest natural landscapes, Ohio State Park staff have partnered with others to undertake special projects, improve trails, develop and enhance wetlands, and promote wildlife diversity. Environmental and property damage from winter ice and summer storms required significant clean-up efforts.

Land Transactions

Land acquisitions, sales, easements, and exchange agreements fulfill the needs of neighboring landowners while protecting the resource base and public trust concerns of Ohio State Parks. Ten parcels of shoreline property totaling 0.6 acres were sold to adjacent landowners at Buckeye Lake, Grand Lake St. Marys, Indian Lake and Portage Lakes. At Lake Loramic, 1.2 acres were sold to settle an estate, and a negligible amount of land was traded in an equal exchange to adjust the property boundary. Land transactions resulted in a net loss of 1.8 acres at a total value of \$16,920.

Wetland Projects

In cooperation with The Ohio State University and the Division of Wildlife, a boardwalk was completed at the renovated wetland at East Harbor. Features of the boardwalk that enhance accessibility include construction at a low elevation, and kick-rails on the outer edge of the boardwalk.

Malabar Farm partnered with the Richland Soil and Water Conservation District, the Ohio Land Improvement Contractors Association (OLICA) and Malabar Farm Foundation to create a 1.5 acre wetland. The wetland was designed as an educational area for students to experience and explore wetland habitats and learn about the importance of wetland functions. The site amenities include a gravel observation pier with signage, photos and descriptions of wetlands and plants. The project received the Richland Soil and Water Conservation District's Wetland Enhancement Project Award, and the Division of Soil and Water Conservation's Friend of Education Award.

Approximately six acres of wetlands were delineated on Middle Bass Island, allowing the wetland area to be protected from development and preserved for future educational purposes.

Waterway Improvements

More than 688,164 cubic yards of sediment were dredged from Ohio State Park waterways. Dredging projects were conducted at the Muskingum River Parkway; on four canal feeder reservoirs including Buckeye Lake, Grand Lake St. Marys, Indian Lake and Lake Loramic; and on the lakes at Blue Rock, Dillon, Harrison Lake and Hueston Woods. Other waterway improve-

ment and related projects included launch ramp repairs, shoreline stabilization, silt trap construction and clean out, stump and debris removal, construction and restoration of dredge material relocation areas and dredge rehabilitation. The division received a \$495,000 grant from the Division of Watercraft for the purchase of a hydraulic suction dredge.



Clam shell dredge

Shoreline stabilization projects were completed at Indian Lake, Lake Loramic and Mosquito Lake. The division continued to work with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on solutions to excessive sedimentation problems at Dillon and Rocky Fork.

Approximately 905 tons of nuisance aquatic vegetation were removed from eleven state park waterways, providing

safe access for boaters into waterways that had been choked with vegetation. Through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services grant program under the federal Clean Vessel Act, Buck Creek and Lake Milton received grants totaling \$34,500 for construction work on boat pump out stations.

Beaches

Throughout the swimming season, Ohio's state park beaches were monitored for bacterial contamination in accordance with guidelines established by the Department of Health, and advisories were posted when the bacteria content exceeded the levels established by the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency. During the swimming season, 26 advisories were issued at 23 of Ohio State Parks' 65 inland beaches and sampling sites, and 19 advisories were issued at the 13 Lake Erie beaches in the state park system. The duration of advisories ranged from a four-day posting at Caesar Creek, to an 83-day posting at Cleveland Lakefront's Edgewater Beach.

The division continued to support research projects conducted by the U.S. Geological Survey on several beaches in the Cleveland area in hopes of developing more accurate and faster sampling methods, as well as developing predictive models for forecasting beach water quality.

The beach cleaning program provided mechanical cleaning of 25 state park beaches during the year at a cost of about \$9,689. Annual beach litter cleanups by volunteers were conducted at Maumee Bay and Cleveland Lakefront as part of the Coastweeks event.

Recreational Trail Improvements

Trail improvements funded through the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) Recreational Trail Grant Program continued at Nelson Kennedy Ledges, and several ongoing projects were completed. The construction of a walking/bicycling trail at Lake Milton was completed in partnership with

Resource Management

the Lake Milton Association. In addition to the TEA-21 grant money, numerous financial contributions from private individuals and businesses, as well as volunteer labor helped defray the total project cost of \$100,000. At Grand Lake St. Marys, work was completed on a 7,600-foot, paved multi-use trail along the eastern shoreline of Grand Lake St. Marys that links the Miami-Erie Canal with the City of St. Marys. At Lake Loramie, an accessible 120-foot bridge was built to link the Miami-Erie Trail and the park's campground with the park's loop trails. Trail repaving at Indian Lake was completed, benches were installed and trees were planted along the trail system.

In partnership with the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers and the City of Springfield, work began on the first segment of a spur trail that will ultimately connect the City of Springfield's bicycle trail to Buck Creek's main beach parking lot via the Little Miami River Scenic Trail. The segment linking the Little Miami Trail to the Army Corps of Engineers visitor center at C. J. Brown Reservoir has been completed. Construction of the remaining trail section continuing the spur to the Buck Creek beach is scheduled for 2004.

Through the assistance of local volunteers, new mountain bike trails were designed and completed at Lake Hope and John Bryan.

Wildlife Diversity Initiatives

Projects at West Branch were undertaken to enhance aquatic habitat in the 2,650-acre reservoir, as well as a small pond. Fish structures were placed in the reservoir to provide breeding areas, and the reservoir was stocked with muskie fingerlings by the Division of Wildlife. The deteriorated dam on Blackman Pond was rebuilt and the overflow pipe was replaced to reestab-



Ice storm damage at Shawnee



Flooding at Grand Lake St. Marys

lish aquatic habitat, as well as slow erosion that washes into the reservoir.

A five-acre plot in Mary Jane Thurston's North Turkeyfoot area was cleared and seeded with a variety of grasses to provide ideal pheasant habitat. The project was undertaken in cooperation with the local branch of Pheasants Forever and the Henry County Soil and Water Conservation District. Pheasants were released in the area in the fall.

Flooding and Storm Damage

A February ice storm at Shawnee damaged buildings, downed powerlines and caused extensive damage to the forest. The resort lodge and cottages had to be evacuated for over a week during the extended power outage. No injuries were reported, although falling tree limbs damaged the roofs of two cottages and a state forest maintenance building. Some adjacent state forest trails were closed through the summer due to potential hazards from falling trees and unsecured limbs. Clean-up continued through the year.

Wet, cool weather and flooding during the summer months had significant impacts on Ohio State Parks. Statewide average precipitation was above normal every month of the peak season; according to the Division of Water, the state experienced the third wettest May, fourth wettest July and the second wettest September in 121 years. Storms over the Memorial Day, July Fourth and Labor Day holidays impacted campers as several parks experienced flooding in campgrounds and day-use areas, temporary power outages and flooded roads. Damages to docks and marinas, and potential hazards from falling tree limbs were also an issue at several parks, and required extensive clean-up efforts.

Professional Development

During the peak season, Ohio State Parks employed a workforce of 500 permanent and 1,101 less-than full-time employees. Within the workforce, there were 330 new hirings of permanent or seasonal employees, 67 reclassifications or promotions, 272 resignations and 18 retirements.

Numbers of permanent employees by general job categories are:

Administration	7
Professional and Technical	121
Clerical/Office Support	49
Skilled Craft	122
Protective Services	103
Operational Support	98
Total Permanent Employees	500

The division continued to streamline its organizational structure for operational efficiency. Thirty-two of the 74 state parks have been satellited to larger parks in the regions.

In its second year, the division's Alumni Association continued to grow with 104 retirees and former employees becoming members. To maintain communication with alumni and recruit new members, a web page was developed and linked to the Ohio State Parks website. The web page features a member directory, alumni spotlight and memorial pages, a schedule of events and meetings, and links to websites of interest to retirees.

Ohio Award for Excellence

The division submitted a Tier 1 (Pledge to Excellence) application for the Ohio Award for Excellence in October. The OAE recognizes public and private Ohio-based organizations that practice measurable continuous improvement and utilize outstanding processes to achieve customer-focused performance excellence. Criteria include leadership, strategic planning, customer focus, information and analysis, staff focus, process management and organization performance results. Pursuant to review of the application, OAE scheduled an on-site assessment of the division's organization in March 2004.

Employee Surveys and Feedback Sessions

A series of surveys and feedback sessions with employees were conducted to evaluate the division's performance in meeting the needs of internal customers. Central office group managers and regional field managers were surveyed for feedback on the division's performance with respect to leadership, strategic planning, human resources focus, process management, business results, and knowledge measurement, analysis and management.

Following the surveys, feedback sessions were held to discuss areas of improvement and provide feedback. In addition, feedback on the division's effectiveness and employee satisfaction was garnered from central office staff through a facilitated discussion.

Training

The division continued to emphasize training in the areas of diversity and sexual harassment policy. All bargaining unit employees and many seasonal employees attended a half-day sexual harassment awareness training program provided by an outside consultant. In November, exempt supervisors also attended a two-hour diversity training at the semi-annual all managers meeting. The training was conducted by the department's EEO Coordinator.

A majority of employee training was paid for by the Workforce Development funds, FOP tuition reimbursement, the seminar and conference fund, and the Exempt Professional Development funds rather than using division funds. Employees attended training on a variety of topics including computer training, listening skills, landscape design, sexual harassment investigations, grammar, workers compensation, ergonomics, and employment law. Several employees attended supervisor and maintenance management classes sponsored by North Carolina State University at Oglebay Park in Wheeling, West Virginia.

Eight employees graduated from the Ohio Certified Public Managers (OCPM) program, and nine additional students were enrolled in OCPM. To date, 25 division employees have graduated from the OCPM program. Two employees graduated from the Department of Administrative Service's Human Resources University.

Ohio State Parks hosted the annual Midwest State Park Executives Conference. Fifty participants representing eight state park systems and the National Park Service attended the five-day conference at Hueston Woods. The conference showcased Ohio State Parks' best practices with on-site demonstrations at several parks.

The training for commissioned law enforcement officers included the annual in-service training, fall firearms training and shotgun qualification. During the in-service training held at the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy, all commissioned officers received instruction in advance first aid through the National Safety Council, updates on search and seizure law, and self-defense techniques. Firearms training focused on teaching officers how to carry, draw, and fire their weapon from a concealed carry position. The division's Internal Investigative Unit also received training in arson investigation and concealed carry.

The annual pre-season naturalist training featured guest speakers from the Division of Wildlife on delivery of trapping, fishing and aquatic studies programs. Naturalists also received tips on how to use the fur and skull program kits furnished by the Division of Wildlife as props for interactive programs.

Professional Development

Employee Recognition Programs

Employee Of The Quarter

In its eleventh year, the Employee of the Quarter Award program recognized four employees each quarter for outstanding performance and service to the division. To date, 166 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

Kara Moore, Cowan Lake - Administrative Support

Anthony Buchholz, Harrison Lake - Maintenance

Russ Knepper, Caesar Creek - Law Enforcement

John Lewis, Indian Lake - Management

Spring Quarter

Naomi Weinstiger, Hueston Woods - Administrative Support

Douglas Minnich, Indian Lake - Maintenance

Brian Roesti, Harrison Lake - Law Enforcement

Kenny Smith, South Construction Unit - Management

Summer Quarter

Bridget Derrick, Findley - Administrative Support

George Duggins, East Fork - Maintenance

Brad Copeland, Mohican - Law Enforcement

Martin Hall, Tar Hollow - Management

Fall Quarter

Maria Lavengood, Mohican - Administrative Support

Amy Wolford, John Bryan - Maintenance

Jason Lawson, Pike Lake - Law Enforcement

James Wilson, East Harbor - Management



Gov. Taft with Chris Grupenhof, Service & Stewardship Award winner.

Management Awards

Two new awards were introduced to recognize park managers who excel in providing leadership and accomplishing the division's strategic goals. The Parks Leadership Award is a peer-driven award initiated to honor managers who demonstrate excellent leadership traits and excel in establishing the culture of customer service, developing good community relations, encouraging employee development and fostering a positive "can-do" attitude. The Stewardship and Service Award was initiated to recognize a manager's outstanding efforts to achieve the division's goals in all aspects of the park operation, including customer service, resource management, professional development, infrastructure improvement and stable funding. The Stewardship and Service Award winner is selected by senior management.

Jerry Van Zile, regional manager of the Harrison Lake Region, received the first Parks Leadership Award for his exceptional skill and dedication in managing four parks, motivating staff and volunteers, and providing a positive and productive working environment, as well as his ongoing contributions to the division.

Chris Grupenhof, park manager at Great Seal and Scioto Trail, received the first Service and Stewardship Award in recognition of his superlative efforts to make continuous improvements at the parks he manages and contribute to the achievement of the division's strategic goals.



Gov. Taft presents Jerry Van Zile with the Leadership Award.

Lifesaving Awards

Three employees were recognized for their participation in lifesaving actions of a distinguished nature. The Lifesaving Commendation Award was presented to the following employees whose actions saved or attempted to save the life of another:

Keenan Cook, Park Officer, Cleveland Lakefront
Raymond Makkos, Park Officer, Cleveland Lakefront
Carlos Toledo, Park Officer Specialist, Cleveland Lakefront

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. Sixty-six team award certificates were issued in 2003 during the program's sixth year. The following teams were recognized:

Barkcamp/Salt Fork Refuse Management Team
Malabar Farm Barn Restoration Team
Catawba and Middle Bass Island Staff Team
Buck Creek Entrance Sign Renovation Team
Cowan Lake 2003 VIP Fall Campout Team



Barkcamp/Salt Fork Refuse Management Team



Bill Price Award winner, Brian Gregory, offering a fishing program.

Bill Price Award

Brian Gregory, naturalist at Great Seal and Scioto Trail, received the Bill Price Award for his quality programs as well as his exceptional efforts to design and build the disc golf course at Great Seal and help secure corporate funding for the equipment.

Bill Price, Ohio State Parks' first chief naturalist who is the namesake for this award, passed away in August.

In Memoriam

Several division employees passed away during the year. We are deeply saddened by our loss, and recognize their good work for Ohio State Parks.

James N. Clark, Hueston Woods, Equipment Operator 2
October 18, 2003

Mark Dague, Indian Lake, Dredge Operator 1
January 26, 2003

Paul J. Nichols, Lake Alma, Natural Resources Specialist
June 12, 2003

Robert Sears, East Fork, Park Officer
July 8, 2003

Harry E. Taylor, Mohican, Treatment Plant Aide
August 12, 2003

G. Rich Van Horn, Deer Creek, Park Officer
September 10, 2003

Infrastructure Improvements

Infrastructure Improvements

New visitor centers combined with office space, improved access and facilities for boaters, renovations to cottages and lodges, new and improved recreational facilities, and dam repairs were the focus of park facility improvement projects totaling \$11 million.

Geneva Lodge Initiative

Significant progress was made on the construction of the resort lodge and conference facility at Geneva made possible through a public-public partnership with Ashtabula County. The project remained on schedule through the year and is expected to be completed well in advance of the scheduled opening in May 2004. The lodge, which is the ninth in the Ohio State Park system, will offer 109 guest rooms, conference facilities, and resort amenities including a swimming pool, hot tub and fitness room.

Construction Projects

NatureWorks- Ohio's Natural Investment

Year nine of rehabilitation projects funded wholly or in part by NatureWorks has been completed. Construction was completed on a model multi-purpose facility at Hocking Hills that combines a spacious campground commissary with the park office and camp check-in. The new facility allows park visitors to receive travel and tourism information, purchase camp supplies, and check into the park campground and cottages in one convenient location near the campground entrance. Construction of the facility involved the acquisition of adjacent property, develop-



Hocking Hills visitor center

ment of a new access roadway and parking lot, and the closing of the historic entrance which required vehicles and camping units to ford Old Man's Creek, the water source for the Old Man's Cave Gorge. The project also entailed emergency repairs to a bridge near Cedar Falls that was damaged in a flash flood that occurred during construction of the commissary building.

A new visitor center and office was constructed at Cowan Lake to replace the park office that faced imminent closure due to health and safety concerns. The new office facility is located close to the campground, cottages and park maintenance facilities for customer convenience and efficiency of park operations.

Work was completed on a major dam rehabilitation project at Stonelick which entailed expanding the spillway structure to comply with current regulatory requirements. The lake drain system was repaired during the project, and an accessible fishing pier was incorporated in cooperation with the Division of Wildlife. At Wolf Run, repairs to the dam lake drain system were completed.

At Malabar Farm, the entire roof on the Bromfield Big House was replaced with a new metal roof system including gutters, downspouts and ice guard protection. The roof of the Working Farm Barn was also repaired, and deteriorated beams and siding were replaced. Much of the oak lumber used for beam replacement and siding was milled locally from trees at Mohican that had been harvested by the Division of Forestry.

An innovative bio-peat mound system was designed and installed at Paint Creek's Deer Park Marina area to provide a sanitary treatment facility for a restroom that is located within the normal flood limits of the reservoir. The new system requires very little maintenance and can withstand annual flooding.

At Lake Milton's marina area, a vault latrine restroom was converted to a flush facility, and additional improvements were made including installation of paved, lighted walkways to the docks, and expansion of the parking lot. Lake Milton's Pointview launch ramp was totally rehabilitated with repaving on the entrance roadway; construction of a two lane concrete ramp with boarding docks; redevelopment of an accessible restroom facility; shoreline rehabilitation and site drainage improvements. These projects were undertaken in cooperation with the divisions of Wildlife and Watercraft.

As the first phase of stabilizing historic structures at the marina area at Middle Bass Island neared completion, work began on the investigation and preliminary design of incremental improvements at the marina. As a complement to the marina study, groundwork was laid for a capital improvement project to develop the park construction master plan and conduct a feasibility study for other park improvements.

Consultant work began on the third phase of dam repairs at Buckeye Lake, and consultant studies continued on the South Fork Licking Watershed initiative linked with Buckeye Lake.

Capital Improvement Projects

A variety of renovation and improvement projects were completed using capital funding sources other than NatureWorks. A new park area was developed on donated property at Portage Lakes referred to as the Knapp McDowell Recreation Area. The project work entailed site clearing and regrading, installation of a new entrance roadway and parking lot, signage, security lighting and a modern picnic pavilion. It is anticipated that future work in the area will include the development of a second picnic area with pavilion, hiking and biking trails and shoreline fishing access.

A major playground improvement project was completed at Dillon in the marina and campground areas. More extensive and costly repairs were averted at Buckeye Lake with the proactive repair of a developing slip in the earthen dam.

Mapping and survey work were completed on a joint initiative with the Division of Water to redefine permanent land management responsibilities at the Nimisila area of Portage Lakes.



Dillon playground

NatureWorks/Capital Improvement Project Summary

PARK	PROJECT	*COST
Cowan Lake	Visitor Center	\$ 462,600
Stonelick	Dam Rehabilitation	\$ 1,417,812
Lake Milton	Marina & Pointview Ramp	\$ 1,232,724
Portage Lakes	Nimisila Survey	\$ 74,873
Hocking Hills	Commissary/Visitor Center	\$ 1,943,830
Wolf Run	Lake Drain	\$ 112,710
Portage Lakes	Knapp/McDowell Recreation Area	\$ 265,000
Malabar Farm	Big House Roof	\$ 157,095
Malabar Farm	Working Farm Barn	\$ 250,000
Paint Creek	Deer Park Sewer	\$ 152,100
Dillon	Playground	\$ 95,000
Hocking Hills	Bridge #12 Emergency	\$ 68,000
Buckeye Lake	Dam Slip	\$ 9,680
Middle Bass Island	Park Consultant	\$ 497,900
Middle Bass Island	Marina Consultant	\$ 199,497
Statewide	Underground Storage Tank Replacement	\$ 724,980
Buckeye Lake	Additional Consultant Fees Dam Design	\$ 745,832
Hocking Hills	Brunney Property Acquisition	\$ 580,000
Buckeye Lake	Additional Consultant Fees Watershed	\$ 312,909
TOTAL		\$ 9,302,542

* Includes Design & Construction Costs

Infrastructure Improvements

Roadway Maintenance and Striping

Major projects undertaken through the Cooperative Roadway Maintenance Program with ODOT include the rebuilding of the campground access road and repaving of parking areas at West Branch; replacement of the cottage area bridge and resurfacing of roads and parking lots at Mohican; and emergency repairs to correct flood damage at Hueston Woods. The total cost of various projects undertaken through this program amounted to \$830,011.

Miscellaneous Park Improvement Projects

A number of repair, replacement and improvement projects were completed at revenue generating park facilities such as lodges, cottages, marinas and concession buildings. Funding sources for these projects include lodge maintenance, repair and replacement funds, and the depreciation reserve fund. A sampling of these projects follows:

In-House Construction Initiatives

Statewide, 157 construction projects including 21 emergency projects were completed with in-house labor and equipment. The types of projects accomplished included utility upgrades, trail improvements, campground upgrades, dock and launch ramp improvements, wetland enhancement projects, beach and golf course enhancements and continued support for special events such as the Ohio State Fair and Ohio Heritage Days at Malabar Farm. A number of the emergency projects were necessitated by severe storm or flood damage at nine parks.

Miscellaneous Park Improvement Summary

PARK	PROJECT	COST	SOURCE
Burr Oak	Cottage renovations & electronic locks; lodge ceiling repair	\$ 67,312	MRR*/DR**
Geneva	Dock repairs & channel dredging; marina A/C installation	\$ 91,420	MRR
Hueston Woods	Lodge room renovations; new lobby furniture	\$ 176,515	MRR
Maumee Bay	Tennis & racquetball court resurfacing; dish machine	\$ 222,644	MRR
Mohican	Tennis & racquetball court reconditioning; walking bridge installation; landscaping	\$ 68,651	MRR
Punderson	Lodge front entrance renovation; exterior painting	\$ 187,525	MRR
Salt Fork	Cottage power washing; new playground equipment	\$ 85,553	MRR
Shawnee	Cottage roof repairs & bathroom remodeling; Lodge veranda enclosure & kitchen cooler	\$ 50,231	MRR/DR
West Branch	Boat ramps & accessible parking	\$ 630,000	MRR
TOTAL		\$ 1,579,851	

*Maintenance Repair and Replacement Fund

** Depreciation Reserve Fund

Project Design - NatureWorks

Design work continued on the following NatureWorks rehabilitation projects anticipated for construction.

Burr Oak: elevated water storage tank replacement and park-wide sewer improvements.

Muskingum River: rehabilitation of Devola Lock #2.

Portage Lakes: rehabilitation of the Old Park day-use area.

Design work was completed and competitive bidding for construction work was initiated for the following NatureWorks projects.

Alum Creek: replacement of launch ramp courtesy docks

Cleveland Lakefront: bluff stabilization at the Upper Edge-water area

Forked Run: phase 1 campground electrification

Grand Lake St. Marys: wastewater improvements at the East Bank area

Indian Lake: dock replacement at Chippewa Marina

Quail Hollow: water and wastewater system improvements

Rocky Fork: campground wastewater improvements

Salt Fork: parkwide wastewater improvements and campground re-electrification

In addition to these, 15 other NatureWorks and capital improvement projects were under active design, 11 capital projects were completed with construction anticipated in 2004, and 13 other capital projects were completed and competitive bidding for construction was initiated.

Accessibility Improvements

Accessibility design standards are incorporated into all new and rehabilitated park structures in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act guidelines. The new Hocking Hills campground commissary and park office building offers accessible facilities throughout for both park visitors and park employees. The new Cowan Lake park office also meets accessibility standards.

A launch ramp under construction at Indian Lake was designed for accessibility, and ongoing design work on launch ramp renovations at Paint Creek, West Branch and Buck Creek includes accessibility elements, as well. Construction work began on a courtesy dock replacement project at Alum Creek that was designed for accessibility.

The 'Old Park' rehabilitation project under design at Portage Lakes incorporates accessible facilities including restrooms, a picnic shelter and launch ramp. An accessible fishing pier has been incorporated in the design for the Devola Lock #2 dam project at Muskingum River Parkway. Construction work is nearly completed on an accessible restroom at Buckeye Lake's Brooks Park area. Three playgrounds with accessible features were constructed at Dillon.

In addition to major capital projects, park staffs continued to improve facility access by widening doorways, toilet compartments and shower stalls, constructing access ramps, modifying campsites, and adding ADA parking spaces. Accessibility also continued to be enhanced through numerous small projects such as removing doorway thresholds, changing door handles, and updating plumbing fixtures and drinking fountains.

Fiscal Management

Fiscal Management

Ohio State Parks expended \$80 million in fiscal year 2003, including \$29 million in revenues generated from fees and charges.

Budget

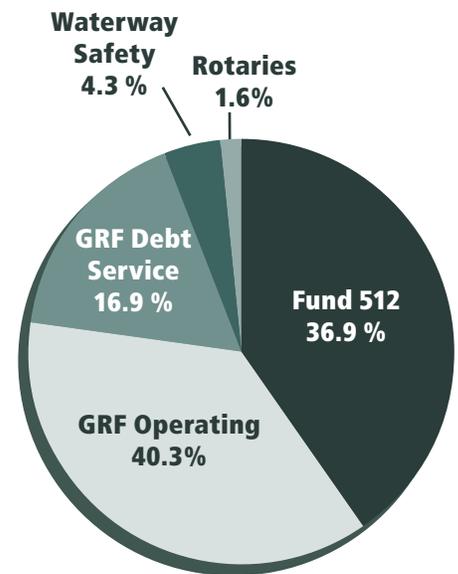
The primary source of the division's operating funding is the state's General Revenue Fund (GRF). In FY 04, the GRF is providing 57.9 percent of funding; in FY 03, 57.2 percent of the

division's money came from the GRF. The second largest source is fees and charges generated by the state parks and deposited into Fund 512. This fund accounted for approximately 35.1 percent of the total budget in FY 04; in FY 03, Fund 512 provided 36.9 percent of the budget. Approximately 4.3 to 4.4 percent of the budget is provided by the Waterway Safety Fund, which is designated for specific purposes. The balance of the funds received is obtained from miscellaneous rotary accounts.

Actual expenditures for FY 03 and the total appropriation for FY 04 are indicated in the charts below:

Funding

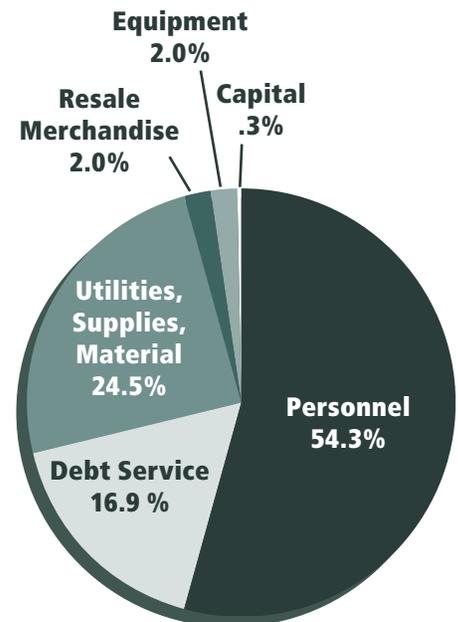
Funding	FY '03 Expended	FY '04 Budgeted
GRF Operating	\$ 32,267,369 (40.3 %)	\$ 34,232,205 (40.2 %)
Fund 512 (Fees & Charges)	\$ 29,501,113 (36.9 %)	\$ 29,915,146 (35.1 %)
GRF Debt Service	\$ 13,534,590 (16.9 %)	\$ 15,066,500 (17.7 %)
Waterway Safety	\$ 3,432,834 (4.3 %)	\$ 3,693,250 (4.4 %)
Rotaries	\$ 1,275,602 (1.6 %)	\$ 2,237,768 (2.6 %)
Total	\$ 80,011,508	\$ 85,144,869



Expenditures

An itemization of major expenditures to pay salaries, debt service, utility and maintenance costs, resale items and equipment purchases is as follows:

Expenses	FY'03 Expended	FY'04 Budgeted
Personnel	\$ 43,485,886(54.3 %)	\$ 44,797,146 (52.6 %)
Debt Service	\$ 13,534,590(16.9 %)	\$ 15,066,500 (17.7 %)
Utilities/Supplies/Material	\$ 19,594,590(24.5 %)	\$ 22,805,136 (26.8 %)
Resale Merchandise	\$ 1,580,957(2.0 %)	\$ 1,750,932 (2.0 %)
Equipment	\$ 1,601,936(2.0 %)	\$ 725,155 (0.9 %)
Capital	\$ 213,549(0.3 %)	\$ 0 (0.0 %)
Total	\$ 80,011,508	\$ 85,144,869



Revenue

Ohio State Parks generated \$27,075,200 in revenue, a 0.05% percent decrease over 2002 revenue. Some facilities are operated under contract by private vendors. The difference between gross receipts and revenue received by the division is the money retained by private concessionaires per the terms of their concession agreements. All revenue generated by state parks is deposited into Fund 512.

The gross receipts and revenue received in calendar year 2003 were as follows:

Source of Revenue	Gross Receipts	Revenue to the Division
Camping	\$ 10,117,310	\$ 10,117,310 (37.37 %)
Concession Agreements	\$ 38,291,304	\$ 4,008,871 (14.81 %)
Self-Operated Concessions	\$ 3,344,131	\$ 3,344,131 (12.35 %)
Cottage Rentals	\$ 2,930,004	\$ 2,930,004 (10.82 %)
Dock Permits	\$ 2,358,444	\$ 2,358,444 (8.71 %)
Miscellaneous	\$ 1,947,504	\$ 1,947,504 (7.19 %)
Golf Greens Fees	\$ 1,986,362	\$ 1,750,908 (6.47 %)
Getaway Rentals	\$ 319,971	\$ 319,971 (1.18 %)
Group Lodge Rentals	\$ 84,055	\$ 84,055 (0.31 %)
Land Rentals	\$ 76,106	\$ 76,106 (0.28 %)
Pools & Lockers	\$ 68,278	\$ 68,278 (0.25 %)
Malabar Tours	\$ 48,732	\$ 48,732 (0.18 %)
Duck Blinds	\$ 20,886	\$ 20,886 (0.08 %)
TOTAL	\$61,593,087	\$27,075,200

Concessions

Sixty-three concession facilities were operated under 52 separate leases, contracts or short-term agreements. The contracts or agreements on eleven of these concession facilities expired and were rebid during the year, including the contracts for the operation of the resort lodges and cottages at Burr Oak, Shawnee and Hueston Woods. The contract for these resort facilities was awarded to the current operator, Xanterra Parks and Resorts.

Construction work started on two new state park concession facilities, both of which are being built without the use of state funds. The contract for the new sailboat marina at Alum Creek was awarded to the Alum Creek Sailing Association under the authority of section 1501.012 of the Ohio Revised Code. The Association is funding the construction and operation of the marina facility which will provide an additional 135 seasonal dock slips for sailboats on Alum Creek reservoir.

Progress continued on the unique public/public agreement between the department and Ashtabula County to build and operate a resort lodge at Geneva State Park. The lease agreement between the state and the county, which expires January 31, 2040, provides that the county will assume all financial responsibility for the design, construction and operation of the facility on state park land. Construction began on the new facility, and county officials executed a management agreement with Delaware North Companies Parks and Resorts, Inc. to operate the lodge. Delaware North began booking reservations for the guest rooms and conference facilities, which are scheduled to open in May 2004.

2004 Goals

- Continue our customer service focus and emphasis on providing family oriented programs and facilities for our visitors.
- Continue to strengthen existing partnerships with federal, state and local agencies as well as private organizations, corporations and individuals, and foster new partnerships to help sustain and improve programs, services and facilities.
- Conduct focus groups to gather constituency input for the next five-year strategic planning document and align it with the department's overall strategic plan.
- Facilitate the formation of a statewide organization that links all the various parks' friends, constituent and other support groups.
- Complete the implementation of all functions of the centralized reservation and point-of-sale system.
- Implement at least one resource stewardship enhancement project in each park region utilizing park staff and /or partnerships with other agencies or constituency support groups.
- Market the new centralized reservation system along with promoting the overnight facilities through a multi-faceted approach.
- Integrate North Bass and continue improvements at Middle Bass as part of the Lake Erie Islands operation, and develop public recreational facilities as funding becomes available.
- Facilitate a successful opening of the lodge and conference center at Geneva and continue to foster the partnership with Ashtabula County Commissioners and Delaware North.
- Initiate the preliminary investigation phases of three capital improvement projects in each of the following categories: water and wastewater; marinas and public boat launch ramps; lodges and cottages.
- In collaboration with OSU, conduct a second Flickinger Leadership Academy for existing staff with a special emphasis on attracting new candidates with management potential.
- Submit a Tier 2 Ohio Awards for Excellence application for the division that will be used to further assess and evaluate the division's effectiveness in the areas of leadership, process management, strategic planning, customer focus, information technology, human resources and getting results.

Statistical Abstract Of The Ohio State Park System 2003

General Park

# State Parks	74
Total Acreage	163,929
Acreage -- Land	101,768
Acreage -- Water	62,161
Miles of Shoreline	1,021
% of Land that is Developed	21.8%
% of Shoreline that is Developed	26.9%
Visitor Occasions	55,059,265
# Buildings	2,621
# Water Systems	145
# Sewer Systems	149
# Restroom Buildings -- Water Borne	459
# Restroom Buildings -- Pit Privies	503
Miles of Roads Patrolled	1,844
# Felonies	126
# Citations	5,849
# Visitor Assists	35,095
# Park Residences	81
# Dining Lodges/Restaurants	3

Campgrounds

# Campgrounds	91
# Campsites	9,178
# Full Service Sites	129
# Electric Sites	6,297
# Non-electric Sites	2,752
# General Group Areas	60
# No-fee, Non-group Primitive Sites	74
# Horse Camps	14
# Horse Camp Sites	350
# Showerhouses	112
# Amphitheaters	51
# Camp Store/Commissaries	43
# Campsites Rented	648,092
Campground Occupancy (244 nights)	28.9%

Camping Options

# Rent-A-Camp Sites	40
% Rent-A-Camp Occupancy (184 nights)	25.6%
# Rent-A-RV Sites	8
% Rent-A-RV Occupancy (184 nights)	55.5%
# Rent-A-Tepee Sites	8
% Rent-A-Tepee Occupancy (184 nights)	27.4%
# Rent-A-Yurt Sites	11
% Rent-A-Yurt Occupancy (184 nights)	47.5%
# Cabents	4
% Cabent Occupancy (153 nights)	50.7%
# Camper Cabins	53
% Camper Cabins Occupancy (184 nights)	36.7%
# Cedar Cabins	19
% Cedar Cabins Occupancy (184 nights)	46.4%

Resort Lodges & Concession Cottages

# Resort Lodges	8
# Resort Lodge Rooms	709
# Lodge Room Nights Rented	123,489
% Lodge Occupancy	47.7%
# Restaurants in Resort Lodges	8

# Concession Cottages	221
# Cottage Nights Rented	36,298
% Cottage Occupancy	45.0%

State Operated Cottages

# State Operated Cottages	298
# Cottage Nights Rented	39,959
% Cottage Occupancy	41.8%

Golf Courses

# Golf Courses	6
# Golf Rounds	129,032

Boat Ramps/Marinas/Docks

# Boat Ramps	188
# Boater Occasions	7,775,005
# Marina / Boat Rental Operations	46
# Docks - Concession Operated	1,414
# Docks - State Operated	6,309
# Private Docks Licensed	10,701

Beaches

# Swimming Beaches	79
# Swimming Occasions	3,992,076
# Beach Concessions	23

Group Facilities

# Overnight Group Facilities	6
# Overnight Group Facility Users	20,081
# Beds in Group Facilities	313
# Day-use Group Lodges	13
# Day-use Group Lodge Users	46,869

Visitor/Nature Centers

# Visitor/Nature Centers	38
# Visitor/Nature Center Users	1,113,039

Picnic Areas

# Picnic Areas	461
# Picnic Area Users	8,128,348
# Picnic Shelters -- Total	165
# Reservable Picnic Shelters	107

Other Recreational Facilities

# Swimming Pools	18
# Tennis Courts	16
# Basketball Courts	76
# Volleyball Courts	93
# Miniature Golf Courses	14
# Disc Golf Courses	2
# Playgrounds	184
# Parks with Bike Rental Operations	21
# Trails - Total	395
Total Miles of Trails	1,154
# Multi-Use Trails	122
# Hiking Only Trails	224
# Mountain Bike Only Trails	24
# Bridle Only Trails	22
# Parks with Snowmobile Trails	11
# Parks with Cross Country Ski Trails	44
# Parks with Sledding Hills	39
# Shooting Ranges	5

Overnight Facilities

2003 Overnight Facilities in Ohio State Parks

