



Ohio State Parks

2008 ANNUAL REPORT



PROVIDING FUN, SAFE, CLEAN AND FRIENDLY PLACES FOR FAMILIES TO GATHER AND ENJOY THE GREAT OUTDOORS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



We started the year braced for serious challenges, but determined to keep providing high quality facilities, programs and activities for our state park customers. By staying focused on our mission, and nurturing our personal and collective sense of purpose and community pride, we maintained our high standards for customer service through the year, and managed to make some improvements, as well.

Our state park staff, community partners, and stakeholders, alike, recognize that we have become a very lean organization over the past several years, and we have applied extraordinary ingenuity and perseverance to buffer budget cuts with minimal impact to the public. Meanwhile, increasing fuel costs, rising operating expenses, and the ongoing impacts of deferred maintenance have compounded the impact of reduced funding to a level unparalleled in our history. Still, we are not alone in our fiscal challenges, and we have been fortunate to be spared the full impact of the state's fiscal struggles.

At the individual park level, and across the state park system, we enjoy a wealth of public goodwill. Despite their own economic hardships, Ohioans continue to visit their favorite state parks, attend special events in record numbers, vacation close to home, and introduce their kids and grandkids to the outdoors.



Generous partners continue to help our dedicated staff find innovative ways to offer new and improved programs and facilities for customers. Community support groups still rally around their local state parks.

Favorable public sentiment has been leveraged in new and exciting ways that hold promise for a brighter future. As part of the capital appropriations and budget correction bill, the Ohio State Parks and Recreational Area Study Committee was created to evaluate the budget challenges and make recommendations for achieving adequate funding levels, including potential revenue-generating ideas to be considered and further explored by the Ohio General Assembly and the administration. The Ohio Natural Resources Stakeholder Group continued to lend their support and advocacy for funding for our state parks, forests, nature preserves, and soil and water resources.

The spirit of gratitude and optimism that has seen us through these difficult times will continue to serve our state parks well. We know our state parks have value for the people of Ohio, and our parks are needed now, more than ever. As long as we remain focused on our mission and act on our deeply held beliefs, our state park system will remain relevant and vital for generations to come.

Dan West

Dan West
CHIEF, OHIO STATE PARKS

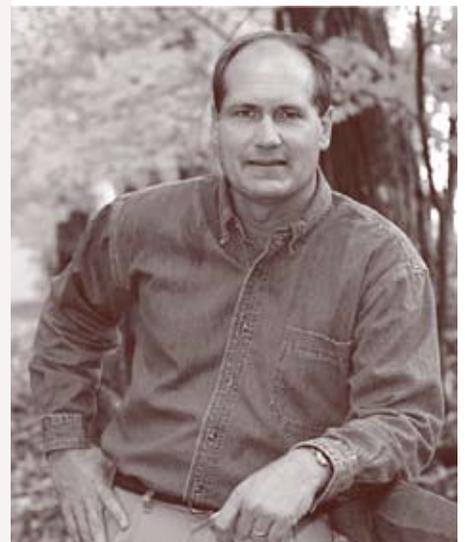
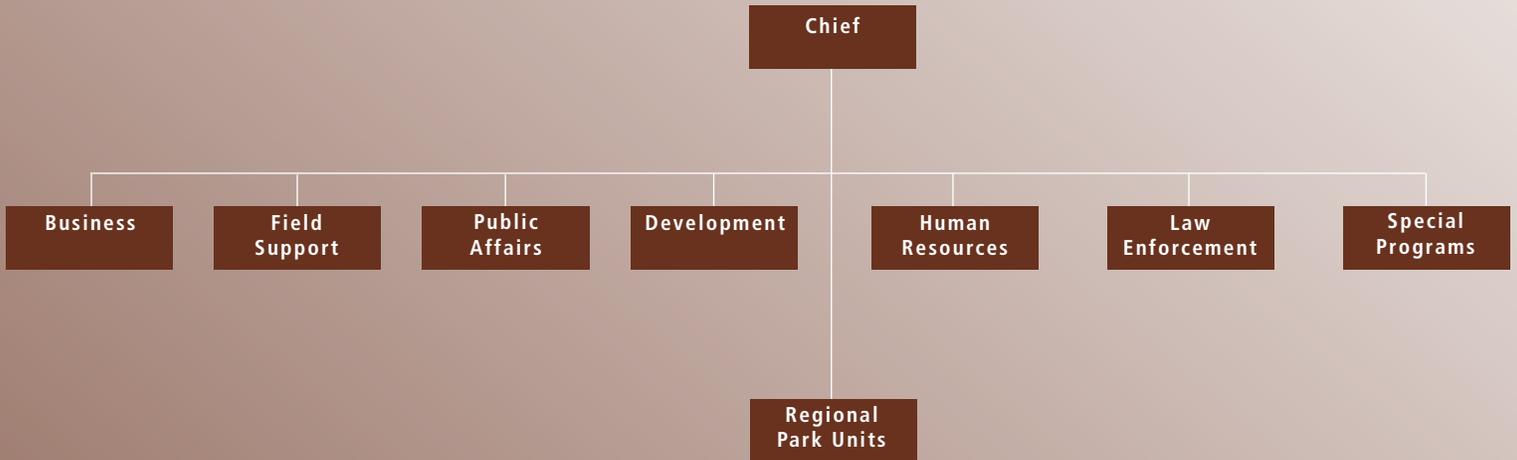
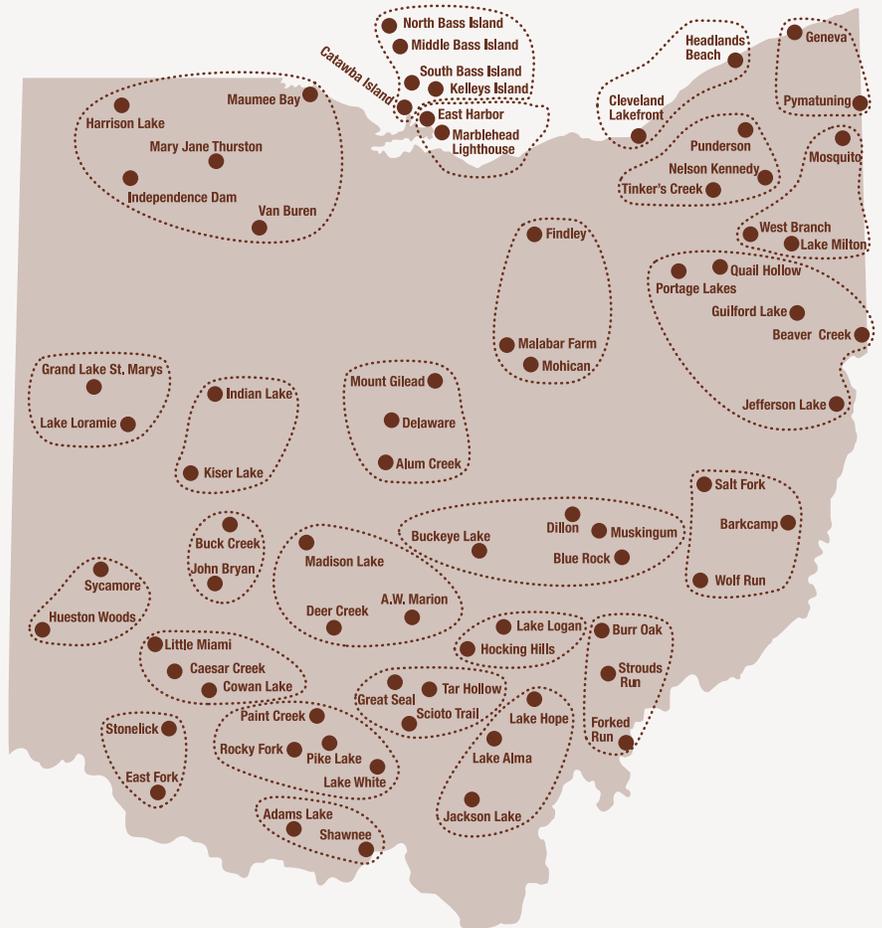


Table of Organization

The organization of Ohio's 74 state parks into regional units continued, with the total number of regional units reduced to 25. The regional units consist of two to five parks in close proximity. Each region works together as a team, sharing financial and human resources as necessary for better economy and efficiency.



Map of Regional Park Units



Customer Service

Making park visitors feel welcome is the first priority for our dedicated staff and volunteers, and just the beginning of our customer service philosophy. In addition to hospitality, we strive to provide interesting and educational programs, a wide variety of outdoor recreation opportunities, and a wealth of memorable experiences in nature that promote the health and well-being of body, mind and spirit.



Explore the Outdoors Kickoff event at Alum Creek

CUSTOMER FOCUS

Ohio State Parks' long tradition of customer focus continued, with each employee in the parks and in central office serving first and foremost as a customer service representative. Responsiveness to park visitors remained the top priority for management, administrative and maintenance personnel, and emphasis continued to be placed on visitor assists for law enforcement staff. For the fourth consecutive year, regional customer service champions planned and presented hospitality training sessions for more than 150 front line employees. The training focused on providing exceptional service and managing difficult situations.

SPECIAL EVENTS AND TOURISM INITIATIVES

Newly introduced nature-based tourism events included the first Appalachian Butterfly Conference at Shawnee, the Lake Erie Raptor symposium at Maumee Bay, the "Mushroom Madness" edible mushroom workshop at Malabar Farm, and the Green Energy Workshop at Malabar Farm's state-of-the-art Visitor Education Center. Established nature tourism events, including the third annual Flora-Quest at Shawnee, the seventh annual Mohican Wildlife Weekend, and the seventh annual "Shoot the Hills" nature photography weekend at Hocking Hills, continued to attract large and appreciative audiences, as well as boost overnight occupancy in the spring.

Park visitors were invited to help tag monarch butterflies during the Maumee Bay Monarch Festival, Cleveland Lakefront's Monarch Watch Program, and at Van Buren's new butterfly gazebo. At Lake Hope, the hand-feeding hummingbird program attracted more than 5,000 people in its seventh year.

Events utilizing technology included the Ohio State Parks Geocaching Challenge held at several northeast Ohio parks, coordinated through the Portage Lakes region. The event concluded at Punderson in September with the 2008 Geo-finale campout. In its fourth year, the "Holiday Trail of Lights" at Lake Hope was expanded and improved to include 100,000 energy efficient LED lights in nature themed displays along a quarter-mile hiking trail.

In addition to the dozens of traditional park events promoting heritage tourism, a few new heritage events



"Sweet Sounds of Ash Cave"
Concert at Hocking Hills

were held with assistance from local community support groups. At Mohican, the Friends of the Wolf Creek/Pine Run Grist Mill held a two-day Pioneer Days Festival at the historic mill. At Salt Fork, the Friends of the Kennedy Stone House offered a Passport to the Past program specially tailored to children. In its fourth year, attendance doubled at Cleveland Lakefront's "Remembering the Sights and Sounds of Euclid Beach Park," featuring attractions from the historic amusement park, and co-sponsored by Euclid Beach Park Now.

A few new events for specialized audiences were well received. Malabar Farm hosted a yoga retreat in January featuring yoga workshops, meals in the Malabar Farm Restaurant, and relaxing activities around the park. Incredible natural acoustics and scenic beauty attracted more than 750 music and nature lovers for the Columbus Symphony Orchestra's "Sweet Sounds in Ash Cave" concert held in Hocking Hills' Ash Cave in August. The event raised more than \$5,900 for the Columbus Symphony and the Friends of Hocking Hills.

In cooperation with one of the resort lodge concessionaires, Xanterra Parks and Resorts, and the American Automobile Association (AAA), the division helped host FAM tours for nearly 100 AAA travel agents. Stops on the FAM tour included the Hueston Woods lodge, golf course, marina and nature center; the Maumee Bay resort facilities and nature center; the Mohican lodge and nearby Malabar Farm; and the Salt Fork lodge and resort facilities in addition to the campground and nature trails. As a result of the FAM tours, the participating state park resorts were featured in the May/June issue of AAA's *Home and Away* magazine, as well as AAA's *Driving Vacations Guide*.

For the second consecutive year, affordable vacationing close to home was a major theme of Ohio State Parks promotional efforts including news releases, media interviews and advertisements.

INTERPRETIVE SERVICES

Over a quarter million park visitors participated in summer naturalist programs offered in 50 state parks. For the seventh 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. A new grant-funded partnership program in conjunction with the Division of Watercraft was introduced. Through the partnership, park naturalists received training and boating-related props to provide boating safety instruction to over 3,000 guests at 11 state parks.

An estimated 17,000 students attended environmental education programs, including school days events and nature center tours, at Cleveland Lakefront, Hocking Hills, Hueston Woods, Lake Hope, Malabar Farm, Maumee Bay, Quail Hollow and Shawnee.

Quail Hollow expanded its naturalist program offerings for children and adults with an "Experiencing Nature through Art" series that encourages close observation of nature, fosters creativity, and promotes appreciation of the arts through hands-on activities including nature journaling, print making, weaving, and writing. The program was made possible through a \$500 mini-grant from the County Arts Council of Stark County.

Upgrades to existing state park nature centers include improvements to raptor housing at Hueston Woods' raptor rehabilitation center. The center's A-frame bird perches with tethers were replaced with four large flight cages for the birds of prey, utilizing recycled lumber and fence material at a cost of less than \$500. The cages are more comfortable for the birds, and provide better viewing for nature center visitors. At Quail Hollow, the small raptor enclosure was replaced with a large, open mews that offers more room for the birds and an unobstructed view for park visitors. The Quail Hollow Volunteer Association received a \$5,000 grant for the project. At Cleveland Lakefront, work was completed on renovations to a former office facility that will house the park's new nature education center, and work continued on the design and development of interactive interpretive displays. The center is expected to open to the public in summer 2009.

The Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalist (OCVN) Program, offered through the Ohio State University

extension with assistance from ODNR and other partners, provides classroom instruction and field experience in a variety of life science, earth science and natural resources topics. State park naturalists in the Cowan Lake and Hocking Hills regions serve as instructors for the local OCVN programs.

Through the OCVN program, dozens of civic minded nature enthusiasts have performed valuable community service projects in our parks. At Caesar Creek, the volunteer naturalists assisted with tours and programs, organized program materials, updated trail maps, and improved nature center displays as well as landscaping. The certified volunteer naturalists also expanded the professional park naturalists' outreach by participating in activities such as school programs and campground programs, nature-oriented park events, and educational field trips. At John Bryan, the certified volunteer naturalists designed and planted flowerbeds around the park. At Hocking Hills, the first class of 20 certified volunteer naturalists graduated from the program

New promotional displays in the pavilion at the Ohio State Fair promoted overnight stays and activities such as disc golf. A new "Go Green Camping" display at the pavilion was developed to encourage energy and resource conservation while camping, and showcase camping gear that employs green technology. Living history demonstrations at the log cabin included the popular washboard laundry activity, fiber arts demonstrations by volunteers from the Malabar Farm Spinning and Weaving Guild, and musicians performing folk songs.

GETTING KIDS OUTDOORS

More than four dozen state parks participated in the ODNR "Explore the Outdoors" partnership program to encourage youth to experience and appreciate nature. As part of the initiative, parks around the state were recommended for outdoor activities including hiking, fishing, swimming, paddling, camping, birding, exploring wetlands, visiting nature centers, attending naturalist programs, and participating in volunteer clean-ups. Posters with codes for the various activities were displayed in the parks so that participants could verify that they visited the parks and engaged in the suggested activities. A kick-off event was held in May at Alum Creek, with activities including fishing, kite flying, disc golf, canoeing and kayaking, and naturalist programs.

The Explore the Outdoors program design included a completion certificate and a chance to win a small gift as incentives for visiting several parks, participating in several activities, and reporting back through a central website, exploretheoutdoorsohio.com. Redemption of the certificates served as a measure of the program's success. In addition to ODNR, partners included the American Heart Association, Audubon Ohio, Leave No Child Inside chapters, National Park Service, Ohio Department of Education, Ohio Department of Health, Ohio Parks and Recreation Association, Ohio Metro and County Parks, and the U.S. Forest Service.

Complementary to the departmental Explore the Outdoors program, the Ohio State Parks Kids Exploring the Outdoors photo contest was held from May through October to encourage children and their families to visit our state parks and embark on a healthy, active, outdoor lifestyle. Consistent with the contest theme, more than 215 photos of children connecting with nature and engaging in outdoor activities in 23 state parks were submitted by parents and grandparents.

Youth fishing derbies held at 15 parks during the spring and summer attracted more than 4,000 children, along with their families, for a day or weekend of wholesome outdoor fun.

Youth-oriented special events and programs offered in the parks were highlighted in news releases, the *Ohio State Parks* magazine, and the Ohio State Parks website. The "Park Pals" feature of the magazine was expanded to a prominent two-page spread, and the "For Kids" segment of the website was enhanced to include easy access to family friendly events in the parks, the improved "Nature Thing of the Month" feature, and a variety of educational activities for kids to enjoy at home.

Photo contest winner



RECREATIONAL OFFERINGS

New and improved recreational facilities were developed at several parks, through the ingenuity of park staff, with assistance from friends groups, community partners and donors. Examples include:

- Archery ranges at Caesar Creek and Paint Creek
- Accessible playground at Harrison Lake
- Accessible duck hunting blind at Buck Creek
- Butterfly enclosure at Hocking Hills
- Dog park Lake Alma, dog park and beach at Portage Lakes
- .5-mile fitness trail at Beaver Creek
- 5.5-mile beginner's orienteering course at Hocking Hills
- 3-mile, partially paved multi-use trail from Mohican to neighboring Loudonville
- 2-mile interpretive nature trail at Van Buren
- Electrical hookups at 16 campsites at Burr Oak
- Electrical hookups at 13 campsites at Van Buren
- Kayak rentals at Kelleys Island
- Nature center at Punderson
- Outdoor swimming pool at Geneva Lodge
- Patio at the East Harbor Camp Store
- Pioneer vegetable garden at Shawnee
- Visitor information center at Mohican
- WiFi service in Hueston Woods Cottages

Boat swimming opportunities were expanded with newly designated areas at Caesar Creek, Lake Logan and Salt Fork. Boat camping areas were established at several parks including Dillon, Grand Lake St. Marys, Guilford Lake, Paint Creek, Portage Lakes, Rocky Fork and Salt Fork. The horsepower limit on Pymatuning Lake was increased to 20 hp.

The policy of offering pet friendly cottages at state-operated cottage locations was expanded to include one cottage at Cowan Lake, five cottages at Dillon, and four cottages at Pike Lake. Lake Hope and Pymatuning continued to welcome pets at select cottages for the second year.

Kids exploring trails



CENTRALIZED RESERVATION SYSTEM

The total number of reservations made through the centralized reservation system for camping, getaway rentals and state-operated cottages declined by 2.5 percent, although the number of nights that guests stayed for each reservation increased an average of 4.9 percent system-wide. The proportion of overnight customers who made advance reservations, rather than walk-in, increased 1.5 percent to 53.5 percent. About 43 percent of these advance reservations were made through the call center, while 57 percent were made on-line through the division's website.

The contract with InfoSpherix for the operation of the Ohio State Park Reservation and Point of Sale system expired in October. Prior to the contract expiration, a request for proposals to continue providing these services was issued in March. Three companies responded with proposals, and after extensive evaluation, InfoSpherix was again awarded the contract. This contract is a three year contract with two two-year renewals.

In addition to the services already provided by InfoSpherix, the new contract includes the following new services, which are scheduled for implementation in 2009 and 2010:

- Gift card redemptions at concession operated facilities;
- Online and call center reservations for day use facilities;
- A customer loyalty program;
- A seasonal boat dock management program;
- On-line merchandise sales;
- A pilot self-service kiosk;
- A golf tee time management system at both state operated courses for on-line tee time booking.

PUBLICATIONS

A new keystone publication, the “Ohio State Parks Welcome Kit,” was introduced as part of a partnership with Government Solutions Group (GSG), and printed free of charge to the division. The Welcome Kit brochure included the familiar park amenities chart and locator map (typically included in the “Park Directory”), along with editorial content including recommendations for parks offering popular activities, tips on getting kids outdoors, green initiatives and gear. Also included in the kit were leaflets from GSG’s corporate sponsors, Canon, Odwalla, Travelocity and Geico. GSG provided 400,000 welcome kits for distribution through the parks, 1-800-BUCKEYE, ODOT Travel Information Centers, travel shows, American Automobile Association outlets, various convention and visitor bureaus, direct mailings, and requests generated from the division’s website.

The numbers of key promotional pieces printed annually, including the *Ohio State Parks* magazine, “Getaway Rentals,” and “Overnight Facilities Fees,” were reduced by nearly 20 percent as a cost savings measure. The “Park Directory” was temporarily replaced by the Welcome Kit, and not reprinted, saving approximately \$5,000. In its fourteenth year of production, two issues of *Ohio State Parks* magazine were published and direct mailed to a subscriber list of more than 56,000 households.

MARKETING AND ADVERTISING

Print advertising was placed in a number of publications that provide reader response service, generating over 12,100 requests for general information about Ohio State Parks. The number of requests increased significantly compared to 2007, 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 Travel and Tourism’s *Discover Ohio* and *Ohio Golfers Guide*, and partnered with the Division of Travel and Tourism for inclusion in special travel sections focused on Ohio destinations in *Midwest Living*, and AAA’s *Michigan Living* and *Home and Away* magazines distributed throughout the Midwest. Additional exposure in travel publications included advertisements in *Pittsburgh Magazine*, *Over the Back Fence* magazine, and Ohio Electric Cooperatives’ *Country Living* magazine. Ads were also placed in publications targeted to campers, including *Woodall’s Campground Directory*, *Ohio Camper*, 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 was again redesigned with an appealing new look, expanded content, and improved navigation to enhance its effectiveness as a marketing, promotional and informational tool. The re-design is compliant with web design standards provided by the State of Ohio’s Department of Information Technology to maintain a consistent look across all state agencies.

The Internet continued to be an increasingly important component of the division’s marketing mix, and a primary vehicle for public outreach campaigns, including “Get Fit Naturally” and “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. One issue of “E-News from Ohio State Parks” was sent to 14,900 subscribers. The electronic newsletter highlights special offers and discounts, new programs and recreational offerings, and upcoming events in the parks.

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 fourth 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.

Other promotional programs that were continued include 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



Re-designed website



Maumee Bay Monarch program

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.

Special promotional programs offered by the resort lodge concessionaires included Xanterra Parks & Resort's "Stays for As" program, offering discounts of \$10 on overnight stays at seven resort lodges for each "A" on a student report card, and Delaware North's special discounts during the month of November for active duty military personnel booking reservations at Geneva Lodge.

OTHER PUBLICITY

Each of the Ohio State Park golf courses received favorable ratings in *Golf Digest's* annual "Places to Play" list. Hueston Woods received a rating of 4.5 stars (out of a possible 5); Deer Creek and Maumee Bay both received 4-star ratings; Punderson received a 3.5-star rating; and Salt Fork and Shawnee each received 3-star ratings.

Alum Creek's dog park was selected as one of two Ohio stops for the Milk Bone brand 100th anniversary tour of dog friendly facilities across the U.S. The tour event included promotional giveaways, and a contest for pet owners.

Paint Creek's bridle trails were featured in the *Paint Horse Journal's* "Great Rides" series. John Bryan's mountain biking trails were declared the best in Ohio by the *Dirt Rag* magazine on-line mountain biking forum. The scenic terrain, interesting geology and history along Hocking Hills' Grandma Gatewood trail was the subject of an article in *Backpacker* magazine.

In observance of National Trails Day, the Columbus FOX news affiliate, Channel 8, filmed five two-minute news segments at Hocking Hills that included interviews with staff regarding hiking trails and hiking safety, a general park overview, and the Explore the Outdoors program. Geneva's lodge, park facilities and special events were featured in a five-minute segment on the "That's Life" daytime TV program on the Cleveland FOX affiliate, Channel 8.

Hocking Hills was the subject of a travel writer's lengthy fall color travel article in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette's* Sunday Travel Section in September. Several recent state park improvements were highlighted in an early summer travel feature in the *Columbus Dispatch* Sunday Travel Section, including the Burr Oak Lodge renovations, Deer Creek lodge room remodeling, Geneva lodge heated outdoor pool, Malabar Farm songbird aviary, Van Buren butterfly garden and gazebo, Maumee Bay butterfly gazebo, Lake Hope hummingbird programs, Buck Creek disc golf course and additional state park disc golf courses, and WiFi installations at several state park campgrounds.

In addition to the *Columbus Dispatch*, Lake Hope's handfeeding hummingbirds program was featured in *Birds and Blooms* magazine and *Country Living* magazine, and was highlighted in the summer "Discover Ohio" news release by the ODOD Division of Travel and Tourism.

An enthusiastic review of Beaver Creek was featured in a travel writer's column on the *ColumbusAlive* website. Salt Fork Resort was featured in a review of recommended New Year's holiday packages on the *wejustgotback.com* travel website.

In September, "HAM" amateur radio operators around the state designated "Ohio State Parks on the Air" day, and broadcasted from more than 40 temporary radio stations established in various state parks.

Dozens of participants in the "Longest Walk 2," a five-month, cross-country trek to raise awareness for environmental issues and protection of native American spiritual and cultural sites, camped at John Bryan for several days while walking through the area on the 3,600-mile route.

As part of the division's ongoing partnership with the ODOD Division of Travel and Tourism, visits to state parks in general, as well as individual parks and specific park events, were promoted through various media. For example, in October, Mt. Gilead's annual apple butter festival was the subject of Travel and Tourism's monthly "Discover Ohio" travel segment on the Columbus NBC television station, WCMH TV-4. Fall events along with fall foliage viewing at various state parks were promoted on Travel and Tourism's Autumn Adventures website feature, as well as the annual ODNR fall color campaign. Ohio State Parks gift cards were promoted for holiday gift giving on Travel and Tourism's multimedia "Holiday Highlights" news release.

Customer Service - Surveys

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



CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY

Customer satisfaction surveys were conducted for the 17th 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 unacceptable (1). A total of 9,982 surveys were returned, with 92.53 percent of respondents rating their overall visit as excellent or good. (See Table 1, 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, 66 percent were repeat visitors to a specific state park, 79 percent had visited other state parks, 83 percent would return to that specific state park, and 80 percent would visit other state parks. In addition, 59 percent of respondents were between 31 and 60 years of age, 45 percent had one or more children, 87 percent were in groups of two or more people, 70 percent stayed more than one night on their visit, and 43 percent visited one to three times per year, while 44 percent visited more than four times.

TABLE 1: OVERALL AVERAGE RATINGS FOR FACILITY AREAS

Facility Area	2008	2007
Campground Operation	4.408	4.375
Resort Lodge Operation	4.448	4.352
Cottage Operation	4.316	4.377
Getaway Rentals	4.440	4.427
Golf Course	4.700	4.704
Beaches	4.047	4.078
Boating Facilities	4.354	4.344
Trails	4.108	4.236
Picnic Areas	4.318	4.288
Visitor/Nature Centers	4.489	4.518

TABLE 2: SERVICE EXCELLENCE AWARD RECIPIENTS

Facility	Park	Average Rating
Picnic Areas	Lake Milton	4.667
Beach	Lake Milton	4.703
Lake/Boating Facilities	Rocky Fork	4.365
Trails	West Branch	4.436
Visitor/Nature Center	Maumee Bay	4.591
Cottages	Lake Hope	4.455
Golf Course	Deer Creek	4.819
Campground	West Branch	4.714
Resort Lodge	Mohican	4.538

Customer Service - Partnerships

Our parks play an important role in the community that is enhanced through a variety of partnerships. Thanks to the generosity of friends groups, volunteers and partners, we can reach out together, and expand our positive impact.



Paddle Quest

FRIENDS GROUPS AND SUPPORT GROUPS

A total of 50 friends' groups were active in the parks, and continued to provide a variety of services such as hosting tours, assisting with special events, leading fundraising drives and securing grant money, in addition to high quality park improvement projects. Improvement projects funded by friends and community support groups include:

- Amphitheater renovation at Caesar Creek campground
- Butterfly garden at Hocking Hills
- Dog park at Lake Alma
- Pioneer village expansion at Mohican
- Pioneer village renovation at Beaver Creek
- Playground equipment at Harrison Lake, Lake Loramie, Lake Milton and Portage Lakes
- Rope rescue equipment and automated external defibrillator (AED) at Hocking Hills
- Shelterhouses at Deer Creek and Salt Fork
- Trail renovations and expansion at Paint Creek, Punderson and several other parks
- Trail signage at Strouds Run
- Walking bridge over the spillway at Guilford Lake

In its fifth year, the Friends for the Preservation of Ohio State Parks (FPOSP), the non-profit advocacy and umbrella organization for the individual state park friends' groups, sponsored its fourth annual set of two statewide meetings at which individual park friends groups received training in fundraising, managing a nonprofit, and other relevant topics. The group continued to expand its website, www.fposp.org, in order to enhance communications with member groups.

The FPOSP served in a leadership role in 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.

In its third year, the Ohio State Parks Legacy Foundation announced its second series of grant awards at the FPOSP's spring symposium at Mohican. The grants went to Findley for development of a disc golf course, and to Harrison Lake for construction of a playground.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

In the 26th year of the Ohio State Parks Volunteer Program, some 7,000 volunteers of all ages contributed about 350,000 hours of service to help improve their local state parks. Almost 300 volunteers attended the statewide campout at East Harbor and enjoyed a perch dinner courtesy of the Friends of East Harbor as part of the division's annual "thank you" to volunteers for their service.

The Volunteer Park-of-the-Year Award was presented to Paint Creek for its highly productive, long-time volunteer program. Over the years, the Paint Creek volunteers have raised funds and assisted with construction of a shelter house, nature center and playground. They recently enhanced these facilities with a new deck on the nature center, and an enclosure for the shelterhouse. The Paint Creek volunteers have also maintained a long tradition of outstanding landscaping and beautification projects, and have historically assisted with special events at the park and within the region.

CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS

Ohio State Parks partnered with nationwide outdoor retailer, Gander Mountain, and the Division of Watercraft to offer the “PaddleQuest” series of boating events promoting canoeing and kayaking. Ten PaddleQuest events were held between May and September at nine different parks, including Burr Oak, Deer Creek, Geneva, Hueston Woods, Maumee Bay, Mohican, Punderson, Salt Fork and Shawnee. Boaters were encouraged to bring their own boat and equipment, or could rent boats at park marinas where available.

In addition to producing 400,000 copies of the Ohio State Parks Welcome Kit free of charge to the division, the partnership with Government Solutions Group (GSG) yielded cash donations for the division. Through GSG’s “20 Percent for Parks” program, each of the eight state park systems participating in the Welcome Kit initiative was eligible to receive a share of 20 percent of GSG’s net sponsorship proceeds from distribution of the Welcome Kits; Ohio received \$1,018. In addition, the division received a donation of \$1,776 for purchasing and planting trees in the parks, courtesy of one of the Welcome Kit corporate sponsors, Odwalla Inc. A total of 98 high quality trees were planted at Alum Creek, Delaware and Mt. Gilead through the program. The amount of the Odwalla donation was determined through a national contest announced in each participating state’s version of the Welcome Kit, where park visitors were invited to log onto Odwalla’s website and vote for their favorite participating state park system.

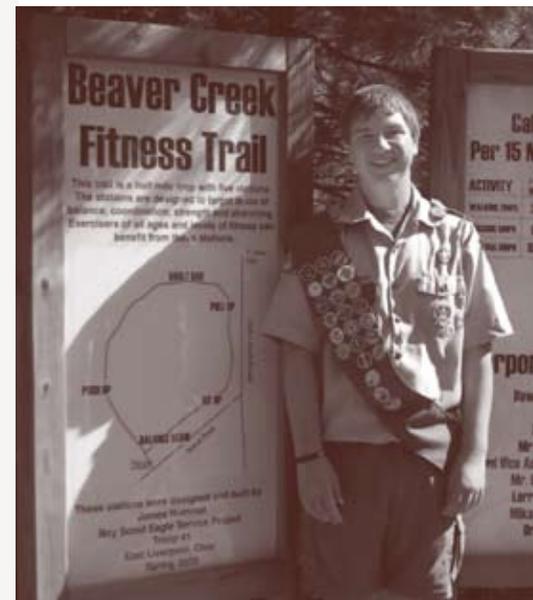
Fresh Encounter, Inc., the management company for Community Markets grocery store chains, partnered with the Ohio State Parks Legacy Foundation to donate \$.05 each time a grocery store customer uses a reusable grocery bag purchased at one of the chain’s 31 stores.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Mohican collaborated with the Loudonville-Mohican Convention and Visitors’ Bureau, as well as a local business, Hochstetler Milling, to construct a self-serve visitor information center at the park.

Several scouting projects have provided valuable and satisfying experiences for local youth, as well as park improvements and exciting new recreational facilities for park visitors. At Punderson, eagle scouts constructed a kayak/sailboat dock at the marina; installed benches and landscaping at the tennis courts; and developed a quarter-mile, self-guided nature trail with interpretive signage. At Beaver Creek, Eagle Scout James Hummel and East Liverpool Boy Scout Troop 41 collected donations and materials, and built a half-mile, five-station fitness trail conveniently located near the park’s soccer fields. At Lake Loramie, Eagle Scout Nicholas Fahrig and Troop #167 from Kettering built sturdy benches and trash/recycling bins adjacent to a mini golf course completed in 2007 by another scouting group. Eagle scout projects completed at Maumee Bay’s nature center promise better bird watching, with installation of a bird feeder sound system and a convenient field guide/binocular stand, as well as bird netting outside the windows to prevent birds from striking the glass and injuring themselves. Dillon hosted a week-long “rite of passage” day camp event for the Heart of Ohio Girl Scout Council, featuring instruction in canoeing, archery, fishing, and identifying edible and medicinal plants.

For the seventh year, Cowan Lake hosted the annual “Fishing Has No Boundaries” event, in partnership with the Cincinnati Chapter of Fishing Has No Boundaries, the Clinton County Convention and Visitors Bureau, Gander Mountain, and local businesses and individuals who provided prizes and refreshments. More than 150 children and adults with disabilities participated, along with their volunteer companions.



Beaver Creek Fitness Trail

Buck Creek hosted more than three dozen youngsters participating in Summerbridge Dayton, an academic enrichment program offered by Wright State University and Dayton Public Schools for at-risk middle school students that emphasizes culture, art, and a healthy active lifestyle. Buck Creek also hosted the annual summer camp for Ohio's Youth Empowerment Program, which helps build leadership skills and positive life experiences for kids who are homeless or in transition in foster care.

At East Fork, improvements were made to the Matt Maupin Welcome Pavilion, initially constructed in 2007 in honor of Sgt. Matt Maupin, a frequent park visitor who was captured and killed in Iraq. Volunteers provided labor and materials to construct a fireplace, install electrical fixtures and wiring, and complete the landscaping. In July, the park hosted a fundraising motorcycle ride in honor of Sgt. Maupin, with proceeds benefiting the "Yellow Ribbon Support Center" which supports military personnel and was started by Matt's parents. More than 1,900 cyclists participated in the ride.

For the fourth year, Ohio State Parks and the Ohio Mountain Bike Championship (OMBC) Series presented Get Fit Naturally events at 12 parks. More than 1,400 mountain bikers of all ages, including dozens of children, participated in the OMBC race and safety instruction events.

At Shawnee, new interpretive signs for a park nature trail were developed in partnership with the Shawnee Nature Club and a \$3,000 grant from the Scioto Foundation.

INTER-AGENCY PARTNERSHIPS

The Mohican region continued and expanded its partnership with Mansfield Correctional Institute (MANCI) which provides a variety of work projects for inmates, resulting in repaired and refurbished equipment for several parks around the state. Through the MANCI partnership, several pieces of Malabar Farm's agricultural equipment were repaired; a total of eight tractors were repaired for parks outside the region, including Lake Milton, John Bryan, Grand Lake St. Marys, West Branch and Dillon; and four pontoon boats were refurbished for Dillon and Alum Creek, at a total combined cost savings of more than \$90,000. When the program was initiated in 2005, the focus was primarily the farm operation at Malabar Farm, with inmates providing assistance with animal husbandry, planting crops and baling hay, installing fencing, repairing farm equipment and producing maple syrup. Cost savings realized through this mutually beneficial program since its inception are estimated at \$500,000.

To promote safe, water-based recreation for persons with disabilities, Rocky Fork hosted Recreation Accessibility Day (RAD) in September with several partners, including the Water Safety Council of Southern Ohio, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and a local advocacy group, J.U.M.P.

As part of the nationwide observances of the 75th anniversary of the Civilian Conservation Corps, the division provided information and historic photographs of Ohio's African American CCC camp near present day Shawnee State Park, for inclusion in a special exhibit at Grand Canyon National Park.



Tractor refurbished by MANCI.

Customer Service - Visitor Safety and Protective Services

Of the 70,098 visitor contacts by commissioned law enforcement personnel, 35 percent were visitor assists. Of the visitor contacts for law enforcement actions, 89 percent 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 \$25,207 grant from the Division of Watercraft, matched with \$8,403 from the parks, assisted with lake patrols on the waters of Lake Milton, West Branch, and Mosquito Lake.

The Drug/DUI account received \$ 19,241.04 in fines resulting from O.R.C. Title 4511.19, Operating under the influence and O.R.C. Title 2925, Drug abuse. These fines provided \$428 toward the purchase of law enforcement equipment.

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 50 instances in which park officers were required to respond to resistance while performing law enforcement duties. Sixty-seven 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)

TABLE 1: PROTECTIVE SERVICES

Enforcement Activity	2008	2007	2006
Visitor Assists	24,364	28,130	30,513
Warnings (written or verbal)	40,717	45,360	48,848
Misdemeanor Citations/Arrests	4,803	6,050	6,070
Felony Arrest	214	183	204
Outside Agency Assists	402	564	775
Property Stolen	\$172,040	\$412,275	\$177,456
Vandalism	\$9,259	\$9,676	\$121,297
Investigations	2,596	3,893	4,161

TABLE 2: TYPE OF RESPONSE TO RESISTANCE USED

Unholster Weapon	30
Bodily Force	5
Chemical Agent	1
Vehicle Pursuit	13
Injury to Officer	0
Road Block	0
Display Shotgun	6
Suspect Injury	1
Baton	0
Canine	0
CEW	3
Unholster CEW	16
Patrol Rifle	0

Visitor Occasions

Visitor occasions for both day use and overnight stays declined slightly, overall. A rainy June put a damper on camping, but visitation rebounded in the late summer and fall with large crowds attending special events. Getaway rentals and cottage rentals remained strong, continuing an upward trend in occupancy of these popular overnight options.

State Park	2008 Total Visitor Occasions
Adams Lake	175,929
Alum Creek	2,394,392
AW Marion	436,693
Barkcamp	223,582
Beaver Creek	286,037
Blue Rock	159,088
Buck Creek	335,165
Buckeye Lake	360,013
Burr Oak	394,497
Caesar Creek	2,697,383
Cleveland Lakefront	7,063,125
Cowan Lake	1,804,162
Deer Creek	928,888
Delaware	507,170
Dillon	750,055
East Fork	1,066,492
East Harbor	1,414,858
Findley	620,003
Forked Run	177,922
Geneva	872,552
Grand Lake St Marys	737,145
Great Seal	13,817
Guilford Lake	150,262
Harrison Lake	302,263
Headlands Beach	2,157,724
Hocking Hills	2,880,750
Hueston Woods	2,862,370
Independence Dam	62,690
Indian Lake	1,832,958
Jackson Lake	39,904
Jefferson Lake	112,483
John Bryan	243,632
Kiser Lake	473,968
Lake Alma	117,991

State Park	2008 Total Visitor Occasions
Lake Erie Islands	761,159
Lake Hope	833,836
Lake Logan	210,638
Lake Loramie	525,068
Lake Milton	688,590
Lake White	26,325
Little Miami	288,859
Madison Lake	149,276
Malabar Farm	311,037
Marblehead Lighthouse	1,152,102
Mary Jane Thurston	153,960
Maumee Bay	1,054,244
Mohican	508,766
Mosquito Lake	1,792,903
Mt Gilead	142,933
Muskingum River Parkway	260,603
Nelson Ledges	35,235
Paint Creek	489,055
Pike Lake	121,021
Portage Lakes	1,019,347
Punderson	718,551
Pymatuning	387,582
Quail Hollow	264,875
Rocky Fork	723,793
Salt Fork	1,127,944
Scioto Trail	33,849
Shawnee	249,079
Stonelick	343,250
Strouds Run	616,688
Sycamore	223,522
Tar Hollow	128,667
Tinkers Creek	29,155
Van Buren	105,422
West Branch	468,179
Wolf Run	64,078

TOTAL

50,665,554

Resource Management

Park staff teamed up with volunteers, community groups and park visitors to protect and enhance our natural park environments, conserve energy and reduce our carbon footprint, and plan wisely for the future of our precious natural resources.



Volunteer park clean-up

LAND TRANSACTIONS

Land purchases, sales, easements and trade agreements help to 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. For example, the requests of seven adjacent landowners were satisfied through the sale of surplus property at three state parks. These sales involved .5721 acres of surplus property, and were sold for a total of \$21,950.

A 5.842 acre parcel was donated to Guilford Lake by a neighboring landowner.

Crane Creek, which encompasses 41.66 acres along Lake Erie and is bordered on three sides by the Magee Marsh Wildlife Area, was transferred in its entirety to the Division of Wildlife. At Hueston Woods, the Oxford Museum Association's leasehold was expanded to accommodate relocation of an historic structure.

WETLAND PROJECTS

At Grand Lake St. Marys, 900 feet of shoreline was stabilized to protect wetlands located at the Anderson area on the north central portion of the lake. A shoreline stabilization project was completed at Buckeye Lake to protect a wetland located around Onion Island. The wetland had been created with dredge sediment in a dredge material relocation area.

With the help of volunteers, 200 feet of plank style boardwalk trail was developed in a wetland on the north side of Guilford Lake. At Quail Hollow, volunteers helped build 50 feet of plank style boardwalk in wetlands along the Peat Bog Trail.

At Middle Bass Island, existing wetlands were enhanced and aquatic vegetative beds were prepared for upcoming plantings. Environmental covenants were prepared for other wetland areas, and a vernal pool was constructed as part of the marina rehabilitation project. As part of the mitigation for the redevelopment of the Middle Bass Island marina, wetlands at Fox Marsh on North Bass Island were improved by the spraying of phragmites by the Division of Wildlife, and submerged vegetative beds under the marina docks were prepared for planting with a variety of wetland species.

Wetland determinations were conducted at Indian Lake, Lake Loramie, Grand Lake St. Marys, Portage Lakes and Buckeye Lake 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 375,000 cubic yards of sediment were dredged from Ohio State Park waterways, including the Muskingum River Parkway, Buckeye Lake, Grand Lake St. Marys, Indian Lake, Lake Loramie, Rocky Fork, Delaware Marina, Geneva Marina and the Maumee River at Independence Dam. At Cleveland Lakefront's Wildwood Marina, sand bars were removed from the entrance channel.

The nuisance aquatic vegetation harvesting program provided safe access for boaters into waterways otherwise choked with vegetation and not navigable. Approximately 5,000 tons of nuisance weeds were removed from 13 state park waterways.

WATER QUALITY ISSUES

At Salt Fork, work was completed on construction of a waterline connecting the park to the local public water system, in cooperation with the Guernsey County Water Department and Ohio EPA. Elevated levels of disinfection byproducts, caused when disinfectants used to treat drinking water react with organic substances, necessitated the abandonment of the park's own water treatment plant for water obtained from Salt Fork Lake.

At South Bass Island, work was completed on a new water distribution system adjacent to the Oak Point dock and picnic access. This will allow the facility located at Oak Point to tie into the municipal system and cease to independently provide water.

Implementation of Grand Lake St. Marys' Watershed Action Plan began with shoreline protection projects at the Anderson area. Other elements of the plan include additional shoreline stabilization, increased dredging, educational programs and preservation of natural areas and green space in the watershed.

BEACHES

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. Thirty-one advisories were issued at 22 of 65 inland state park beaches and 78 advisories were issued at 7 of the 12 Lake Erie beaches in state parks. Many of these advisories were single-day postings, although longer postings occurred at Lake Alma and Jackson Lake where advisories continued for 21 days at each location.

In cooperation with the U.S. Geological Survey, Cleveland Lakefront's Edgewater Beach served as a pilot site for a new water quality forecasting system, "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.

East Harbor initiated the first phase of a project to control erosion at the south end of the public swimming beach on Lake Erie. The park received a \$25,000 NOAA grant through the Office of Coastal Management to conduct an evaluation of the beach erosion issues.

RECREATIONAL TRAILS

Two bridges along the Little Miami Scenic Trail were repaired after it was determined their foundations were undermined. The bridges were closed temporarily, inspected, repaired and re-opened within the season.

Recreational Trail Users



Lake Hope assisted the Moonville Rail Trail Association with its efforts to reclaim an abandoned railroad bed to provide 10 miles of multi-use trail adjacent to the park.

At Mohican, work was completed on the first leg of a multi-use trail linking Mohican State Park, Mohican Memorial State Forest, and Malabar Farm. The trail connects forest lands, various Mohican park areas including the Mohican Resort Lodge and Conference Center, and the Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District's Pleasant Hill Lake.

At East Fork, work commenced on development of a Williamsburg to Batavia trail corridor with the paving of an access road and staging area.

At East Harbor, work was completed on the first section of paved multi-use trail connecting the campground to the beach. The trail project was funded through the Recreational Trails Grant Program.

BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

Bald eagles nested in a portion of Pymatuning's campground, prompting temporary closure of some campsites until the conclusion of the nesting season. At Portage Lakes, local volunteers erected purple martin houses and feeding stations. A large, donated bat house was installed at Deer Creek, and several bluebird boxes were installed at A.W. Marion and Madison Lake.

At Lake Loramie, a bass Spawning Habitat Improvement Project (SHIP) was completed with assistance from the Ohio Bass Federation's Ohio Valley Bass Masters, the Shelby County Bass Masters, and the Division of Wildlife. The project entailed placement of 100 nest boxes around the lake to provide sediment-free gravel beds for spawning largemouth bass. An additional benefit of the partnership project was a "bass school" hands-on fishing and conservation education program, sponsored by the Division of Wildlife for young anglers ages 6 to 18.

At East Fork, work continued on a quail habitat project, in cooperation with Quail Forever, to provide corridors linking previously established quail habitat areas. The park also worked with the National Wild Turkey Federation and the Division of Wildlife to expand turkey habitat at East Fork. At Sycamore, more than 100 pheasants and quail were released into the park through a partnership with Parker's Pheasant Farm.

At Hocking Hills, a "Hands on Habitats" habitat restoration project was implemented in partnership with the divisions of Wildlife and Forestry to restore native habitat along the gorge at Old Man's Cave, as well as reduce mowing costs.

At Cleveland Lakefront's Wildwood park area, volunteers were invited to assist with an invasive plant pull event held in collaboration with the Cuyahoga County Soil and Water Conservation District. At Shawnee, park staff and volunteers removed garlic mustard, privet and barberry along park trails.

As part of the renovation project at the Middle Bass Island marina, measures were taken to prevent potential disruption of the Lake Erie water snake, a federally protected species that inhabits the area.

During a Heritage Program botanical hike held at Shawnee in cooperation with the Division of Natural Areas and Preserves, botanists found populations of rare species, including ragged fringed orchid, along with purple wood sedge and southern black haw, which are listed as threatened and potentially threatened species, respectively.

Research projects included plant inventories on North Bass Island and Kelleys Island along with cave mapping on the Lake Erie Islands conducted by the Division of Natural Areas and Preserves; studies of microorganisms in Lake Hope conducted by Ohio University; and studies of leaf beetles at Shawnee by the Smithsonian Institution. At Hueston Woods, research on amphibians in the golf course ponds was conducted through a collaborative project between the U.S. Golf Association, National Fish and Wildlife Service, and Miami University.

Cleveland Lakefront joined a partnership with 11 regional conservation organizations to develop the Dike 14 Environmental Education Collaborative at an 88-acre wetland area adjacent to Cleveland Lakefront's Gordon Park area. The ecologically diverse wetland has evolved from a former dredge disposal site, and was recently designated as an important bird habitat by Audubon Ohio. The education collaborative seeks to protect the area and provide on-site environmental education programs.



Amphibian research



Electric car on loan to the Mohican region.

SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES AND GREEN INITIATIVES

A new “Carry In Carry Out” program was introduced at 22 state parks 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 and trailheads. Some immediate benefits of the program include elimination of the smell, mess and eyesore created by dumpsters and other trash containers; reduction of wildlife’s dependency on trash as a food source; and increased visitor safety by reducing the number of bees, wasps and other pests commonly associated with trash containers. In the long term, encouraging park visitors to bring reusable containers and recycle as much as possible will ultimately provide an additional benefit of reducing the amount of trash that reaches landfills. The annual cost savings from reduced trash collection in remote areas of parks is estimated at \$35,000, in addition to freeing up park staff to focus their effort and attention on other important projects.

Community recycling drop-off centers were established at Deer Creek, Indian Lake and John Bryan through partnerships between the parks and their respective local solid waste management districts, which provided funding for setting up the recycling areas. Barkcamp’s in-house industries produced and distributed recycling barrels to the parks to promote recycling by park visitors and staff.

Each park region adopted green technologies and implemented operational measures to reduce energy consumption. Throughout the park system, several hundred conventional incandescent light bulbs were replaced with energy efficient compact fluorescent bulbs in office buildings, maintenance facilities, and guest facilities, such as cottages. A number of parks placed motion detectors on light fixtures in restrooms, and installed programmable thermostats in office buildings. All park offices adopted policies of turning off unnecessary lights and appliances, along with powering down computers overnight. Several park regions consolidated administrative and maintenance staffs in the regional office during the off-season, and winterized the vacated park offices and maintenance facilities to save on utility costs.

East Harbor, Pymatuning and the Lake Erie Islands parks began using bio-diesel in off-road service vehicles, and Malabar Farm and Maumee Bay continued to fuel service vehicles with bio-diesel. Buckeye Lake and Muskingum River Parkway established a program with local businesses and Hocking College to research the potential for manufacturing bio-diesel in the parks. Buck Creek initiated a pilot program to test the usage of biodegradable vegetable-based lubricants for its lawn mowers and other maintenance vehicles. At Mohican, administrative and maintenance staff piloted use of a ZENN electric car in the campground.

For the second year, Lake Hope observed “No Heat/No Cool Month” in May and September by turning off the heating and air conditioning units in the parks’ administrative offices and maintenance facilities, and inviting cottage guests to participate in the energy saving program. Energy-saving “on-demand” tank-less water heaters were installed in two of Hocking Hills’ vacation cottages, as well as Malabar Farm’s restroom facilities, and Burr Oak’s service center. Beaver Creek installed solar-heated “sun showers” in its primitive family and equestrian campgrounds for the convenience of campers.

Occupancy-sensing thermostats were placed in lodge guest rooms at Burr Oak, Mohican, Punderson and Shawnee, and in the lodge and cottages at Hueston Woods. At the Maumee Bay and Hueston Woods lodges, windows were fitted with solar films to help keep rooms cooler in the summer. Insulating liquid swimming pool covers were installed at Hueston Woods and Salt Fork to retain heat and minimize evaporation. All of the state park lodge food service operations discontinued use of Styrofoam cups and plates, and replaced disposable tableware with recycled content and biodegradable products.

MANAGEMENT OF NUISANCE SPECIES

Champaign, Clermont, Crawford, Darke, Licking, Preble, Shelby, Van Wert and Wayne 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 29, including East Fork, Hueston Woods, Kiser Lake, Lake Loramie, Stonelick and Sycamore. The division’s public information efforts continued with updates to managers, notices posted on the Ohio State Parks website, information provided to campers making reservations, and signs posted in the parks.

As part of the Ohio Department of Agriculture's EAB monitoring program, improved detection traps that do not require girdling of trees were placed on ash trees in 37 state parks in 16 park regions in eastern and southern Ohio. Nearly 7,500 of the triangular purple plastic traps were placed in state parks, forests, nature preserves and wildlife areas not yet quarantined for EAB. Van Buren was included in a promising pilot project to slow the spread of EAB by introducing three species of tiny parasitic wasps that interfere with EAB's reproduction.

Several parks cut down dozens of ash trees damaged or killed by EAB, including East Harbor, Maumee Bay, Harrison Lake, Mary Jane Thurston, Van Buren, and Independence Dam. At Maumee Bay, 60 infested ash trees cut at the campground area were made available to campers to use for firewood to be burned in the park.

The division continues 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. Through the ODA's ongoing gypsy moth management program, A.W. Marion and Tar Hollow were included in gypsy moth treatment areas where the goal is eradicating isolated populations to prevent their spread to uninfested areas.

Periodical cicadas hatched in large numbers at Shawnee. The 17-year cicadas caused inconvenience for some customers during the weeks they were active, but the park staff used the natural occurrence to educate park visitors about the cicadas' habits.

Parks continued to face challenges from the growing numbers of Canada geese and the mess and health hazard they create, especially at swimming beaches, marinas and golf courses. Goose control methods including noise makers, dogs, mylar taping, and early hunting seasons met with limited and temporary success, as the geese became acclimated to all of the harassment measures. The division initiated a collaborative project with the Division of Wildlife to explore other methods in 2009.

Muskrats caused damage to the golf course ponds at Hueston Woods, and were trapped and removed from Lake Alma to prevent damage to the dam. Beaver damaged 60 trees at Cleveland Lakefront's Wildwood Park, and a growing colony of beaver caused problems at Scioto Trail, although Lake Hope took advantage of its local beaver population by offering naturalist-led canoe excursions to observe the beaver in its natural habitat.

NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLANS

Natural resource management plans were completed and approved for the following 13 parks, bringing the total number of approved plans to 18: A.W. Marion, Beaver Creek, Deer Creek, Indian Lake, Lake Erie Islands (including Catawba, Kelleys, Middle Bass, North Bass and South Bass Islands), Maumee Bay (including Crane Creek), Nelson Kennedy Ledges, Punderson, Sycamore, Tinker's Creek, Van Buren, West Branch and Wolf Run. Natural resource management plans were initiated by a number of other parks, and several additional parks continued to develop their draft plans.

FLOODING AND STORM DAMAGE

An ice storm followed by heavy snowfall in early March impacted several parks around the state. Overnight guests were stranded at Punderson, and the park staff at Hocking Hills provided food and firewood for a group of 50 students who were stranded in the cottages and dining lodge. Maple syrup events at Malabar Farm and Hueston Woods were cancelled. The Lake Erie Islands region and all park areas in the Cleveland Lakefront region were closed for three days, and Headlands Beach remained closed for six days. There was extensive tree damage at Lake Loramie and Geneva. Several parks experienced power outages, and the loss of power at Quail Hollow damaged the septic system at the Manor House. Subsequent flooding swept away a walk ramp connected to docks on the Ohio River at Shawnee. At East Fork, flooding closed several boat ramps for nearly a month.

The month of June was the seventh wettest on record, with precipitation for the month an average of 2.5 inches above normal across the state. At Paint Creek, the sewage treatment plant was damaged during June floods, and several park areas were closed temporarily, including the marina, main beach, and a portion of the campground.



Storm damage repair



Birding group

In September, heavy winds in the wake of Hurricane Ike impacted dozens of state parks with extensive damage to trees, pervasive power outages and resulting impacts to water supply and wastewater treatment systems. Deer Creek, Hueston Woods, Mohican, Punderson and Salt Fork resort lodges, Buck Creek and Dillon cottages were all closed temporarily due to the loss of electricity and other essential services, resulting in lost revenue in addition to the parks' expenses for debris clean-up. Thirty-three Ohio counties encompassing 22 state parks were declared disaster areas as a result of the storm. The estimated total cost of emergency repairs, equipment and staff time for the storm recovery in the state parks was \$250,000.

SPECIAL DESIGNATIONS

Malabar Farm was recognized as a "Friend of Public Health" by the Mansfield/Ontario/Richland County Health Department for the environmental health benefits of the park's sustainable farming practices and alternative energy sources for the Visitor Education Center, as well as the public health benefits of the park's "Hike for Health" programs.

The Division of Wildlife's "Fish Ohio" program recognized Indian Lake as the best location for trophy saugeye, and named Buckeye Lake the third best saugeye lake. Portage Lakes was named top "Fish Ohio" area for largemouth bass. West Branch was recognized as the second best lake for catching trophy muskellunge. Indian Lake was listed third for catches of record yellow perch.

The division observed "Great Outdoors Month" in June per the official designation by Governor Strickland as part of a national initiative to celebrate our wealth of natural resources and outdoor recreation opportunities, and encourage citizens to enjoy the health benefits and quality of life contributions of an active outdoor lifestyle.

The Little Miami Scenic Trail was recognized as the second longest paved trail in the world by American Trails, a national, nonprofit organization that promotes trail use and development, and fosters cooperation among trail user groups.

The namesake of Findley State Park, Judge Guy B. Findley, was inducted into the ODNR Hall of Fame for his legacy of promoting a healthy forest and preserving and protecting natural resources on land that is now a state park for all to enjoy.

Malabar Farm became an "Ohio Proud" partner for meat, eggs and maple syrup with revenue totaling over \$16,000 for these products.

Professional Development

During the peak season, Ohio State Parks employed a workforce of 458 permanent and 1,000 less-than full-time employees. Within the workforce, there were 229 new hirings of permanent or seasonal employees, 47 reclassifications or promotions, 337 resignations and 19 retirements.

The division continued to consolidate and restructure its regional park operations for greater efficiency. As management positions were vacated and not refilled, the park operations were integrated. The number of park regions was reduced from 26 to 25 with the merger of the Harrison Lake and Maumee Bay regions.

The division's seasonal hiring process became more streamlined with the introduction of the department's web-based hiring site, which serves as an efficient recruitment tool. The site allows applicants to select the summer position(s), location and employment duration of their choice, and apply on-line. Managers can view the on-line applications, and select applicants to fill certain summer and college intern positions.

Employees gained the ability to monitor and update their benefit options and their dependents' benefits on-line with the introduction of the e-Benefits Self-Service module on the web-based Ohio Administrative Knowledge System (OAKS).



Park naturalists

Personnel

Numbers of permanent employees by general job categories are:

Administration	10
Professional and Technical	131
Clerical/Office Support	39
Skilled Craft	134
Protective Services	80
Operational Support	64
Total Permanent Employees	458

IN MEMORIAM

We are deeply saddened by the loss of our friends and coworkers, William Morrow II, Auto Mechanic at Deer Creek, who passed away on January 2; and Brenda Pellegrin, Cashier at Hueston Woods, who passed away on January 21.

Employee Development Programs

TRAINING

In compliance with the Governor's executive order requiring one hour of ethics training for all full time state employees, the division offered an ethics training session at the August All-Managers Meeting at central office headquarters. Ninety-five managers, supervisors and central office employees attended the session presented by the Ohio Ethics Commission (OEC). Field staff who did not attend the session were provided with a DVD and training manual produced by the OEC, along with instructions on how to conduct and document the training effort.

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

Thirty-one division employees participated in the ODNR Supervisors Training Program. The ten class curriculum was designed to strengthen supervisory skills in a civil service and collective bargaining environment. Division representatives from the Business and Human Resources groups served as instructors in their areas of expertise.

The Ohio Certified Public Manager Program (OCPM) was placed on temporary interruption by the Ohio Department of Administrative Services. Participating division employees who were far enough along in their cohort were permitted to finish and graduate, while employees who had just started the OCPM training process were invited to re-apply at a later date, and permitted to retain credit for the course work they had completed. Since its inception in 1998, 62 division employees have graduated from, or are currently enrolled in the OCPM program.

Three division management employees attended the first State Park Leadership School offered by the National Association of State Park Directors (NASPD). The two-year program consists of two intensive week-long sessions covering various aspects of state park operations, as well as decision making, change management, conflict resolution, entrepreneurial management and trends. Several directors of state park or natural resources agencies served as instructors for the NASPD program, held at Oglebay Resort in West Virginia.

The division adopted a workshop format for the annual clerical staff training. One representative from each park region attended the two clerical workshops offering training on a variety of human resources, business, payroll and OAKS topics. The regional representative was then responsible for sharing the information and material with the other clerical staff in the region.

A total of 125 division employees, including one or more maintenance representatives from each park region, attended training sessions regarding operation of the division's new bucket truck.

For the fourth year, front-line staff who provide direct service to customers were provided with customer service training at the beginning of the summer season as part of the division's hospitality management initiatives. One-day sessions were held at four locations around the state for 150 park employees. Participants received training in providing exceptional customer service and managing difficult situations.

Naturalist training included instruction by the Division of Watercraft for conducting hands-on programs regarding safe boat handling and water safety, as part of a partnership with Watercraft to help fund the parks' naturalist programs. Additional naturalist training topics included heritage interpretation and natural history interpretation, as well as public relations.

Training for all commissioned officers included the annual in-service training, fall firearms training, and Strategies and Tactics of Patrol Stops 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 and in media relations. All officers were also fitted for a respirator as part of Homeland Security requirements. Fall firearms training entailed shotgun qualification, various handgun shooting drills and live fire shooting scenarios that built on the active shooter training provided during the annual in-service training. The division again partnered with Hocking College by providing traffic stop instructors who trained students in basic peace officer classes at the Natural Resources Ranger Academy.

Commissioned officers also completed training recommended by the Ohio Peace Officers Training Commission on bridging the gap between law enforcement and victim advocates, death notification, and missing persons. Officers were also trained on DNA submission guidelines by the Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation.

The division's Internal Investigative Unit attended specialized training on investigating officer involved shootings. The three day course was presented by the Office of Investigative Services of the Ohio State Highway Patrol.

Commissioned officers participated in physical fitness assessments and annual testing conducted by the division's physical fitness specialists. A total of 59 officers participated in the annual testing, 26 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 24 of the 26 officers for whom the test was mandatory, and 31 of the 33 officers who took the test voluntarily.

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 13 teams comprised of 106 individuals were recognized during the program's tenth year. They are:

- Indian Lake Region Conestoga Cabin Team
- North Bass Island Vegetation Survey Team
- Kiser Lake Marina Renovation Team
- Lake Loramie Conestoga Cedar Cabin Team
- Buck Creek Region Cultural History Team
- Buck Creek Flower Team
- John Bryan Flower Team
- Buck Creek Handicapped Accessible Duck Blind Team
- Parks/Engineering Water & Wastewater Operations Team
- Buck Creek Volunteer-In-Parks Activity Team
- Team Buck Creek & South Construction Storm Team
- Buck Creek Outreach Team
- Buck Creek Region Water Systems Manual Team



The **Team of the Year Award** was presented to the Public Affairs Group Web Design Team for development of a fresh new look, more detailed content, and better navigation for the official Ohio State Parks website. Each member's unique set of skills and strengths were utilized in the process which resulted in a greatly improved website to promote the state park system and help customers plan their park visits.

EMPLOYEE OF THE QUARTER

In its sixteenth year, the Employee of the Quarter Award program recognized four employees each quarter for outstanding performance and service to the division. To date, 242 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

Frances Reau, Maumee Bay – Admin. Support
Diane Abele, Blue Rock – Maintenance
Joshua Gardner, Mohican – Law Enforcement
Brian Andrews, Findley - Management

Spring Quarter

Michelle Jenkins, South Construction– Admin. Support
Sandra Farmer, Dillon – Maintenance
Christopher Langford, Maumee Bay – Law Enforcement
Mark Lockhart, Rocky Fork – Management

Summer Quarter

Margaret Thompson, Hocking Hills – Admin. Support
Charles Burton, Buck Creek – Maintenance
Charles Wadley, Buckeye Lake – Law Enforcement
Nicholas Hall, Buck Creek – Management

Fall Quarter

Lori Marteney, Central Office – Admin. Support
Terry Trefz, Rocky Fork – Maintenance
Michael Yates, Alum Creek – Law Enforcement
Ina Brolis, East Harbor – Management

Professional Recognition

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

Three commissioned officers received the *Distinguished Service Award* for their outstanding service, commitment, and support, to the division's law enforcement program. **John Patrick**, a park officer at Caesar Creek, was presented the award for his contributions to the Ohio State Parks canine program. John is credited with developing the program and was the first canine handler for the division. After the tragedy at the World Trade Center on 9-11-2001, John and his canine partner Guese responded to the disaster area and assisted in the rescue and recovery efforts.

Robert Dorinsky, Law Enforcement Administrator for the division, was presented the award for his extraordinary dedication and exemplary leadership of the division's law enforcement program. For many years, Bob was responsible for making the division's law enforcement training program one of the most comprehensive in the state.

Dave Frank, assistant park manager at Cleveland Lakefront, was presented the award for his long standing work as a division instructor, training coordinator, and investigator. For several years, Dave served as the division's shooting investigation team coordinator and state-wide CPR training coordinator.



BILL PRICE AWARD

Brett Mitchell, park naturalist at Malabar Farm, was awarded the annual *Bill Price Award* for his exemplary skills as a cultural history interpreter, winning attitude and friendly, personable

manner. As a demonstration of his commitment to history and public service, Brett volunteered his personal time to conduct an exhaustive search that was instrumental in the recovery of stolen Civil War artifacts that belonged to the family collection of U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown.



SERVICE & STEWARDSHIP AWARD

Lake Loramie Park Manager **George Sholtis** received the *Service & Stewardship Award* for providing well-rounded leadership that enabled the park to make impressive accomplishments through partnerships with groups as diverse as the Lake Loramie Improvement Association and the Lake Loramie Artists' Cooperative.



PARKS LEADERSHIP AWARD

Business Group Manager **Ron Kus** received the peer-driven *Parks Leadership Award* for his sound fiscal management, knowledge and insight that have helped the division through challenging times and difficult issues. Ron has served the division for more than 36 years, and he is well respected and admired by the managers and staff through the division and all of ODNR.

CUTTING EDGE AWARD

The *Barkcamp Sign Shop* team received the *Cutting Edge Award* for their cost-effective, innovative, environmentally-friendly operation. The routed park entrance signs are carved in two-color plastic plywood made from recycled milk jugs, creating a very durable, low-maintenance, attractive and weatherproof product that costs 20 to 50 percent less than similar signs by private vendors.



The Ohio Parks and Recreation Association (OPRA) recognized Ohio State Parks Chief **Dan West** as *Professional of the Year* for providing effective leadership that has contributed to the division's success during difficult economic times.

DIVISION LIFESAVING AWARDS

Twenty-eight individuals were recognized for their participation in lifesaving actions of a distinguished nature. Eleven of the individuals were division employees, and the remaining seventeen were resort lodge employees, park visitors, or local police or fire personnel.

The Lifesaving Commendation Award was presented to the following employees whose actions saved or attempted to save the life of another:

Nick Fischbach, Park Manager, Punderson
Bill Dunlap, Parks Conserv. Coordinator, Beaver Creek
Doug Lyons, Park Manager, Guilford Lake
Ron Swope, Natural Resources Worker, Portage Lakes
Chris Langford, Park Officer, Maumee Bay

The Team Lifesaving Award was presented to two teams of employees, whose actions, working as a team, saved or attempted to save the life of another.

For preventing an attempted suicide:
Thomas Schaefer, Park Officer, Cleveland Lakefront
Steven Bartczak, Park Officer, Cleveland Lakefront

For an ice rescue incident:
Nigel Mills, Park Officer, Cleveland Lakefront
Robert Thuemling, Park Officer, Cleveland Lakefront
Ron Haines, Park Officer, Cleveland Lakefront
Jim Schneider, Park Officer, Cleveland Lakefront

Infrastructure Improvements



Burr Oak lodge

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 \$23.3 million.

NATUREWORKS - OHIO'S NATURAL INVESTMENT

In its 14th year, the NatureWorks program provided partial funding for a number of facility rehabilitation projects. Completed projects include upgrades of existing electrical service at the Indian Lake campground, renovations at the Burr Oak Lodge, and exterior work at the Hocking Hills Dining Lodge. Projects in progress include the Hocking Hills Dining Lodge renovations, Middle Bass Island marina renovation and expansion. Planning work continued on a potential project to connect Mosquito Lake's wastewater system to a county wastewater system.

At the Burr Oak Resort Lodge, construction work was completed on the installation of a new three-stop elevator, along with modifications to four guestrooms for handicapped accessibility. In addition, existing handrails and guardrail were replaced, a new fire alarm system was installed, the asphalt shingle roof was replaced, and repairs were made to structural column bases in the swimming pool area.

At Middle Bass Island, work was completed on the reconstruction of the marina basin, including relocation of the marina entrance and reshaping of the marina perimeter. Ongoing project work includes construction of a new two-lane boat launching ramp and construction of a water tower.

At Indian Lake, work was completed on replacement of water treatment plants that serve the campground and the Fox Island picnic area. At Mosquito Lake, it was determined after discussions with Trumbull County and the Ohio EPA that the park may connect its existing trailer waste dumping station to the county's regional wastewater system, pursuant to the proposed expansion of the county's plant.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Several renovation and improvement projects were undertaken using capital funding sources other than, or in addition to, NatureWorks. Design work continued on projects to improve boating facilities at Delaware, Hueston Woods and Paint Creek.

Significant progress was made on upgrades to underground fuel storage units (UST) to bring them into compliance with current regulations, and obtain a status of "No Further Action" for those sites where soil or groundwater contamination was discovered. In addition to addressing the USTs, parks have continued to make improvements to above-ground tanks that are not compliant with current regulation. Upgrades to UST systems serving marina facilities were accomplished at Buck Creek, Burr Oak, Cowan Lake, Deer Creek, Delaware, Rocky Fork and Salt Fork.



Silt fence installation at Middle Bass Island

At Kelleys Island, work was initiated to replace an existing wastewater treatment plant, including construction of a new chemical storage/lab/equipment building along with other system improvements. Final design and construction documents were compiled for upcoming water and wastewater system improvements at Harrison Lake, Hueston Woods, Indian Lake, Middle Bass Island, Nelson Kennedy Ledges and Punderson.

At Caesar Creek, work was completed on the North Pool project, which entailed rehabilitating the boat launch ramp, restroom and parking lot area. Other boating facility improvements include renovation of East Fork's campground and Reisinger Road boat launch ramps.

EXAMPLES OF NATUREWORKS/CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

The following summary is a sampling of projects under construction or design in 2008 with funding released for design and/or construction.

PARK	PROJECT	Funds Released
Beaver Creek	Preparations for future sanitary sewage service	\$ 80,000
Burr Oak	Wastewater system (design & construction)	\$ 100,000
Caesar Creek	Boat launch ramp renovation	\$ 578,750
Delaware	Marina professional engineering services	\$ 188,000
East Fork	Courtesy docks/dock anchorage piles	\$ 395,650
East Harbor	Shoreline stabilization study	\$ 56,000
Grand Lake St. Marys	Purchase of flowage easements/spillway	\$ 1,030,217
Grand Lake St. Marys	Shoreline erosion protection	\$ 601,000
Hocking Hills	Dining lodge renovations (boiler, exterior plaza)	\$ 53,440
Hueston Woods	Marina professional engineering services	\$ 164,564
Indian Lake	Excavator, dredging, shoreline protection	\$ 368,179
Indian Lake	Water treatment system	\$ 1,250,000
Kelleys Island	New treatment plant, wastewater system upgrades	\$ 1,662,500
Middle Bass Island	Marina redevelopment	\$ 6,004,571
Mohican	Lodge transformer replacement	\$ 124,690
Mosquito Lake	Wastewater collection system improvements	\$ 375,475
Muskingum River	Push boat for lock & dam maintenance	\$ 229,334
Paint Creek	Marina professional engineering services	\$ 176,411
Portage Lakes	Water well equipment	\$ 51,700
Salt Fork	Connection to regional water, new service lines	\$ 1,846,900
Tar Hollow	Resident camp beach improvements (design)	\$ 55,835
Various Parks	Water/wastewater design/construction documents	\$ 128,573
Various Parks	Upgrades to USTs at marina facilities	\$ 479,700
TOTAL		\$16,001,489

In addition to the above projects, a number of water and wastewater system improvements were made at 21 parks. 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 and installation of monitors, to replacement of pumps and lift station repairs, to complete system overhauls or connections to municipal water supplies. The total cost of the various water/wastewater projects was \$408,000.

A total of 70 work requests were submitted to the Division of Engineering for assistance with a variety of projects 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 lift stations water treatment plants, dams and bridges. The total estimated value of this assistance is more than \$500,000.

ROADWAY MAINTENANCE AND STRIPING PROGRAM

Major projects completed through the Cooperative Roadway Maintenance Program with ODOT included resurfacing and drainage work at Burr Oak and Shawnee, and resurfacing and drainage throughout the park at Geneva, including the initial segment of a new paved bike trail that will eventually be completed by the county. The second phase of paving was completed at Buck Creek. Punderson received striping in portions of the park, and Delaware and Hueston Woods both received crack sealing work. This fund also assisted with a bridge repair at Malabar Farm. Expenditures on these projects totaled \$5,312,970. Also through this program, a total of 1,195 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 \$30,161.

MISCELLANEOUS PARK CONSTRUCTION AND IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

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

PARK	PROJECT	COST
Burr Oak	Replace wall covering	\$ 24,700
Hueston Woods	Carpet/guestroom bath fixtures	\$ 127,600
	Water heater/washers & dryers/kitchen eqpt.	\$ 66,900
	Wireless Internet in cottages	\$ 10,400
Maumee Bay	Replace bedding in guestrooms	\$ 62,300
	Refinish hardwood floors/replace HVAC controls	\$ 67,100
	Outdoor patio/paint amphitheater & lodge exterior	\$ 91,800
Mohican	Guestroom TVs & bedding	\$ 131,400
	Repair roof/replace ceilings	\$ 63,000
	Purchase tractor	\$ 16,400
Punderson	Guestroom carpet & bedding	\$ 52,200
	Repair roof tile/upgrade public restroom	\$ 27,900
	Replace 7 cottage furnaces	\$ 19,955
Salt Fork	Replace bedding & mattresses	\$ 84,200
	Resurface tennis courts/replace decks	\$ 21,650
	Purchase walk-in freezer	\$ 12,300
	Repair cottage steps/sidewalks	\$ 24,000
Shawnee	Cottage siding staining/repairs	\$ 67,000
	Mattresses/PATC units fro guestrooms	\$ 35,800
	Hazardous tree removal	\$ 8,700
TOTAL		\$1,015,305

OTHER PROJECT DESIGN

Design work commenced on a new beach restroom and changing room with external showers at East Harbor.

A number of boating facility projects were under active design, with anticipated design completion or construction in 2009. Many of these projects are made possible through grant funding assistance from the Division of Watercraft. Design work was completed and construction work commenced on Buckeye Lake’s North Shore boat launch ramp, and Pymatuning’s Cabin Beach and Birches boat launch ramps. Design work continued on Cleveland Lakefront’s Gordon Boat Ramp renovation, and Mosquito Lake’s SR88 Launch Ramp. Design work continued on marina rehabilitation projects at Delaware, Hueston Woods and Paint Creek. Design work was initiated on improvements to dock facilities at Geneva, Kiser Lake, Lake Milton and Shawnee. Design work for boat launching facility renovations was initiated for several parks including Alum Creek, Grand Lake St. Marys, Harrison Lake, Lake Hope, Paint Creek, Portage Lakes and Rocky Fork.

DAM SAFETY

Emergency Preparedness Plans (EPPs) were prepared for 42 dams owned by the division. The EPPs outline 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 division owned dams.

IN-HOUSE CONSTRUCTION INITIATIVES

Statewide, more than 114 construction projects, including seven emergency projects, were completed with in-house labor and equipment. Special projects include in-house dam renovations at Punderson’s Pine Lake, electric hook-ups at the Burr Oak and Van Buren campgrounds, drainage improvements and construction of a patio at East Harbor’s camp store, and construction of an accessible path at Buckeye Lake. At Pymatuning and Hocking Hills, three cottages at each location were extensively remodeled. Former park residence buildings were removed at several parks. A total of 15 Romtec restrooms were constructed at 11 parks.

IN-HOUSE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

The in-house dock shops in the Portage Lakes region and the South Construction Crew continued to provide refurbished dock structures at considerable cost savings. The Portage Lakes dock team produced dock mains and more than 100 dock fingers for installation at four parks, including 50 dock fingers, 20 mains and three catwalks at Buck Creek; 49 dock fingers at Indian Lake; four dock fingers, two mains and a catwalk at Guilford Lake; and two dock fingers at Grand Lake St. Marys. The South Crew dock shop assisted with the Buck Creek project, and completed the first phase of the Deer Creek marina renovation with the installation of 50 rebuilt dock fingers and 25 walkway sections.



Paving at Geneva

The vinyl graphics shop at Dillon produced a total of 1,713 signs, 4,940 decals/stickers and 16 banners to provide uniform informational signs and markings identifying recreational offerings, overnight facilities and special events. Among the signs produced were 157 signs for the newly designated carry in/carry out areas; hunting blind locations and “hunting”/“no hunting” area identifiers; trail identifiers; “men’s” and “women’s” identifiers for restrooms; “getting greener” programs; and warning signs for electric fences, petroleum storage tanks and water/wastewater operations. Decals and stickers produced included the division arrowhead and ODNR cardinal logos; striping packages for law enforcement vehicles and watercraft; boundary markers; campsite reservation markings; dock numbers; pet site designations; Muskingum River Parkway lock passes; and “energy saving” stickers placed near thermostats in cottages.

In its second year of operation, Barkcamp’s routed sign shop produced a total of 50 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 1,110 picnic tables, 955 fire rings, 463 waist-high grills for use in the parks, along with 76,085 bundles of firewood for sales to park customers.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Construction of a new three-stop elevator in the Burr Oak Resort Lodge, originally built in 1967, was a major structural renovation to bring the facility into compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines. Additional access upgrades included modifications to four guest rooms and replacement of existing handrails and guardrail.

Launch ramp renovations at East Fork and Caesar Creek included construction of accessible boarding ramps, along with accessible parking spaces. As part of the marina redevelopment at Middle Bass Island, foundation work was undertaken for installation of accessible docks and ramps. In addition, a sidewalk was extended to the breakwater to provide improved access to the lake frontage. At Buckeye Lake, a paved trail was installed at the Fairfield Beach area to provide access from the parking area to the lakeshore. An accessible duck hunting blind was constructed at Buck Creek.

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

The division’s motor vehicle fleet remained relatively unchanged, with 597 vehicles in service. Across the fleet, the average vehicle is 9.8 years old, and has been driven 103,800 miles.

Of \$351,000 originally allocated for the purchase or replacement of vehicles during the year, \$71,000 was spent prior to the suspension of vehicle purchases as a departmental budget balancing measure. Vehicle acquisition was limited to the purchase of four new vehicles; replacement of an aerial bucket truck; several salvage vehicles purchased for a total of \$23,100; and several dump trucks purchased through an extension of the previous year’s dump truck contract.

Through a cooperative arrangement with the Department of Public Safety, the division acquired ten used State Highway Patrol cruisers on a two-year loan, at no cost. This allowed the division to salvage ten older, high mileage cruisers, resulting in a significant improvement to the patrol cruiser fleet.

The division’s rolling equipment fleet of 1,100 vehicles included 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.

Several parks utilized the equipment restoration services provided by the Mansfield Correctional Facility (MANCI) to have older tractors restored to near-new condition. Through the MANCI partnership, tractors were rebuilt for Dillon, Grand Lake St. Marys, John Bryan, Lake Milton and West Branch. In addition, a dump truck was repaired for Dillon, and a total of four pontoon boats were rebuilt for Alum Creek and Dillon. Agricultural equipment repaired for Malabar Farm included a chisel plow, disk, and cultamulcher, as well as three farm tour wagons.



Clearing and grading at Buck Creek

Fiscal Management



Ohio State Parks expended \$91.6 million in fiscal year 2008, including \$29.9 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). The GRF is providing 39.4 to 41.8 percent of funding, of which \$18.3 to \$19.4 million is earmarked for debt reduction.

In FY 08 and again in FY 09, the division's GRF was reduced from the original allocation. In FY 08, the GRF was reduced \$1,582,846. In FY 09, three reductions occurred resulting in a total reduction of \$5,766,600. The total amount of reductions for the biennium was \$7,349,446, or 9.2 percent of the original allocation.

The second largest source of operating funding is fees and charges generated by the state parks and deposited into Fund 5120. This fund accounts for approximately 32.6 to 34.5 percent of the total budget in FY 08 and FY 09. To offset the reductions in GRF, the division is planning to increase the appropriation authority in fund 5120 in the third quarter of FY 09. The planned increase is not reflected in the charts on page 32.

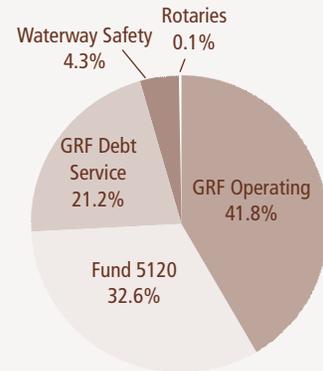
Approximately 4.3 to 4.7 percent of the budget is provided by the Waterway Safety Fund, which is designated for specific purposes. The balance of the funds received is obtained from miscellaneous rotary accounts.



Actual expenditures for FY 08 and the budgeted amount by fund for FY 09 are indicated in the following charts:

FUNDING

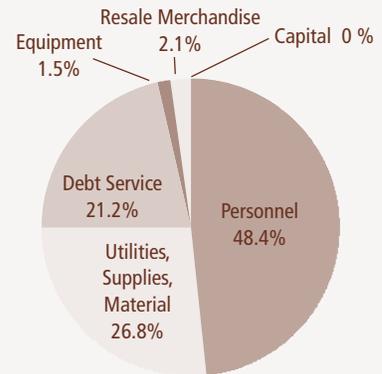
FUNDING SOURCE	FY '08 EXPENDED	FY '09 BUDGETED
GRF Operating	\$ 38,282,979 41.8%	\$ 34,108,241 39.4%
Fund 5120 Fees & Charges	\$ 29,885,203 32.6%	\$ 29,890,528 34.5%
GRF Debt Service	\$ 19,406,818 21.2%	\$ 18,316,200 21.2%
Waterway Safety	\$ 3,924,305 4.3%	\$ 4,062,452 4.7%
Rotaries	\$ 114,081 0.1%	\$ 199,406 0.2%
Total	\$ \$91,613,386	\$ 86,576,827



EXPENDITURES

An itemization of major expenditures in FY 08 to pay salaries, debt service, utility and maintenance costs, resale items, subsidy payments, operating capital and equipment purchases is as follows:

EXPENSES	FY '08 EXPENDED
Personnel	\$ 44,370,423 48.4%
Utilities/Supplies/Material	\$ 24,544,747 26.8%
Debt Service	\$ 19,406,818 21.2%
Equipment	\$ 1,334,920 1.5%
Resale Merchandise	\$ 1,920,041 2.1%
Capital	\$ 36,437 0%
TOTAL	\$91,613,386



REVENUE

Ohio State Parks generated \$32,525,408 in revenue, a 15.2 percent increase over 2007 revenue. In 2008, however, the division received a one time payment of \$5 million as a settlement payment for the Lake Hope dining lodge fire. In addition, a correction was made in 2008 for a 2007 deposit. The correction resulted in \$720,598 being added to fund 5120 in 2008 that was originally subtracted from 2007 revenue. When this one time payment and correction are factored out of the total, the revenue generated by the parks shows a decline of 7.0 percent. All revenue generated by state parks is deposited into Fund 5120.

The revenues received in calendar years 2008 and 2007 were as follows:

REVENUE CATEGORY	CY 2008	CY 2007	PERCENT CHANGE
Camping	\$ 11,125,357	\$ 11,232,748	-1.0 %
Lake Hope settlement*	\$ 5,000,000 *	0	100.0 %
Self-Operated Retail	\$ 3,700,589	\$ 4,087,193	-9.5 %
Cottage Rentals	\$ 3,142,745	\$ 2,941,529	6.8 %
Dock Permits	\$ 2,713,911	\$ 2,829,651	-4.1 %
Concession Agreements	\$ 2,313,973	\$ 2,759,243	-16.1 %
Golf Greens Fees	\$ 1,428,744	\$ 1,849,299	-22.7 %
State Agency Transfers	\$ 1,305,855	\$ 174,996	646.2 %
Miscellaneous	\$ 1,100,155	\$ 1,630,564	-32.5 %
Getaway Rentals	\$ 496,648	\$ 579,577	-14.3 %
Group Lodge Rentals	\$ 232,118	\$ 240,923	-3.7 %
Royalties & Easements	\$ 225,102	\$ 131,476	71.2 %
Grants	\$ 214,203	\$ 166,101	29.0 %
Donations	\$ 81,762	\$ 69,375	17.9 %
Sales Assets	\$ 65,256	\$ 21,701	200.7 %
Laundromats	\$ 47,271	\$ 49,704	-4.9 %
Pools & Lockers	\$ 29,829	\$ 33,946	-12.1 %
Duck Blinds	\$ 16,788	\$ 15,258	10.0 %
Fines & Penalties	\$ 5,700	\$ 7,938	-28.2 %
Land Rentals	\$ 0	\$ 48,641	-100.0 %
TOTAL	\$ 33,246,006	\$ 28,869,863	15.2 %
<i>*AMENDED TOTAL</i>	<i>\$ 27,525,407</i>	<i>\$29,590,461</i>	<i>-7.0 %</i>
	<i>Without Lake Hope settlement and with deposit correction</i>		

INVENTORY

The Ohio Administrative Knowledge System (OAKS), which consolidates business and human resources processes statewide, was expanded to include physical inventory. The inventory module of OAKS went live on July 1.

GIFT CARDS

Despite tough economic times, the Ohio State Parks gift cards continued to increase in popularity, with 410 gift cards with a combined value of \$38,752.00 sold over the holiday season, October to January. Over the same period last year, 393 cards with a combined value of \$34,132.50 were sold.

STATE PARKS LICENSE PLATE

In its fourth year, sales of the Ohio State Parks license plate increased ten percent to 1,161 plates sold, providing \$17,415 for state park interpretive and educational programs and displays.



Statistical Abstract

Ohio State Park System 2008

GENERAL PARK

# State Parks	74
Total Acreage	174,176 ¹
Acreage – Land	107,771
Acreage – Water	66,405
Miles of shoreline	1,030.88
% of Land that is Developed	21.2%
% of Shoreline that is Developed	26.8%
Visitor Occasions	50,665,554
# Buildings	2,649
# Water Systems	144
# Sewer Systems	146
# Restroom Buildings – Water borne	463
# Restroom Buildings – Pit privies	493
Miles of Road Patrolled	1,861.25
# Felonies	214
# Citations	4,803
# Visitor Assists	24,364
# Park Residences	75
# Dining Lodges/Restaurants	2

CAMPGROUNDS

# Campgrounds	87
# Family Campsites	9,230
# Full Service Sites	211
# Electric Sites	6,568
# Non-electric Sites	2,100
# General Group Areas	61
# No-fee, Non-group Primitive Sites	79
# Horse Camps	14
# Horse Camp Sites	351
# Showerhouses	115
# Amphitheaters	52
# Camp Store/Commissaries	44
# Campsites Rented	533,520
Campground Occupancy (244 nights)	24.2% ²

GETAWAY RENTALS

# Rent-A-Camp Sites	21
% Rent-A-Camp Occupancy (184 nights)	28.7%
# Rent-A-RV Sites	3
% Rent-A-RV Occupancy (184 nights)	49.6%
# Rent-A-Tepee Sites	2
% Rent-A-Tepee Occupancy (184 nights)	19.8%
# Rent-A-Yurt Sites	12
% Rent-A-Yurt Occupancy (184 nights)	55.7%
# Cabents	4
% Cabent Occupancy (184 nights)	40.2%
# Camper Cabins	41
% Camper Cabin Occupancy (184 nights)	66.7%
# Cedar Cabins	27
% Cedar Cabin Occupancy (184 nights)	63.8%
# Conestoga Cabins	22
% Conestoga Cabin Occupancy (184 nights)	47.5%

RESORT LODGES & CONCESSION COTTAGES

# Resort Lodges	9
# Resort Lodge Rooms	818
# Lodge Room Nights Rented	134,870
% Lodge Occupancy	45.2%
# Restaurants in Resort Lodges	9
# Concession Cottages	221

# Cottage Nights Rented	33,818
% Cottage Occupancy	41.9%

STATE OPERATED COTTAGES

# State Operated Cottages	297
# Cottage Nights Rented	42,810
% Cottage Occupancy	39.5%

GOLF COURSES

# Golf Courses	6
# Golf Rounds	119,651

BOAT RAMPS/MARINAS/DOCKS

# Boat Ramps	186
# Boater Occasions	6,545,332
# Marina / Boat Rental Operations	43
# Docks - Concession Operated	1,526
# Docks - State Operated	5,944
# Private Docks Licensed	16,051

BEACHES

# Swimming Beaches	78
# Swimming Occasions	4,276,119
# Beach Concessions	19

GROUP FACILITIES

# Overnight Group Facilities	3 ³
# Overnight Group Facility Users	18,651
# Beds in Group Facilities	309
# Day-use Group Lodges	13
# Day-use Group Lodge Users	113,752

VISITOR/NATURE CENTERS

# Visitor/Nature Centers	40
# Visitor/Nature Center Visitor Occasions	1,200,319

PICNIC AREAS

# Picnic Areas	464
# Picnic Area Visitor Occasions	7,768,379
# Picnic Shelters – Total	178
# Reservable Picnic Shelters	119

OTHER RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

# Swimming Pools	20
# Tennis Courts	16
# Basketball Courts	83
# Volleyball Courts	100
# Miniature Golf Courses	15
# Disc Golf Courses	10
# Playgrounds	186
# Parks with Bike Rental Operations	21
# Trails – Total	401
Total Miles of Trails	1,207.6
# Multi-Use Trails	151
# Hiking Only Trails	219
# Mountain Bike Only Trails	27
# Bridle Only Trails	23
# Parks with Snow Mobile Trails	9
# Parks with Cross Country Ski Trails	44
# Parks with Sledding Hills	38
# Shooting Ranges	5
# Archery Ranges	9

¹ Based on REALM's 2006 Land Inventory report.

² Includes Horse Camp Sites, and excludes 181 volunteer Camper Host sites.

³ Includes Lake Hope's Laurel Lodge, Pike Lake Group Lodge & Tar Hollow Res. Camp

2009 Goals



- Keep our successful customer service focus at the top of the list in all we do; continue to provide hospitality and skill development training to help staff provide excellent service during challenging times.
- Actively communicate with and involve staff at all levels as we continue to look at ways to reduce operating costs and increase revenues.
- 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, high-impact innovations to better serve the public.
- Build upon our efforts to promote connecting children and nature, getting fit naturally and nature tourism through our programs, services, public outreach and partnerships.
- Evaluate revenue producing operations; protect and enhance our core revenues, especially the lodges and cottages, to determine the best strategies for long-term sustainability.
- Collaborate with community and corporate partners, and continue to work closely with the division's volunteers and friends groups.
- Build on the recommendations and efforts of the State Park and Recreational Area Study Committee and the Ohio Natural Resources Stakeholders Group.
- Continue to strategically realign the park regions for greater efficiency with limited resources.
- Expand the use of technology to better facilitate the communication needs of field management and central office administration while reducing costs.
- Initiate the preliminary work on the division's next five-year (2011-2015) strategic plan.
- Share services and integrate resources with our internal partners to maintain and enhance public service.

