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Scoop du Jour, B2



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This trail behind a Brooklyn fire station on Memphis Avenue leads to potential wetland sites in the "Oxbow" area. People hiked the trail during an event Sept. 10 led by the city and the group Friends of Wetlands.

Group is promoting a cleaner watershed

By Ken Baka
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BROOKLYN — A healthier Cuyahoga River and Lake Erie.

That would be the result of work by advocates who want a healthy Big Creek and a healthy West Creek.

The latter are tributaries of the Cuyahoga. Given that each channels water that flows from roads and parking lots, the task is to find ways to hold and the filter that water before it flows to the river and the lake.

The group Friends of Big Creek is promoting public understanding of the challenge by sponsoring hiking tours of wetlands, such as that of West Creek, held at 6:30 p.m. Oct. 5 at West Creek Reservation, off of Ridgewood Drive, Parma, between Broadview and State roads.

The half-mile hike will lead to a wetland that West Creek Preservation Committee created before Cleveland Metroparks assumed management of West Creek Reservation in January 2006.

David Lincheck, of Parma, director of West Creek Preservation Committee, will lead the hike. Bob Gardin, project manager for Friends of Big Creek, will explain how wetlands filter water that runs following rains or melts and how wetlands make homes for animals and plants.

Friends of Big Creek helped launched this year's tours of wetlands. Next year, the group will sponsor tours not just of wetlands but of places that showcase the best methods to manage storm waters. One example is a retention



John Katko, of the group Friends of Wetlands, talks with hikers as they tour the "Oxbow" area of wetlands in Brooklyn.

basin near Coe Avenue and West 145th Street, one block south of Puritas Avenue, in the Bellaire-Puritas neighborhood of Cleveland. A hike there will be held at 6:30 p.m. Monday.

Gardin, of Cleveland, has been active in clean-water initiatives since the 1980s. He was president of the Cleveland Waterfront Coalition in 2003-04. Friends of Big Creek began the next year, with help from Cleveland Councilman Brian Cummins, Ward 15, and Jim White, of Cuyahoga River Remedial Action Plan.

Friends of Big Creek formed for two reasons:

- Extend the greenway and trail network of Cleveland Metroparks from the lower Big Creek valley through Brooklyn to Brook Park Road, the zoo and to the Towpath Trail on the west bank of Cuyahoga River.

With Cleveland Metroparks and the cities of Parma, Brooklyn and Cleveland, Friends of Big Creek recently released a plan to expand the Big Creek greenway through Brooklyn.

- Be good caretakers of the Big Creek watershed.

A watershed gathers and flows water to another body of

water. Big Creek drains nearly 38 square miles that comprises Parma, Parma Heights, Brook Park, Middleburg Heights, North Royalton, Cleveland, Brooklyn and Linndale. The nine-mile-long West Creek drains Parma, Seven Hills, Brooklyn Heights and Independence.



Beverly Welky, of Cleveland, leads a hike followed by Tom Wenderoth, of Cleveland, and others.



A hike such as this one will occur at 6:30 p.m. Oct. 5 to see a wetland created in West Creek Reservation, off of Ridgewood Drive, between Broadview and State roads, Parma.