

## Big Creek Watershed News & Notes

### Lower Big Creek Plan promotes future of Old Brooklyn's "hidden asset"

Building on work begun in 1999 by a consortium of government agencies, a partnership of public sector, non-profit, and community interests has recently completed the *Lower Big Creek Greenway Redevelopment and Restoration Plan*. This comprehensive master plan and land use strategy was produced by the Floyd Browne Group consulting firm (FBG). Funded with contributions from the Ohio & Erie Canal Association, Old Brooklyn Community Development Corporation (OBCDC), City of Cleveland, Cleveland Councilmen Brian Cummins and Kevin Kelley, and Cleveland Metroparks, the plan provides an overarching and realistic vision for the future of this heretofore ignored and underutilized community asset.

Dating to the late-1990s, a number of planning studies had been developed for the valley area between the Brooklyn-Brighton Bridge and the Jennings Road area. The most notable of these was the multi-phased *Lower Big Creek Study*, completed by the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA) in 2006 and undertaken at the direction of former Cleveland Councilwoman Merle Gordon.

The FBG study builds on the past efforts by blending the best concepts of the earlier studies with fresh ideas developed by the current master planning team to create a new vision for a Valley Greenway. The creation of this vision incorporates detailed future land use, public access, infrastructure, ecological restoration, open

space and trail linkages, and economic development concepts.

A driving force in the development of this vision for the Valley was to dispel the view of many in the surrounding neighborhoods that the Valley is a place to avoid, due to its present concentration of industrial and transportation uses. As a result, a key study recommendation is the creation of a 1-mile long multi-purpose trail and greenway through the Valley that would directly link the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo with the Towpath Trail's Lower Harvard Avenue trailhead. The main trail and greenway would be complemented by a system of connector trails designed to link the population centers of Old Brooklyn and Brooklyn Centre to the trail. The recently completed Treadway

Connector Trail and Greenway to Harmody Park in Old Brooklyn and the planned Calgary Park Connector to Brooklyn Centre exemplify these connections.

Although much remains to be done relative to negotiating easements, performing environmental assessments, and securing funds by which to design and construct the planned trail and its connectors, the level of citizen enthusiasm is high. Public meetings that were held to frame the Plan's direction were well attended and highlighted by many supportive comments.

The challenge that remains will be to successfully integrate an accessible public trail and related ecological and environmental restoration activities within (See LBC page 2)

### Big Creek Watershed Management Plan nears completion

In May of 2007 the Cuyahoga River Community Planning Organization (CRCPO) was awarded an Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) grant to develop a Watershed Management Plan for the Big Creek Watershed budgeted at \$43,500. The \$20,000 ODNR Office of Coastal Management grant was sought after local matches for the same amount were secured by Friends of Big Creek and the CRCPO from the five communities comprising 95% of the

watershed area: Cleveland, Parma, Parma Heights, Brooklyn, and Brook Park. The remainder of the funding is provided by in-kind services.

Initially, planning was to be divided into two phases: first, a Watershed Inventory, Assessment and Problem Definition; second, development of a State Endorsed Watershed Action plan. The second phase was to include a detailed implementation plan for the watershed based on traditional models used in similar projects.

It was later determined that the State Endorsed Balanced Growth Initiative model would be the most effective in identifying measures that improve the Big Creek watershed's functions. It could also be completed within the budget and timeline of the first phase of funding.

Any additional local funding matches could be sought later and used towards the hiring of a watershed coordinator to help in implementing recommenda-

At a meeting in Parma in April 2008, community representatives broke into work groups to begin identifying key preservation/restoration areas.



tions within the plan as well as towards specific projects.

This Big Creek Watershed Plan benefits the Big Creek communities in several ways:

(See WMP page 6)

## Message from the Chair

This spring marks four years since the first public meeting that recognized Friends of Big Creek as the stewardship organization for the Big Creek watershed. Our formation was in part an outgrowth of studies underway of the lower Big Creek valley. Our vision was—and remains—to take a holistic planning approach to address environmental impacts in the lower valley and beyond and to establish recreational trails to connect people and parklands throughout the watershed.

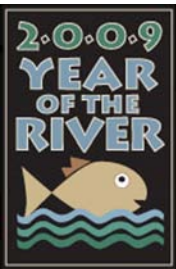
In this issue you can read about the recently completed Lower Big Creek

Valley plan as well as two other studies which FOBC facilitated that will have major positive impacts on land use and greenway development in the watershed.

These planning projects are the first steps towards an expanded Big Creek greenway and trail system—from Big Creek Reservation in Parma, through the City of Brooklyn and Cleveland's lower Big Creek valley, to the Ohio & Erie Canal Reservation and Towpath Trail along the Cuyahoga River. They work in unison, recognizing the role of comprehensive watershed planning in local

communities. The projects are timely considering today's economy and our region's prospects for growth. Communities that recognize and capitalize on natural and cultural amenities are better poised for growth as they become more attractive places to live and invest in.

Tell us what's happening in your corner of the watershed, or what you'd like to see happen. And as you learn more about what FOBC is doing to make our watershed communities more attractive and livable, we hope that you will join us in that effort.  
— Bob Gardin, Chair



## Celebrating 40 years of Cuyahoga River recovery

Proclaiming 2009 the Year of the River, the Cuyahoga River Community Planning Organization, home of the Cuyahoga River Remedial Action Plan

(RAP), is commemorating the 40th anniversary of the infamous 1969 river fire that shaped our region's image but also sparked a broad environmental awareness in our country. A year of activities is aimed at celebrating progress in the Cuyahoga's cleanup and

highlighting ways we can all contribute to stewardship of our streams. FOBC, along with more than 40 organizations to date, have signed on as Year of the River partners. Go online to **www.riveryear.org** for events and ways you can get involved.

### (LBC – continued from page 1)

the confines of a Valley that retains viable economic enterprises. The project sponsors believe that this is an achievable goal that will require the cooperation of land owners, business owners, government agencies, and the general public.

At its February 6, 2009 meeting, the Cleveland City Planning Commission adopted the *Lower Big Creek Greenway Redevelopment & Restoration Plan* as a component of the City's *Connecting Cleveland: 2020 Long-Range Master Plan*. The Commission invested 90 minutes of their time to hear a detailed plan presentation by project consultant Dennis Mersky of FBG. Mr. Mersky pro-

vided a historical perspective of both the valley and the project history and an explanation of how the Plan fulfills a West Side leg of the original 1905 "Inner Ring" Loop Plan that begat Cleveland Metroparks.

Councilmen Cummins and Kelley along with thirty-five people representing OBCDC, neighborhood residents, public agencies, and Friends of Big Creek were present to demonstrate support for transforming the valley from an underutilized industrial area to one that incorporates a greenway connection between Brookside Reservation and the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail. Additional people wrote the Planning Commission endorsing the plan's recommendations.

Much work remains to implement the greenway connection. The OBCDC will soon begin meetings with community groups and block clubs to further solidify public support. Meanwhile, discussions will continue with affected valley property interests to secure permission to conduct physical and environmental assessments of the proposed greenway route. Further work will be needed to secure easements and encumber funding to construct the improvements.

— George Cantor, Chief City Planner,  
Cleveland City Planning Commission

See *Overall Map* on page 3. To access the study and the consultant's PowerPoint presentation, please use the following link: [www.friendsofbigcreek.org](http://www.friendsofbigcreek.org).

## How your everyday shopping can benefit Friends of Big Creek

In these uncertain economic times, we all face hard choices as we plan for special occasions, gifts, and charitable giving. With iGive.com, you don't have to choose between buying something or sending a donation to Friends of Big Creek. Every time you shop at any of 700+ online stores in the iGive network, a portion of the money you spend benefits our cause. FOBC encourages you to shop local when you can. For those times you shop online, give iGive.com a go! iGive is FREE for you and free for our organization.



**Get started at [www.iGive.com/FOBC](http://www.iGive.com/FOBC)**

**Get a \$5 bonus donation when you make your first purchase within 45 days of signing up!**





# Lower Big Creek Greenway Redevelopment & Restoration Plan

Overall Map - Trail Plan & Restoration

**Client Partners:**

- OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
- CITY OF CLEVELAND
- CLEVELAND METROPARKS

**Prepared By:**

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**schmidtclawson.com**



## Brooklyn's Big Creek Trail Plan completed—will link Parkway with Zoo

In August of 2007 federal funding was granted for a trail plan seeking an alignment through the City of Brooklyn that connects Cleveland Metroparks' Big Creek Reservation in Parma with Brookside Reservation in Cleveland. Friends of Big Creek joined Cleveland Metroparks and the cities of Brooklyn, Parma, and Cleveland as partners in the study, which is administered by the city of Brooklyn.

The \$75,000 study was funded with a \$60,000 Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative (TLCI) grant through the Northeast Ohio Coordinating Agency (NOACA) after the project partners provided the \$15,000 local match. Through a competitive bidding process, the project partners chose the Floyd Browne Group as the consultant for the study.

Although the study area lies primarily within the City of Brooklyn, the Big Creek Greenway Trail and Neighborhood Connector Plan complements a study begun

a year earlier in the lower Big Creek area of Cleveland. (See accompanying article.) The primary trail route is supported by a series of connecting trails to the residential and commercial neighborhoods of Brooklyn and Brooklyn's civic center.

Big Creek Valley contains the last vestige of unprotected natural area within Brooklyn and is well worth preserving. With an intact floodplain forest, a meandering stream, and dramatic shale cliffs, this section of valley offers an ideal route for connecting the two reservations that border it. The plan identifies key natural and cultural features in the Brooklyn community and creates trail and greenway connections among them, while protecting valued greenspace.

The plan calls for two routes that make the desired connection between the reservations: one that is within the Big Creek valley and the other that follows a power line corridor through adjacent neighbor-

hoods. An advisory committee formed to be the primary decision maker for the plan selected this two-pronged approach, recognizing the desirability of both routes and the flexibility that the two options provide.

Both routes, along with several of the connecting routes, require the cooperation of involved landowners, so an extensive public involvement process was incorporated into the planning effort. Public workshops, stakeholder interviews, and a series of advisory committee meetings ensured that a constructive dialogue was begun. Within the report the plan identifies the landowners involved, recommends a conservation strategy for greenspace protection, provides a detailed cost opinion, and gives guidelines for construction and funding.

See Overall Plan on page 5. To access the study, please use the following link: [www.friendsofbigcreek.org](http://www.friendsofbigcreek.org).

— Kyle Lukes, *The Floyd Browne Group*,  
contributed to this article.

## Save a drop—save a lot...with rain barrels

Avid gardeners know that plants love rainwater – it's naturally soft and free from chlorine, fluoride and other chemicals. Collecting rainwater also reduces stormwater runoff, which collects and carries motor oil, lawn chemicals and other pollutants into our waterways. What's more, rainwater you save and use to water your lawn and garden reduces your water bill.

More and more casual gardeners are catching on: the Cuyahoga Soil and Water Conservation District reported "an enormous response" to rain barrel

workshops in 2008. Participants were guided through the steps of turning a 55-gallon plastic drum into a rain collector and went home with a barrel ready to connect to their downspout using their own diverter.

More workshops are on tap this year in collaboration with local communities and watershed groups. Check for a convenient location and time to learn about rain barrels, rain gardens plus other ways to go green in your own backyard at [www.cuyahogawcd.org](http://www.cuyahogawcd.org) or call 216-524-6580.

## FOBC hosts first symposium

FOBC sponsored an **Urban Wetlands Symposium** on the evening of September 24, 2008. John Katko, founder and President of *Friends of Wetlands* and board member of the *Ohio Environmental Council*, introduced the nature and functions of wetlands in his keynote address and updated us on recent efforts to forestall unmitigated urbanization of classified wetlands in Ohio.

Almost 60 attendees - including planners and other public officials, consultants, educators and the general public - filled the Reinberger Auditorium at Cleveland

Metroparks Zoo to near capacity for over three hours of varied presentations on wetland conservation and restoration best practices, including highlights of five model projects in the Cuyahoga region. We are grateful to Mr. Katko and the other presenters who shared their insights, experience and advice with a diverse and actively engaged group of participants, many of whom are in a position to apply the analysis techniques discussed and implementation lessons cited to current and proposed wetland restoration efforts in the Big Creek watershed and beyond.

### Thank you to our members and community supporters.

#### Please consider joining or renewing.

Your membership in Friends of Big Creek will enable us to continue our mission to conserve, enhance, and bring recognition to the natural and historic resources of the Big Creek Watershed and develop a recreational trail network that joins these resources to each other and the community.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

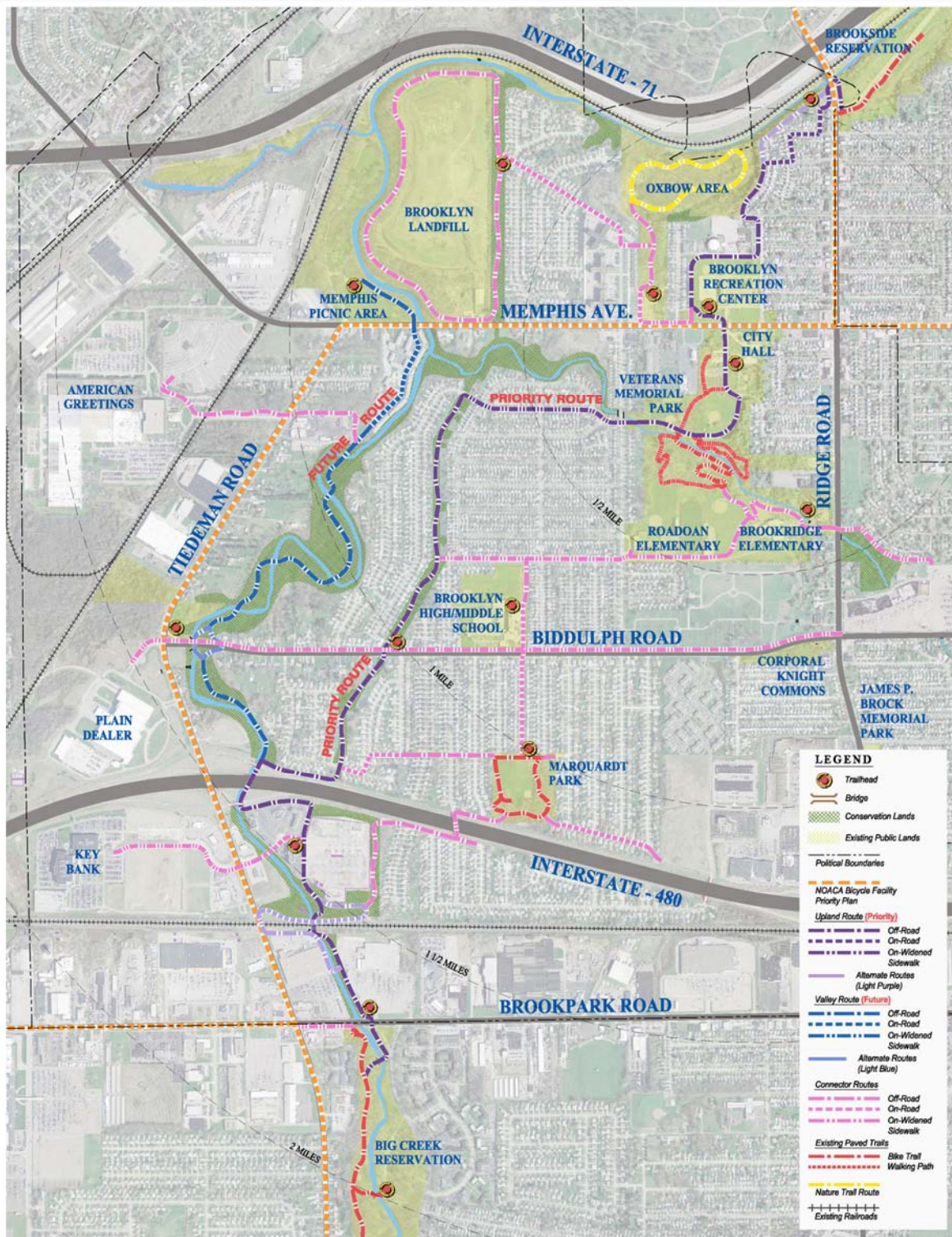
#### Annual dues:

- \_\_\_ \$15.00 Individual
- \_\_\_ \$25.00 Sustaining
- \_\_\_ \$25.00 Organization
- \_\_\_ \$50.00 Supporting

Make checks payable to FOBC and mail to:  
Friends of Big Creek  
P. O. Box 609272  
Cleveland, OH 44109

Secure online payment is available online at [www.friendsofbigcreek.org](http://www.friendsofbigcreek.org)

FOBC's fiscal agent, CRCPO, is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. All contributions are tax deductible.



# Big Creek Greenway Trail Alignment & Neighborhood Connector Plan

## Overall Master Plan

Client Partners:

Friends of Big Creek

NOACA  
Planning for Greater Cleveland

CITY OF CLEVELAND

CLEVELAND METROPARKS

CITY OF CLEVELAND

Cleveland Metroparks

Prepared By:

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In association with

schmidtlopelandparkstevens





## Gardin & Brennan among CSWCD Awardees

On September 13th, 2008, Parma Councilman **Sean Brennan** and FOBC Chairman **Bob Gardin** were recognized by Cuyahoga Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) for their outstanding contributions to local conservation. The 59<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the agency was held at Cleveland Metroparks' Euclid Creek Reservation.

Parma Ward 2 Councilman Sean Brennan was recognized for launching a **Storm Drain Stenciling Project** in his ward last summer. The councilman was elected to office in 2004, and has shown great interest in the health of his community's watershed. In 2008 Mr. Brennan combined his juvenile diversion community service group with the stenciling program of Cuyahoga SWCD to raise awareness on the dangers of dumping wastes into storm sewers. Noting that 80% of water pollution comes from non-point sources such as runoff and storm drains, he notes in his Fall 2008 newsletter that "Ward 2 is in the Big Creek watershed, so all our storm water ultimately ends up in Big Creek, then the

### DUMP NO WASTE – DRAINS TO CREEK

Cuyahoga River and, finally, Lake Erie."

FOBC Chairman Bob Gardin of Cleveland was recognized as **Conservationist of the Year**. Mr. Gardin has long advocated for environmental causes, being former president of the Cleveland Waterfront Coalition. The district's award highlighted his involvement with efforts to restore and protect the Big Creek watershed, for founding the citizens group Friends of Big Creek in 2005, and for serving as its Chairman in the years since. During the ceremony Mr. Gardin recognized FOBC's Steering and Advisory Committee members and project partners for their contributions towards the organization's recent successes including the Big Creek Watershed Management and Trail plans currently underway. He also stated that "when thinking about [FOBC] you should know that Mary Ellen Stasek, our Vice Chair, shares with me a large percentage of the work we do."

We extend our congratulations to Bob and Sean and thank them for their commitment to improving the health of our watersheds and community. Anyone interested in helping Councilman Brennan for the Summer 2009 stenciling project, please contact him at



From left to right: Bob Gardin, Jan Rybka, Al Weiler (National Wildlife Federation), Sean Brennan

440-884-0489 or by e-mail at [councilmanbrennan@sbcglobal.net](mailto:councilmanbrennan@sbcglobal.net).

*Cuyahoga SWCD promotes conservation of land and aquatic resources in a developed environment through stewardship initiatives, education programs, and technical assistance for all landowners. The agency strives to share its expertise through a variety of programs, events, and conservation partners. In 2009 it celebrates its 60<sup>th</sup> year. For more information contact Cuyahoga SWCD District Administrator Jan Rybka at 216-524-6580.*

### What is Balanced Growth?

Balanced Growth is a strategy to protect and restore Lake Erie and its watersheds to assure that long-term growth equally benefits economic competitiveness, ecological health, and quality of life.

In 2004, the Ohio Lake Erie Commission adopted task force recommendations for a voluntary, incentive-based program to achieve balanced growth in the Ohio Lake Erie Watershed. Recommendations include a lead role for local governments with state government providing strong support and encouragement. Lake Erie Balanced Growth Program recommendations include:

- ≈ A regional focus on land use and development planning.
- ≈ Local Watershed Planning Partnerships to designate Priority Conservation and Priority Development Areas.
- ≈ Alignment of state policies, incentives, funding and other resources to support watershed balanced growth planning and implementation.
- ≈ Implementation of model regulations to promote best local land use practices that minimize impacts on water quality and provide for well planned development efficiently served by infrastructure.

Visit [www.lakeerie.ohio.gov](http://www.lakeerie.ohio.gov) for more.

### (WMP— continued from page 1)

*Provides Funding to the City:* each community will be eligible for future grants and other State incentives through the Balanced Growth Initiative.

*Saves Long-Term Costs:* many of the recommendations in the plan can help reduce infrastructure costs through better site design.

*Leverages Assets & Cooperation:* watershed planning helps to facilitate projects and other mutually supportive actions across community boundaries.

*Addresses Citizen Concerns:* regarding flooding, erosion, property damage and water quality.

*Improves City's Compliance with Storm Water Phase II Regulations:* the plan identifies wetland, streams and other important natural resources.

*Strengthens Planning and Zoning:* by updating master plans and incorporating recommendations like Priority Develop-

ment Areas (PDAs) and Priority Conservation Areas (PCAs).

*Improves Community Livability and appeal:* by greening up the community through enhancements, landscaping and stormwater treatments that function for both water issues and aesthetics.

In the next step, communities will be asked to review the findings and pass a resolution of support. The Balanced Growth Program requires demonstration of significant support from at least 75% of the local governments in the watershed in order to be endorsed by the Ohio Lake Erie Commission. Once the plan receives endorsement, Cleveland, Brooklyn, Brook Park, North Royalton, Parma, and Parma Heights will be eligible for State incentives and grants to assist in the implementation of the Balanced Growth Plan.

Details about the Big Creek WMP will follow in our next issue.

— Charles Hamby, CRCPO Watershed Planner, contributed to this article.

## Our watersheds, our homes

**W**hy should we care about Big Creek and the surrounding lands that drain into it, that is, its watershed? Simply put, a healthy community requires a healthy watershed.

Land use in the Big Creek Watershed impacts the health of Big Creek, the Cuyahoga River, and Lake Erie, our source for drinking water. The quality of these waters is also tied to our region's economic vitality and quality of life. Consider the following benefits of a healthy watershed:

- Higher property values due to more community green space and recreational opportunities
- Reduced erosion-control measures, dredging costs, and property damage from land clearing, flooding and erosion
- Lower public health risks due to reduced runoff of pollutants and toxins into our water supply
- Greater business and population retention due to more attractive and livable communities
- More social amenities from enhanced public access to natural areas and neighborhoods
- Greater and richer habitat for native plant and animal species

Watersheds work properly when certain habitats are in place. These habitats need to be big and healthy enough to manage the waters that flow into them. Together they form a highly organized chain of natural features and biological communities that include:

- Wetlands – soggy areas that capture and slowly release water into streams and aquifers
- Headwater Streams – tiny streambeds in which overland flows begin to collect – these account for about 80% of stream miles in Ohio
- Riparian Zones – heavily vegetated land along well-defined, shaded streambeds
- Floodplains – relatively flat broad areas that accommodate floodwaters and meanders
- Pools – deep slow-moving sections of streams that offer temporary water storage
- Riffles – shallow fast-moving rocky sections of streams that enrich water with oxygen
- Runs – fast but less turbulent sections of streams
- Meanders – s-shaped channels that flow through floodplains, increasing water storage capacity and providing flowing water with access to floodplains

Over thousands of years, natural forces have shaped the living systems that comprise watersheds. But human activity has brought urban development in such forms as lawns, rooftops, parking lots, roads and drainage systems, which has severely degraded these systems. In heavily urbanized watersheds, like Big Creek, little of the natural landscape remains and development continues to threaten what is left.

Today scientists and planners recommend the best way to protect our natural resources is to understand and manage them on a watershed basis. This approach uses natural, not political boundaries, and a partnership of concerned individuals, agencies, and organizations having a stake in the condition of the watershed. It provides for sound science and creative problem-solving to reduce soil erosion and flood damage, decrease the loss of green space, and improve water quality.

No matter where you live, you live in a watershed. Join us in becoming good stewards of these precious resources – these watersheds, our homes. Get involved! Visit [www.friendsofbigcreek.org](http://www.friendsofbigcreek.org) or call: 216-661-4998.

*Portions of the above are based on "Streams & Watersheds" Brochure #2 of the Cuyahoga American Heritage River Partners, undated.*

## Chevy Branch stormwater improvement project

**B**ig Creek's two-mile long Chevy Branch begins in Parma and meanders north through the **Bellaire Puritas neighborhood** of Cleveland on either side of West 130<sup>th</sup> Street. A significant culvert replacement and stream restoration project in an area particularly prone to flooding began this February. The **Big Creek Watershed Stormwater Management Improvement Project** consists of installing eight new culverts along Chevy Branch at Emery Road, Harold Road, Kadel Avenue,

Gilmore Avenue, Erwin Road, Milligan Avenue, Longmead Avenue and Leeila Avenue. In all, 4,500 feet of the stream channel will be restored along with clearing and reshaping of the channel. Work will include replacement of pavement and utilities.

The primary goals of restoration are to stabilize channel banks, develop a riparian zone with native vegetation and channel clearing to restore both the flow and sediment carrying capacity of the

stream. Channel improvements are based on using natural channel design techniques within an urban context.

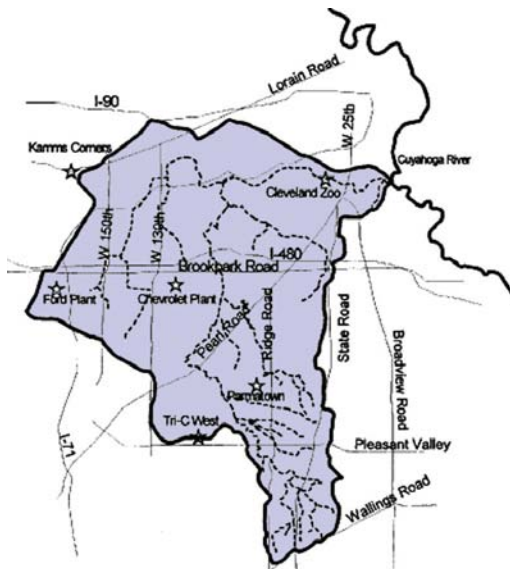
While this project is meant to primarily address flooding and water quality problems it is also an example of comprehensive planning that values the natural environment as an amenity towards an environmentally, socially and economically attractive neighborhood.

Cleveland Division of Water Pollution Control, 216-664-2750.

Get involved. Make a difference. Share your concerns. Join us for a hike or a meeting.  
Visit FOBC online at [friendsofbigcreek.org](http://friendsofbigcreek.org). Sign up for e-mail announcements.

# Friends of Big Creek

P.O. Box 609272  
Cleveland, OH 44109  
[www.friendsofbigcreek.org](http://www.friendsofbigcreek.org)



**Big Creek Watershed**

## Steering Committee

Bob Gardin  
Chair  
Mary Ellen Stasek  
Vice Chair/Corresp.Secy  
Greg Cznadel  
Recording Secretary  
Diana Slobodian  
Treasurer

Thomas Coyne  
James A. Gazda  
Ann M. Kuula  
Jeffrey Lennartz  
Donald C. Martin  
Alfred Penko, P.E.  
Dennis Petro  
Kim Petro

## Advisory Committee

Regis Barrett  
Chair, City of Brooklyn Zoning Board of Appeals  
Sean Brennan  
Parma City Council - Ward 2  
George Cantor  
Chief City Planner, Cleveland Planning Commission  
Brian J. Cummins  
Cleveland City Council - Ward 15  
Mary Galinas  
Parma City Council - Ward 1  
Kevin Kelley  
Cleveland City Council - Ward 16  
David Lincheck  
Director, West Creek Preservation Committee  
Melissa Miller  
Planning and Safety Coordinator, Bellaire-Puritas Development Corporation  
Kathleen Pucci  
Brooklyn City Council  
Carla Regener  
Associate Senior Planner, Cuyahoga County Planning Commission  
Janine Rybka  
District Administrator, Cuyahoga Soil and Water Conservation District  
Lester Stumpe  
Manager of Watershed Programs, Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District  
Laura Travers  
Sanitarian, Cuyahoga County Board of Health  
Andy Vidra  
Senior Environmental Planner, Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency  
Jim White  
Executive Director, Cuyahoga River Remedial Action Plan

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

- Sunday, April 19 20th Annual EarthFest at the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo.  
Saturday, May 9 RiverSweep - Ohio Canal Corridor's 20th environmental cleanup.  
Saturday, May 16 RiverDay - Big Creek: Where the Waters Meet. Explore the hidden beauty of Big Creek at its confluence with the Cuyahoga. Meet 11 AM at Zeleznik's, 4002 Jennings Rd. at Harvard Ave.  
Saturday, June 6 Annual Big Creek Cleanup (FOBC, Cuyahoga Soil and Water Conservation District & other partners).  
Thursday, June 11 Rain Barrel Workshop - Stearns Homestead Farm, Parma, 6-7:30 pm.  
Monday, June 22 Year of the River events - Cleveland Heritage Parks 1 & II.  
Saturday, July 19 Brookstock - A Celebration of Music & Nature, 4-10:30 pm. Metroparks Brookside Reservation.

Visit us online at [friendsofbigcreek.org](http://friendsofbigcreek.org) for the latest information on cleanups, hikes, meetings and more.

Big Creek is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest tributary of the Cuyahoga River. Its watershed contains over 130 miles of streams and culverts. Together they drain nearly 38 square miles from 8 municipalities - Cleveland, Brooklyn, Linndale, Parma, Parma Heights, Brook Park, Middleburg Heights, and North Royalton. Over 90% of the watershed's area has been developed and 52% of the land surface has been made impervious, making Big Creek the most heavily urbanized watershed of any major tributary in the Cuyahoga River Watershed. This degree of urbanization provides tremendous challenge ... and opportunity.

Friends of Big Creek is a community-based greenway advocacy and watershed stewardship group. The Cuyahoga River Community Planning Organization, a 501(c)(3) organization, acts as the group's fiscal agent.



Produced with financial assistance from:  
**Freshwater Future** Project Grant. Freshwater Future builds effective community-based citizen action to protect and restore the water quality of the Great Lakes basin;  
**Cuyahoga County Board of Health.**

