

WEST CREEK CONSERVANCY

a land trust serving Greater Cleveland

Our Cuyahoga River – 50 Years Later

Join West Creek Conservancy in celebrating decades of progress

For the better part of two centuries, water pollution and a lack of sewer and waste disposal regulation were viewed as necessary byproducts of the wealth that industry brought to American cities. Cleveland was no exception. Lack of environmental regulation resulted in the Cuyahoga River catching fire not just once, but many times leading up to the infamous fire of 1969. The first time the river caught fire was in 1868, followed by another 12 times in recorded history. The deadliest incident was in 1912 with five documented deaths, and the worst blaze occurred in 1952, resulting in \$1.3 million in damages as well as the iconic photos which ended up in Time Magazine following the 1969 fire.

The fire which burned on June 22nd, 1969 at 12pm was not the worst Cleveland had seen in terms of physical damage, but was one of the most catalytic moments in the environmental movement. In the 1960s, the United States was becoming more environmentally



**XTINGUISH
CELEBRATION**

**Xtinguish the Past
Ignite the Future!**

June 19-22, 2019

Activities throughout 2019

conscious and the public's attitude towards the pollution on the river was turning from unavoidable to unacceptable. Cleveland's residents had been taking action to combat the impact industry had produced for the Cuyahoga's health prior to 1969, shown by the passage of a \$100 million bond initiative in 1968 to fund river cleanup efforts, sewer system improvements, storm water overflow controls, and debris removal. The 1969 fire was not viewed as the climax of decades of pollution, but rather as "the last gasp of an industrial river whose role was beginning to change."

Regardless of the pro-environmental actions prior to the 1969 fire, Cleveland became the symbol that showed the world there was a need for change. Time's article and Cleveland Mayor Carl Stokes's press coverage welcomed massive attention and increased pressure on the region to strengthen hygienic regulation. The coverage served as a reminder



*The Cuyahoga River on fire near downtown
Cleveland on June 25th, 1952*

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The mission of West Creek Conservancy is to enrich the lives of people in Greater Cleveland by conserving natural habitats, restoring the ecological value and sustainability of urban lands, and expanding neighborhood opportunities to experience nature.

Xtinguish, continued from page 1



Cuyahoga Falls

of how bad things had been and how much work still had to be done to address pollution issues across the nation caused by the industrial boom and minimal regulation.

Although the news made Cleveland a symbol of environmental health complications, it catalyzed action on behalf of Congress to resolve the issue of pollution throughout the United States. On January 1st, 1970, the legislature passed the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) which also

helped establish the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in order to manage environmental risks and regulate sanitation policies. One of the first pieces of legislation enacted by the EPA was the Clean Water Act (1972), this charge led by Mayor Carl Stoke's brother Congressman Louis Stokes, which mandated that all rivers in the United States be hygienic enough to allow mass amounts of swimmers and fish to exist safely within the water by 1983.

The 1969 Cuyahoga River fire serves as a reminder of how far Cleveland has come to reclaim its natural prosperity, and the continual importance of the work being done to restore, protect, and reclaim our land and waterways.

Fast forward to present day: the river has not ignited since the fire of 1969. The Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District has invested billions of dollars towards river purification and the development of new sewer systems. Their current effort, Project Clean Lake, is a \$3.4 billion effort slated for completion in 2036. The river is now clean enough that businesses and investors have been able to help revitalize a previously disregarded Flats landscape into an entertainment district.

The 1969 Cuyahoga River fire serves as a reminder of how far Cleveland has come to reclaim its natural prosperity, and the ongoing importance of the work being done to restore, protect, and reclaim our land and waterways. A real world natural testament to the improved health of our river lies below the water, in its resident population. In 1969, between Akron and Cleveland, there were nearly no fish due to the toxic state of the river. Today, there are over 60 fish species, increased bird, animal, and plant biodiversity, and water clean enough to recreate on.

In June 2019, in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the 1969 fire, West Creek Conservancy will host the "Xtinguish Celebration." The multi-day event will bring citizens together in recognition and celebration of our shared waterway. As the anniversary draws near, regional collaboration and excitement is building. Over 80 organizations are already involved. Highlighting the celebration will be the Xtinguish Torch Fest - which will include a "Passing of the Torch"

down the entire 100 miles of the Cuyahoga River from Geauga County, through Akron, and into Cleveland. A series of community dialogues called the “Crooked River Conversations” is also being organized across the watershed to showcase strategies to further improve our river and engage our citizens.

The Xtinguish Celebration starts June 19th with a Native American Water Blessing and ends June 22nd with a celebration at the site of the fire, hosted with partner Share the River. The Celebration seeks to present all parts of our Cuyahoga River from its headwaters in Geauga County, through Kent, Akron, Cuyahoga Falls, Cuyahoga Valley National Park, and Cleveland. Along the way, festivals of art, culture, and music will showcase the stewardship

and economic benefits of recreation and industrial uses of the river. At selected locations a commemorative Eternal Flame Sculpture will be installed on the river bank to symbolize the river’s connection to our region and to us.

Along with the Passing of the Torch, Xtinguish Torch Fest, and Eternal Flame Sculpture dedications, the Xtinguish Celebration is tied to the designation of the Cuyahoga River as an Ohio Division of Natural Resources Water Trail. A Water Trail Committee has been working diligently to finalize the designation in time for the Xtinguish Torch Fest. To learn more and get involved with this remarkable event, please contact Peter Bode at peter@westcreek.org or 216-749-3720 ext. 13.



Blazing Paddles 2018

Irishtown Bend

By LAND Studio, Proud Conservancy Partner

Despite its looming obscurity, Irishtown Bend Park may become one of the region's most breathtaking green spaces when it is finally built. With dramatic vistas, various regional trail connections, historical tragedy and magnificence as the once-burning river and the landing point for thousands of immigrants, as well as its adjacency to Cleveland's most diverse neighborhood, Irishtown Bend will be a place that people will visit and enjoy for a multitude of reasons. Irishtown Bend Park will be a place locals and international guests will visit to experience the best of Cleveland.

Although it is easy to gush about Irishtown Bend's future marvels, the uncomfortable truth is that it will not be easy to pull off. Right now, Irishtown Bend is an area full of complex land, infrastructure and environmental issues. It is a 17-acre version of a structural engineer's nightmare that has been long overgrown by invasive species, and degraded by constant drainage problems to the extent that the hillside has become unstable and even slumping in certain section forcing the closure of Riverbed Road and installations of back-up/above ground sewer lines. Woozy and weakened by a strong cocktail of mis-engineered projects and long-ignored infrastructure needs, the project brings with it a \$50 million-plus list of structural fixes to bring it back to health.

Though currently an eyesore, it is not a superficial problem that this region can hide beneath a hill full of Japanese knotweed. If it were to collapse into the Cuyahoga, it



would effectively put a tourniquet on the shipping channel that supports 20,000 local jobs and \$3.5 billion worth of economic activity. Fortunately, this problem was not lost on the Port of Cleveland. About five years ago, the Port took a leadership role by committing the funds to thoroughly analyze the structural integrity of the hillside. With a 300+ page report in hand, the region was given a full diagnosis as well as a pathway forward to fixing the hillside's stability issues. Identifying the

problem, in this case, is not half the battle. The heavy lifting to fix the hillside entails several multi-million dollar public expenditures that each fall under the jurisdiction of different political subdivisions or agencies. That means that advocates will need will need to coordinate on the highest level in order to leverage the funds from local, state, federal and private resources.

The Port's study not only accomplished the necessary engineering data to move forward, but it also set a regional example by stepping up to address a problem that was not necessarily theirs to fix. The study results and their proactive approach set the stage for other a collaborative approach to the problem. Soon after, the Mayor of Cleveland organized monthly meetings that brought together the various entities responsible for the different fixes as well as other interested non-profit organizations who saw the potential that a collective and concerted effort could have.

While primary focus of the overall Irishtown Bend stabilization initiative will always be the critical infrastructure needs, the post stabilized hillside will provide a blank slate of land in a key location. The future implementation of the various infrastructure improvements will result in a transformative opportunity for this region: uniquely situated among a confluence of trail networks, panoramic vistas, a riverfront and a pivotal nexus between Ohio City, Downtown Cleveland and the Flats, the restored hillside becomes primed for a generational opportunity to create a dynamic and uniting open space for Northeast Ohio. The impact of this project can be immense, but it may never be possible unless land acquisition can take place soon. The principle risk is if the hillside were to collapse into the adjacent Cuyahoga River it would put industries and thousands of jobs in immediate danger. However, land acquisition for the new park and the multi-step hillside stabilization process are intertwined in a complicated way that necessitates immediate action or risk losing this once-in-a-City's-lifetime opportunity. To that end, LAND studio, Ohio City, Inc. (OCI), the Port and West Creek Conservancy began planning together to address this side of the stabilization coin: create a strong greenspace vision for Irishtown Bend and secure the land necessary to implement that vision.

Each of these organizations brought a skill set to the table that was critical to the overall goal. None of the organizations could have pulled it off on its own.

Regarding the greenspace visioning process, the Port and OCI successfully secured grant funds from NOACA. LAND studio provided additional funding to elevate the level of design. Planning and engineering firm of Michael Baker International teamed up with renowned landscape architecture firm of CMG to do the design work. Over the course of 2017, the three organizations formed a strong team to lead a process that drew large, enthusiastic crowds to its three public meetings. The final version the plan was unanimously approved and adopted by the City Planning Commission.

While working on the vision for the future park, the partners strategized on how to begin land acquisition. Of the total 17 acres, Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA) owned 14 acres. With over 2000 public housing residents and the neighborhood's largest landowner, CMHA had a strong working relationship with OCI. Almost a decade earlier, LAND studio had secured a Clean Ohio grant to buy a nearly 2-mile abandoned railroad line on the west bank of the Flats and turn it into the Lake Link Trail. Having recently completed all but the Irishtown Bend portion of the

KEY PARTNERS

City of Cleveland:

- City Planning
- Engineering
- Water Pollution Control
- Streets
- Economic Development
- Mayor's Office

Cleveland Metroparks

Cleveland Metropolitan Housing Authority

Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District

LAND studio

West Creek Conservancy

Port of Cleveland

Ohio City, Inc

The Trust for Public Land

trail, LAND studio was aware that it was not positioned to take on ownership of such a large tract of land. Having partnered with West Creek Conservancy in the past, LAND studio knew that West Creek Conservancy's deep knowledge, experience with acquiring and preserving land and overall can-do approach to getting things done would be key for the overall effort. Additionally, West Creek Conservancy was willing to do what no other organization could or would

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Morgana Bluffs Nature Preserve and Learning Center

By Boys and Girls Club of Cleveland, a proud conservancy partner

Conservation work rightly focuses on the ecological details. The abundance and distribution of plant and animal species, the sinuosity of streams, the diversity of wetlands, the extent of the tree canopy - conservation saves all of it. The reality, though, is that conservation saves people. Given enough time, the earth would heal itself from our misdeeds, but we need nature now and will need abundant access to it in the future.

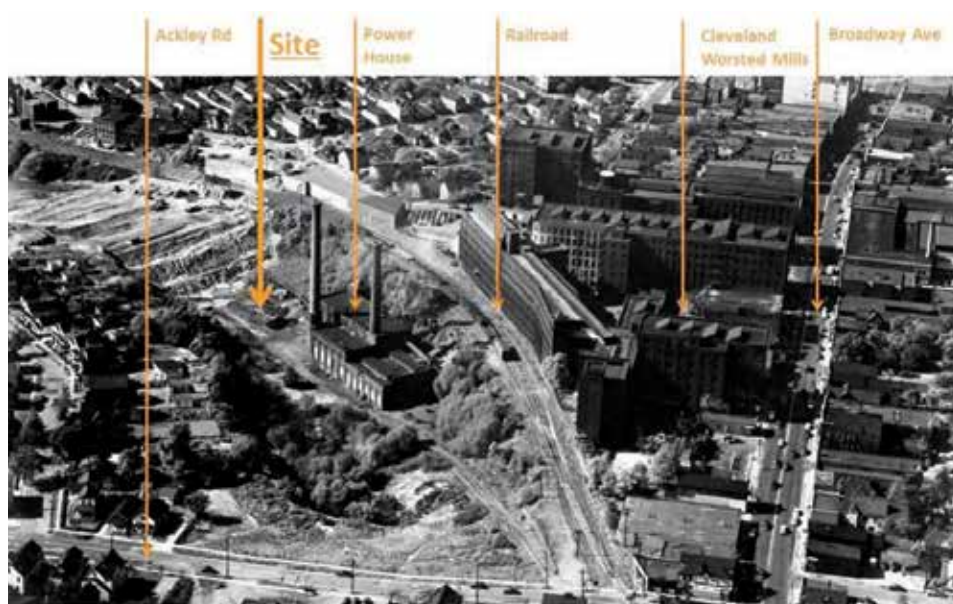
Nowhere is this more true than in our inner city. Here where residents are surrounded by the noise, pollution, and hardscapes of urban life; it's here where nature makes a deep and lasting impact to reduce stress and crime, improve health, and restore real estate value. West Creek Conservancy has been a crucial partner to one such project and, as a recipient of the organization's expertise and good will, we have to extend our sincere thanks.

Boys & Girls Clubs of Cleveland serves the most vulnerable youth in Cleveland, empowering them to reach their full potential. We serve 1,000 young people each day at 13 locations in our community's most distressed neighborhoods. Our members find not only a safe place, but also access to a range of programs that lead to academic success, healthier lifestyles, and character development. Club members dance, read, create art, play sports, grow food, visit museums, play math games, volunteer in the community, and hang out with good friends and great mentors. The clubs are

where great futures start, for the kids and for our community.

Our flagship club and administrative center located in Cleveland's Slavic Village neighborhood sits on land once occupied by the sprawling

Worsted Mills manufacturing facility. The massive complex employed thousands in its heyday, but, nearly abandoned by the early 1990's, the complex was heavily damaged by arson and was demolished. A portion



Morgana Bluffs Nature Preserve and Learning Center

of the land was repurposed to our facility which includes an urban farm, pollinator garden, plus sports fields in addition to our 16,000 square foot club space. Other land became a new elementary school and then a 4.5 acre parcel was left to revert to nature.

This parcel, nestled between our site and the school alongside the Morgana Run Bike Trail, is now in play to become a high quality wetland because of the support we received from West Creek Conservancy, whose efforts helped us secure two grants, the first from the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District Green Infrastructure program and the second from the Clean Ohio Greenspace Conservation Fund.

Our members find not only a safe place, but also access to a range of programs that lead to academic success, healthier lifestyles, and character development.

Site improvements will include ADA accessible trails, an enhanced wetland, and substantial invasive species removal. This preserve, open to public at its completion in October 2019, will become a primary learning and



Conceptual Plan

recreation tool for the 125 kids who come to our adjacent club. With our members and the population of nearby schools, the neighborhood sees 1,700 students daily. They will now have a high quality nature preserve within walking distance, right in the heart of one of Cleveland's most struggling neighborhoods. This preserve is for them.

Your support has made this possible. West Creek Conservancy accomplishes projects like this every day – projects that make nature accessible to people. And, in the process, makes all our lives healthier, happier, and more prosperous.



2018 Ribbon Cutting



Hiking Morgana Run Trail

2018 Conservation in Our Community

Conservation takes on many forms in the community and below are just a few highlights of recent projects made possible with your support.

West Creek:

- 50+ acres protected along West Creek, 5 properties added to future extensions of West Creek Reservation
- Over 1-mile of West Creek conserved, beautiful stream-side forests, 5+ acres of wetland
- Critical connections for the West Creek Greenway



Baldwin Creek

- Approx 12 additional acres protected along Baldwin Creek, a vital tributary to Rocky River
- Contains vital floodplain, riparian, and wetlands
- Expands protected land in this reach of stream to over 35 acres

Tinker's Creek

- Over 35+ acres preserved adjacent to the Tinker's Creek State Nature Preserve
- High quality wetland
- Provides additional buffer to the State Nature Preserve



Cuyahoga River

- Helped protect over ½ mile of Cuyahoga River frontage to initiate the restoration of Irishtown Bend
- Vital to the stabilization of the Riverfront, as well as construction of the Cleveland Foundation Centennial Lake Link Trail connecting to Whiskey Island – Wendy Park.
- Catalyst to the creation of Irishtown Bend Park

Plantings & Partnerships

Maple Heights

The Conservancy partnered with the City of Maple Heights, Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District, with support from the Western Reserve Land Conservancy to plant over 25 trees to naturalize and reclaim a vacant property.



River Sweep

West Creek Conservancy partnered with Canalway Partners, Northeast Ohio Chemical and Hazardous Material Managers, The Sherwin-Williams Women's Club, with support from the Western Reserve Land Conservancy to plant trees, remove invasive species, remove trash, and maintain a series of rain gardens.



Bear Creek

West Creek Conservancy partnered with Tinker's Creek Watershed Partners, Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District, with support from the Western Reserve Land Conservancy, to plant 60+ trees along Bear Creek on a property reclaimed and preserved by West Creek Conservancy. Thank you also to the Cuyahoga Arts and Culture Council for their support!



Irishtown Bend, continued from page 5

do -- take ownership of the hillside parcels and help carry the project forward. Through its relationship with local developer The Snively Group, OCI was able to secure a critical land donation, a parking lot adjacent to CMHA's land, that would serve as the matching requirement for the Clean Ohio request. With the team in place, LAND studio successfully leveraged \$1.45 million through the Clean Ohio Greenspace Program to acquire 14 acres of CHMA's Irishtown Bend land. Meanwhile, West Creek Conservancy started

working with the Port to acquire the land along the riverside which at the time was in private hands. Acquiring this land was key for the overall stabilization because it enabled the Port to begin work on repairing the failing bulkheading--the key first stabilization project that must occur before any other fixes can happen. This story is still in progress. While there are undoubtedly many curveballs ahead, the organizations involved are taking a collaborative approach that better positions Irishtown Bend for success.

The stabilization and restoration of Irishtown Bend is a regional problem that requires regional collaboration. The outstanding partnerships created for this project will be key to its success. As it silently overlooks the Cuyahoga River, soon to be bustling with life as a public park, Irishtown Bend sends a message of environmental stewardship, economic development, civic pride, and community engagement. It is a template for how this region can address its major challenges.

West Creek Greenway: Hemlock Creek Trail Under Construction!

On National Trails Day, June 2nd, over 80 officials, trail enthusiasts, and project partners gathered in Independence to celebrate the groundbreaking for Hemlock Creek Trail. The 1.7-mile trail is part of the West Creek Greenway, an evolving 25-mile network of public trails and conservation lands radiating from the West Creek valley in Parma. The Hemlock Creek segment will link the Greenway directly to the Towpath Trail. A second connection of the Greenway to the Towpath will be three miles north in Cuyahoga Heights.

In addressing the audience, Independence Mayor Anthony Togliatti, host of the groundbreaking ceremony, noted, “Of all the community connections to the [Cuyahoga Valley] National Park’s amenities that we are fortunate to have, the Hemlock Creek Trail will be the most extensive. Completion of the trail will ensure that our residents, daily workforce, and visitors can enjoy safe access to some of the most treasured natural assets in Northeast Ohio.”

The concept of the West Creek Greenway originated some 20 years

ago with West Creek Conservancy founder Dave Vasarhelyi. Public support grew steadily as the Conservancy rallied citizens and civic leaders. In coordination with the Conservancy, Ohio U.S. Rep. Dennis Kucinich earmarked \$2 million for the Hemlock Creek Trail in the 2005 Federal Transportation Bill. The City of Independence, West Creek Conservancy, and other partners then helped secure the required additional funding, including the ODNR - Clean Ohio Trails Fund.

Engineering design of the trail began in 2014. In early 2018, Independence



Hemlock Creek Trail. The 1.7-mile segment of the West Creek Greenway will extend east through Cuyahoga Valley National Park from Brecksville Road in Independence to the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail in Valley View. Map courtesy of City of Independence

City Council voted to award construction contracts totaling \$3.4 million. “I have been supporting and pushing this project over a decade,” said Independence Vice-Mayor David Grendel. “It’s an investment in our city’s connection to the national park and the towpath. I think it’s an investment in the region.”

Named for the stream flowing prominently through the heart of Independence, and whose course it will closely follow, the Hemlock Creek Trail will become the largest community connector to date along Ohio’s 110-mile Towpath Trail, which when finished will extend south along the old Ohio & Erie Canal corridor from Lake Erie at Cleveland to New Philadelphia, Ohio.

The 10-foot wide asphalt all-purpose Hemlock Creek Trail will extend from Brecksville Road at Selig Drive, past the Cleveland Clinic Business Operations Center, and follow Hemlock Creek through parts of the former William H. Hunt estate in the national park. It will reclaim the abandoned part of Hemlock Road as it descends to Stone Road. A 200-foot pedestrian bridge across the Cuyahoga River will rejoin the long-separated parts of Stone Road. (County engineers had removed the original 1898 iron span in 1988.) Once east of the river, Hemlock Creek Trail will follow the abandoned Stone Road in the Village of Valley View to join the Towpath.

“This project has been a key element of the West Creek Greenway plan for more than a decade,” said West Creek Conservancy Executive Director Derek Schafer. “Hemlock Creek Trail will help enable our 25-mile inter-community recreation and green space system through Independence, Seven Hills, Parma, Parma Heights, and Brooklyn Heights. In addition to connecting these areas to each other, this will link them to our national park, three Cleveland Metropark reservations, and many other regional destinations.”



A perfect event for National Trails Day. Construction of Hemlock Creek Trail, a segment of the West Creek Greenway, formally kicked off with a June 2nd groundbreaking in Independence. The event was held next to the Cleveland Clinic Business Operations Center, 6801 Brecksville Road. Participants representing project partners in the ceremonial pose are (l to r): Ron White, former Independence Economic Development Director; Independence City Council members Dale Veverka, Carl Asseff, Dave Grendel, and Kathleen Kapusta; Tom Yablonsky, Co-founder of Canalway Partners; Derek Schafer, Executive Director of West Creek Conservancy; Independence Mayor Anthony Togliatti; Craig Kenkel, Superintendent of Cuyahoga Valley National Park; and Richard Pace, CEO of Cumberland Development.

Adds Conservancy Board Chair Jeff Lennartz, “We applaud the City of Independence for their perseverance in seeing the project through to this exciting moment. The City and our other partners have made Hemlock Creek Trail possible. Now and for generations to come, this trail will benefit community residents throughout our region not only as a basic amenity, but as a natural engine for health, growth, and prosperity.”

Completion of Hemlock Creek Trail is slated for spring of 2019. Meanwhile, West Creek Conservancy will provide updates and free guided walks along the developing Trail and other parts of the West Creek Greenway to showcase the scenic and historic nature of the area. Visit westcreek.org for the latest news on these activities and other Conservancy projects or call 216-749-3720 to be placed on the notification list.

Community Partners of West Creek Conservancy

Kurtz Bros.

Kurtz Bros., Inc. boasts nearly 70 years of experience in the landscape supply and waste-to-resource industry across Northeast Ohio. They offer full circle, sustainable solutions for recycling, stormwater management, and sediment-related issues. In addition to their commercial products and services, their four conveniently located Landscape Supply Centers, located in Avon, Willowick, Garfield Heights and Valley View, help contractors and homeowners alike take their landscape and gardening projects from concepts to reality. To speak with an expert today about your next project, call 216.986.7000 or learn more about Kurtz Bros., Inc. at www.kurtz-bros.com.



With shared missions centered on making our good earth better and conserving nature, Kurtz Bros., Inc. has been a proud supporter of West Creek Conservancy for years. Through their dedication to protection and enhancement of our neighborhoods, the team at West Creek Conservancy has truly helped transform the Greater Cleveland area into a vibrant city! We are honored to have helped along the way and will continue to lend our support for years to come.

CVE



Chagrin Valley Engineering, Ltd. (CVE) is a medium sized civil, surveying and environmental engineering firm located in Northeast Ohio. CVE has worked closely with West Creek Conservancy to protect and preserve the water and land resources within the West Creek watershed and beyond. This working relationship

between CVE and West Creek has been a strong partnership. CVE is the municipal engineer for several communities which allows them to assist the Conservancy to work with local communities to protect natural areas, open spaces, streams and waterways as well as reclaiming vacant urban lands and restoring streams, wetlands, woods and natural habitats. Understanding West Creek Conservancy is a not for profit organization, CVE's mastery of regulatory strategies, proven investigative techniques, and specialized ecological expertise enable our scientists and engineers to apply optimal solutions while minimizing project expenditures.

With all the items performed by West Creek Conservancy to meet their mission to make Cleveland a greener place to live, CVE has used their experience in a broad range of environmental and engineering services to create riverside greenways, protect high quality wetlands and streams, and evaluate the conservation values of properties. Working in conjunction with the Conservancy's staff, CVE performed pre-acquisition due diligence research to ensure project requirements were met.

CVE also provides for conservation easements and land acquisition projects, including property research, boundary surveys, ecological baseline documentation reports, and environmental database searches to document the conservation values of each property. For watershed management projects, CVE employed Geographic Information System tools to profile the physical limits of the watershed, identify land use and vegetation community types, map soil properties, and locate sensitive natural habitats and waterbodies that are essential for bio-diversity within the watershed.

2018 Greater Cleveland Trails & Greenways Conference

On May 31, 2018, West Creek Conservancy and Big Creek Connects co-chaired the 2018 Greater Cleveland Trails & Greenways Conference at Lago East Bank in Downtown Cleveland. Over 200 decision makers, planners, practitioners, and trail advocates from around Greater Cleveland gathered to share ideas, discover new tools, and set the stage to transform plans and concepts into successfully completed projects. With a diverse panel of speakers, mobile workshops, plenty of exhibitors to showcase, the conference was a huge success!



We would like to thank The George Gund Foundation for their support of this year's conference as well as their continued contributions to parks, trails, and public spaces throughout Greater Cleveland. Following the conference was the Trails Showcase, which is an opportunity for municipalities, non-profits, park systems and for-profit enterprises to highlight their accomplishments and share best practices. We'd like to recognize and thank OHM Advisors & Great Lakes Brewing Company for sponsoring the Showcase & Reception with the fabulous food and beverages. Please visit www.gctrails.org to view the 34 submissions for the showcase, presentations, and conference photographs.



Co-Chairs

Big Creek Connects

West Creek Conservancy

Planning Partners

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– Cleveland Section

Bike Cleveland

City of Cleveland Office of Sustainability

Cleveland City Planning Commission

Cleveland Metroparks

Cuyahoga County Board of Health

Cuyahoga County Planning Commission

Environmental Design Group

Greater Cleveland Regional
Transit Authority

National Park Service: Rivers & Trails

Northeast Ohio Areawide
Coordinating Agency

Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District

OHM Advisors

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

The Trust for Public Land

Thank you to all 2018 Conference Sponsors You make it possible!

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Commission

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Flats Forward

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HZW Environmental

Consultants, LLC

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Northeast Ohio Areawide

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Norwalk Concrete Industries

Ohio City Incorporated

Ohio to Erie Trail

OHM Advisors

Rails to Trails Conservancy

Share the River

Suburban Press

The George Gund Foundation

The Sherwin-Williams Company

The Trust for Public Land

UH BIKES

Western Reserve Land Conservancy

Welcome New Board Members!

West Creek Conservancy is pleased to announce the addition of four new members to the Board of Directors:

- **Mike Bean** of Parma, Corporate Facilities Manager at Third Federal Savings & Loan
- **Bob Dagostino** of Parma, Print Coordinator at the Plain Dealer and Vice President of the US Bartenders Guild
- **John Daters** of Lakewood, Director of Digital Strategy at Ripple Effect Interactive
- **John Ivancic** of Brunswick, Technology Director at Sherwin-Williams

"We are excited to welcome Mike, Bob, John (Daters), and John (Ivancic)," says Board Chair Jeff Lennartz. "Each brings a new community perspective, skillset, and passion that will help West Creek Conservancy meet the conservation needs of Greater Cleveland."

R E M E M B E R I N G Dorothy Hazel & Irene Toth



Dorothy Hazel



Irene Toth

West Creek Conservancy recently lost two longtime board members and cherished friends.

Dorothy Hazel served as a director since the board's creation in 2000, additionally becoming an officer and committee chair. Dorothy and her husband Irv joined West Creek Conservancy in 1998. From the onset, she used her talents as archivist, organizer, and researcher. Dorothy spoke with passion and respect, whether at board meetings, city council meetings, or with friends. She served the larger community in myriad other ways.

Before her death on February 11th, the Board of Directors created an award titled Conservation Hero and bestowed it upon Dorothy as its first recipient. In celebration of her life, a bench will be installed near West Creek at a point where the future West Creek Greenway trail will pass.

Irene Toth joined West Creek Conservancy as someone who loved sharing fossil history and raising public awareness of the environment. She died July 5th. Irene lived near West Creek valley and collected many fossils there, earning her the nickname The Fossil Lady. An exhibit at West Creek Reservation contains some of her collection. After her husband died, Irene became a frequent and enthusiastic volunteer with the Conservancy. In 2003 she was elected to the board of directors. Irene, a retired English teacher, wrote many articles about the West Creek area and became newsletter editor.

Irene and Dorothy often helped staff event tables, enthusiastically greeting guests and visitors, always sharing a smile. Dorothy Hazel and Irene Toth cared deeply about the natural world and held a commitment that inspired all who knew them. Their legacies will touch generations. A simple message from Dorothy will be inscribed on her memorial bench. It captures the enduring spirit of both women: "We can all make a difference."



CREATURES IN THE FOREST
5K TRAIL RUN

5K TRAIL RUN!

Saturday, October 27, 2018
Keystone Pavilion at West Creek Reservation
2277 W. Ridgewood Dr., Parma, OH

RACE DAY TIME SCHEDULE:
7:30–8:15am Packet Pick-up
(pre-race pick up available on 10/25/18)
8:30am 5K Race
8:45am 1-Mile Walk/Run & Trot for Treats

INCLUDED WITH RACE ENTRY:

- Trail Run with bib tag and chip timing
- Race bandana/t-shirt (5K runners only)
- Post race food and drinks
- 1-Mile Walk or Trick or Treating 1-Mile hike for kids & Music

~ Post race festivities include: awards, food truck, spirits, and music

For questions or to learn more about sponsorship opportunities, please contact Dawn Petkov at 216-749-3720 ext. 10.

Proceeds will benefit West Creek Conservancy's efforts in creating a Greener Greater Cleveland!

Presented by
University Hospitals

\$25 race fee before 10/12/18
\$5 Trot for Treats fee for kids 12 years old and under

Register today at
GreaterClevelandXC.com or visit
westcreek.org for more info

COSTUMES ENCOURAGED!

Yes, I want to help West Creek Conservancy protect woods and streams in Greater Cleveland.

Enclosed is my 100% tax deductible contribution to help West Creek Conservancy protect natural areas, acquire new parkland, restore streams and provide opportunities to experience nature in our community.

Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Annual Memberships:

- | | | | |
|--|---------|---|---------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation Leader | \$2,500 | <input type="checkbox"/> Watershed Patron | \$1,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greenway Champion | \$500 | <input type="checkbox"/> River Guardian | \$250 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trail Builder | \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> Land Steward | \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Introductory | \$35 | | |

I would like to learn more about:

- ☐ Volunteer Opportunities
- ☐ Planned Giving
- ☐ Conserving My Land
- ☐ Event & Intern Sponsorship

Please make checks payable to:
West Creek Conservancy
P.O. Box 347113, Cleveland, OH 44134
or donate online @ www.westcreek.org

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

2018 Up! A Creek Conservation Gala

West Creek Conservancy's 2018 Conservation Gala, Up! A Creek, was a huge success, bringing together a sold-out crowd of 600 supporters from the Greater Cleveland community. The event was held on August 25th at Windows on the River, in downtown Cleveland, to celebrate 21 years of land conservation. The night began with cocktail hour in the Greater Cleveland Aquarium, where guests mingled over hors d'oeuvres and cocktails. The evening also featured a delectable dinner, tasty desserts from A Taste of Excellence and Nothing Bundt Cake, plentiful local brew and spirits, and the vibrant music courtesy of Zach Friedhof and The Bluewater Kings. MC'd by

Auctioneer Bob Hale, the event raised vital support for West Creek Conservancy's land and water conservation programs throughout Greater Cleveland. Five incredible live auction prizes and over thirty-five baskets comprised this year's raffle items. Prizes for the raffles and live auctions were donated by over 200 generous businesses. The always-popular wine toss, a lively game of Heads or Tails, cornhole and Jenga on the riverfront patio, and a photo booth rounded out the options for partygoers throughout the evening. The celebration was sponsored, in part, by our tremendous community partners - Kurtz Bros, Cuyahoga Valley Engineering, and

studioTECHNE. We thank each of the nearly 50 companies and organizations who also generously sponsored the event. Of course we also thank our Event Committee led by Dawn Petkov and Barbara Hermes for pulling it all together. Finally, we extend our sincere appreciation to our honorary event chair, Brian M. Zimmerman, CEO of the Cleveland Metroparks. We could not have pulled off the event without your ongoing partnership! Thanks to everyone for making Up! A Creek 2018 a success! Your support is greatly appreciated and essential to keeping West Creek Conservancy strong and creating a Greener Greater Cleveland.

Thank you to our 2018 Up! A Creek Sponsors:

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**We hope to see you at next year's
Up! A Creek event on August 17,
2019 at Windows on the River!**

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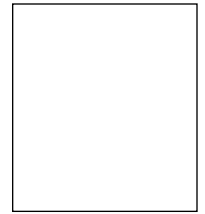
2018 Up! A Creek Raffle & Auction Donors

12th Street Florist	Connor Redman	Lake Erie Crushers	Quaker Steak & Lube
A Taste of Excellence	Conservancy for	Lake Erie Nature & Science	Rich & Barbara Weiser
ABC Piping Co.	Cuyahoga Valley	Center	Rick Capone
Ace Hardware	National Park	Larchmere Fire Works	Ridgewood Golf Course
Adventure Zone	COSI	LaunchHouse	Robert Dagostino
African Safari Wildlife Park	Costco Wholesale	Litehouse Pools & Spas	Rock & Roll Hall of Fame
Aladdin's Eatery	Cozumel Restaurante & Cantina	Maggie & Ellie's Pottery and	Scene75 Entertainment Center
Aloft Hotels	Creekside Restaurant & Bar	Art Studio	Scrambler Marie's Breakfast
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AMC Theatres	Dan Veloski	Make Believe Family Fun	Self-Love LLC
Arc of Appalachia	Destiny Derma Spa & Salon	Center	Share the River, Jim Ridge
Austin's Wood Fire Grille	DiGeronimo Family	Margaritaville	Sharon Pfeifer
AutoZone	Eat'n Park	Maria Curcio	Shearer Equipment
Banyan Tree	Emma Lee Spring	Maribeth Feke	Sky Zone
Barbara Hermes	Eric Sluss	Mark Haynes Construction	Slyman's Tavern
Bartels Busack Pet Hospital	Erie Island Coffee Co.	Market Garden Brewery	Souper Market
Resort & Spa	Espress Nails & Spa	Master Pizza Parma	Sparano Appraisal
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BEET JAR juicebar+grocery	Fat Head's Brewery	Waterpark	Square 22 Restaurant & Bar
Bella Toccare De Spa & Salon	Fin Feather Fur Outfitters	Melt Bar & Grilled	State Sharpening
Beviamo Cafe	Fish Furniture	Michael Angelo's Bakery	Superelectric Pinball Parlor
BJ's Restaurant and	Fitworks	Michael Bean Jr.	Susan Ballou
Brewhouse	Forage Public House	Michael Craig	Sweet Melissa
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Brunswick Strongsville Storage	Get Air Cleveland	Mueller Family	Terry Stahurski
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Cedar Fair	Great Lakes Science Center	Nothing Bundt Cakes	The Dinner Detective
Charles Ritley Associates	Great Lakes Watersports	OBM Arena	The Home Depot
Chick-fil-A	Grog Shop	Office Depot	The Jump Yard
Chris & Teri Berwald	Grumpy's Café	Ohio City Bicycle Co-op	The Little Birdie Wine Nest
Chris Soukup	Harry Buffalo	Ohio State Fair	The Macaron Tea Room
Cinemark Theatres	HiiTtoFiT	Old Carolina Barbecue Company	The Oak Barrel
Cleveland Axe Throwing	Hilton Cleveland Downtown	Old Lakeshore Charters	The Olive Scene
Cleveland Brew Bus	Ho Wah	Old School Architectural	The Paul Duda Gallery
Cleveland Browns	Hokulia Shave Ice	Salvage Project	The Rail
Cleveland Cavaliers	Holiday Inn Express	On-Call Waterproofing	TownHall
Cleveland Cookware	House of Blues Cleveland	Online Liquidation Auction	Tracey Rock
Cleveland Improv	ICEMULE Coolers	Orvis	Trail Mix
Cleveland Metroparks	J.T. Krohe	Outback Steakhouse	Tremont Taphouse
Cleveland Monsters	Jersey Mike's Subs	Painting with a Twist	Trivs Restaurant & Lounge
Cleveland Museum	Jim & Dee Laurence	Pat Catan's	Ty Fun Thai Bistro
of Natural History	Jim Ptacek	Peak Resorts	U.S.S. Cod
Cleveland Play House	Jimmy John's	Petitti Garden Center	Uber
Cleveland Skydiving Center	John Daters	Pickwick & Frolic	Ursula Keck
Cleveland Whiskey	John E. Skory	Pita Pit	Watershed Distillery
Columbus Association for the	Josef & Katherine Krist	Pizza (216)	Whippoorwill Manor Farm
Performing Arts	Joy Machines Bike Shop	PizzaFire	Williams-Sonoma
Commence Fire	Kingfish	Potbelly Sandwich Shop	Winking Lizard Tavern
Training Academy	Lago Custom Events	Pulp Juice & Smoothie Bar	Zoup!





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Calendar of Events

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Meetings held at West Creek Reservation's Watershed Stewardship Center.

Greenways of Cuyahoga County

Thurs, Nov 8, 7:00 - 9:00pm

West Creek Greenway is one of many greenways coming soon to a neighborhood near you. Glenn Coyne, Director of the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission will show and discuss the network of new trails being planned by a partnership of organizations that will build connections throughout our county.

CREATURES IN THE FOREST 5K RUN (\$) & 1-MILE WALK

Sat, Oct 27, 8:30 am Keystone Shelter at West Creek Reservation

Lace up for a trail run or 1-mile fun walk through West Creek Reservation. Plus, a Trot-for-Treats for kids under 12. Includes food trucks, spirits, and awards. Registration required.

HOLIDAY PARTY

Tues, Dec 4, 6:30 pm

Watershed Stewardship Center at West Creek Reservation. Celebrate the season and another year of conservation successes.

RSVP to dpetkov@westcreek.org or 216-749-3720 ext 10

To register, get tickets, or check out the details visit westcreek.org or call 216-749-3720 x10.