

Cleveland Metroparks Natural Resources Management Plan

Cleveland, Ohio



Cleveland Metroparks includes 22,000 acres of open space that define one of the most interconnected, extensive urban park systems in the U.S. The Park District’s mission is to “conserve significant natural resources and enhance people’s lives by integrating high-quality outdoor education, recreation and zoological opportunities into people’s lives.” The Natural Resources (NR) Division, comprised of natural resources managers, biologists and ecologists, offers critical scientific and management support for this mission.

In 2015, the NR Division contracted Biohabitats to help craft a guidance document

A new management plan supports the Natural Resources Division of Cleveland Metroparks in prioritizing effective stewardship of the District’s natural resources and communicating their importance to a wide audience.

that would serve as a tool to communicate to the Board of Park Commissioners, Cleveland Metroparks staff, and the general public about natural resources management considerations and future actions. Biohabitats helped the NR Division identify the target audience and key themes of the Plan, synthesized and compiled data describing the current status of the natural resources throughout the system, drafted the plan, and established a framework for updating it.

The plan explains the three principles that guide Cleveland Metroparks in the management and protection of natural resources. The first is to provide lasting stewardship of the Park District’s flora, fauna, and geological resources. Secondly, the NR

Division prioritizes scale and connectivity when making resource decisions, and finally, the Division practices science-based adaptive management to account for conditions that change through time.

This plan provides an overview of Metroparks’ natural resources and its threats, needs, and opportunities. In the long term, the NR Management Plan will serve as a framework for the holistic management of the Metroparks natural resources. The final plan also communicates immediate priorities and outlines near-term projects to protect, restore, and maintain the natural resources of the park district.

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