

Euclid Creek Watershed Update

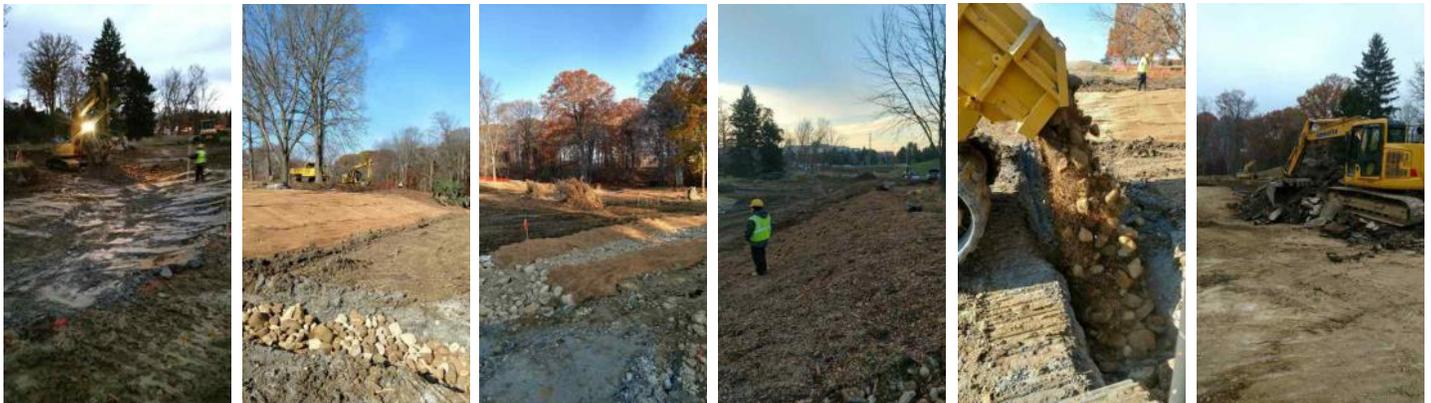


The Knitty Gritty: Acacia Restoration update, *by Jenn Grieser, Cleveland Metroparks*

When working on a restoration project, I love pretty project renderings provided by consultants vying for the design contract. Similarly lush, green photographs, which shed the best light on projects after construction, encourage us to do more. What about all of the details – the knitty gritty – between renderings & post-construction pics?

Here’s a glimpse of those details for the Euclid Creek restoration at Acacia Reservation, listing a week’s worth of work by contractor, Meadville Land Services (MLS). November 9th – 15th MLS stripped topsoil, excavated excess material, built a cobble riffle, excavated a pool, graded a spoil pile, covered ground with wood chips, installed cobble field drain outlets, added topsoil, seed and mulch to floodplain & slope, placed habitat structures (e.g. snags & large woody debris), installed coir matting, hauled out asphalt, installed cobble in buried silt, removed asphalt path and gathered irrigation pipes.

These activities may not compel a day of *plein air* painting, but they are the foundation to a functioning floodplain and stream ecosystem. We look forward to unveiling a beautiful canvas for everyone’s appreciation in 2017!



This project is financed in part through grants from the United States and Ohio Environmental Protection Agencies, under the provisions of Section 319(h) of the Clean Water Act and the Water Resources Restoration Sponsor Program.

FOEC Awarded Watershed Mini Grant for Ecological Management Plan

We are pleased to announce that Friends of Euclid Creek received a \$2,500 grant from the Western Reserve Land Conservancy’s (WRLC) 2016 Dominion East Ohio *Watershed Mini Grant program*, presented at a ceremony at the WRLC office on October 20th. With this funding the FOEC Board’s Conservation Committee will hire a local environmental consultant to develop an ecological management plan for the Dusty Goldenrod Preserve, a 12.5 acre site protected in 2007 with Clean Ohio funding, with a state-endangered plant, sensitive wetlands and headwater tributaries running through it. The goal is to come up with a management plan that includes short- and long-term actions to protect the resources on the property and to get more students involved in protecting this valuable watershed asset.



Mike Reed, Dominion General Manager of Pipeline Operations (left) and Betsy Juliano, WRLC Board Chair (right) present grant award to Ken Messinger-Rapport and Claire Posius

2017 Upcoming Meetings & Events

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| February 2, 8:00-10:00am | Euclid Creek Watershed Council Meeting, Mayfield Heights* |
| March 10, 9:00-11:00am | Public Involvement Committee Meeting, South Euclid* |
| May 20, 10:00am-noon | Wildwood Park Wetland Restoration Project and Creek Cleanup Day, Euclid Creek Reservation, Cleve.* |
| July 15, 9:00am-2:30pm | 4th Annual A Day in the Life of Euclid Creek, Locations throughout the watershed* |
| Next FOEC Mtg. March 7 | Friends of Euclid Creek meetings, details on page 3 |

*To register or for questions, contact the Watershed Coordinator or check the website (contact/web information on back page of newsletter)

President's Message, *by Ken Messinger-Rapport*

The Friends of Euclid Creek 15th Anniversary year is nearly concluded. We would like to thank all of you, our members and stakeholders, for participating in the “Fifteen Miles with Friends” hikes, the Day in the Life of Euclid Creek, and the Watershed Summit. We hope you learned something new, took pleasure in the outdoors, took satisfaction in helping the environment, and came to be even more inspired to advocate for the preservation, restoration, and regeneration of the natural beauty that is within the Euclid Creek Watershed.

At the Board level, we are in the process of setting our schedule of events and programs for the coming calendar year, so stay tuned for that—there will be a mixture of lecture presentations and outdoor events, so hopefully we'll have something for everyone.

Also, you may have noticed that membership dues have been requested irregularly in the past. Beginning this coming May, we are going to ask everyone to pay their dues by June 1st so that you can vote in the organizational elections at the June picnic. A new schedule of yearly dues has been adopted by the Board and shall consist of the following: Individuals: \$25.00, Families: \$35.00, Students (up to age 24) and Seniors (age 65 and over): \$20.00 per year. As dues are necessary we have tried to keep them affordable, yet at a level that allows us to cover our annual expenses which range between \$7,000 and \$10,000 per year. If you feel comfortable paying your dues or making a donation electronically through our secure website, you can do so by going to www.EuclidCreekWatershed.org and clicking on the ‘Support Us’ tab.

Even though we have a budget and expenses, we still operate entirely on a volunteer basis which has been our strength and weakness as an organization. It means we have committed volunteers, but it also means we have limited resources. So, if you'd like to see something get done that we are not doing or not doing well enough, I encourage you to step forward and contact me about joining one of our working committees. We will be working all winter in preparation for events and programs that will emerge with the blossoms in Spring.

Have a safe and productive winter, Ken Messinger-Rapport, President



Anniversary cake (above) and Acacia Reservation hike as part of 'Fifteen Miles with Friends' series (below)



Funding Our Future—2017 Scholarship Application Open

Each year, Friends of Euclid Creek strives to support a college-bound high school senior or current college student pursuing a degree in environmental studies. We award at least one **\$1000 scholarship** to be used for educational purposes. Applicants are evaluated on their potential to contribute to the field of environmental studies or a related field.

Eligibility: The applicant must not be a previous scholarship recipient and must be a high school senior or college student planning to pursue a degree or certificate in environmental studies. We prefer a student who attends or has attended a school located in Beachwood, Cleveland, Euclid, Highland Heights, Lyndhurst, Mayfield Heights, Pepper Pike, Richmond Heights, South Euclid, Willoughby Hills, or Mayfield Village - communities in Euclid Creek watershed.

Application deadline: All application materials must be postmarked on or before April 1, 2017.

Application details: At www.EuclidCreekWatershed.org and click on icon for ‘FOEC Scholarship’ on home page.

Questions: Direct questions to jeanette.evans@sbcglobal.net.

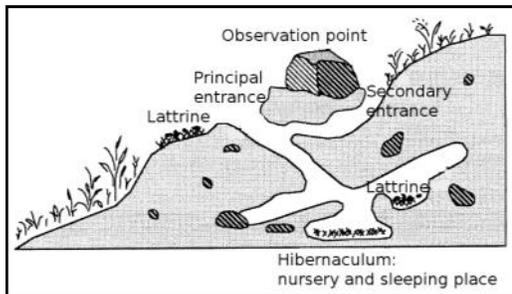


Watershed Wildlife, *by Barb Holtz*

Ask the average person what mammals do in winter and most often the response is “hibernate.” On the contrary, we have very few furry hibernators in northeast Ohio. Just because we don’t regularly see an animal in winter doesn’t mean it’s down for a snowy snooze. Take chipmunks, for instance. From yards filled with these striped scamperers throughout spring, summer and fall to few and far between in the cold. Where do they go in winter?



Chipmunk Photo—Jim McCormac via Ohio Division of Wildlife



Underground Chipmunk Burrow

Chipmunks are a great example of a not quite hibernator yet not quite active winter mammal. These members of the squirrel family create a cozy underground retreat complete with different chambers for sleeping, toileting and storing food. In warmer months when the ground is soft, chippies stuff their cheek pouches with dirt to excavate their home, creating more than one entrance and exit. This tunnel & chamber system is perfect for protection and day to day living during warmer months as well as for extended slumber in winter.

As above ground dwellers, we rarely recognize the world hidden beneath our feet. While we slip and slide through the snow, chipmunks stir underground nibbling on cached food in their hidden lair. They sleep again, eat some more and may even emerge to dip a toe in the snow. Chipmunks also wait. Attuned to nature’s cycle of seasons, they will resurface to busy themselves with new life.

And The Award Goes To....

The Friends of Euclid Creek held its annual Holiday Party and Awards presentation on December 6th. As always, we were thrilled to recognize the extraordinary efforts of our volunteers and partner organizations who make everything we do possible. In recognition of their outstanding contributions, the awards for 2016 went to the following recipients:

Volunteer of the Year to **Barb Holtz**, in appreciation of her outstanding work in planning and implementing Friends’ 15th Anniversary programming including: “15 Miles with Friends” and “A Day in the Life” of Euclid Creek.

Partner Organization Award in appreciation of the **Cleveland Metroparks** (CMP) and its outstanding staff for partnering with Friends to plan and produce “A Day in the Life of the Euclid Creek”, enabling Friends to celebrate its 15th Anniversary with distinction. Jenn Grieser and Chris Cheraso accepted the award on behalf of CMP.

Service Award to **Brian Gilbert** for conceiving, creating, and completing the Wild Plant ID App—a tool that will enhance every hiker’s experience while walking through the woods and meadows of the Euclid Creek watershed.

And, finally, our highest honor the **Tom Jenkins Award** was given to **Christi Carlson** in appreciation of her many years of outstanding service to Friends; and, especially in recognition of her successful term as President.



*Ken Messinger-Rapport & Barb Holtz (left)
Claire Posius,
Chris Cheraso,
Jenn Grieser, Ken MR (right)*



*Ken Messinger-Rapport & Brian Gilbert (left)
Ken & Christi Carlson (right)*



Upcoming FOEC Meetings / Activities

January and February - No meetings / Winter break

March 7, 7:00pm - Acacia Reservation - Climate change presentation / discussion.

April 4, 7:00pm - Acacia Reservation - Barb Holtz will discuss incorporating native plants in the landscape.

Please confirm upcoming meetings and details on our website or facebook page (web addresses on back page)

Planting Partnerships Pay-off, *by Jenn Grieser, Cleveland Metroparks*

This fall several organizations – Cleveland Metroparks, Holden Arboretum and Friends of Euclid Creek - worked together to continue to reforest Acacia Reservation. Holden received a grant from the Arbor Day Foundation through funding from CSX to purchase 200+ trees and associated soil amendments and protection. Over 50 enthusiastic volunteers from the Watershed Volunteer Program, Tree Stewards, Beachwood High School, FOEC, boy scouts and even adjacent neighborhoods enjoyed gorgeous weather while installing the native trees in the northern section of the park. The new area links two sections previously planted by Park District staff on Arbor Day. The forest will be forest soon enough!



Adjacent Watershed Update

Euclid High School Environmental Club Plants Trees in Green Creek Outdoor Learning Laboratory, *by Paul Beno, City of Euclid*

On a chilly and wet day during the first week of November, a hearty and enthusiastic group from Euclid High School's SAVE Environmental Club forged their way into the Green Creek Valley.

The valley threads its way between Upper Valley Drive and Green Road along Euclid's southwest border. The students' mission was to plant twenty trees to seed the new outdoor learning laboratory as a place where students can conduct experiments and observe the natural world. The tree plots will help demonstrate the impact of the deer population on forest regeneration.

The outdoor experiment was funded by a grant from Royal Bank of Canada Capital Markets Corp. as part of the lender's commitment to environmental issues in the Great Lakes region. Other partners included the Cuyahoga Soil and Water Conservation District, Friends of Euclid Creek and the Alliance for the Great Lakes who developed the grant application in partnership with Euclid Public Schools.

Claire Posius of the Cuyahoga Soil and Water District was the technical advisor for the project. She selected the tree species and advised on the setup of the deer exclosure plots. The students planted one fence protected tree plot, one fenced control area and one unprotected set of trees. Through this experiment of creating three different marked observation areas, students will observe the effect of deer browsing and analyze the results.

The tree planting is the first student activity in a ten acre preserve which has been acquired by the City of Euclid as an outdoor learning laboratory. The protected preserve, unlike a traditional park, is an area where students can experiment.

The students were led by the SAVE Club's advisors Matt Young and Ramona Spivey. The tree planting demonstration was provided by Chris Vild, a certified arborist from the Friends of Euclid Creek organization.

The land acquisition was carried out by Paul Beno who serves as the Euclid Landbank Manager. Beno also assisted with the tree planting. "The kids were real troopers digging in with their new tree planting skills. While it was a bit wet and muddy, a good time was had by one and all", observed Beno.

Small groups who are interested in a tour of the Green Creek Outdoor Learning Laboratory can call Paul Beno at 216-289-8180.



Ed Kapraly, Riverside Native Trees and Nursery—where native trees/shrubs from; Students and FOEC volunteers planting trees; Reflections on day discussed in outdoor land lab setting (from left to right)

City of Cleveland Awarded GLRI Shoreline Cities Grant

In October, City of Cleveland's Office of Sustainability was awarded a \$175,000 Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI), Great Lakes Shoreline Cities Grant to construct a green infrastructure project at Cleveland Metroparks Wildwood Park in the Euclid Creek Reservation. A series of bioretention cells will be installed to capture and treat polluted stormwater runoff from the surrounding marina parking lot, and will prevent roughly 660,000 gallons of untreated stormwater from reaching Lake Erie. Cleveland Metroparks is taking the lead on hiring a design-build team through a competitive bid process to implement the project in 2017. So keep an eye out for updates in the upcoming months.



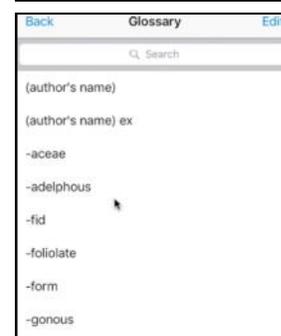
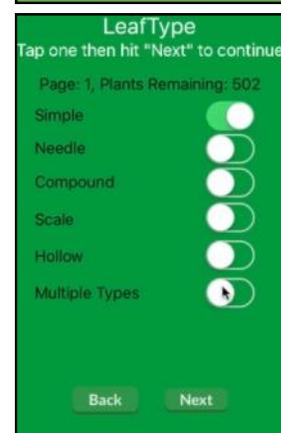
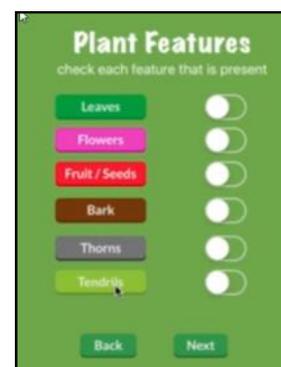
Rough conceptual plan of bioretention areas

Wild Plant ID Application Update, by Brian Gilbert, FOEC Board Member

Wild Plant ID is a project of Friends of Euclid Creek. It is an app (application) for smartphones to help people with no botanical training to identify wild plants anywhere within the Euclid Creek watershed. The app begins by asking the user to select any of six features (leaves, flowers, fruit, bark, thorns and/or tendrils) found on the plant to be identified ('Plant Features' graphic to right). The app will then lead the user through a series of attribute screens from which selections are made about the plants' form and structure. For each feature selected there will be between 3 and 6 attribute screens (e.g. 'Leaf Type' graphic to right) presented. Each attribute screen will have a short list of characteristics of each attribute and include an illustration and optional pop-up definition ('Glossary' graphic to right) to help with the choice. After the choice is made on each attribute screen the identity of the plant will be presented. Since all known wild plants within the watershed are included, all identification attempts should result in an identification. There will also be additional information available about the plant such as photos (to help confirm identification), rarity status, uses, and relationships to use and its environment.

The idea for a computer application to help amateurs identify plants in the wild initially grew out of work to database the 16,000 herbarium specimens collected by **Dr. George Wilder** at Cleveland State University (CSU). During this work, it became apparent that a computer could be a really useful tool in plant identification. With a belief that most of the amateur plant identification books tried to cover too wide an area, such as the entire eastern United States, it was decided to create an app which focused on identifying all the wild plants in a more limited, biologically-defined area. The Euclid Creek watershed was selected for the first prototype since it had a number of protected wild areas and included a wide variety of habitats. One of these areas, Highland Heights Community Park, had already been the subject of a thesis by **Suneeti Jog**, a PhD candidate in biology at CSU.

As the design continued to evolve it became obvious that there was one missing ingredient—the computer code to make the app work on what now was being called a smartphone. Fortunately, in 2014 it was learned that the Excel TECC program at Mayfield High School was looking for community-based projects for their computer science students to get involved in. They selected Wild Plant ID as one of these projects. By early November 2016, the coding for the first prototype of the Wild Plant ID app was created by students **David Bryson** and **Max Koltan**. Under the guidance of **Ron Suchy**, their instructor/advisor, they prepared a 3-minute YouTube video describing the app and illustrating how it would work on an iPhone. That video was used as their submission to the Congressional App Challenge. Their video may be viewed at the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HPopejxRTQY>. Even though there is still some coding work to complete the prototype, it is likely that the app will be finalized by late March 2017 so that it can be submitted to the CoolTech Challenge. Website address: http://exceltecc-itp.org/wildplantID_root/index.html.



Euclid Creek Watershed Coordinator
Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District
6100 West Canal Road
Valley View, Ohio 44125

More About Our Program Partners

Euclid Creek Watershed Council (ECWC)

City of Beachwood	City of Cleveland
City of Euclid	City of Highland Heights
City of Lyndhurst	City of Mayfield Heights
Mayfield Village	City of Richmond Heights
City of South Euclid	

Each community appoints a representative to serve on the Council, which meets three times a year and has several committees that focus on education & outreach, technical issues and volunteer monitoring.

Friends of Euclid Creek (FOEC)

The Friends of Euclid Creek is a community-based watershed stewardship group, a non-profit 501(c)(3).

Board: **President**—Ken Messinger-Rapport; **Vice President**—Chris Vild; **Secretary**—Sue Swisher; **Treasurer**—Christine Laskin; and **Directors**—Christi Carlson, Brian Gilbert, Patrick Henry, Jim Juknialis, Anna Kozlenko and Annie Roberto.

Meetings: FOEC holds educational meetings, hikes and tours throughout the year. Check our website or Facebook page for the meeting schedule.

Support FOEC by becoming a member or donating as we need your support! Call, email, or check the website to find out how.

Friends of Euclid Creek
P.O. Box 21384
South Euclid, OH 44121
FriendsofEuclidCreek@gmail.com



Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District

Houses the Euclid Creek Watershed Coordinator, the Program's full time staff person who implements the Euclid Creek Watershed Action Plan and acts as the liaison between the ECWC and FOEC.

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Program Website and Facebook Page

Website: www.EuclidCreekWatershed.org

Facebook: Like 'Friends of Euclid Creek'



Only Rain Down the Drain

If you would like to **receive this electronic newsletter**, sign up on the website, email, or call the Watershed Coordinator with your email address.

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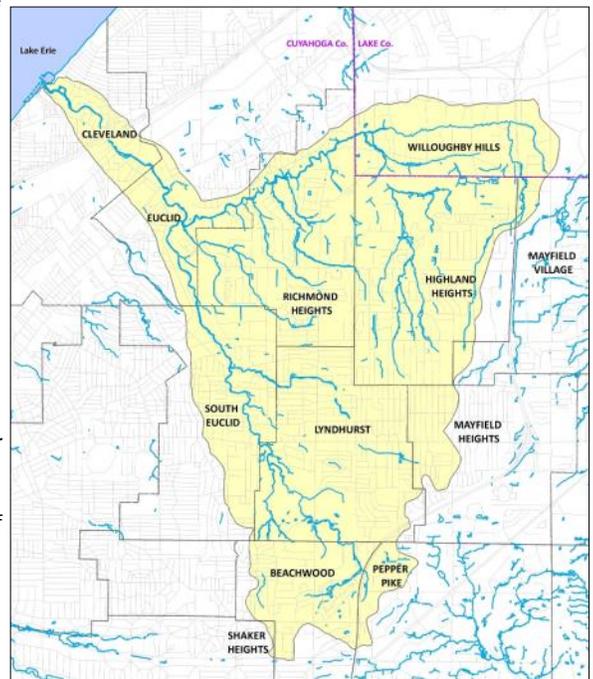


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What is a Watershed? A watershed is the area of land that drains to a single river, stream or lake. Because the actions we take on land directly affect the quality of our rivers and streams, it is important to take the entire watershed into consideration when trying to protect and improve the health of our local waters.

The Euclid Creek Watershed drains 24 square miles from 11 Northeast Ohio communities in Cuyahoga County and a portion of Lake County. The Creek includes 34 miles of streams as far as 8 miles away from the Creek's outflow to Lake Erie, our source of drinking water, at Wildwood Park in Cleveland.



Euclid Creek is one of the most densely populated and developed watersheds along the Ohio Lake Erie coastline—which results in poor water quality. But we have a plan to restore the health of the watershed and it includes you, so contact us to find out how you can help Euclid Creek today!

Map of the Euclid Creek Watershed.