

Reservoir Reflections

Watershed Management News Spring 2014

THE CITY OF
COLUMBUS

MICHAEL B. COLEMAN, MAYOR

DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC UTILITIES

Watershed Management Program Review Progressing

Following a public meeting with homeowners adjacent to city-owned land buffers around the drinking water reservoirs last fall, the Columbus Department of Public Utilities began review of its watershed management programs this past winter. This newsletter will be sent periodically to update our neighbors on that progress and to share related items of interest.

A summary of the public meeting was mailed in December, but to recap, the city agreed to move forward with three new strategies. Stantec, a consultant firm, has been hired to assist the department in developing:

- A pilot project to remove invasive species from the land buffers along the reservoirs. Several city-owned properties have been identified for removing invasive species this year, and we will work with the adjacent owners to encourage removal of these non-beneficial plants on their private property for best success on controlling regrowth on both parcels.
- Paths to be allowed on city-owned land to access the water without requirement of a dock permit. The consultant is developing recommended standards for path materials and alignments to minimize erosion and discourage geese. (Boats still require an annual dock or stake permit).
- Flexibility on stair access where possible. Stantec is researching standards for slopes and stair requirements based on the different types of terrain found around the city's three reservoirs, Griggs, Hoover and O'Shaughnessy.



The city will have recommendations from Stantec by June on those three items.

Separately, as also discussed at the public meeting, the city is in the process of retaining a consultant to assist with longer-term watershed master planning updates to protect the quality of the city's drinking water supplies. Columbus provides drinking water to 1.1 million customers in the central Ohio area. This consultant will

provide expertise and recommendations to the department in evaluating risks to the reservoirs, and devising cost effective watershed protection strategies. The scope of work will also include review of the land stewardship program. This review will include benchmarking with other similar cities, gathering input from stakeholders and making recommendations. One area in particular to be reviewed is the transferability of land stewardship agreements. We are hoping to be ready to share the recommendations with the community by early 2015 and to begin implementation of any needed changes by next spring.

We look forward to working with all of you in the future. If you have any questions regarding watershed management or land stewardship agreements, please contact the Watershed Management Office at 645-1721, visit www.watershed.columbus.gov or email watershed@columbus.gov. For boat dock or stake permit application information, please contact the Columbus Recreation and Parks Department at 645-3337.

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Upcoming Waterway Volunteer Opportunities

<u>Date/Time</u>	<u>Location/Activity</u>	<u>Contact/Organization</u>
Saturday, May 31 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Griggs Reservoir litter cleanup	Columbus Department of Public Utilities/Scioto Boat Club, 645-1748 or LOWinters@columbus.gov
Saturday, June 7 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Kenny Park (behind Graceland) invasive plant removal	Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed info@olentangywatershed.org, or 267-3386
Saturday, June 14 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM	Adena Brook litter cleanup/invasive plant removal	Adena Brook Community, 447-8043 or judyrob59@gmail.com
Saturday, September 20 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Hoover Reservoir litter cleanup	Columbus Department of Public Utilities, 645-1748 or LOWinters@columbus.gov

Bags, gloves and light refreshments are usually provided and all are welcome to join.

Reservoir Parkland Area Parking Lot and Roadway Improvements

Various improvement projects will continue on City of Columbus reservoir parkland areas this year, to be overseen by the Department of Public Utilities, Division of Water engineering staff.

At Griggs Reservoir, the City of Columbus will be replacing the existing pavement between Griggs Dam and Fishing Road at Griggs Reservoir. The improvements will be done between July and November and will be performed so that at least one boat launch ramp will be accessible at all times. Construction will be coordinated with Department of Recreation and Parks activities.

Various improvements will continue at Hoover Reservoir this year as well. Please look for informational signage in these areas.