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GRAPEVINE

Volunteer Information, News & Events



Volunteer Spotlight



Sharon

Years of Service – 2

What's the most interesting thing you've learned recently?

How intricate the food growing environment is from the fungi mycelium in the soil passing nutrients to plants all the way up through when we eventually eat. (Book: What Your Food Ate)

What is your favorite volunteer activity? Stew crew or landscaping; it gets me outdoors and doing physical work.

What is your specialty dish?

Chocolate Sourdough Cake.

What is your favorite Great Park volunteer memory?

Spotting the frogs in the pond at Woodland Mound.

What's your favorite outdoor activity?

Walking, hiking, and biking. It's hard to choose!

What might we be surprised to know about you?

I helped build jet engines in the 1988 GE strike.

What is your favorite Great Park and why?

Woodland Mound for the views and trails.

Stopping Erosion to Keep Our Big Lands Accessible

With so much water across our big lands, we always must be aware of the power of erosion to degrade these spaces. Water erosion is a natural process that has molded the planet into the valleys, hillsides, mountains, and cliffsides that are familiar today. But erosion also has the potential to cause major damage to important areas of our parks, limiting access and harming ecosystems.

Erosion problems are among those included in our Ten-Year Critical Infrastructure Needs study, which lists over \$100 million in projects that need attention. Infrastructure repairs were included in our commitment to Hamilton County when voters approved the 2021 levy.

Many of our Great Parks are surrounded by significant commercial development. While the proximity to these developed places adds convenience to our day-to-day lives, it also means our parks and conservation areas are now closer to parking lots, streets, and expanses of asphalt and concrete. These impervious surfaces do not allow rainwater to soak in, increasing the amount and speed of water runoff, which makes erosion worse.

On land, erosion cuts away the soil and can cause safety hazards at the water's edge. Our Conservation and Planning teams are often called in to address erosion damage among the more than 80 miles of trails in Great Parks. Eroded areas of the land can also hold less water, which causes worse flooding.

By introducing more soil into the water, erosion can cause excess siltation in creeks, which is a form of water pollution. The increased sediment decreases water quality and is not good for fish, turtles, frogs, and other wildlife. For example, Hamilton County is a global hotbed of diversity for freshwater mussels, which are highly impacted by sedimentation. Some are even endangered, which calls for extra care.

Often out of sight, storm pipes and basins can be particularly susceptible to erosion, with major, expensive impacts. Our engineering and park management teams are doing all we can to address erosion, protecting the investments Great Parks is making into new places and legacy spaces, while also remaining vigilant for some of the less visible damage caused by water.

To learn more and read this entire blog post, visit <https://blog.greatparks.org/2023/09/stopping-erosion-to-keep-our-big-lands-accessible/>.



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November Volunteer Meeting

Natural Resources Management with Kari Horn at Winton Woods

Tue., Nov. 21 | 6 – 7:30 p.m.

Are you interested in learning about how Great Parks manages natural resources across Hamilton County? Then join us for our next volunteer meeting where Kari Horn (she/her), Natural Resources Manager, will share about our Natural Resource Management Plan and the goals it sets out for the agency. Planning and coordinating natural resource management actions and monitoring as part of our follow-up are a major aspect of what our team works on daily.

From monitoring streams to planting trees, volunteers contribute a major effort to our Natural Resource Plan. Kari will share a broad overview of volunteer and staff's impact this year and highlight a handful of special projects, including bat surveys and rare plant monitoring.

Volunteer meetings are an amazing way to meet new people, hear about upcoming volunteer opportunities, and learn something interesting from an exciting lineup of guest speakers. Meetings take place from 6 to 7:30 p.m. with networking and refreshments from 6 to 6:15 p.m.

Coffee and tea will be provided, but we invite attendees to bring a snack to share! If you are bringing food, please arrive a few minutes early and be sure to bring serving utensils.

Location: Winton Woods, Winton Centre Auditorium

Registration: No need to RSVP, just come and enjoy!

Hours: Please record your hours under [Volunteer Meeting–Training \[Volunteer Engagement\]](#).

As always, training hours may be doubled! *Drive time to and from the training may be included but not doubled.*

November Volunteer Opportunities

This November, we are offering a handful of volunteer opportunities that can pique anyone's interest! We are excited to wait for you to join us.

If you cannot find a volunteer opportunity in your MIP calendar or list, please check your filter settings at the top of the page. It is most likely full if you still cannot find the opportunity, so we encourage you to sign up for another one!

My Impact Page (MIP) Login: <https://app.betterimpact.com/Login>

Park Information, Maps, & More: <https://www.greatparks.org/parks>

Stew Crew Volunteer Opportunities

For all trail, litter cleanups, invasive removal projects, and other similar work, you are asked to wear your uniform t-shirt, long pants, boots or sturdy closed-toe shoes, and additional weather-appropriate clothing as well as bring work gloves, insect repellent, sunscreen, reusable water bottles, and snacks. Tools will be provided!

Coverboard Survey at Francis RecreAcres

Wed., Nov. 1 | 9 – 11 a.m.

Do you call snakes a slippery noodle or nope rope? If you are excited to see snakes out in their natural environment, this event is for you! You will learn about our snake survey methods and record data throughout the morning. This opportunity includes walking far distances on uneven terrain through tall vegetation.

- Age Requirements: For volunteers ages 14 and up
- Meeting Location: Francis RecreAcres Parking Lot
- Registration & Hours: To volunteer, sign up on your MIP calendar/list and record your hours under [Stew Crew–Francis RecreAcres \[C&P/East\]](#).

For additional information, contact Jessica Blaha at jblaha@greatparks.org or (937) 309-2902!

Invasive Removal at Fernbank Park

Thu., Nov. 2 | 9 – 11 a.m.

Think about your favorite part of a hike – is it the wildlife? The peaceful calm of the woods and the fresh air? Maybe it's birdwatching or seeing some nice spring wildflowers? Invasive species like honeysuckle, winter creeper, and multiflora rose threaten all of this by aggressively outcompeting native wildflowers, trees, and other flora. Help us tackle invasive species and keep our trails great for generations to come!

- Age Requirements: For volunteers ages 14 and up
- Meeting Location: Sycamore Trail Parking Lot
- Registration & Hours: To volunteer, sign up on your MIP calendar/list and record your hours under [Stew Crew–Fernbank \[C&P/West\]](#).

For additional information, contact Hannah Riess at hriess@greatparks.org or (513) 296-7465!

Honeysuckle Removal at Winton Woods

Fri., Nov. 3 | 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Honeysuckle takes up a lot of space in our wild places where native species are meant to thrive! Remove invasive plants along the Fitness Trail to benefit the ecosystem and humans and continue the necessary maintenance to hinder its growth. You will also learn how to identify a variety of invasive plants and how to safely and properly remove them. This is an ongoing project only possible with your help and support!

- Age Requirements: For volunteers ages 14 and up
- Meeting Location: Fitness Trail & Disc Golf Course Parking Lot (10248 McKelvey Rd, Cincinnati, OH 45231)
- Registration & Hours: To volunteer, sign up on your MIP calendar/list and record your hours under [Stew Crew–Winton Woods \[C&P/Central\]](#).

For additional information, contact Emma Abrahamson at eabrahamson@greatparks.org or (513) 641-7710!

Hike & Invasive Removal at Campbell Lakes Preserve

Sun., Nov. 5 | Noon – 3 p.m.

Join our ongoing efforts to eradicate non-native, invasive species and learn about a unique natural area along the way! After removing invasives, staff will share more about the biodiversity while guiding you on a hike around the lakes.

- Age Requirements: For volunteers ages 18 and up
- Meeting Location: Campbell Lakes Preserve Parking Lot (10431 Campbell Rd, Harrison, OH 45030)
- Registration & Hours: To volunteer, sign up on your MIP calendar/list and record your hours under [Stew Crew–Campbell Lakes \[C&P/West\]](#).

For additional information, contact AJ Norton at anorton@greatparks.org or (513) 910-5067!

Invasive Removal at Withrow Nature Preserve

Tue., Nov. 6 | 9 – 11 a.m.

Invasive species are a threat to the ecosystem because they diminish biodiversity and outcompete our native species. Learn how to identify and properly treat invasive plants that could be present in your backyard while removing invasive species along the Trout Lilly Trail!

- Age Requirements: For volunteers ages 14 and up
- Meeting Location: Withrow Nature Preserve Parking Lot
- Registration & Hours: To volunteer, sign up on your MIP calendar/list and record your hours under [Stew Crew–Withrow \[C&P/East\]](#).

For additional information, contact Elissa Oliveira at eoliveira@greatparks.org or (513) 673-1102!

Lake Cleanup at Lake Isabella

Wed., Nov. 8 | 9 – 11 a.m.

Clean up litter and experience the beauty of the lake on a crisp, autumn morning!

- Age Requirements: For volunteers ages 14 and up
- Meeting Location: Lake Isabella Boat House Parking Lot (10174 E Loveland Madeira Rd, Loveland, OH 45140)
- Registration & Hours: To volunteer, sign up on your MIP calendar/list and record your hours under [Stew Crew–Lake Isabella \[C&P/East\]](#).

For additional information, please contact Jessica Blaha at jblaha@greatparks.org or (937) 309-2902!

Invasive Removal at Embshoff Woods

Sat., Nov. 11 | 9 – 11 a.m.

Did you know there are more than 300 acres of green space tucked away in Delhi? Embshoff Woods opened in 1982 and was formerly a horse farm. Today, it is home to picnic shelters, a disc golf course, and a parcours trail! Learn more about the park's history and remove invasives like multiflora rose, Asian bittersweet, and honeysuckle along the Fitness Trail. Please bring thick gloves if you have them!

- Age Requirements: For volunteers ages 14 and up
- Meeting Location: Trailhead across from the Rivermount Shelter
- Registration & Hours: To volunteer, sign up on your MIP calendar/list and record your hours under [Stew Crew–Embshoff \[C&P/West\]](#).

For additional information, contact Hannah Riess at hriess@greatparks.org or (513) 296-7465!

Litter Cleanup at Woodland Mound

Mon., Nov. 13 | 9 – 11 a.m.

We need your help to keep our parks beautiful and free of litter! Come out to the former Steamboat Bend and assist us in picking up trash that washes up from the Ohio River.

- Age Requirements: For volunteers ages 14 and up
- Meeting Location: Steamboat Bend Boat Ramp Parking Lot (39.020615, -84.315701)
- Registration & Hours: To volunteer, sign up on your MIP calendar/list and record your hours under [Stew Crew–Woodland Mound \[C&P/East\]](#).

For additional information, contact Elissa Oliveira at eoliveira@greatparks.org or (513) 673-1102!

Honeysuckle Removal for Eastern Leatherwood at Kroger Hills

Wed., Nov 15 | 9 a.m. – noon

Join us as we work to restore a portion of the Kroger Hill woodland! By removing invasive honeysuckle, we will be protecting Eastern Leatherwood, which is uncommon throughout our park district, and creating a more accessible entrance for future maintenance.

- Age Requirements: For volunteers ages 14 and up
- Meeting Location: Kroger Hill North (39.150141, -84.328355)
- Registration & Hours: To volunteer, sign up on your MIP calendar/list and record your hours under [Stew Crew–Kroger Hills \[C&P/East\]](#).

For additional information, contact John Walker at jwalker@greatparks.org or (513) 272-4131!

Invasive Removal at Shawnee Lookout

Wed., Nov. 15 | 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Invasive Autumn olive and honeysuckle crowd out native plants like pawpaw and spicebush that are vital to wildlife. While removing these invasive along our park roadways, you will learn about management practices to combat the spread of woody invasive species and how native plants help in biodiversity within the ecosystem!

- Age Requirements: For volunteers ages 14 and up
- Meeting Location: Cedar Bend Picnic Shelter Parking Lot
- Registration & Hours: To volunteer, sign up on your MIP calendar/list and record your hours under [Stew Crew–Shawnee Lookout \[C&P/West\]](#).

For additional information, contact Alex Hearing at ahearing@greatparks.org or (513) 646-4217!

Invasive Removal at Fernbank Park

Thu., Nov. 16 | 9 – 11 a.m.

Think about your favorite part of a hike – is it the wildlife? The peaceful calm of the woods and the fresh air? Maybe it's birdwatching or seeing some nice spring wildflowers? Invasive species like honeysuckle, winter creeper, and multiflora rose threaten all of this by aggressively outcompeting native wildflowers, trees, and other flora. Help us tackle invasive species and keep our trails great for generations to come!

- Age Requirements: For volunteers ages 14 and up
- Meeting Location: Sycamore Trail Parking Lot
- Registration & Hours: To volunteer, sign up on your MIP calendar/list and record your hours under [Stew Crew–Fernbank \[C&P/West\]](#).

For additional information, contact Hannah Riess at hriess@greatparks.org or (513) 296-7465!

Invasive Removal at Mitchell Memorial Forest

Fri., Nov. 17 | 9 – 11 a.m.

Remove invasive plant species in higher-quality natural areas near the Mountain Bike Trail to preserve the beauty of this deep-woods trail and habitat!

- Age Requirements: For volunteers ages 14 and up
- Meeting Location: Maintenance Building Parking Lot
- Registration & Hours: To volunteer, sign up on your MIP calendar/list and record your hours under [Stew Crew–Mitchell Memorial \[C&P/West\]](#).

For additional information, contact Gregor Bundy at gbundy@greatparks.org or (513) 658-2577!

Prairie Restoration & Invasive Removal at Miami Whitewater Forest

Sun., Nov. 19 | Noon – 3 p.m.

Help us restore a sensitive prairie by removing invasive species and dragging brush from the area! Learn more about our prescribed burn efforts and what it takes to keep the park and the staff safe in an ecosystem that requires frequent disturbance.

- Age Requirements: For volunteers ages 18 and up
- Meeting Location: Old Shaker Building Parking Lot (11347 Oxford Rd, Harrison, OH 45030)
- You will be meeting at the Old Shaker Trace Building Parking Lot off Oxford Road and then carpooling to the worksite.
- Registration & Hours: To volunteer, sign up on your MIP calendar/list and record your hours under [Stew Crew–Miami Whitewater \[C&P/West\]](#).

For additional information, contact AJ Norton at anorton@greatparks.org or (513) 910-5067!

Honeysuckle Removal at Winton Woods

Tue., Nov. 21 | 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Honeysuckle takes up a lot of space in our wild places where native species are meant to thrive! Remove invasive plants around the Great Oaks Trail to benefit the ecosystem and humans and continue the necessary maintenance to hinder its growth. You will also learn how to identify a variety of invasive plants and how to safely and properly remove them. This is an ongoing project only possible with your help and support!

- Age Requirements: For volunteers ages 14 and up
- Meeting Location: Great Oaks Trail Parking Lot
- Registration & Hours: To volunteer, sign up on your MIP calendar/list and record your hours under [Stew Crew–Winton Woods \[C&P/Central\]](#).

For additional information, contact Emma Abrahamson at eabrahamson@greatparks.org or (513) 641-7710!

Invasive Removal at Fernbank Park

Thu., Nov. 30 | 9 – 11 a.m.

Think about your favorite part of a hike – is it the wildlife? The peaceful calm of the woods and the fresh air? Maybe it's birdwatching or seeing some nice spring wildflowers? Invasive species like honeysuckle, winter creeper, and multiflora rose threaten all of this by aggressively outcompeting native wildflowers, trees, and other flora. Help us tackle invasive species and keep our trails great for generations to come!

- Age Requirements: For volunteers ages 14 and up
- Meeting Location: Sycamore Trail Parking Lot
- Registration & Hours: To volunteer, sign up on your MIP calendar/list and record your hours under [Stew Crew–Fernbank \[C&P/West\]](#).

For additional information, contact Hannah Riess at hriess@greatparks.org or (513) 296-7465!

Event & Interpreter Program Volunteer Opportunities

Throughout the year, Great Parks offers a variety of programs and events the greater community. These programs and events range in topics, activities, and audiences!

For all special events, programs, and other similar work, volunteers are asked to wear their volunteer uniform polo or t-shirt, sturdy closed-toe shoes, and other weather-appropriate clothing as well as bring a refillable water bottle and snacks.

1800's Harvest Jamboree at Shawnee Lookout

Sat., Nov. 4 & Sun., Nov. 5 | Noon – 5:30 p.m.

Every autumn of the 1800's, the people of Ohio had to reap what they sowed: crops! Fall time brings food, and that's a reason to celebrate, so join our historic jubilee from 19th-century Ohio. Guests will have traditionally prepared foods at our pioneer picnic, join in frontier festivities, toss tomahawks, and engage in homesteader hijinks by playing pioneer games!

You will help greet at direct guests, prepare and distribute apple tansy, onion pie, and corn pudding, facilitate stick and hoop, the graces, trundle hoops, and additional games, make crafts like whirlygigs, ragdolls, and candles, and assist with wool spinning and sheep yard stations!

- Age Requirements: For volunteers 14 and up
- Meeting Location: Cabin View Picnic Area Parking Lot

- Registration & Hours: To volunteer, sign up on your MIP calendar/list and record your hours under [Interpreter Programs-Shawnee Lookout \[Edu & Events/West\]](#).

For additional information, contact Jacob Fogle at jfogle@greatparks.org or (513) 202-7890!

E-Waste Collection Event at Winton Woods

Sat., Nov. 11 | 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Disposing of e-waste in a landfill can result in the leaching of toxic chemicals such as flame retardants and heavy metals into watersheds and wildlife areas. Through this Electronic-Waste (E-Waste) Collection Event, we are striving toward Great Parks sustainability goals and offering a sustainability-focused service to the local community. E-waste like outdated or inoperable laptops, televisions, and cell phones is the fastest-growing source of waste in the world. With the U.S. in the lead as the biggest producer of e-waste, we hope to provide Hamilton County residents the opportunity to dispose of their e-waste properly and easily! We are looking for volunteers to help with directing traffic and unloading the items from vehicles throughout the event!

- Age Requirements: For volunteers ages 14 and up
- Meeting Location: Winton Woods Harbor (801 Lakeview Dr, Cincinnati, OH 45231)
- Registration & Hours: To volunteer, sign up on your MIP calendar/list and record your hours under either [E-Waste Collection Event-Directing Traffic \[NR/Central\]](#) or [E-Waste Collection Event-Unloading Vehicles \[NR/Central\]](#).

For additional information, contact Stephanie Bacher at sbacher@greatparks.org or (513) 484-5086!

Veterans Day Celebration at Sharon Woods

Sat., Nov. 11 | 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Honor and show appreciation for our Veterans at our celebration! You will have the opportunity to lead guided hikes, tend the fire and make s'mores, provide light refreshments, oversee lawn games, or assist with atlatl throwing. We invite you to bring a picnic lunch to enjoy!

- Age Requirements: For volunteers ages 14 and up
- Meeting Location: Pavilion Grove Shelter
- Registration & Hours: To volunteer, sign up on your MIP calendar/list and record your hours under [Interpreter Programs-Sharon Woods \[Edu & Events/East\]](#).

For additional information, contact Lisa Salehpour at lsalehpour@greatparks.org!

Holidays on the Farm at Parky's Farm

Fridays – Sundays from Fri., Nov. 24 through Sun., Nov. 17 | 4:30/5 – 9 p.m.

Thu., Dec. 21 – Sat., Dec. 23 | 4:30/5 – 9 p.m.

Tue., Dec 26 – Sat., Dec. 31 | 4:30/5 – 9 p.m.

Help spread the holiday cheer at Holidays on the Farm! Help spread the holiday cheer at Holidays on the Farm! It's the 2nd year of Holiday on the Farm and we are looking to make it bigger and better with our updated layout, new light features, and fun activities. *Additional details can be found below and in your MIP!*

Interpreter Program Support

Assisting interpreter staff with educational programming, animal encounters, and winter-themed activities.

- Age Requirements: For volunteers ages 14 and up
- Meeting Location: Hayloft Barn (10073 Daly Rd, Cincinnati, OH 45231)
- Registration & Hours: To volunteer, sign up on your MIP calendar/list and record your hours under [Holidays on the Farm-Interpreter Support \[Edu & Events/Parky's Farm\]](#).

For additional information, contact Chloe Terzakis at cterzakis@greatparks.org!

General Event Support

In this role, you will support the special events team with the Hot Cocoa Hut, Winter Wonder Zone, holiday character meet & greet, fire pits, and hay wagon rides!

- Age Requirements: For volunteers ages 18 and up
- Meeting Location: Hayloft Barn (10073 Daly Rd, Cincinnati, OH 45231)
- Registration & Hours: To volunteer, sign up on your MIP calendar/list and record your hours under [Holidays on the Farm-General Event Support \[Edu & Events/Parky's Farm\]](#).

For more information, contact Jamie Piccola at jpiccola@greatparks.org!