

Brook Notes

A publication of the
DOAN BROOK WATERSHED PARTNERSHIP

Board Adopts *Action Plan*, Presents at Gathering of City Leaders

APRIL 2004

The non-profit Doan Brook Watershed Partnership takes the lead in protecting and restoring Doan Brook and its watershed.

The Partnership Board of Trustees in January adopted the *Action Plan for the Doan Brook Watershed*, setting short-term priorities and a long-term vision and goals for restoration and protection of Doan Brook.

The *Action Plan* was unveiled at a February 26th gathering of city leaders at the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes, symbolic in that the Nature Center has played an integral role in focusing attention on Doan Brook and its watershed.

Mayors Edward Kelley of Cleveland Heights and Judy Rawson of Shaker Heights were present, as were Ollie Shaw, Commissioner of Water Pollution Control for Cleveland, Kathy Heffernan, Nature Center Board President, and Cleveland Heights City Manager Bob Downey. Outgoing Partnership trustee and long-time Doan Brook advocate, Jan Devereaux, was honored by the Partnership's 11 member Board and her replacement, Nancy Moore, was welcomed.

Full copies of the *Action Plan* are available upon request, or contact us at doanbrook@clvhts.com for an electronic copy of the *Action Plan* Executive Summary.



Cascading waters in the
Doan Brook Gorge

Photo by Bill MacDermott ©

ACTION PLAN FOR THE DOAN BROOK WATERSHED

*A plan for improving Doan Brook
and its watershed through the work
of the non-profit*

*Doan Brook Watershed Partnership
and its watershed partners*



Board of Trustees of the
Doan Brook Watershed Partnership

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Cleveland Moves Ahead with Rockefeller Park Brook Restoration

Planning has been underway for over three years for what will be one of the largest urban stream restoration projects undertaken in the U.S.

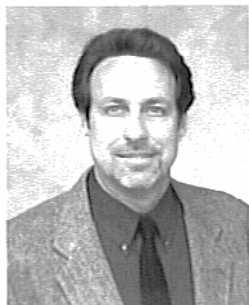
The two-mile length of Doan Brook in Wade and Rockefeller parks in Cleveland will be ecologically restored using \$5.5 million in federal funds (made available to the City of Cleveland as a result of environmental impacts from the Hopkins Airport expansion).

This landmark stream restoration project will reduce flooding in Rockefeller Park, provide habitat for fish and wildlife, improve water quality and prevent soil erosion. The project will employ innovative *bioengineering* techniques. The stream channel will be widened to create a more natural stream and floodplain area.

Final plans are being drawn up with

construction expected to begin later this year. A Memorandum of Agreement crafted following negotiations between the community, City, federal and state agencies, Cleveland Cultural Gardens Federation, Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District, University Circle Inc., the Doan Brook Watershed Partnership and others will commit parties to long-term monitoring of the project and future park planning and management.

Executive Director's Report



Spring is here (at last!) and our work on the Doan Brook is progressing nicely through the combined efforts of many watershed partners.

This includes many of you, our *contributing partners*, who made our first annual request for "Donations" last fall a success (\$2,235 through 54 separate contributions). Thank you! These funds will be used for operations and, perhaps, for a special project: a "Crossing Doan Brook" signage project is under consideration. Thank you also to our watershed cities, Cleveland Heights, Shaker Heights and Cleveland, for your funding support of the Doan Brook Watershed Partnership.

Our last newsletter described current projects and priorities and showed them on a map of the watershed. These include, but are not limited to:

- ~ supporting Cleveland on its ambitious Rockefeller Park Doan Brook Restoration Project
- ~ applying Ohio EPA nonpoint pollution control funds (\$255,388 OEPA grant and \$170,259 local match from Shaker Heights, the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District and The Nature Center at Shaker Lakes) to improve conditions along Doan Brook's south branch and to provide watershed-wide educational programming
- ~ providing technical support on Phase II stormwater compliance and lake management to our watershed cities
- ~ creating committees to build partnerships and accomplish work that would be impossible to accomplish alone
- ~ organizing public events to benefit Doan Brook and build support for future initiatives.

Our recently adopted *Action Plan for the Doan Brook Watershed* provides direction, goals and priorities for all aspects of our work (see front page story).

Let me highlight another aspect of the work of the Doan Brook Watershed Partnership, and of the Partnership itself. There is much discussion in Northeast Ohio today, deservedly so, about governments combining resources in the name of efficiency, planning at a regional scale, preserving green space and providing for quality-of-life improvements that will encourage people to remain (and thrive) in our area.

The Partnership, in place for two years now, represents the joint action of three cities (Shaker Heights, Cleveland Heights and Cleveland), two non-profits (University Circle Inc. and The Nature Center at Shaker Lakes), a

regional agency (the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District) and many citizens, working through a collaborative and integrated approach to protect and restore a natural feature that crosses many jurisdictional lines: Doan Brook. Watershed planning and management at its best. We are on the cutting edge of our region's current discussion, and already in action mode.

Please join us for the many events planned for this spring and summer, and thank you for your continued interest.

Keith Jones, Executive Director
Doan Brook Watershed Partnership

Four Partnership Committees Active

Four permanent committees have been formed and are active:

- ✓ City Services and Capital Projects Committee (CSCPC), providing a forum for information exchange and coordination on plans and projects having the potential to affect Doan Brook, like municipal sewer and road improvements, trails, new land development and storm water retrofit projects. (Carl Czaga, Chair)

- ✓ Monitoring, Mapping and Technical Studies Committee (MMTSC), serving as a clearinghouse of past and current Doan Brook watershed research projects, and promoting information sharing and future research among schools (e.g. CWRU, JCU, CSU) and University Circle institutions. (David Saja, Chair)

- ✓ Watershed Education Committee (WEC), with a stated mission "to champion and guide development of educational activities in the Doan Brook Watershed to further watershed awareness and restoration, by supporting DBWP projects, goals and other independent activities. (Nancy King Smith, Chair)

- ✓ Partnership Outreach Committee (POC), promoting the Partnership through outreach events, such as concerts, cleanups and public meetings (Chair, vacant)

Committees meet 3-5 times a year and are always looking for new members. Come hear the latest, first-hand, and lend your expertise and ideas to one of our dynamic committees! Contact us by phone or e-mail.



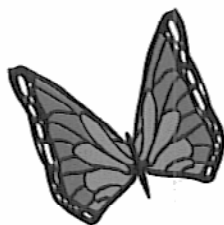
Eco-advice from your watershed education specialist...

Save the Spotted Owl! Save the Doan Brook! Save TIME AND MONEY! It's not often you are canvassed by environmentalists to save time and money, but a joint program between The Nature Center at Shaker Lakes and the DBWP will do just that.

Every spring we embrace the warm weather with thoughts of leisure and spending time in the great outdoors. Yet, by May, those wistful images are already purged from our minds as we get swirled into the annual homeowner hustle. We find ourselves watering two or three times a week; mowing our Saturdays away, edging, pruning, weeding, raking, bagging, and, in some cases, applying more fertilizer and pesticides than are healthy or necessary. If our car required this much maintenance, we'd deem it a lemon and trade it in.

Each year, more people realize that we don't have to trade in our summers to enjoy our backyards. Thanks to an Ohio EPA 319 grant, the Laudable Lawn and Home Habitat (LLHH) project provides assistance to folks who wish to reclaim time and money, and, as an added dividend, reclaim habitat and clean water.

The LLHH Project was created after water quality tests of Doan Brook revealed high levels of nutrients (phosphorus and nitrogen). Because the Doan Brook runs through residential neighborhoods, lawn fertilizer became the most likely culprit for those smelly and oxygen-depleting algal blooms on all the Shaker Lakes. But don't feel badly; we're not alone. Green landscaping is sweeping the country, as communities realize how applying 67 million lbs of chemicals to our U.S. yards each year works against the very outdoor environments we are trying to create. The marvelous thing about going organic, creating habitat and establishing a little ecosystem, is that pests tend to stay in check.



Below are just five of the many choices you can make for a healthier backyard. As you make these decisions, you will see and hear more birds, feel the savings to your pocket book, and increase yields of fruits and vegetables.

1. Mow high! Lawns should be mowed with a sharp blade at a height of 3 inches. Allowing grass to grow tall encourages roots to grow strong and deep, resulting in healthier grass that can withstand dry periods and other stresses. This is the most important thing you can do to improve the health of your lawn!



Victoria Mills, Watershed Education Specialist, The Nature Center at Shaker Lakes

2. Water Sparingly! In Northeast Ohio we usually get enough rain during the summer to eliminate the need for watering the lawn. Grasses naturally slow their growth during the hot, dry summer months. During this dormant period, brown patches of lawn are not dead; they're just resting! Check to see if your

lawn needs water by walking across it. If footprints linger for several hours, your grass is dehydrated and needs water. Remember, between you and Mother Nature-never water more than one inch per week.

3. Forsake the Rake! Fertilize by leaving grass clippings and leaves on the lawn. Grass clippings that remain after mowing contain the three main fertilizer ingredients: nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium. Clippings decompose in 1-2 days (thanks to earthworms and soil microorganisms) and do not contribute to thatch accumulation. If you must use fertilizer, choose organic varieties that give soil life and provide the building blocks for healthy plants. Here in the Doan Brook watershed, phosphorous is a big problem so a no-phosphorous fertilizer is a must.

4. Test your Soil! Grass grows best in 4-6 inches of well drained topsoil with plenty of organic matter. Soil pH should be between 6.5 and 7.0. You can learn how to test your soil and where to send samples by joining the LLHH program. Remember that grass can't grow successfully everywhere. Converting a little bit of your lawn each year to habitat is a fun goal.

5. Go Native! Plant native trees, shrubs, grasses and wild flowers that are already adapted to the Northeast Ohio environment and require less fertilizer, water, and maintenance. Birds and wildlife benefit from a diverse menu of berries and even weeds. Businesses too can decrease lawn size, save money and become models of sound ecology. Landscape fragmentation and loss of biodiversity have become major environmental issues. As wilderness shrinks and backyard acreage increases, we all have an increasingly important role to play in promoting diversity in our backyards.

Additional benefits to creating a new backyard ethic include:

- ✓ Improved water, air & soil quality
- ✓ Decreased water & fuel consumption
- ✓ Decreased "green waste" to be hauled and processed
- ✓ Decreased human, pet, and wildlife exposure to potential toxins
- ✓ Increased biodiversity
- ✓ Decreased municipal spending
- ✓ Increased neighborhood and community interaction and fun

But before you pick up your trowel, call the Nature Center or the DBWP to learn how you can join the Laudable Lawn and Home Habitat program. The program provides education for sustainable outdoor living and offers small grant awards to individuals and families that create change in their backyards and community. In addition to the help we can provide, you can help to create a social shift to sustainability—not to mention to saving time and money! Call me, Victoria (Tori) Mills, at 216-321-5935, ext. 234.



Also, contact Tori for information on other program offerings made possible through funding from the George Gund Foundation and the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, including Storm Drain Stenciling and Volunteer Stream Monitoring. Visit the Nature Center's website at www.shakerlakess.org and click on 'Doan Brook'



Doan Brook Watershed Partnership

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"The Doan Brook Watershed Partnership...

protecting, restoring and enhancing

Doan Brook and its watershed for the

benefit of future generations"

Phone (216)291-3304

E-mail doanbrook@clvhts.com

Spring Cleaning planned for Doan Brook April 24th...help needed!

In celebration of the Doan Brook and Shaker Heights or Cleveland Heights Earth Day/Week, the Doan Brook Watershed Partnership invites you to come out for our 2nd annual **Doan Brook Community Cleanup**, 9:00 am to Noon, Saturday April 24th. Doan Brook, Shaker Lakes and surrounding parklands a much deserved spring cleaning! Gloves, trash bags and refreshments provided.



Last year's cleanup included Glenville residents and CWRU Americorps workers at Rockefeller Park

portion of Doan Brook by coming to one of the following locations beginning at 9:00 AM (rain or shine):

- Rockefeller lagoon/gazebo (across from the tennis courts in Rockefeller Park)
- Rudy Rogers Memorial Scout Park
- The Nature Center at Shaker Lakes.

Take your pick of the Cleveland, For information call 216-291-3304.

Scout Park dedication, Dike 14 Wildlife Fest planned for Saturday May 22



Wedge between Stokes and MLK Jr. boulevards and the RTA Rapid tracks is a hidden green space known formerly as Ambler Park. Today, "**Rudy Rogers Memorial Scout Park**" has been added to its title, named after the deceased champion of Greater Cleveland area boys and girls scouting. Festivities begin at 9:00 am on May 22, with a flag ceremony and dedication at 10:30 am. Call (216)721-0880 for information.

The Environmental Education Collaborative for Dike 14 holds its first "**Wildlife Fest**" on May 22nd from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm where Gordon Park and the Dike 14 dredged material fill site (and future conservation area) join between I-90 and Lake Erie. The day will include boat tours, fishing, guided hikes, entertainment and more! Call (440)243-9070.



Doan Brook Events Coming Your Way

✓ **2nd Annual DBWP
Doan Brook Community Cleanup**, April 24, 9:00 am - Noon (see story, left)

✓ **The Nature Center at Shaker Lakes invites you to Celebrate the Earth**, April 24, 1:00 - 5:00 pm at the Nature Center

✓ **Rudy Rogers Memorial Scout Park Dedication**, May 22, 10:30 am (see story, left)

✓ **Dike 14 Wildlife Fest**, May 22, 10:00 am - 2:00 pm (see story, left)

✓ **Fishing Derby and Water Quality Expo**, June 19, Rockefeller Lagoon (call the Nature Center for info: 216-321-5935)

✓ **Free Music By-the-Brook Concerts** this summer (to be announced)