



Contact for news media:
Peter Osborne
513-546-4181
peter.osborne@keypointpr.com

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News Release: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GREAT PARKS COMPLETES CONSTRUCTION ON SHAKER TRACE NURSERY RENOVATION

Great Parks has completed a major renovation and expansion of the Shaker Trace Nursery in Miami Whitewater Forest, with upgrades that will allow the nursery to better fulfill its conservation mission while serving as a unique educational resource. [Great Parks](#) will welcome community leaders and the news media to tour the nursery during an event starting at 10 a.m. on Thursday, May 21.

“People look to Great Parks for conservation leadership, and the renewed Shaker Trace Nursery shows conservation in action,” said Todd Palmeter, Great Parks CEO. “From preserving native plant species that are critical to our ecosystem, to providing hands-on environmental education unique to our region, the Shaker Trace Nursery is a unique Great Parks gem that we are very proud of.”

Upgrades will enhance the seed harvesting capacity at Shaker Trace, which, with 200 local plant species in production, was already one of the largest seed nurseries in Ohio. Shaker Trace Nursery produces plant species specially adapted to the local soil and climate, which reduces the need to purchase seed commercially. Great Parks uses the seed to restore habitat such as prairie, meadow, wetlands and rain gardens throughout Hamilton County, where it has more than 18,000 acres and one-third of the county’s open space.

Seed Processing Upgrades

An 1880s-era drying barn is the nursery’s signature building. Great Parks retained the charismatic wood beams on the interior of the barn while transforming the space into an all-season educational and event space. A modern greenhouse and a new climate-controlled seed storage room will allow for increased seed production.

New Trail

Great Parks added a new trail to make the nursery more accessible. Shaker Trace is in Miami Whitewater Forest, and the new half-mile trail connects to the park’s existing 7.8-mile Shaker Trace Outer Loop Trail through prairies and wetlands. Park guests can easily access the nursery from Miami Whitewater Forest’s popular harbor, campground, golf course, soccer fields, disc golf course and other attractions.

Board of Park Commissioners

Caroline Keating • Caren Laverty • Scott Schuster • Marcus Thompson • Melissa Wegman • Todd Palmeter, CEO
10245 Winton Road • Cincinnati, OH 45231 • greatparks.org

Sustainability Highlights

The renovated nursery is a net-zero energy facility, pulling all of its energy needs from on-site solar panels and a geothermal system. Great Parks designed the project to achieve LEED certification, a green building certification from the U.S. Green Building Council.

Bat Habitat

Great Parks took steps to protect a population of brown bats, which are a declining species in Ohio. The bats were found to be living in the nursery's old barn. Great Parks added a purpose-built bat enclosure in the barn that allows the bats to continue living there while remaining completely isolated from human activity. This part of the project represents a significant conservation success story for Great Parks. (Video of the bats is available upon request.)

Great Parks is working to add programs at the nursery in the near future and anticipates welcoming tours and school field trips so guests can learn more about this regional conservation resource. The restored barn will also soon be available for the public to rent.

The cost for design and construction of these improvements was more than \$13 million. Funds for the project came from the Millstone Fund, the Sutphin Family Foundation, the Louise Taft Semple Foundation, an anonymous foundation and Great Parks capital project funding supported by voter approved levies that support master plan priorities.

(Note: Valid Motor Vehicle Permits are required for every vehicle entering Miami Whitewater Forest. Information about purchasing MVPs, and accessing free or discounted MVPs, is available at greatparks.org.)

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