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October 22, 2025

Media Advisory: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA TOUR FOR SHAKER TRACE NURSERY RENOVATION

Upgrades made for 1880s Barn, Native Seed Harvesting, Bat Habitat, New Trail

What:

Great Parks will provide media access to the active construction site at the nearly complete \$12 million renovation of the Shaker Trace Seed Nursery, a project that will open the way for many more people to learn about this critical conservation resource for Southwest Ohio and join in the conservation efforts made possible by the nursery. A new trail connection will also link the nursery to recreational opportunities in other areas of Miami Whitewater Forest, Great Parks' largest destination.

Where:

8667 New Haven Rd., Harrison, Ohio, 45030. Media parking is available in a lot on New Haven Road directly east of the large barn. The construction site can be muddy, so media are requested to dress appropriately, including long pants and closed-toed shoes. Great Parks will provide personal protective equipment.

When:

9–11 a.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 28. (Because this is a busy construction zone, please advise if you plan to attend so we can be prepared for you.)

Who:

CEO Todd Palmeter and other Great Parks team members will be available for comment.

Upgrades:

Great Parks is dramatically expanding the capacity of the Shaker Trace Seed Nursery, already one of the largest in Ohio with more than 200 species grown and stored there. The nursery advances Great Parks' conservation and ecological stewardship. Great Parks and volunteers harvest hundreds of pounds of native plant seed adapted to local soil and climate. The seed is used to restore habitat such as prairie, wet meadow and rain gardens, reducing the need to purchase seed and live plants on the open market.

1880s-Era Barn

The signature building at Shaker Trace has been its barn, built in the 1880s. Great Parks retained the charismatic barn interior while converting this structure into a functional all-season education and event space that will enhance the nursery's educational role. Great Parks will

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welcome private events, school groups, community groups, children's groups and anyone who wants to learn about this key to regional conservation efforts.

Greenhouse and Seed Storage Room

During the media tour, Great Parks team members will be demonstrating seed processing techniques. Media are invited to walk through the nursery's new, modern greenhouse, which will start production after the completion of construction. Great Parks is also adding a climate-controlled seed storage room and other additions, allowing for more seed to be utilized.

Bat Habitat

A population of big brown bats, a declining species in Ohio, has been living in the barn for many years. In a unique and significant conservation win, Great Parks has been able to continue providing habitat for the bats even through noisy construction at the nursery by adding a purpose-built bat enclosure into the renovated barn. Video of the bats is available [in this Dropbox folder](#) and Great Parks team members will explain this part of the project during the event.

New Trail

Renovations to the nursery include a new 0.5-mile trail connection to the existing 7.8-mile Shaker Trace Outer Loop trail through prairies and wetlands in the area. The connector links the nursery to other attractions at Miami Whitewater Forest such as its lake, harbor, golf course, soccer fields, camping, dog park and the newly expanded 18-hole disc golf course.

Sustainability

The nursery will be a net-zero energy facility. Energy needs will be addressed by new on-site solar panels and a geothermal system. Great Parks is working to secure LEED platinum certification, the highest level of green building certification.

This project meets multiple priorities established by the public for Great Parks in its Comprehensive Master Plan such as building ecological resiliency and sustainability, building more trails, adding programming for diverse audiences, providing access to conservation areas, focusing on partnerships and others.

This project is partially funded by the 0.95-mill levy passed by Hamilton County voters in 2021. It is one of \$101 million in critical infrastructure needs and \$124 million in park improvement projects identified through the Great Parks master planning process. The project is also made possible through outside funding from The Millstone Fund, Sutphin Family Foundation, Louise Taft Semple Foundation and an anonymous foundation.

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