

## OPRA Grant Report

In 2019-2020, Erie MetroParks (EMP) received an OPRA Foundation Program Development Grant for the Erie MetroParks Conservation Club, which began as a program to reach our most underserved school-aged students. The Conservation Club seeks to serve students in grades 8-12 and give them valuable hands-on conservation educational experiences throughout the year.

Our objectives for the Conservation Club were as follows:

- Increase program offerings for grades 8-12
- Teach skills for identifying native plants and animals of Ohio
- Provide hands-on conservation experience
- Participants will learn how to cook over a fire
- Participants will learn how to protect native areas
- Participants learn about waste reduction
- Provide students with a unique learning opportunity

Activity description 2020:

The Conservation Club will meet on Saturdays, once a month. It will be led jointly by an Erie MetroPark Naturalist and the Natural Resource Manager. Each club participant will earn community service hours while also gaining hands-on experience. The following are the topics assigned to each month:

January – Invasive Species Removal (Held)

February – Great Backyard Bird Count (Held)

March – Maple Sugaring (Held)

April – Animal Care (Cancelled – COVID-19-19)

May – East Sandusky Bay Clean-Up by Kayak (Cancelled - COVID-19)

June – Blue Bird Boxes (Cancelled - COVID-19)

July – Moth Survey (Cancelled - COVID-19)

August – Monarch Butterflies (Cancelled - COVID-19)

September – Seed Collection (Cancelled - COVID-19)

October – Harvest Happenings Fall Festival Informational Booth (Cancelled - COVID-19)

November – Big Tree Project (Cancelled - COVID-19)

December – Christmas Bird Count (Cancelled - COVID-19)

Activity Description 2021:

September: Sandusky Bay Clean Up

October: Bio Blitz

November: Invasive Species Removal

December: Project Feeder Watch

After receiving the grant at the beginning of 2020, EMP was able to successfully purchase the equipment necessary to perform the program. EMP made "Conservation Club" flyers that were distributed to all Erie County students in grades 8-12. In 2020, the program began and EMP was able to perform three programs in January, February, and March, then COVID-19 hit and shut down all programs for over a year and a half. We did have a few students attend our first three programs and they helped remove invasive species, helped with the Great Backyard Bird Count, and maple sugaring.

After the delay COVID-19 placed on our public programming, EMP was able to restart our programs in July of 2021. In August, we were able to start the Conservation Club up again and scheduled the program for once a month through December. Unfortunately, we have had very little attendance with this program since starting back up. We believe this is due to the continuing pandemic and the busy schedules of the students we are attempting to target. We hope that this program generates more attendance as we continue to offer the program in the future. EMP will offer similar projects in the coming year that provide these same opportunities for conservation education.

A. Category	B. Total Project Cost	C. OPRA Grant Request	D. Other Funding for Project
Services			Hourly rate for employees providing programs (\$19 x 60 hrs= \$1,140)
Supplies		\$1076.00 (Supplies Below on Amazon List)	Food for Participants of programs: \$150 (due to not holding all of the programs because of COVID-19)
Other			
Total Project Cost	\$ 2,366	\$1,076	\$ 1,290

Erie MetroParks provided food as well as staff time for in-kind contribution of the project. Two staff members, one Naturalist and one staff member from the Natural Resource Department, helped organize projects and educational programs provided.

Melissa, get a **\$100 Amazon.com Gift Card** upon approval for the **Amazon Business American Express Card**. Terms apply. [Learn more](#)

**Current Total:** \$ 1,076.38  
**Savings:** - \$ 100.00  
**Cost After Savings:** \$ 976.38

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