



Ohio Parks and Recreation Association Foundation Program Development Grant Report

Great Miami River Recreation Trail Ambassador Program

Statement of Program Objectives and Outcomes

MetroParks of Butler County (MetroParks) received \$1,500 (approximately 50% of direct expenses) in grant funds to support the purchase of materials and supplies needed for the *Great Miami River Recreation Trail (GMRRT) Ambassador Program*. MetroParks established an ambassador program comprised of volunteers and managed by MetroParks staff, to monitor the 9-mile section of the GMRRT that is managed by MetroParks. The first year goals and results of the GMRRT Ambassador Program included:

- **Goal:** accumulate 480 hours of volunteer service on the section of the Great Miami River Recreation Trail that is managed by MetroParks of Butler County
 - **Results:** 5 active volunteers logged 67 service hours
- **Goal:** distribute 500 promotional flyers/handouts to expand the community involvement in MetroParks educational and recreational programs along the GMRRT
 - **Results:** 73 flyers and/or giveaways to trail users
- **Goal:** connect with 500 trail users through verbal communication to include information sharing and customer assistance
 - **Results:** 318 trail users counted with 163 interactions between volunteers and trail users
- **Goal:** receive feedback on GMRRT through Trail reports
 - **Results:** reports were completed by GMRRT Ambassadors to evaluate the effectiveness of their efforts. The reports included the following information:
 1. Volunteer Information
 2. Incident Reporting (i.e. injuries, bike repairs)
 3. Emergencies
 4. Maintenance Issues (i.e. obstructions to the path, damages)
 5. Interactions with trail users



Statement of Impact and Participating Agencies

MetroParks of Butler County maintains approximately 9 miles of the Great Miami River Recreation Trail between Trenton and Middletown. MetroParks of Butler County strives to provide trained volunteers to assist with hospitality, maintenance, public safety, and visitor enjoyment of the GMRRT as well as programming through recreational and educational events. This trail sees a diverse population of park customers including adults, children, elderly, pets, families, walkers, runners, fishermen, and bicyclists. While the GMRRT is a great source of fun and recreation within MetroParks, the trail can be a location where injuries, crime, environmental danger, and even medical emergencies may occur. By increasing the sense of safety and security along the trail through the use of volunteers, MetroParks hopes to increase the use of the trail by the community. Recreation trails provide an outlet for family centered outdoor recreation, exercise, health and wellness. The program would connect the community with relevant, trail related resources offered by educational/recreational organizations such as Miami Valley Bike Trails, Miami Conservancy District, and Butler Soil and Water Conservation District to enhance the trail user's experience through maps, information, and education. The GMRRT Ambassador Program will extend the promotional reach of MetroParks by providing trail users with information on upcoming GMRRT educational programming and family centered activities.

Funding

Donations of equipment and supplies were sought from local businesses. MetroParks received approximately \$1,545.69 dollars of in-kind value through the effort of volunteers.

The first year costs of the program were estimated at \$3028.20 with \$1,507.05 for overhead and marketing/development for a total of \$4,535.25.

Following year one, MetroParks will continue to recruit interested volunteers to further the reach of the program and offer up to date trainings for volunteers to connect with more trail users, provide more information and education to customers. The GMRRT is viewed as a venue for expanded educational and recreational programming, to be promoted by the GMRRT Ambassador Program.



The \$1,500 OPRA Grant was used to offset the purchase the following items for use by Trail Ambassadors:

1. Bike
2. Bike supplies which included:
 - a. Tire pumps
 - b. Replacement tire tubes
 - c. Tire Lever
3. First Aid supplies
4. MetroPark gift items for trail users which included:
 - a. Cozies
 - b. Water Bottles
 - c. Cups
 - d. Reusable Bags
5. Volunteer T-Shirts

Receipts for items are attached.

Proposed Timeline

Phase I - 2016

Completed: Established a basic trail ambassador program with 5 active volunteers. Acquire all equipment needed for a basic program. MetroParks will provide CPR/First Aid training and Orientation training to volunteers. MetroParks will provide equipment including T-shirts and first aid kits. Volunteers will provide all other equipment (bike, bike helmet, cell phone, ability to carry first aid kit are mandatory) during Phase I. MetroParks aims to provide other equipment to volunteers through Phase II and Phase III.

2/1/16 Create Flyer – Begin marketing to volunteers

3/28/16 – Acquire first aid kits/t-shirts

3/28/16 – CPR/First Aid Training and Orientation

4/3/16 – Program begins

July 2016 – Assess program, consider improvements for Phase II



Phase II – July 2016

Goal: Provide volunteers with more equipment to expand their ability to aid others on the trail

7/1/16 – Acquire portable bike pumps, tire repair kits, helmet covers, backpacks

7/30/16 – Training on how to use new equipment (bike repair kits)

8/1/16 – Begin Phase II

December 2016 – Assess Phase II, consider improvements for Phase III

Phase III - 2017

Goal: Be able to provide volunteers with all needed equipment; Record 1000 hours of service by Ambassadors on the GMRRT

January 2017 – Develop training to include CPR/First Aid, orientation, general trail safety, bicycle repair kits, use of motor assisted bicycles or hybrid bicycles

February 2017 – CPR/First Aid and Orientation training for 2017 Ambassador Program

3/1/17 – Begin Phase III

Description of Continued Plans

Going forward with the GMRRT Ambassador program we will continue to utilize volunteers to monitor trail activity and maintenance issues. Our goal is for increased presence on the trail and interaction with trail users. MetroParks is in the planning stages of adding a River Center along the Great Miami River with an estimated completion date in 2018. It is our hope that the River Center will increase traffic along MetroParks' portion of the Great Miami River Recreation Trail.