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FIVE RIVERS METROPARKS AWARDED NATIONAL ACCREDITATION

Agency joins prestigious list of agencies throughout the world that have met this industry gold standard.

DAYTON, OHIO (Oct. 10, 2016) – The [Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies](#) (CAPRA) and the [National Recreation and Park Association](#) (NRPA) have awarded accreditation to [Five Rivers MetroParks](#), which joins an elite group of park and recreation agencies with CAPRA accreditation. The announcement was made at the 2016 NRPA annual conference held Oct. 4-8 in St. Louis.

Media are invited to attend the Five Rivers MetroParks board of park commissioners meeting at the agency's headquarters, 409 E. Monument Ave., third floor, at 4 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 11, when the CAPRA award will be officially presented to the board.

"Achieving CAPRA accreditation is part of Five Rivers MetroParks' commitment to providing the world-class natural areas, parks, facilities and programs our community deserves," said Becky Benná, Five Rivers MetroParks executive director. "It serves as a validation to the community that Five Rivers MetroParks uses best practices standards in all its operations, and CAPRA accreditation holds our agency accountable to the public and ensures responsiveness to meet their needs."

Accreditation is based on an agency's compliance with 151 standards for national accreditation. Five Rivers MetroParks is one of the few organizations that was 100 percent in compliance, meeting all the standards and exceeding the required compliance rate of 90 percent.

Five Rivers MetroParks is one of only 10 park and recreation agencies in Ohio and 155 in the United States to receive CAPRA accreditation.

"One thing that stood out during my visit was the commitment of Five Rivers MetroParks' staff and leadership," said Irby Brinson, lead visitor from the CAPRA team and retired director of parks and recreation in Asheville, North Carolina. "This wasn't my first visit, but it was one of my best. The community in Montgomery County should know the park commissioners are representing them well and making good, responsible use of taxpayer dollars."

CAPRA is the only national accreditation for park and recreation agencies and is a measure of an agency's overall quality of operation, management and service to the community. This mark of distinction indicates that an agency has met rigorous standards related to the management and administration of lands, facilities, resources, programs, safety and services.

Preparing for CAPRA accreditation is typically a two-year process that involves an extensive self-evaluation, written documentation of policies and procedures, a site visit by a team of trained visitors, and a hearing with the commission to grant accreditation. The process also creates an environment for regular review of operations, policies and procedures and promotes continual improvement, as accredited agencies must uphold the standards by submitting an annual report and is reviewed again in five years.

– more –

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“Every Five Rivers MetroParks employee had the opportunity to participate in the rigorous process to achieve accreditation,” Benná added. “The process strengthened our team, helped identify efficiencies and heightened areas of accountability – all of which translate into higher quality service and operation to benefit the community.”

Alan Pippenger, president of Five Rivers MetroParks board of park commissioners, said the comprehensive planning and community input that were part of the CAPRA process have been invaluable in helping the board understand what the community most values.

“CAPRA helps us as a governing board with resource allocation and planning,” he said. “It’s a third-party stamp of approval that assures the community Five Rivers MetroParks is an agency managed at the highest standards of any park agency in the country.”

ABOUT FIVE RIVERS METROPARKS

[Celebrating more than 50 years](#) of preserving green space and natural areas, [Five Rivers MetroParks](#) is a nationally renowned [park system](#) composed of natural area parks, [gardens](#), high-quality [river corridors](#), urban parks and a network of [recreation trails](#). Five Rivers MetroParks [protects](#) the region’s natural heritage and provides [outdoor experiences](#) that inspire a personal connection with nature. [Educational](#) programs and [recreational](#) opportunities are offered year-round for all ages. To learn more [about](#) Five Rivers MetroParks, log onto www.metroparks.org or call 937-275-PARK (7275).

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