

4.0 Master Planning Process

1. Established a working core team
 1. Representatives from each functional area
 1. Beth Burke- Interpretation Coordinator
 2. Carrie Scarff-Chief of Planning and Projects
 3. Eric Sauer- Planning Manager
 4. Joshua York- Education Coordinator
 5. Karen Hesser- Chief of Operations
 6. Mike Enright- Conservation Manager
 7. Mary Klunk- Conservation Manager
 8. Randy Ryberg- Outdoor Recreation Coordinator
 9. Sidney Gnann- Business Services
 10. Trevor Hagedorn- Business Services Manager
2. Retained consultants
 1. Hitchcock Design
 2. Provided background documents and base map information
 1. GIS Data
 2. Property Data
 3. Conservation Files
 4. Park History
 5. Previous Master Plan
3. Public Relations
 1. Park Banners
 1. Placed at park entrances about 30 days before open houses
 2. Parkways
 3. Social Media
 4. FRMP Electronic Newsletters
 5. Direct emails
 6. Surveys
 1. In park intercept surveys
 2. Open House surveys
4. Two Day work session
 1. **Thursday October 13th**
 1. 8:00- 9:00 AM Kick Off Meeting- Meet with core team- Wegerzyn Classroom
 2. 9:00- 11:00 AM – All Staff Meeting at Wegerzyn
 3. 11:00-11:30- Quick Lunch/ travel to open house
 4. 11:30 AM till 1:30 PM-Open House Location: Trotwood Library Branch, 651 E. Main Street, Trotwood
 5. 1:30-3:00 Meet with FRMP Operations Staff- Wesleyan Nature Ctr
 6. 3:00-4:30 Meet with interpretive staff- Wesleyan Nature Ctr
 7. 4:30-5:30- Dinner
 8. 6:00 PM till 8:00 PM- Open House Location: Adventure Central, 2222 N. James H. McGee Blvd

2. Friday October 14th

1. 8:00-11:00 Walking and in depth tour of the park- Site analysis (includes public safety)
 2. 11:30-1:00 Meet with key volunteers (Lunch) HQ
 3. 1:00-2:00 Meet with community stakeholders - HQ
 4. 2:00-3:30 Meet with Program Staff- HQ
 5. 3:30-5:00 Meet with core team for wrap up - HQ
 6. Consultant Team departs
5. Develop meeting notes
 1. Core team review and comments provided to the consultant
 6. Develop program
 1. Core team review and comment
 7. Developed concept alternatives
 1. Presentation to the Core Team
 2. Core Team and Staff Comments
 8. Develop Pre-final site plan
 1. Presentation to the Core Team
 2. Core Team and Staff Comments
 9. Public feedback
 1. Public Open House
 1. Notified participants by email
 2. Posted meeting on social media and website
 2. Post Pre-final plan online for public comment
 10. Final plan development
 1. Site Plan
 2. Capital Improvement Estimate
 3. Established 10 top priority projects
 4. Developed Projections
 1. Narratives and project cost estimates
 1. Parks and Conservation
 2. Programing and Interpretation
 3. Business Operations
 4. Public Safety
 5. Philanthropy

Spring Run MetroPark is a planned park addition to the FRMP park system that will be comprised of two distinct land masses: the Great Miami Wetland Mitigation Bank and the former Larchtree Golf Course. FRMP has restored streams and wetlands at the 364 acre Mitigation Bank site and offers mitigation credits for sale to developers. The restoration has resulted in site becoming a destination for a significant variety of migrating bird species, including threatened and endangered species and species not previously seen in the area. The Larchtree site consists of 186 acres immediately north of the Mitigation Bank with four ponds grasslands that have been maintained from the hay that had been planted at the time of purchase. The former buildings have been demolished, though the cart paths remain. Visitors frequent the sites, particularly birders at the Mitigation Bank, as well as anglers and walkers at Larchtree. The total of 550 acres of mostly grassland offered by the Spring Run site is unique within the FRMP system and offers an opportunity to create a habitat for wildlife that will provide the public a different experience than is available elsewhere in the region.

Spring Run is situated in the western portion of Montgomery County, southwest of the city of Trotwood and a mile from the city of Dayton's west boundary, an area identified in the CMP as underserved by the district. Sycamore State Park lies immediately to the northwest, and its 2,384 acres combines with Spring Run to create substantial open space habitat. The Wolf Creek Rail Trail travels along Sycamore's northern boundary and provides a convenient opportunity to connect to Spring Run. The remainder of the surrounding area is agricultural uses dotted with single family homes.

Spring Run MetroPark, when developed, will be classified as a nature park based on the typology system established in the CMP. The classification reflects the future blend of ecosystem services and the natural setting with human services. The park will offer fewer amenities and have less human activity per acre than the more concentrated community parks. Staff input that guided the development of the site plan emphasized taking advantage of the unique natural habitat to create opportunities to experience the unique species attracted to this site. Likewise, the park offers the ability to provide service to residents of Trotwood, west Dayton that is traditionally underserved. To this end, care should be given in the design of the park to emphasize comfort and safety, which can be well-achieved by taking advantage of the long views offered by the relatively flat terrain and proposed grasslands. Staff and consultants also emphasized providing day use activities such as picnicking, hiking, and children's play areas, while accentuating fishing and bird watching opportunities.

FRMP's core interpretive storylines relevant to Spring Run are that we can all take part in conservation and those active conservation efforts protect the lands for future generations. Specific to the Spring Run site is the theme that the land is changing from past use as farmland and a golf course, and now through active conservation efforts the land is returning to open meadows, forests, grassland, and wetlands to immerse us in nature.

Spring Run offers FRMP a strong opportunity to connect with a population that is currently underserved by the district and the larger community. Spring Run also provides the second strong opportunity to develop an extensive grass and wetland habitat unmatched in the district, particularly focusing on bird habitat. This combination results in a site that can provide the constituent population a way to connect to nature in a rich and distinct habitat that marries well with the need to prioritize safety and comfort.

Wide open views and traditional park uses listed above will be emphasized. Spring Run's identity in the FRMP system will emerge as a park that serves the needs of the surrounding underserved population in a unique, vibrant, and expansive habitat.

Larchtree Reserve / Mitigation Bank Inventory and Analysis


2701 North Snyder Road
Trotwood, Ohio 45426

November 1, 2016





Meeting Summaries

Dates:  October 13th and 14th, 2016

Attendees:

Eric Sauer:	Five Rivers MetroParks (FRMP)
Carrie Scarff:	FRMP
Karen Hesser:	FRMP
Michael Enright:	FRMP
Mark Klunk	FRMP (not present)
Laura Stevens	FRMP
Joshua York:	FRMP
Randy Ryberg:	FRMP
Trevor Hagedorn:	FRMP
Chris Romer:	FRMP
Bill Inman:	Hitchcock Design Group (HDG)

RE: Larchtree / Mitigation Bank Master Plan

1. Core-Team kick-off meeting (October 13, 8:00 AM)

- a. In the early 2000's, FRMP responded to demand for wetland banks
 - i. Reviewed +/- 30 sites, selected property owned by Waste Management – slated for landfill
 - ii. Acquired first 363-acres in 2008 for \$1.2 million
 - iii. Following design approvals, the eastern 100-acres were built in 2011/2012, to date 5RMP has collected \$700k in credits (revenue placed in long-term management endowment)
 - iv. Next credit release is scheduled for 2017
 - v. Remaining area is currently farmed
 - vi. Management may be outsourced in 2017 to a private entity. Credit sales will help fund endowment and pay for management costs
- b. Conservation Easement overlays Bank
 - i. By agreement between FRMP and ACOE, EPA, NRCS, etc.
 - ii. Annual reporting required
 - iii. Provision for trails, parking, and other disturbance impacts is 4-acres maximum. Impact where previous houses and parking lots once were is allowed
- c. Purchased Larchtree Golf Course in 2014
 - i. Bought with Clean Ohio funds, grant came with land-use restrictions (prohibits industrial/commercial uses)
 - ii. City water available
 - iii. Demolished buildings, retained parking lot-used for volunteer parking
 - iv. Neighbors like remaining cart path network for walking and ponds for fishing
- d. Habitat considered excellent
 - i. Largest concentration of grassland bids in the county (visiting, nesting, breeding)
 - ii. Working with Ohio Division of Wildlife to gain funds (up to \$1 million/year) for habitat and infrastructure improvements
 - iii. 6-8 miles of tiles exist onsite, breaking as restoration occurs

225 W. Jefferson Avenue
Naperville, Illinois 60540
630.961.1787

hitchcockdesigngroup.com



- e. Adjacent public lands will be considered in Master Plan
 - i. Sycamore State Park
 - 1. 3,000 acres
 - 2. Direct connection to Larchtree/Mitigation Bank
 - 3. Managed remotely (no onsite staff)
 - 4. Invasive intensive (honeysuckle)
 - 5. Some maintenance provided by Horseman's Council
 - 6. City of Trotwood would like FRMP to manage this site (trust)
 - ii. Wolf Creek Trail (about ½ mile away)
 - iii. Trotwood Community Center
 - iv. Board of Education Site
- f. Northwest region considered underserved
 - i. Opportunities to connect to other assets
 - ii. Nature Park: Human and Nature together
- g. Master Plan needs to fulfill comprehensive master plan objectives
 - i. Typology: Nature park (balanced)
 - ii. Nature Play
 - iii. Trails
 - iv. Access
 - v. Habitat
 - vi. Other appropriate services and amenities
- h. Interpretation / programming opportunities
 - i. History: Agriculture/Golf/Wetland Bank – now animals are present
 - ii. Birding
 - iii. Volunteer restorations
 - iv. STEM program connections
 - v. Cart paths currently make up a 5k network – event ready
 - vi. Greenhouse gas research results available from USDA-NASA grant – documents greenhouse gas uptake improvement through land-use change (Agriculture to Wetland bank)
 - vii. Powerful stories about what humans can do for conservations
 - viii. Cyclocross, Bike-Packing opportunities; Nearest opps are John Brian State Park, Cinci-Ohio Valley, Columbus-Cap City
 - ix. Potential equestrian access (coop with Sycamore State Park?)
- i. Some basic amenities will be needed to support programming
 - i. Restrooms
 - ii. Parking
- j. Model: Sugar Creek Nature Park
 - i. One entry/exit
 - ii. Heavily used, over-programmed
 - iii. We are only allowed 4-acres of impact on 2/3 of the site, so support infrastructure will be a challenge
- k. Park Name will change
 - i. Bank will be "Great Miami Mitigation Bank at X Park"
 - ii. Will include this as a focus question for community input



- I. Revenue possibilities
 - i. Events
 - ii. Food trucks
 - iii. Wetland Bank credits (toward endowment)
 - iv. rentals

2. Public Open House #1, Trotwood Public Library (October 13th, 11:00-1:30)

- a. Directional/distance signs
- b. Off street parking
- c. Keep site mown
- d. Picnic area with shelters
- e. Clear pathways of debris
- f. Use cart paths for accessible trail network
- g. Interpret wetlands, habitat, and bird species
- h. Food production
- i. Educational opportunities (importance of this land)
- j. Nature trails in wetland bank
- k. Dove habitat
- l. Foot golf
- m. Meeting center (economic development)
- n. Maintain edges by homes
- o. Maintenance facility
- p. Restrooms
- q. Educational signage
- r. Wildflowers
- s. Bike Trail connection
- t. Remove invasive species
- u. Paved walking trails
- v. Scenic views
- w. Picnic tables and shelters
- x. Concern about drug dealers at parking lot
- y. Camping and fishing (accessible)
- z. Is this site part of the original Virginia Land Grant?
- aa. Trotwood Historical Society, Regina Kleinhent 854-4505
- bb. Observation tower
- cc. School group accommodations
- dd. Habitat for pheasant and migratory birds
- ee. birding blinds
- ff. 175 species of birds documented on eBird
- gg. Larger body of water
- hh. ADA birding destination
- ii. Benchmark: Madison Park
- jj. Observation decks
- kk. Butterfly gardens
- ll. Amphitheater near water
- mm. Disc golf
- nn. Partner with OH to acquire state park
- oo. Field trips
- pp. City council meeting space
- qq. Education Center
- rr. Shelter with restroom
- ss. Place to throw football
- tt. Cycling – bike rental
- uu. Swing
- vv. Docents onsite
- ww. Sledding



- xx. Enhance habitat
- yy. Disease resistant native trees
- zz. Keep it serene, quiet
- aaa. Cross country skiing
- bbb. Benches to watch sunsets
- ccc. Education regarding limestone shelf-substrate
- ddd. Keep it clear for surveillance
- eee. Walking for exercise
- fff. Frisbee golf
- ggg. Incorporate safe edges to ponds
- hhh. Connection to regional trail
- iii. Equestrian link to Sycamore State Park

3. Operations Staff Meeting, Community #1 Debrief (October 13, 3:00-4:30)

- a. Appreciative of FRMP's ownership of the property
- b. Think this property might be a part of the original Virginia land grant
- c. Site facilitates nature experience, bird habitats, and trail walking
- d. Accessibility should be considered
- e. Trotwood is passionate about having a MetroPark
- f. Equestrian connection to Sycamore State Park is a possibility, but Larchtree is not big enough for a meaningful equestrian trail network
- g. Events, such as weddings, council meetings, family reunions, and rentals could be served well at Larchtree
- h. Design to LEED standards? Consensus is to not pursue LEED certification, but rather consider the LEED and ASLA Sustainable Sites, kit of parts.
- i. Windmill pond aeration?
- j. Look at Darby Creek Nature Center (open 2nd story for viewing)
- k. eBird (app for bird sightings) has documented over 100 species at Wetland Bank
- l. This MetroPark will be well suited for a birding trail and eco-recreation improvements
- m. Allowing Larchtree to become predominantly cool-season grasses and expanding Wetland Bank will benefit bird habitat, and hence, birding and eco-tourism
- n. Example projects: Nature Center at Darby Creek, Ottawa Wildlife Nature Building-Lake Erie
- o. Relationship to Sycamore State Park
 - i. State of OH would like to have FRMP acquire and manage the park
 - ii. FRMP's position: the State would need to fund the management
 - iii. Land uses include: equestrian (Horseman's Council), camping (group), archery range, fishing, and cross country
 - iv. Connection to Larchtree is desirable
 - v. Grasslands Management (via excise tax) is available to FRMP through Pittman Robertson Act Funds
- p. FRMP considers this a 10+ year master plan vision that includes monitoring of both people and wildlife use, with a core area in Larchtree being the phase I improvement
- q. Park could be an economic development catalyst for Trotwood
- r. Park currently does not have any staff onsite, but Rangers do get called if residents see people on the property
- s. To open this MetroPark requires improving/providing:
 - i. Parking
 - ii. Restrooms
 - iii. Maintenance
 - iv. Identity (signage, etc)
 - v. Onsite staff (FRMP or contract)
- t. Could consider "Businesses in a Box" like bike rental
- u. Other possible "people" uses



- i. Foot golf
 - ii. Disc golf
 - iii. Cross country
 - iv. Permit hunting (culling) – when Sycamore State Park opens hunting season, many deer come to Larchtree/Mitigation Bank site. Managing the deer population is necessary
- v. Wetland Bank Management will transition from FRMP staff operation to contractor management (bonded to uphold management standards and meet 10-year quality goals)
- w. The Wetland Bank has a 4-acre “impact” maximum, including mown trails, and excluding the existing maintenance drive and parking lot. Need to invest impact wisely
- x. Need to review adjacent parcels for potential acquisition as new/adjacent acquisitions will not count toward impact calculation
- y. Consider SE corner of Larchtree as the core area, utilizing existing entry points and roadway visibility
- z. Consider FRMP’s concept of the Power of 10+ (ten categories of things to do once you arrive and 10-activities/categories supported)
- aa. Consider stacking or concentric use zones that allow for multiple levels of experiences
- bb. Consider winding road with multiple parking areas at activity zones
- cc. Consider large shelter, or multi-purpose building with a classroom
- dd. Will be a popular site for school visits and Trotwood residents
- ee. Stories:
 - i. Could have been a landfill
 - ii. Active conservation efforts to protect land asset
 - iii. Successful and improving habitat
 - iv. Partnerships create healthy and vibrant communities
 - v. We can all take part in conservation
 - vi. Birds and pollinators
 - vii. Restored wetland benefits (bolster climate resilience, consume greenhouse gasses)
 - viii. Onsite study, watching the “wetland guys” performing ongoing development of the wetland bank
- ff. Education:
 - i. This will be a higher-level education asset, likely geared toward high school age visitors and University of Dayton students (STEM curriculum)
 - ii. Experience wetland habitat, pollinators in the prairie
 - iii. Consider “boot” vending for students and visitors
 - iv. Bus entry and parking will be necessary
 - v. Sitting/staging area, outdoor classroom/amphitheater, and other stations will be helpful to break-up large groups into a rotation
- gg. FRMP is building a wetland from scratch – how does the master plan address making the site a visitor draw for the wetland experience?
 - i. Nodes to visit on a wetland walk
 - ii. Depressed plaza with walls adjacent to the wetland?
 - iii. Using nets to catch organisms and insects
 - iv. Interpretive areas highlighting various wetland types (forested, emergent, etc.)
 - v. Nature play trail or nodes (catch a frog, see a butterfly, climb a tree)
 - vi. Consider locating nodes by other activity areas
- hh. Visitor types:
 - i. Recharger
 - ii. Experience seeker
 - iii. Birders
 - iv. Fishers



- v. Cyclists (paved trails, plus learn to ride on dirt trails)
- vi. Event participants (rentals, 5k)
- vii. Walkers (accessible trail through quality habitat)
- ii. Trotwood is an underserved population. What does that mean?
 - i. Engage the population center nearest to the site
 - ii. How do we make it attractive and engaging to Trotwood?
 - iii. Marketing and branding to link it to Trotwood (Trotwood MetroPark?)
 - 1. Outdoor afro
 - 2. Black and brown faces in America's Great Places
 - 3. Celebrate the social justice victory over the landfill proposal
 - 4. Incorporate elements familiar in their world to invite visitor-ship
 - 5. Consider Bing Davis art approach (African contemporary)
 - 6. Celebrate community with gathering places (amphitheater, shelter, building) for churches, family reunions, other gatherings
 - iv. Walking will be a primary reason to visit; consider a stacked loop trail approach with inner loop (wide path linking together activity zones), secondary loop (5k route) and longer outer loop that adds wetland bank experience.

4. Public Open House #2, Adventure Central at Wesleyan MetroPark (October 13th, 6:00-8:00 PM)

- a. Picnicking will be a major draw
- b. Churches offer a strong volunteer community
- c. Family reunions
- d. Class reunions
- e. Families spending time with kids
- f. Serious walkers in Trotwood
- g. If we can convince the community that there are things to do at this park, they will come visit
- h. Basketball is big in Trotwood
- i. Need a meeting place
- j. Economic development opportunity for Trotwood
- k. Trotwood doesn't have a showcase site, this could be it
- l. Regional draw to the area and a source of community pride for Trotwood
- m. eBird list (175 species counted already – 50 species count is the usual maximum for a wetland area)
- n. Focus development at northeast corner(visibility)
- o. Consider birder camping
- p. This site was intended as a landfill (City passed an ordinance allowing the land-use but with specific limitations that wouldn't provide for it)
- q. Vision should include a building that can be used for weddings, learning
- r. Picnicking, walking, flowers volunteer activities
- s. Amphitheater for music, art, and cooking events (community picnics – grills)
- t. Councilman is a birder, mayor likes to fish
- u. Shouldn't have to walk ½ mile to get to the center of the park
- v. The US's 2nd largest Audubon Society is in Miami County
- w. Site should have a weather station, referenced by local weather personalities/meteorologists
- x. Combine Larchtree and Sycamore State Park

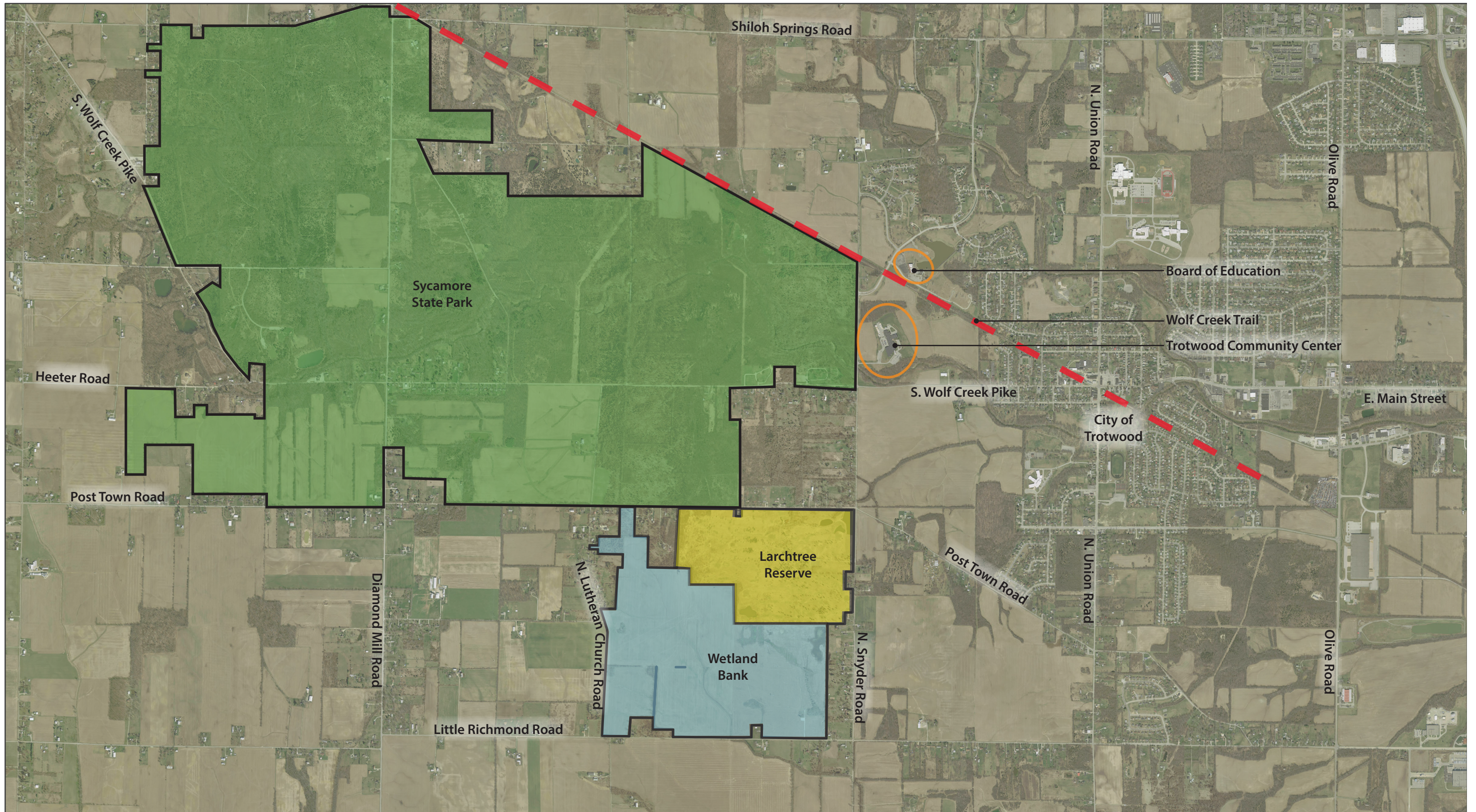
5. Site Tour of Larchtree / Wetland Mitigation Bank (October 14th, 8:00 AM – noon)

- a. See site analysis



6. Wrap-up meeting, Five Rivers MetroParks office (October 14th, 1:00-3:00)

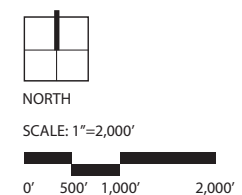
- a. This asset is a blank canvas
- b. Highlight artesian wells (2?) and interpret
- c. Cyclocross route (paving, grass trails, features, 90% rideable)
- d. Low stress trail riding, family biking environment, low-pace, low-energy environment for biking and enjoying nature and bird experiences
- e. Some natural surface trails, but not conducive for mountain biking – doesn't support significant network of single-track
- f. May be an option for bike-packing / camping with connection to Sycamore State Park – group camping and barn rental
- g. Consider widening the paved trail feature (10-12') for multi-use and layer other pathway types amongst paved network (may need to eliminate some of the existing trail and add new links to create meaningful loops)
- h. Site is not conducive for a network of horse trails, but could link to Sycamore State Park for an equestrian stopover; need to inquire with equestrian community
- i. Connection to Wolf Creek Trail (through Sycamore State Park, use utility corridor, connect to Trotwood Community Center / Board of Education sites) – local roads may be too narrow for comfortable biking connection
- j. Camping at Larchtree may be somewhat redundant to Sycamore State Park facilities
- k. Access and Trail concept
 - i. Loop road to activity areas and trail head(s) and a reservable shelter
 - ii. Secondary access at Wetland Bank (existing maintenance road/lot)
 - iii. Stacked loop trail(s)- meadow, wetland, interpretive/feature areas (capture views/highlights special areas) – use levee in wetland area and west Larchtree buffer to extend wetland loop trail
 - iv. Wooded wetland will provide short term views until trees matures
 - v. **need to map proposed wetland communities and topo



Existing Conditions

Larchtree Reserve / Mitigation Bank

Trotwood, Ohio



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All drawings are preliminary and subject to change.
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PREPARED FOR
**Five Rivers
Metroparks**

Dayton, OH

