



April 3, 2020

NORTHEAST OHIO PARKS URGE PUBLIC'S COOPERATION TO REMAIN OPEN DURING COVID-19

Several Northeast Ohio park organizations are jointly requesting the public's assistance in keeping parks operating safely during a visitor surge due to the COVID-19 public health emergency. As an essential service under Ohio's stay-at-home order, parks are playing a vital role in supporting the community's mental and physical health.

For a safe visit, Cleveland Metroparks, Cuyahoga Valley National Park, the Conservancy for Cuyahoga Valley National Park, the Ohio & Erie Canalway Association and Summit Metro Parks urge park visitors to:

- **Think First:** Stay home if you are sick or exhibiting symptoms.
- **Wash Hands:** Wash your hands before coming to the park, carry hand sanitizer and avoid touching picnic tables, railings and benches.
- **Keep Your Distance:** Maintain 6 feet between yourself and others and give warning before passing on the trail.
- **Come Prepared:** Bring your own drinking water, carry out your trash and be prepared for restroom closures.
- **Respect Closures:** Playgrounds, exercise stations, shelters and other amenities are closed for public safety. Also, please bypass busy areas for quieter ones.
- **Stay in Touch:** Parks are implementing dynamic closures and are updating their websites with the latest information.

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Cleveland Metroparks spans nearly 24,000 acres across Northeast Ohio and includes 18 reservations, more than 300 miles of trails, eight golf courses, eight lakefront parks, dining and retail venues, and the nationally acclaimed Cleveland Metroparks Zoo. Visit clevelandmetroparks.com for more information.

Cuyahoga Valley National Park encompasses 33,000 acres along the Cuyahoga River between Cleveland and Akron, Ohio. Managed by the National Park Service, CVNP combines cultural, historical, recreational, and natural activities in one setting. For more information, visit www.nps.gov/cuva, www.facebook.com/cuyahogavalleynationalpark, or call 440-717-3890.

The Conservancy for Cuyahoga Valley National Park is the official friends group and philanthropic partner for Cuyahoga Valley National Park (CVNP). With a mission to enrich lives and our communities by inspiring use, appreciation and support of CVNP and ensure its preservation, the Conservancy offers cultural and educational programming, operates a year-round environmental education center, comanages the park's volunteer program, provides venues for weddings, meetings and special events, and operates three park retail spaces.

The Ohio & Erie Canalway is a National Heritage Area, designated by Congress in 1996, to celebrate the rich historical, cultural and natural resources of the Ohio & Erie Canal and Towpath Trail. **The Ohio & Erie Canalway Association** is the management entity of the National Heritage Area, as designated by the U.S. Congress, and operates as a regional extension of its two founding organizations: Canalway Partners, representing Cuyahoga County, and the Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition, representing the southern three counties of Summit, Stark and Tuscarawas. Learn more: www.ohioanderiecanalway.com.

Summit Metro Parks manages more than 14,000 acres, including 16 parks, several conservation areas and over 150 miles of trails, with 22 miles of the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail. Annual attendance averages 5 million visits. Visit us online at summitmetroparks.org.