RESTORING YOUR OWN BACKYARD

The guy from the tree company thought he could save the paper birch in my front yard. The tree was suffering from two pests—the bronze birch borer and the leaf miner. But a regimen of pesticide injections and sprays could control the problems, he said. It would be a shame to lose such a decorative tree.

The paper birch, with its lacy white bark, had been planted years ago by a previous owner who no doubt had noble landscaping intentions. But it was a cool-weather tree out of its natural range. Ohio’s hot summers placed it under too much stress, made it too susceptible to pests. It was doomed to die an early death unless I agreed to pay for perpetual chemical fixes.

Continued on p. 4
A plug for us

It's always nice to be praised. But we were especially delighted by a review in the March-April 1995 issue of the Utne Reader, the national magazine covering alternative media and emerging trends. The review was by Utne editor Jay Walljasper, and this is what he said:

Alas, poor Cleveland. It's been a full 25 years since that infamous day when the Cuyahoga River caught fire... yet the city has never shaken its image as America's number one urban eco-disaster area. But a close look at EcoCity Cleveland—arguably the best local environmental publication in America—might change a few minds.

This attractive monthly newsletter is brimming with news items, bright ideas, and sweeping visions about the Greening of Cleveland. Frequently taking a bioregional perspective, editor David Beach celebrates the area's natural assets, including forests, river valleys, rich farmland, and back-from-the-brink-of-death Lake Erie. Urban concerns like sustainable transportation, suburban sprawl, workplace toxics, environmental justice, and neighborhood revitalization also get in-depth treatment.

Besides comprehensive listings of local meetings, events, and resources, EcoCity Cleveland offers sharp analysis on issues that affect more than just northern Ohio—global warming and urban disinvestment, for example—as well as reports on success stories from around the world that could be applied to any North American city. All this gives people living outside the Cuyahoga Valley watershed a reason to subscribe—not to mention the fact that EcoCity Cleveland deserves to be widely imitated in other towns and cities across the land, especially the one you call home.

As we end our second year of publication, I believe that we have established EcoCity Cleveland as a unique resource for Northeast Ohio. The support of readers like you has made this possible. In the coming year, I hope that you will keep on supporting us—by renewing your subscription, by encouraging your friends to subscribe, and by sending in your ideas and stories.

New faces
We recently said a reluctant goodbye to Bob Staib, one of the founding members of our Board of Trustees. Bob has assumed expanded responsibilities as acting director of the Cleveland Public Health Department. We wish him well and thank him for helping to get EcoCity Cleveland off the ground.

We are pleased to announce the election of two new board members, Stu Greenberg, executive director of Environmental Health Watch, and Carl Wirtz, a manager of audit and consulting at the accounting firm of Hauser + Taylor. Both will provide valuable guidance in the coming year as we continue to develop as an organization.

Thank you
We recently received a grant from the Benjamin S. Gerson Family Foundation for the purchase of computerized mapping (geographic information system) software. This tool will help us improve the quality of maps in EcoCity Cleveland, as well as strengthen our capacity to assist citizen planning efforts in the region.

David Beach
Editor

Mission
EcoCity Cleveland is a nonprofit, tax-exempt, educational organization. Through the publication of the EcoCity Cleveland Journal and other programs, it will stimulate ecological thinking about the Northeast Ohio region (Cuyahoga Bioregion), nurture an EcoCity Network among local groups working on urban and environmental issues, and promote sustainable ways to meet basic human needs for food, shelter, productive work and stable communities.

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Organizations listed for identification only.

Articles in EcoCity Cleveland do not necessarily reflect the views of board members, although there's a good chance they do.

The EcoCity Cleveland Journal is published monthly at 2841 Scarborough Road, Cleveland Heights, OH 44118. Cuyahoga Bioregion, telephone/fax (216) 932-1007. Unless otherwise noted, all articles and photographs are by David Beach. Submissions from others are welcome, but please call first. We cannot be responsible for unsolicited materials. Copy deadline is the 15th of each month.

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Sprawl tops regional priorities

In a recent preliminary ranking, participants of the Regional Environmental Priorities Project (REPP) selected five environmental issues—outmigration from the urban core, quality of surface water, quality of outdoor air, quality of the urban environment, and use of resources/energy—as high priorities in Northeast Ohio. Outmigration topped the list because urban sprawl contributes to numerous environmental and social problems.

During the past year the REPP has involved citizens and technical experts to evaluate the threats of various environmental problems to human health, ecosystems and quality of life in Cuyahoga, Lake, Lorain and Summit counties. The project is coordinated by the Center for the Environment at Case Western Reserve University.

A number of other key issues did not receive a high priority ranking in part because many members of the REPP Public Committee viewed the scientific evidence as inconclusive. These issues included global problems, such as climate change from greenhouse gases and stratospheric ozone loss, and the problem of persistent toxic substances in the food chain.

At the ranking meeting on March 16, representatives of environmental and citizen organizations argued in vain for toxics in the food chain to be made a high priority. They criticized the REPP’s technical advisory committees for narrowly interpreting the issue of human food contamination. For example, the Human Health technical committee focused on the relatively minor problem of spoiled food (for which local health departments have ready data) and not on the far more worrisome problem of bioaccumulative toxic substances, which can mimic human hormones and disrupt reproduction and development. As a result, a problem that could undermine the reproductive viability of humans and other species was ranked a medium priority.

The REPP process was limited in other ways, as well. Although it was supposed to be based on the best science, lack of time and resources meant it was based on the information readily available to the volunteers who happened to be involved. Sometimes the resulting reports were complete and well developed, but sometimes they were not.

In addition, time pressures shortened the period of debate and public outreach. Members of the voting Public Committee had less than two weeks to digest dozens of technical reports, solicit input, and debate the priorities. The preliminary rankings were accomplished in one meeting.

Environmental and community activists were also frustrated that “management” issues were excluded from the rankings. In their view, environmental problems like water pollution or energy consumption are the result of more fundamental problems of politics, economics and the failure of regulation. Thus, the real priorities should address political campaign financing, an economic system that does not account for the full costs of environmental degradation, or a regulatory system that puts the burden of proof of harm on the victims rather than the polluters.

According to REPP director Norman Robbins, such management issues will be discussed in the next phase of the process, as teams develop strategies to address the top priorities. Ultimately, the purpose of the REPP is to change public policy so that resources are devoted to the most important environmental problems.

Robbins acknowledges that the REPP has had limitations. But he believes that it has incorporated the “best judgment of fair-minded people.” He stresses that economic and political constraints force us to set priorities every day, so there might as well be a national process for doing it. He also emphasizes that the priorities are only relative rankings. The fact that an issue ranks low does not mean it is unimportant.

Still, the process of picking priorities has prompted much soul-searching within the local environmental movement. As one activist said, “I can’t chose my poison.”

Pick your poison?

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<tr>
<th>Issue area</th>
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<td>Outmigration from the urban core</td>
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<td>Quality of outdoor air</td>
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<td>Use of natural resources/energy</td>
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<td>Global climate change</td>
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<td>Hazardous substances in households/schools</td>
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<td>Human food contamination</td>
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<td>Quality of indoor air</td>
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These are the 16 issues being considered by the Regional Environmental Priorities Project for Northeast Ohio. Preliminary rankings are included.

How would you rank these issues in terms of their impacts on human health, ecosystems and quality of life? What are your environmental priorities for the region? Send your comments to EcoCity Cleveland, and we will forward them to priorities project participants before the final ranking meeting in May.

For more information about the project, call the CWRU Center for the Environment at 368-2988 or the Grassroots Environmental Caucus at 961-4646.
Ohio's native plants

Early settlers of Ohio were greeted by expansive forests, wetlands and prairies. Adapting this wilderness to farmland forever changed the face of Ohio's landscape. Almost every mature tree had been cut by 1900; forests which formerly covered 95% of the state now cover only 25%. Thousands of acres of wetlands were drained and, along with the prairies, converted to agricultural use. Presently, only remnants remain of Ohio's original landscape to remind us of our natural heritage.

Of Ohio's estimated 2,700 vascular plant species, 1,800 are considered native or naturally occurring in the state prior to European settlement. The other 900 plant species have been mostly introduced through agriculture and are so thoroughly established that it is often hard to separate them from the natives.

Native plant species are as much a part of our natural heritage as the land and its physical features. Besides their obvious beauty and aesthetic value, native plants make up the framework and support mechanism upon which thousands of other animal and insect species have evolved. They represent a great, largely untapped, resource for the horticultural and landscape professions, and the home gardener.

—Brian Parsons
Holden Arboretum

Restoring
From p. 1

In the end, I decided to accept nature's verdict. I told the guy from the tree company to cut the birch down. I plan to replace it with a hardier tree that's adapted to local conditions.

It's the kind of decision faced by everyone who is the steward of a piece of land. How far do you go to impose your own will and landscape prejudices on your yard? Do you follow the "barefoot grass" admonitions of the lawn care companies, or do you allow natural processes to run their course?

In recent years, it seems more and more people are choosing to err on the side of nature. Some are concerned about the health dangers of pesticides used to poison nature into submission. Others want to turn their artificial, monoculture lawn into a more diverse, natural habitat. They realize that, while urban or suburban land is usually so disturbed that it must be "managed" in some way, the management doesn't have to be toxic. And the resulting yard can contribute in many ways to the larger ecosystem of the region.

"It starts off with homeowners realizing that they are just temporary custodians of this habitat, and they can help restore it or they can blindly follow the landscape style of the guy down the street with a lawn and a few shrubs," says Brian Parsons, natural areas coordinator at the Holden Arboretum in Kirtland.

"If you look at each blade of grass in your yard as an introduced plant species that has displaced a native species, then you can begin to sense the magnitude of change we have made in the name of 'progress,'" he adds.

Gardening writer Sara Stein comments in her book, Noah's Garden: "Suburban development has wrought habitat destruction on a grand scale. As these tracts expand, they increasingly squeeze the remaining natural ecosystems, fragment them, sever corridors by which plants and animals might refill the voids we have created. To reverse this process—to reconnect as many plant and animal species as we can to rebuild intelligent suburban ecosystems—requires a new kind of garden, new techniques of gardening, and, I emphasize, a new kind of gardener."

In this spirit, here are a few basic steps we can take to restore our yards and the larger ecosystems of Northeast Ohio:

- **Stop urban sprawl.** First, we must save as much unspoiled natural area and rural land as possible. This means the municipalities and counties in our region need to work together to slow the unnecessary, uncontrolled sprawl of development over the countryside.

- **Cluster development.** If new land must be developed, at least do it sensitively. For example, new homes or businesses can be clustered so only a small portion of a site has to be disturbed.

- **Get rid of lawns.** In areas that are already developed, reduce the area covered by lawns—those water-hungry, high-maintenance, chemical-intensive, unsustainable, monotonous stands of nonnative plants.

"Anything is better than a lawn," says Parsons, who teaches a class at the Arboretum on designing a natural landscape. "Start from that premise, then work your way back. The goal is to have a lawn no larger than you care to mow by hand with a traditional push mower."

- **Create diversity.** In his backyard, Parsons performed an experiment a few years ago. He simply stopped mowing a large swath of grass and observed what came up. Some of the plants were noxious weeds, which he pulled by hand. But many wildflower species also appeared. He planted some additional wildflowers, and by the second year he had a beautiful meadow.

It's also possible to add complexity to the "vertical structure" of your yard—the
layers of ground cover, understory plants and canopy trees. By increasing the diversity of species and structure, you also create more habitats and food sources for wildlife.

- **Plant native species.** To complete the restoration process, we must assemble as many pieces of the region's original ecosystem as possible. "Our yards are within range of several thousand plant species," Parsons notes. "Rip out a little vinca and dare to plant something different. Live on the edge."

The cooler north and east sides of a house can become woodland meadows. The south and west exposures can feature prairie species. You can find examples to follow in parks throughout the region.

One problem for the casual gardener is finding sources of native plants. Restoration purists scoff at all-purpose, wildflower seed mixes (a "meadow in a can") sold by national retailers. They say it's important to collect seeds of native plants growing within 100 miles or so. Only then can you be reasonably sure that the plants' genes have evolved in response to the specific climatic and ecological requirements of the region. Local nurseries don't sell such native plants, leaving most gardeners to depend on nurseries elsewhere in the eastern United States that sell seed or propagated natives.

Ultimately, the goal should be to create an authentic, regional, landscape aesthetic, just as some parts of the country have regional cuisines or styles of architecture, Parsons says. "Right now, we have no landscape style of our own, very little appreciation of the native flora," he says. "Everyone's got this exotic landscape. There's no sense of place."

"We've inherited a rich natural heritage. I don't want my kids to inherit an imitation," he adds. "We need to consider ourselves as the temporary custodians of land which is home to hundreds of native plant and animal species... Our own lives are brief, but the consequences of our actions can far outlive us. After we move on, our plants stay put, and they can remain for more than 100 years."

### Resources

- Clean-Land, Ohio (urban forestry and beautification), 1836 Euclid Ave., Suite 800, Cleveland, OH 44115, (696-2122).
- Cleveland Botanical Garden (redefining its mission to include more work with urban green spaces), 11030 East Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44106, (721-1690).
- Cleveland Museum of Natural History (botanical surveys and research on rare plants in the region; extensive herbarium collection), 1 Wade Oval, Cleveland, OH 44106, (231-4600).
- Greater Cleveland Ecology Association (leaf humus from recycled yard waste), 332 Lakeside Ave. West, Cleveland, OH 44113, (687-1266).
- Holden Arboretum (the nation's largest arboretum), 9500 Sperry Rd., Kirtland, OH 44094, (946-4400).
- National Institute for Urban Wildlife, 10921 Trotting Way, Columbus, MD 21044, (301/596-3311).
- Ohio Division of Wildlife (information on wildlife management on private lands), (216/644-2293).
- Ohio State University Cooperative Extension Service (growing tips), 3200 W. 65th St., Cleveland, OH 44102, (631-1890).

### Native herbaceous perennials for the home landscape

#### Prairie/meadow species
- Nodding Wild Onion
- Marsh Milkweed
- Sullivant's Milkweed
- Butterfly-Weed
- New England Aster
- White Wild Indigo
- Canada Lily
- Shooting Star
- Rattlesnake Master
- Queen of the Prairie
- Rough Blazing-Star
- Dense Blazing-Star
- Scaly Blazing-Star
- Canada Wildflower
- Oswego Tea
- Wild Bergamot
- Foxglove
- Gray-Headed Coneflower
- Black-Eyed Susan
- Thin-Leaved Coneflower
- Golden Ragwort
- Royal Catchfly
- Rosinweeds
- Goldenrods
- Purple Meadow-Rue
- Culver's Root
- Big Bluestem
- Canada Wild Rye
- Switch Grass
- Little Bluestem
- Indian Grass

#### Woodland species
- Doll's Eyes
- Rue Anemone
- Wild Columbine
- Jack-in-the-Pulpit
- Wild Ginger
- Marashigold
- Green and Gold
- Bugbane
- Fairy Bells
- Wintergreen
- Wild Geranium
- Sharp-lobed Hepatica
- Dwarf Crested Iris
- Falsed Rue Anemone
- Twin Flower
- Virginia Bluebells
- Partridge-Berry
- Miterwort
- Wood Phlox
- Creeping Phlox
- Solomon's- Seal
- Wild Stoncerep
- Solomon's-Plume
- Wood Poppy
- Foam Flower
- Canada Violet
- Barren Strawberry
- Maidenhair Fern
- Lady Fern
- Marginal Shield Fern
- Christmas Fern
- New York Fern

### Additional reading


### Plant sales

- Holden Arboretum plant sale, a good source of hard-to-find native plants and exhibits on protecting plants from deer, attracting birds and butterflies, and transplanting woody plants. April 29-30 at the Arboretum, 9500 Sperry Road in Kirtland. Call 946-4400 for more information.
- County Soil and Water Conservation Districts in the region also sponsor spring plant sales featuring trees and ground covers.
Lawn of the future

Sometimes it's not easy to get rid of your lawn. When I wrote this story back in 1990, Shaker Heights resident Joe Gyurgyik was embroiled in controversy because he had turned his front yard into a wildflower meadow. But I'm pleased to report a happy ending.

"The controversy's has died down," Gyurgyik says. "The city made us plant a row of viburnum and rhododendrons to screen the view from the street, but otherwise they've left us alone. I guess the neighbors have gotten used to it..." At first there was a concern that my yard was going to turn into a field of weeds. But there are no weeds, just flowers.

With five children to worry about, Gyurgyik wants a landscape that requires no toxic pesticides to maintain. His example should encourage other homeowners who want to get rid of their high-maintenance grass. Dare to change! Even in communities with strict landscape and architectural standards, it's possible for a new landscape aesthetic to emerge.

Artists talk about developing new aesthetics. On Winthrop Road in Shaker Heights, Joe Gyurgyik is demonstrating a new aesthetic for lawns.

Up and down the street are manicured expanses of green grass. In front of his stately, Tudor home, however, is a knee-high (soon to be waist-high) profusion of wildflowers—50 varieties, planted not just in a few isolated garden beds but sown over most of the front yard.

Gyurgyik, a professional landscaper, thought his gently sloping front yard would be the ideal place for a natural landscape. He wanted the wildflowers for their beauty and because they are self-sustaining. Unlike the "perfect lawn," the wildflowers don't need mowing or watering. They don't require continual chemical fixes of fertilizers, herbicides and insecticides—chemicals which can poison beneficial insects and wildlife and pollute groundwater, streams and lakes. And they don't create yard wastes that fill up landfills. They simply turn brown and lie-down in the fall and then regenerate in the spring.

In addition, the flowers attract wildlife. There are Shasta daisies for the songbirds, tubular foxglove blossoms for the humming birds, poppies for the butterflies.

"In the morning there are a hundred songbirds," Gyurgyik says. "It's an oasis of nature."

But several of his neighbors don't appreciate his oasis. They see an unmown field of weeds—an eyesore. Last year, they complained to City Hall that Gyurgyik's yard didn't conform to Shaker Heights standards.

The city authorities (ever anxious to preserve the housing values that help Shaker remain a stable, integrated community) told him to get out his mower. He objected. They sent out a horticulturist, who verified that the weeds were flowers. They told him, okay, just confine the flowers to some nice, little beds. He asked to see their landscaping code. They didn't have one, so over the winter the Shaker Heights Board of Zoning Appeals produced a resolution to clarify "appropriate landscaping."

The resolution says the Board "does not wish to stifle creativity in the design of landscape installations but does wish to establish an appropriate contextual standard...the community context is not characterized by harsh contrasts in landscape treatments between lots but rather is most often a flowing mix of green with splashes of seasonal color and tall plantings providing visual interest..."

It goes on to restrict "naturalized" landscapes (those consisting of a mass of..."
Lawn care companies going organic

By Laurel Hopwood

I receive numerous inquiries regarding Who's Who in organic lawn care. I thought that surveying the Cleveland area lawn care companies to learn who offers an organic program would be a tedious task. I found it enlightening, however, to hear how consumer demand is moving the market towards greater ecological viability.

At least two Cleveland-area companies, Grassroots and Bauer, and one in the Akron area, Ecosource, are dedicated to using organic programs (where "organic" is defined as being derived from a living organism). Bauer infrequently spot treats grass with a synthetic pesticide as a last resort. But the companies recognize the need to replenish the soil with materials that close the organic loop, such as poultry manure. Synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, in contrast, are often derived from petroleum, which depletes nonrenewable resources and can contribute to global warming.

Such companies are also self-taught. They have discovered that university-based plant research on landscaping and agriculture is largely funded by chemical companies. Bauer is even experimenting with a new, corn-based organic weedkiller.

About 25 other lawn care companies recently have added an organic option, using fertilizer that comes from chicken byproducts or sewage sludge. Most of these companies added the organic alternative because, as one said, "More customers are asking for it, especially families with young children."

Some companies admitted that they were offering organic because "it's safer" and they felt that the applicator's health was being affected by pesticide exposure. In my informal survey I also found that the companies who were not committed to organics tended to have less knowledge of proper soil pH and the role of soil microorganisms.

We each have our own attitude about lawn care. Personally, I enjoy the array of colors from the flowers that grow from weeds. People who choose the organic route can apply fertilizer themselves or pay someone else to do it. Or you can just mow—preferably with a manual lawnmower—and leave the grass clippings so that the nutrients are returned to the soil. Either way, you'll have a healthier lawn.

Hopwood chairs the Human Health and the Environment committee of the Northeast Ohio Sierra Club. One of the committee's recent projects is to promote an ordinance in Cleveland Heights which would prohibit pesticide use on grounds of city buildings, public libraries, public schools and registered day care facilities. For more information, call 371-9779.
Putting back the pieces: Restoring ecosystems in Ohio

In late winter, before the spring greening of the woods, Karl Smith gets the urge to light fires. He assembles his burn team, and they head out into the Cleveland Metroparks' Brecksville Reservation armed with drip torches—large cans fitted with metallic nozzles that drip a mixture of diesel and kerosene onto the leaf litter. In short order, the burn team sets lines of fire marching through the woods. The flames hug the ground, encircling the smaller saplings with just enough heat to kill them.

Visitors to the park are intrigued, or alarmed, by the blaze. They don't know what to make of Smith, the bearded, chain-smoking "burn boss" who keeps calling out to the people in the woods to set more fires. But rangers and education specialists are on hand to explain: sometimes one has to burn the trees to save the forest.

Smith, the senior naturalist at the Brecksville Reservation, has noticed that areas of oak-hickory forest in the park are in trouble. Shade-tolerant trees such as beech and maple are invading and blocking out young oaks and hickories. The forest canopy is growing denser and less sunlight is reaching the understory plants. As a result, mayapples are going dormant earlier in the summer. Dogwoods and hazel nuts are flowering less. If left alone, the whole complex of plants, animals and insects that makes up the oak-hickory ecosystem will be succeeded by a beech-maple ecosystem.

In much of Northeast Ohio, climate and other factors make the beech-maple forest the last stage of natural succession—the climax forest. Although there's nothing inherently wrong with beech-maple forests, Smith and the Metroparks want to preserve a diverse collection of habitats. In the wilderness, natural disruptions like fire and flooding by beaver dams keep ecosystems at various stages of succession. In the controlled, human world, however, it often takes active management to maintain diversity—burning, mowing meadows to prevent the take-over of woody plants, bulldozing the earth to create wetlands, or physically removing undesirable, nonnative plant species.

Smith's management plan for the oak-hickory ridges in the Brecksville Reservation entails opening up the forest to favor the growth of oaks and hickories. First, a crew moves in with chainsaws to remove nonnative trees, such as pines, which people had planted years ago when the integrity of ecosystems wasn't such a concern. "Prescribed burns" then kill beech and maple saplings that are starting to become established. The fires also remove leaf litter and soil moisture that favor the germination of beech and maple seeds. The last step in the restoration process is to plant seeds of woodland plants that botanical research indicates were once part of the oak-hickory ecosystem. The goal is to reassemble the native plant community.

"We want to hang on to as much species diversity as we can, not by preserving individual species, but by restoring functioning ecosystems," Smith says.

During a burn, Smith paces back and forth, a nervous father watching the rebirth of an ecosystem. Every few minutes he listens to National Weather Service reports on a portable radio to make sure that he is still in the "burn window," the weather conditions making it safe to set the woods on fire. The wind velocity must be less than three miles per hour so burning leaves do not blow outside the target area. If the air is too warm or dry, the fire might burn too fast and get out of control. On the other hand, if it's too humid and the leaf litter is too moist, the fire might not burn hot enough to do the job.

Smith's burn team is composed of Metroparks' personnel, volunteers and an observer from the Brecksville Fire Department. Team members clear a fire break around a burn site, set the fire and then lean on their rakes to watch. They have tanks of water ready to put out runaway flames, but, with all the precautions taken, there is little danger.

"We don't turn fire loose," Smith says. "We keep it on a leash."

Such "prescribed burns" and other techniques of ecological restoration are becoming common throughout Ohio. For example, The Nature Conservancy, a nonprofit organization which acquires and protects rare ecosystems, burns the oak savannas at its Kitty Todd Preserve near Toledo. The fires reduce tree cover and provide openings for flowering plants. The Division of Natural Areas and Preserves of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) schedules numerous burns each year. In addition, ODNR, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and conservation organizations such as Ducks Unlimited are restoring wetlands throughout the state.

"We're trying to manipulate plant communities that have been degraded through human uses and guide them back to their condition in presettlement times," says Jeff Knoop, of the Nature Conservancy's Ohio Chapter.

Ecosystem restoration efforts date back at least to 1930s when famed wildlife conservationist Aldo Leopold initiated a prairie restoration project at the University of Wisconsin Arboretum. The Society for Ecological Restoration is now based at the...
In the last decade, public interest in restoration has mushroomed, inspired in part by the work of John Berger and his organization, Restoring the Earth, in Berkeley, CA. Throughout the world, people are planting trees, restoring creeks and rivers, and creating wildlife habitats in their backyards. Many see themselves as part of a movement that goes beyond defending what's left of the natural world. They seek a positive experience of healing, of putting back the pieces of shattered ecosystems.

Some environmentalists, however, worry that an emphasis on restoration may be counterproductive. It may divert effort from wilderness preservation. And, even though the restoration of complex ecosystems is still more of a craft than a science and doesn't always work, it may pull the public into accepting continued development of natural areas by promoting a Doritos-like hubris: "Go ahead and destroy all the wetlands you want. We'll make more so there's no net loss."

But restorationists believe that the pace of global environmental destruction is so great that it's necessary to act now to start repairing the damage. David Brower, former executive director of the Sierra Club and a founder of Friends of the Earth, has been involved in creating an International Green Circle, an "Earth Corps" that will send teams of volunteers to places in need of environmental healing.

If natural areas have not been too degraded, it may not take much to help them regenerate. The Fish and Wildlife Service has restored hundreds of wetlands in the state since 1989 simply by cutting drain tiles and erecting small dikes so water is allowed to collect as it did before the land was drained for farming. Many wetland plant species have reappeared naturally at these sites, growing from seeds that lay dormant in the soil for years. Similarly, ODNR's Division of Natural Areas and Preserves and the Cleveland Museum of Natural History moved some sand to create a shallow pond at Mentor Headlands Dunes State Nature Preserve, and rare plant species suddenly appeared in the wet, sandy habitat.

Other restoration attempts are more complex, such as Karl Smith's projects in the Cleveland Metroparks. In one experiment, Smith has created a two-acre tallgrass prairie from scratch out of a weedy playfield in the Brecksville Reservation. He started with botanical research, trying to figure out what plants once made up prairies in the region. "I wanted it to be historically accurate, not just a mix of species that I thought would look attractive," Smith says. "So I didn't plant purple coneflowers. They're beautiful, but they didn't grow in Northeast Ohio."

Following a list of nearly 100 species, he collected seeds by hand. It meant having to learn the natural rhythms of each species—knowing what time of year they flowered and went to seed. Once he was too late to get milkweed seeds. The pods opened and the feathery seeds floated away on the breeze. He chased them with a butterfly net.

In an effort to obtain native strains of each plant, Smith tried to collect seeds from within 100 miles of Brecksville. He frowns at those who order seeds from far-away mail-order houses. "If you want to just buy something and plug it in, get a toaster," he says.

Over several years, Smith and Metroparks volunteers gathered bushels of seeds and then dried them, sorted them, and gave them cold treatments in a refrigerator to prepare them for spring planting. Starting in 1981, sections of the plot were torn up with a tractor-mounted rototiller and the seeds were sown.

Now the prairie has grown up into a thriving profusion of big bluestem, Indian grass, prairie cordgrass, dense blazing star, prairie dock, Ohio goldenweed, tall coreopsis, stiff goldenrod and other plants. But even though the prairie is established, the restoration work must continue. If left alone, the prairie's tall grasses would crowd out smaller plants, then woody shrubs and trees would encroach. Eventually a forest would shade out the prairie plants.

So Smith and his assistants keep experimenting with management techniques, trying to mimic the natural disruptions that might have maintained a prairie hundreds of years ago. They burn sections of the prairie and study the impact on species distribution. And, because the prairie is missing hoofed grazers like the elk and bison that once created openings for some of the smaller flowering plants, they've even brought in a horse to do some selective grazing and trampling.

"Restoration is not something you do once and then walk away," Smith says. "One of the biggest human disruptions has been to stop natural disruptions. If an ecosystem is not managed, it will tend to go in one direction and lose its diversity. So we try to nudge things in what we think is a positive direction."

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**Ecosystem restoration**

Ecosystem Restoration is using clearly stated, measurable, and historically accurate goals in an attempt to reassemble local ecotype, native plant and animal species so that they may re-establish interrelations that may have existed between them just prior to settlement by non-indigenous peoples. The resulting ecosystems will appear and function as a viable ecosystem and not a static planting (i.e., some species will increase, some will decrease, and some will appear in locations in which they were never planted).

Ecosystem Restoration allows species to continue to evolve because they are allowed to experience the processes of natural selection. The processes of Ecosystem Restoration offer the rare opportunity for people to establish a harmonious and mutually beneficial relationship with nature. Ongoing restoration efforts are frequently necessary to maintain the restored ecosystems at a specific stage in the continuum of succession."

—Karl Smith
Senior Naturalist, Cleveland Metroparks

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*EcoCity Cleveland*  
*March 1995*
When a major bank starts to question urban sprawl, you know the problem has reached serious proportions. And that's what has happened in California. The state's largest bank, the Bank of America, has joined with a diverse coalition of conservation and housing groups—Greenbelt Alliance, the California Resources Agency, and the Low Income Housing Fund—to declare that continued sprawl threatens California's economic, future, and quality of life.

The groups' recent report, Beyond Sprawl: New Patterns of Growth to Fit the New California, challenges the state to rethink how it will grow in the future. It is particularly interesting for its description of how sprawl threatens not just inner cities and environmental quality but also the business climate of a region.

Excerpts from the report are reprinted below. As you read them, consider this thought: Northeast Ohio does not yet suffer from California-size sprawl, but development trends are leading us down the same road. In order to avoid the fate of California, we need to act now to manage growth. We have an opportunity to create a more sustainable future—a metropolitan region that will succeed in the 21st century.

Beyond Sprawl

California is at a unique and unprecedented point in its history—a point at which we face profound questions about our future. Growth that will determine the state's economic vitality and quality of life for the next generation and beyond.

One of the most fundamental questions we face is whether California can afford to support the pattern of urban and suburban development, often referred to as "sprawl," that has characterized its growth since World War II.

There is no question that this pattern of growth has helped fuel California's unparalleled economic and population boom, and that it has enabled millions of Californians to realize the enduring dream of home ownership. But as we approach the 21st century, it is clear that sprawl has created enormous costs that California can no longer afford. Ironically, unchecked sprawl has shifted from an engine of California's growth to a force that now threatens to inhibit growth and degrade the quality of our life.

This report, sponsored by the diverse coalition of organizations, is meant to serve as a call for California to move beyond sprawl and rethink the way we will grow in the future. This is not a new idea, but it is one that has never been more critical or urgent.

Despite dramatic changes in California over the last decade, traditional development patterns have accelerated. Urban job centers have decentralized to the suburbs. New housing tracts have moved even deeper into agricultural and environmentally sensitive areas. Private auto use continues to rise.

This acceleration of sprawl has surfaced enormous social, environmental, and economic costs, which until now have been hidden, ignored, or quietly borne by society. The burden of these costs is becoming very clear. Businesses suffer from higher costs, a loss in worker productivity, and underutilized investments in older communities.

California's business climate becomes less attractive than surrounding states. Suburban residents pay a heavy price in taxation and automobile expenses, while residents of older cities and suburbs lose access to jobs, social stability, and political power. Agriculture and ecosystems also suffer.

There is a fundamental dynamic to growth, whether it be the growth of a community or a corporation, that evolves
from expansion to maturity. The early stages of growth are often exuberant and unchecked—that has certainly been the case in post-World War II California. But unchecked growth cannot be sustained forever. At some point this initial surge must mature into more managed, strategic growth. This is the point where we now stand in California.

We can no longer afford the luxury of sprawl. Our demographics are shifting in dramatic ways. Our economy is restructuring. Our environment is under increasing stress. We cannot shape California's future successfully unless we move beyond sprawl.

This is not a call for limiting growth, but a call for California to be smarter about how it grows—to invent ways we can create compact and efficient growth patterns that are responsive to the needs of people at all income levels, and also help maintain California’s quality of life and economic competitiveness.

It is a tall order—one that calls for us to rise above our occasional isolation as individuals and interest groups, and address these profound challenges as a community. All of us—government agencies, businesses, community organizations and citizens—play a role. Our actions should be guided by the following goals:

- To provide more certainty in determining where new development should and should not occur.
- To make more efficient use of land that has already been developed, including a strong focus on job creation and housing in established urban areas.
- To establish a legal and procedural framework that will create the desired certainty and send the right economic signals to investors.
- To build a broad-based constituency to combat sprawl that includes environmentalists, community organizations, businesses, farmers, government leaders and others.

Californians are already taking some of these steps. We have attempted in this report to not only point out the obstacles to sustained growth, but also to highlight the positive actions that are occurring to better manage growth. Our fundamental message is that we must build on these early successes and take more comprehensive and decisive steps over the next few years to meet this challenge. To build a strong vibrant economy and ensure a high quality of life for the 21st century, we must move beyond sprawl in the few remaining years of the 20th century.

**Sprawl’s costs for business**

Many businesses benefit from suburban locations. But all businesses, both small and large, also bear many of the following costs:

- **Adverse impacts on the state’s business climate.** By reducing the quality of life, sprawl has made California a less desirable location for business owners and potential employees. By increasing suburban resistance to further growth, sprawl has made it difficult for businesses to relocate and expand in California. Both these trends increase the attractiveness of neighboring states such as Arizona, Nevada, and Utah. For example, a major film studio recently decided to relocate its animation facility to Arizona, principally because of lower housing prices and less traffic congestion.

- **Higher direct business costs and taxes to offset the side-effects of sprawl.** This can include the cost of new business infrastructure or of mitigating transportation and environmental problems. For example, in many metropolitan areas, air-quality regulators have forced businesses to take the lead in fighting air pollution by initiating carpooling programs for their employees.

- **A geographical mismatch between workers and jobs, leading to higher labor costs and a loss in worker productivity.** Many workers now commute long distances to their jobs, which takes a significant toll on their personal, family and professional life. Many other workers are removed from large portions of the job market simply because they cannot get to where the new jobs are.

- **Abandoned investments in older communities, which become economically uncompetitive because of sprawl and its associated subsidies.** This is especially true of the state’s utility companies, whose investments in gas, electric and water infrastructure are literally rooted in established communities.

**California is at a unique and unprecedented point in its history—a point at which we face profound questions about our future growth that will determine the state’s economic vitality and quality of life for the next generation and beyond.**

**Sprawl notes**

- Sprawl taxes Chicago. Elected officials of newer municipalities often try to lure business development to establish a strong tax base and reduce taxes on their voters. But, according to a recent Federal Reserve Bank study in the Chicago area, this municipal development strategy can promote urban sprawl and higher taxes for the region as a whole.

  The study found "because people tend to follow jobs, with business growth encouraging population growth in a whole cluster of communities, economic development in one community may create higher tax rates for nearby communities, which do not receive the tax benefits of business growth." Other unintended consequences of beggar-thy-neighbor development patterns are increased competition between communities, difficulty in preserving valuable open space, and worsening transportation problems created by sprawling land uses.

- **Another voice for regionalism.** We were intrigued by the arguments for regionalism put forth by former Congressman Dennis Eckart in a recent Plain Dealer opinion piece. He noted the mismatch between our local/county governments and the regional problems they have to face—especially problems of school funding and economic development.

  To end school funding disparities, Eckart called for the consolidation of local school districts into a countywide district for budgetary and taxing purposes. He also called for the creation of a seven-county Regional Economic Development Board, which would help fund projects of benefit to all Northeast Ohio.

  "Why regionalize?" he asked.

  "Because it's time we realized that no one city or county can go it alone and that most economic development projects have benefits that reach far beyond the artificial boundary lines of the city or county where they are located."
Taking care of transit and children

In an effort to link transit with other services, the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority has plans to build a Head Start Day Care Center next to its Windermere Rapid Station in East Cleveland. The project not only could attract new riders to RTA but would benefit a low-income community that is underserved by day care. RTA is also looking at the Red Line's Triskett station as a potential day care site.

A place for intermodalism

RTA is beginning a $1.25 million study to determine the best place to build a new intermodal hub for Greater Cleveland. The hub would integrate existing bus, rapid, and intercity rail services, as well as future high-speed rail and commuter rail services. Two sites are being considered: Tower City and a site on the downtown lakefront along RTA's new Waterfront rail line.

Canoe the Crooked River

The ever-adventurous members of the Friends of the Crooked River are repeating their celebrated canoe tour of the Cuyahoga River. On Sundays between March 19 and September 17 they will be covering 4- to 10-mile sections of the river from SR 87 near Burton to Lower Harvard Avenue in Cleveland. Canoe rentals are available for most trips. Call 666-4026 for a schedule and to make reservations.

Greening the rust belt

The good folks at Slippery Rock University in Pennsylvania are planning a Bioregional Congress for the Upper Ohio River area between Cleveland and Pittsburgh. They are advancing the interesting idea that our bioregion consists of the glaciated Allegheny Plateau overlaid by a historic corridor of heavy industry. The goal of the congress is to bring together people from this area to develop a vision for preserving and celebrating this place we call home.

The congress will be in 1996, and the organizers are seeking input on people and organizations who ought to be involved. Themes to be explored include green cities, sustainable agriculture, energy conservation, permaculture and more. For information, contact Larry Patrick at (412) 738-2956.

Portage County stencils

The Portage County Soil and Water Conservation District is the latest group in the area to begin a storm drain stenciling project. By painting warning signs on the street next to catch basins, volunteers inform the public that chemicals dumped down storm sewers flow into local streams and lakes. To participate, call Dick Wetzel at 296-4311.

Saving the Upper Cuyahoga

The pristine upper reaches of the Cuyahoga River are increasingly threatened by development brought about by new highways such as U.S. 422 and I-480. In response, Geauga County and Portage County Soil and Water Conservation Districts and the Headwaters Landtrust are seeking funds to restore and maintain a wooded buffer strip along the river. The project aims to purchase land and conservation easements to limit development along the river.

Paying and paying for nuclear power

The hidden costs of nuclear power keep adding up. Centerior Energy Corp. recently increased its estimate of the cost of closing three nuclear power plants it wholly or partly owns by $700 million. The plants—Davis-Besse, Perry and Beaver Valley 2—have a planned life-span of 40 years. Then they have to be decommissioned, which involves disposing of massive quantities of radioactive materials. As nuclear waste disposal costs keep increasing, the cost of decommissioning the plants could keep skyrocketing. Consumers in Northern Ohio will probably pay most of the bill.

Pressure points

- Illuminating trends. Folks living near I-271 and Wilson Mills Road are finding yet another thing to dislike about the high-speed lanes being constructed in the formerly wooded median of the interstate—towering light poles over the interchange. "Now there's an orange glow that blocks out the stars," says one nearby resident. "It was down with the trees and up with the light poles."

- Residents of the neighborhood are also objecting to a zoning variance that will allow Developers Diversified to include less green space in a project converting the Front Row Theater to a supermarket.

- Dozing breeding grounds. John Katko of Friends of Wetlands notes in his recent newsletter that vernal pools—woodland pools that fill with water in the spring—are critical breeding grounds for salamanders and other amphibians. Yet wet woods are among the most commonly destroyed wetland habitats. In northern Lorain County the losses are especially severe.

- Moving Tinkers Creek. Twinsburg residents and wetland activists are concerned about a proposal to relocate a 1154-foot segment of Tinkers Creek and fill adjacent wetlands to make way for a large commercial development at SR-91 and I-480. Construction and stormwater runoff from parking lots could damage the fragile creek.

- City water. Residents of the Chagrin River village of Gates Mills are sparring over a proposal to bring city water to the community. Concerns about the purity of well water, upon which about two-thirds of residents depend, have prompted plans to hook up to the City of Cleveland water system. The trouble is that city water lines might encourage development, destroy the rural atmosphere of the village, and, ironically, end up increasing pollution of local streams.

- Subdivision surprise. Cleveland Electric Illuminating Co.'s proposed venture into real estate development—a 27-home subdivision in Lake County—has alarmed conservationists and Lake Metroparks officials. The development site overlooks Paine Creek, a major tributary to the Grand River. Home construction on the unstable soils could load the streams with silt and polluted runoff. Lake Metroparks had been negotiating to buy the land and add it to Indian Point Park. One park official said the project was sad and ironic. "CEI wants to do a demonstration project of environmentally-friendly homes with geothermal heating, but they could destroy the environment to make the homes fit the site."

- Bath open spaces. Bath Twp. residents concerned about the fate of the 1,500-acre Firestone estate are moving quickly to place a levy on the November ballot to enable the township to buy all or some of the property from its present owner, Ohio State University. Residents believe the community could then recoup its investment by selling portions of the land to the local school district and Summit Metroparks. Small portions could be sensitively developed. For information, call 643-9328.
Bicycle news

Treating bicyclists as first-class citizens
Bicyclists chose a form of transportation that is energy-saving, nonpolluting, non-congesting, and socially-benign. So why do harassing motorists and unresponsive public officials treat them like second-class citizens?

It doesn't have to be that way, according to a recent article in the newsletter of the Cleveland Area Bicycling Association: "Imagine a community where every road is bike-friendly, where bicycle racks are available everywhere you need them, and where bikes are accommodated on public transit service. Cities around the country are moving in this direction, but only after their citizens have asked for it."

To get people thinking about what's needed in the Cleveland area, the article offered a cycling wish list based on the experience of cities with a high percentage of bicycling for both recreation and transportation. Most of the measures would cost relatively little to implement and would use existing infrastructure:

- A citizen's bicycle advisory committee to review in the planning stages all road improvements and all bicycle facilities.
- Publication of bicycle maps showing bike routes and streets recommended for cycling based on lane widths and traffic volume and speed.
- Bicycle access on mass transit and secure, long-term bicycle parking at transit stops.
- Zoning codes that require bicycle parking wherever car parking is required.
- Bicycle accommodation in all new roads and road improvements.
- A full-time bicycle coordinator.
- An organized and vocal bicycle community.
- Local and regional government that initiates dialogue between cyclists and policy makers.
- Education programs for motorists about cyclists' rights to the road.
- Bicycle safety education in the schools.
- A Spot Improvement Program for minor road repairs to make bicycle travel safer.
- No legal limits to cycling, such as bicycle restricted streets and mandatory sidewalk laws.
- Official support of national Bike-to-Work Day.
- Well-engineered urban trails wherever existing roads are inadequate for cycling.
- Use of abandoned rail lines for bicycle transportation and linear parks.
- Miles of bicycle-only lanes or extra-wide curb lanes.
- Active and equitable enforcement of traffic laws for motorists and cyclists.
- Bicycle police patrols (as Cleveland has started recently).
- Traffic light synchronization that keeps traffic at posted speed limits and allows cyclists to clear intersections safely during light changes.
- A comprehensive regional bicycle transportation plan (which the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency is working on).

Areawide Coordinating Agency is working on.

For more information about the Cleveland Area Bicycling Association, call 522-2944.

Bike planning workshop
The status of bicycle planning in the five-county region will be the topic of a workshop May 13 sponsored by the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency.

Bicyclists and other interested citizens are encouraged to attend and help kick off the development of a regional bike transportation plan. For more information, call NOACA at 241-2414, ext. 275.

Still no bikes on RTA
For several years, local bicycle activists have been trying in vain to get RTA to install racks on buses. In cities such as Phoenix and Seattle, racks mounted on the front of buses have proven very successful. They extend the range of transit by allowing riders to bike to bus stops, ride the bus, and then finish their journey by bike.

Recently, the Earth Day Coalition asked RTA to experiment with bike racks on buses that will be used by participants in the upcoming EarthFest. Earth Day staff researched how the racks have been used in other cities and provided the information to RTA. But, again, RTA refused to give them a try.

Before adding racks on buses, the agency is waiting to see how many cyclists use soon-to-be-installed bike parking racks mounted at transit stops. Nearly two years ago, RTA obtained special funding to purchase and install 50 such racks, but the project has been delayed by red tape. It seems state regulations require RTA to go through the time-consuming process of obtaining legislative permission from every community where racks will be located. "It's become the project from hell," grumbles one RTA staff member.

Bike to work
Wheels of Change, the bicycle advocacy project of the Northeast Ohio Greens, has planned bike to work days on the last Wednesdays of May, July and September. Riders from around the area converge in downtown Cleveland in a demonstration for better bike facilities.

The project also has a new slogan for t-shirts: "Work to live/live to bike/bike to work!" For more information, call 575-7551, or come to weekly planning meetings on Wednesdays, 8-9 a.m. at the Brewed Awakenings coffee shop, 1836 Prospect Ave.

Critical mass
For cyclists who believe in more extreme forms of direct action, a local ad hoc group is organizing a "Critical Mass" bicycle protest on April 21 to take back the streets from cars. In other cities, such protests have brought together hundreds of cyclists to obstruct cars on bridges and major commuter routes. Call 321-8794 for details.
Sahli moves on

With the Republicans in control of the Ohio Statehouse and governor’s office, sometimes it seems like a new environmental horror story comes out of Columbus every week. But things would have been even worse in recent years if not for the work of environmental activists like Richard Sahli, who recently resigned as the executive director of the Ohio Environmental Council (OEC).

Few individuals in the Ohio environmental movement combine Sahli’s expertise (he formerly was an assistant director of Ohio EPA), energy and passionate feelings for environmental justice. He will be missed at OEC. But we hope that, after a well-deserved break, he finds a new niche from which to continue his activism.

In a farewell letter to OEC members, he wrote:

“I have only a few departing words of wisdom because everyone concerned about environmental protection knows what is at stake here in our state and what level of effort is needed to succeed in these challenging times. New citizen leaders as well as seasoned veterans will have to come forward in large numbers if Ohio’s environmental quality is to be truly secure. Members of the public at large need to be activated on a daily basis to walk with strength of numbers through the halls of Congress, the Statehouse, and down at City Hall. People who do not commit time need to support effective environmental organizations with substantial financial contributions. It is activity that starts with family, neighbors and co-workers but in the end will embrace all people with the capacity to care and the willingness to take action to promote a more just and brighter future.”

Lake Erie plan underway

In the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, the governments of the United States and Canada pledged to “restore and maintain the chemical, physical and biological integrity of the waters of the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem.” The agreement calls for Remedial Action Plans (RAPs) to devise comprehensive cleanup plans for the 43 most polluted areas around the lakes, including the Black, Cuyahoga and Ashtabula rivers in Northeast Ohio.

The agreement also requires the governments to cooperate on a Lakewide Management Plan (LaMP) to restore each lake. This plan for Lake Erie is now underway, with Ohio acting as the lead state on the U.S. side of the border. The plan will address water pollutants, as well as all other stresses to the Lake Erie ecosystem (e.g., habitat loss, air pollution deposited into the lake and exotic species). The public is encouraged to get involved in the LaMP process. For more information, call Lauren Lambert at Ohio EPA, (614) 728-1362.

Clean jobs

A new study by the North Carolina-based Institute for Southern Studies concludes that “states with the best environmental records also offer the best job opportunities and climate for long-term economic development.” The study ranked Ohio among the 14 worst states on both measures.

Buying locally

- The Cuyahoga Hours barter currency project continues to develop, with about 60 people signed up to trade services. For more information, call 932-2132.
- The Community Supported Agriculture project of Silver Creek Farm, an organic farm near Hiram, is signing up members for the 1995 growing season. Members invest in the farm in the spring and share in the harvest. The goal is to link organic food producers with consumers in the surrounding region. For more information, call 569-3487.

Permits to pollute

Here are some Ohio EPA actions of interest from recent weeks. For complete and up-to-date lists of permit activities in your county, watch for weekly legal notices in your local newspaper. For more detailed information, call the Ohio EPA Northeast District Office in Twinsburg, 425-9171.

Fines
Ford’s Lorain Assembly Plant has agreed to pay Ohio EPA a $45,000 settlement for air pollution violations—excessive emissions of volatile organic compounds from an enamel paint spray area. Last year, the Ford plant agreed to pay up to $10,000 to reimburse the city of Lorain for costs incurred because Ford discharged water laden with heavy metals into the city’s wastewater treatment plant.

Water pollution
Kalt Manufacturing, North Ridgeville, discharge to Black River. Sterling Foundry, Wellington, discharge to Charlemont Creek. Republic Powdered Metals, Medina, discharge to tributary of West Branch Rocky River.

Air pollution

Commercial Anodizing, Willoughby, sulfuric acid anodizing lines. Spray-Care, Madison, dry mixing and batching of grouts. Hydro Tube, Oberlin, heat cleaning oven.

Nylonite, Elyria, process equipment for cellulose sponge production.

Solid waste
Authorization for Warner Hill Development Co. to engage in maintenance improvements to stabilize waste and improve cover soil at Warner Hill Landfill, Garfield Heights.

Sewer/water line extensions

Wetland (401) permits
Gerald Borac, Eastlake, proposed denial of permit for sheetpile bulkhead and docks along Chagrin River.
Earth Day
25th anniversary
Celebrate the 25th anniversary of Earth Day on April 22 at EarthFest '95, Ohio's largest environmental education event. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo. This year's EarthFest will feature:
- A Non-Profit Pavilion with exhibits from environmental organizations, community groups, government agencies and schools.
- A Green Business Area with displays on environmentally-related businesses.
- The Party with the Planet Entertainment Area with live music.
- The Children's Activity Area with hands-on activities.
- The Environmental Science Area with special demonstrations.
A five-mile march to EarthFest and ten-mile bike ride will assemble on Cleveland Public Square at 8:30 a.m. All marchers, bicyclists and those taking RTA buses to the zoo (shuttles from Public Square and RTA park & ride lots) will receive free admission to EarthFest. Others will pay $2. Call 281-6468 for more information.

Spring
Bird walks
Northeast Ohio's 62nd Annual Series of Spring Bird Walks will take place on Sunday mornings at 7:30 a.m. from April 9 through May 14. Led by experienced birders, the walks will depart from the following locations:
- Aurora Sanctuary of the Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland, parking lot on E. Pioneer Trail in Aurora.
- Bedford Reservation, Hemlock Creek Picnic Area.
- Big Creek Reservation, Lake Isaac.
- Brecksville Reservation, Station Road Bridge Trailhead off Riverview Road.
- Garfield Park Reservation Nature Center.
- Geauga Park District, various locations, call 285-2222.
- Hinckley Reservation, bridge at south end of Hinckley Lake.
- Holden Arboretum, main parking lot off Sperry Road.
- Huntington Reservation, Huntington Beach parking lot.
- Lake Metroparks, various locations, call 256-1404.
- Mentor Marsh, parking area on Headlands Road.
- North Chagrin Reservation, Sunset Pond off Buttermilk Falls Parkway.
- Novak Sanctuary of the Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland, parking lot on Aurora Town Line Road in Aurora.
- Rocky River Reservation Nature Center on Valley Parkway.
- Shaker Lakes Regional Nature Center.
- Sims Park, main entrance off Lake Shore Blvd. in Euclid.
- South Chagrin Reservation, Look About Lodge on Miles Ave. west of River Road.
For more information, call 734-6660.

April 22
Workshop on getting to know your bioregion, 9 a.m. to noon at the Earth Spirituality Center near Oberlin. Call 322-8142 for registration information and information about other programs.

April 22
Earth Day cleanup of the Packard Drive drainage in Lorain, which feeds a wetland along the Black River. Meet at the corner of Packard and Chelsea Ave. at 10:30 a.m. Sponsored by the El Centro Youth Center and Friends of the Black River.

April 22
Earth Day celebration and carnival, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., at the Shaker Lakes Regional Nature Center, 2600 South Park Blvd. Call 321-5935 for details.

April 22
Slide presentation by renowned nature photographer Robert Glenn Ketchum, 7:30 p.m. at Happy Days Visitor Center of the Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area on SR 303. Admission $7. Sponsored by the Cuyahoga Valley Photographic Society.

April 23
Organic gardening teach-in sponsored by Growing Together Organically, the urban gardening project of the Northeast Ohio Greens. For more information, call 631-3233 or 237-0673.

April 24
Dr. Myrna Cunningham, a Miskito Indian, human rights leader and Nicaraguan university rector, will speak about the value of wetlands and current regulatory efforts at 7:30 p.m. at the John Carroll University Student Activities Center, Jardine Room.

April 25
Workshop on transportation and sprawl sponsored by the Northeast Ohio Sierra Club Urban Sprawl Committee, 7 p.m. at the Lakewood Public Library, 15425 Detroit Rd. Call 791-8043 for more information.

April 26
Training session for Black River water quality monitoring volunteers, 6 p.m. at the office of Seventh Generation, 25 Lake Ave. in Elyria. Call 322-4187 for more information.
MAP OF THE MONTH

Landforms of Ohio

This map from the Ohio Division of Geological Survey gives one an appreciation of the state's major landforms—the flat Lake Plain, rolling Glaciated Allegheny Plateau, and deeply dissected Unglaciated Plateau.

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