



Legislation Text

File #: 0030X-2010, **Version:** 1

The Hamilton Road Wetland is a 71.67 acre parcel donated by the New Albany Company to the City of Columbus on December 30, 2008 to preserve this exceptional wooded wetland and blue heron rookery. There are approximately 50 nests of blue heron that locate here every spring and require protection to continue breeding. This location is one of the largest heron rookeries in Central Ohio. Thus, the Nature Preserve Advisory Council recommended unanimously that the Hamilton Road Wetland be designated a Nature Preserve on October 5, 2009. At the regular meeting of the Columbus Recreation and Parks Commission held February 17, 2010, the designation of the Hamilton Road Wetland property was approved as a Nature Preserve. Columbus City Council has designated four park properties as Nature Preserves to date. The last action was Ordinance No. 044X-2004.

These wetlands also perform a vital stormwater function within the watershed of Rocky Fork Creek, a sub-watershed of the Big Walnut Creek. The Friends of the Big Walnut Creek wrote a letter of support as did the New Albany Park Homeowners Association and the Preston Commons Homeowners Association, neighbors of this site. The letters cite the benefit to mental and physical health by maintaining open space. The site also has the potential to be a research area by local high schools and universities in the area.

This Nature Preserve is hereby dedicated to fulfill the following public purpose:

- 1) To protect and enhance the natural wetland and vernal pools, to reduce flooding, pollution, and sedimentation, and to preserve the unique ecological features in conjunction with their use as stormwater control.
- 2) To protect, improve and enhance wildlife habitat. In this case, creating the Hamilton Road Wetland Park Nature Preserve preserves the nesting site of approximately 50 nests of the Great Blue Heron. This is the largest rookery site found, thus far, in Central Ohio.
- 3) To protect and provide an area which can support and promote nature observation and conservation education programs and to encourage and promote wildlife and plant research.
- 4) To protect the habitat necessary to attract and promote sensitive wild plant and animal communities and the general wildlife ecology of the nature preserve areas.
- 5) To provide, preserve, and protect environmentally significant areas for present and future generations.

The site is on the northwest corner of St. Rt. 161 and Hamilton Road. The boundaries of the Hamilton Road Wetland Park shall be comprised of all city parkland north of St Rt 161 and west of Hamilton Road contained within the 71.67 acre tract: Parcel ID: 010-287873, 010-212436, and 010-212435.

The surrounding neighborhoods were contacted. All responses strongly supported the creation of the Hamilton Road Wetlands as a Nature Preserve. Neighborhoods looked favorably on knowing this area would remain a wooded wetland. The site is a mitigated wetland and has a Declaration of Restrictions filed over it for the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency's requirements.

To authorize the Director of the Recreation and Parks Department to designate the Hamilton Road Wetland as a Nature Preserve. (\$0.00)

WHEREAS, the Recreation and Parks Department of the City of Columbus recognizes the existence and importance of these natural areas and resources; and

WHEREAS, it is recognized that protecting water sources and improving water quality and preserving wetlands is a public benefit for drinking water and stormwater; and

WHEREAS, unique areas exist within the Columbus Recreation and Park system that deserve special protection by virtue of their natural areas and habitat provided to migratory birds; and

WHEREAS, the Recreation and Parks Department recognizes the need to preserve and protect these areas for the education and benefit of the people of Columbus; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS:

Section 1. That there is hereby created the Hamilton Road Wetland Park Nature Preserve. The boundaries of the Hamilton Road Wetland Park shall be comprised of all city parkland north of St Rt 161 and west of Hamilton Road contained within the 71.67 acre tract: Parcel ID: 010-287873, 010-212436, and 010-212435.

Section 2. That this resolution shall take effect and be in force from and after the earliest period allowed by law.