

Headwaters Park is a 926-acre reservation located in Claridon and Huntsburg townships. The property is leased by Geauga Park District from the City of Akron in a partnership that allows for conservation of the natural areas, enjoyment by park visitors, and improved outdoor education and passive recreation opportunities. This natural area protects water quality for aquatic life and downstream neighbors. It is Geauga Park District's intent to protect this natural area in perpetuity.

HISTORY

Prior to 1932, the east branch of the Cuyahoga River meandered through a lush ravine as it made its way through Claridon and Huntsburg. Picnickers enjoyed many summer afternoons along its banks; vacationers escaped to cottages nestled around adjacent Crystal Lake and along the river's edge.

When the City of Akron began purchasing land in Geauga County in 1932, the cottages and neighboring farmhouses were moved and a dam was built to impound the waters in East Branch Reservoir. The Durkee stone house, built in the 1800s, is located south of the dam and remains in use as a private residence. Having secured a stable water supply for the businesses and homes in their community, City of Akron officials opened the reservoir and surrounding land to local residents from 1959 through the 1990s.

Geauga Park District Commissioners signed an agreement to lease the East Branch Reservoir area in 1996, renaming the facility Headwaters Park in honor of its location at the upper reaches of the Cuyahoga River. The park has been reopened for hiking, fishing, picnicking, boating, and camping.



East Branch Reservoir is owned and managed by the City of Akron as a component of its water supply system. Headwaters Park is operated and maintained by Geauga Park District. Controlled recreational use of the reservoir and the lands surrounding it will be governed by water supply needs.



Wild Geraniums - Diane Valen

NATURAL HABITATS

Beech-maple forests, meadows and evergreen plantations surround the waters of East Branch Reservoir, home to wild turkey, fox, mink, owls, hawks and a wide variety of song birds. Abundant wildflowers carpet the forest floor in spring.

Headwaters Park is a popular stop-over for migratory waterfowl in the spring and fall, when bird watchers are likely to see loons, tundra swans and many types of ducks. Bald eagles and ospreys have been spotted soaring over the reservoir as cormorants sun themselves in the trees on the islands. A nesting platform has been constructed in a preserved area of Headwaters Park where osprey pairs raise young each spring. Sandpipers and plovers visit the reservoir in late summer.



Barred Owl - Diane Valen

WATER QUALITY


Located on the headwaters of the Cuyahoga River, the 420-acre East Branch Reservoir is the northernmost of the four reservoirs that supply water to the Akron metropolitan area. The City of Akron implements a variety of management practices to maintain a high quality water supply. These include keeping watershed lands in a natural state that allows forest, meadows and wetlands to filter out sediment and pollutants before they reach the waterway. The natural state of watershed lands also provides high quality wildlife habitat and recreation opportunities.


Visitor activities are regulated by Geauga Park District in accordance with The City of Akron in order to achieve mutual stewardship goals of protecting natural resources and water quality.


TRAILS

More than 2 miles of the Buckeye Trail wind along the western shore of East Branch Reservoir for hikers, horseback riders, cross-country skiers, and bicyclists to explore. The eastern shore and all islands are designated as a wildlife preserve and are accessed for special park programs only.

A section of The Maple Highlands Trail, a paved multi-use linear park, runs along the western border of Headwaters Park and continues for more than 8 miles north to the City of Chardon.

 Pike Point Trail and Kingfisher Trail provide passage to shoreline fishing facilities and waterfowl observation.

 The Eagle Trail, at the northern end of the park, is a hiking trail loop that includes a shoreline view, woodland walking, and connections to the Buckeye Trail.

 The Maple Bridle Trail provides additional distance for those looking to extend their ride or hike.

AMENITIES

A boat launch provides access for small watercraft. Only electric motors of 1.5 HP or less are permitted on the reservoir. Boating is available as weather and water level conditions permit.

The Crystal Lake picnic shelter, named for the area enjoyed by picnickers of a bygone era, provides an open shelter, tables and grills.

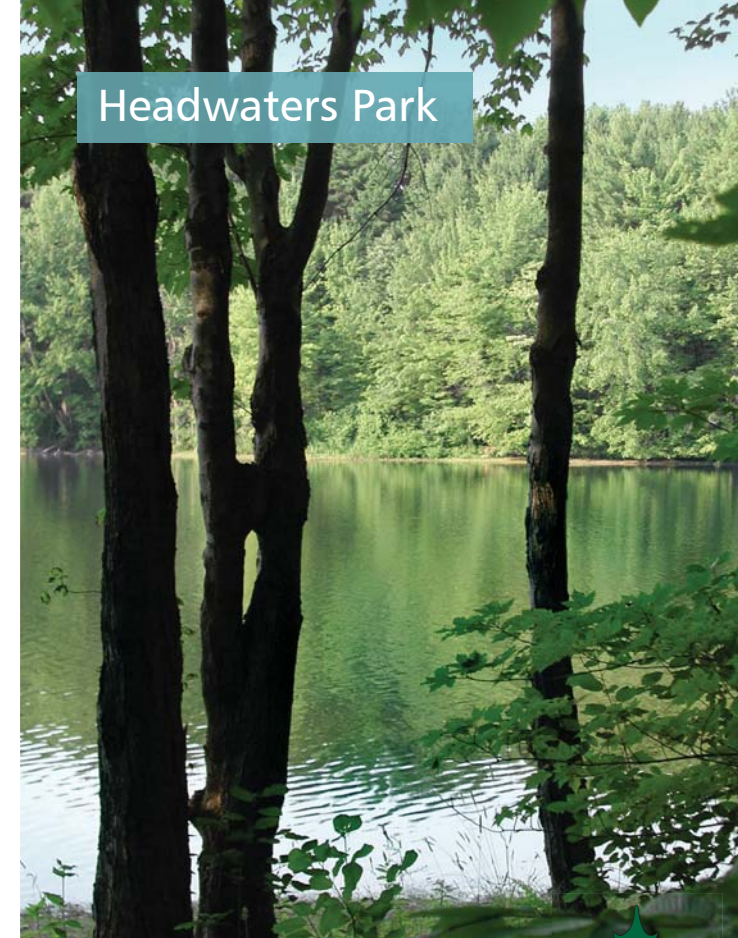
Camping is available by permit in the designated tent pad or lean-to sites. Reservations for all facilities can be made online or by calling the Park District office.

FISHING

Fishing is permitted from boats. Shoreline fishing docks and piers are limited to designated locations to control erosion and protect shoreline habitat. Catches of largemouth bass, northern pike, perch, bluegill, catfish and crappie have been reported from East Branch Reservoir. A current Ohio fishing license is required in accordance with state regulations. Wading and the collection of live bait from the park are prohibited.

Geauga Park District encourages catch-and-release practices to help maintain a balanced and healthy fish population.

Headwaters Park



GEAUGA PARK DISTRICT



GEAUGA PARK DISTRICT

9160 Robinson Road, Chardon, Ohio 44024-9148
(440) 286-9516 or (800) 536-4006 (Gauga toll free)
info@geaugaparkdistrict.org
www.geaugaparkdistrict.org

 Printed on Recycled Paper

