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Scranton Flats/Towpath Trail Ribbon Cutting Opens \$9M Development & Park Along the Cuyahoga River

*An Important Moment for Cleveland, Cuyahoga County,
the Ohio & Erie Canalway National Heritage Area and Northeast Ohio*

CLEVELAND – July 7, 2014 – Today, along the banks of the Cuyahoga River in Cleveland's Flats, community partners and elected representatives from the city, county, state and federal government were joined by approximately 200+ attendees for the official opening of the Scranton Flats/Towpath Trail. The \$9-million public improvement project includes a new park and the first publicly funded section of the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail in the City of Cleveland.

Cuyahoga County Executive Ed FitzGerald, U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown, Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur, Cleveland Metroparks CEO Brian Zimmerman, City Councilman Joe Cimperman, City of Cleveland Chief of Sustainability Jenita McGowan, Congressman Ralph Regula and other dignitaries were joined by the Ohio & Erie Canalway National Heritage Area, helmed by Canalway Partners Executive Director Tim Donovan, to share in the historic event.

Scranton Flats Project Deliverables

- Restores 3,000 feet of natural shoreline
- Creates a major fish habitat – transforming the boat marina into two-acre habitat
- First publicly built 2/3 mile section of the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail in Cleveland
- Remediate and restores nine acres of upland into meadowland
- Establishes a new tourism spot via a pier over the river and an iconic Cleveland viewing stop for birders and ship fans
- Positions the Cuyahoga River fish habitat as a national model for urban shipping lanes
- Fuels momentum for completion of the Towpath Trail in Cleveland and the development of Canal Basin Park - a signature destination for Cleveland, NEO and the National Heritage Area

Positioning Cleveland and the Cuyahoga River to make history once again

“It was 45 years ago that the Cuyahoga River brought the need for environmental change to the world's attention and caused a major shift in environmental policies,” noted Senator Brown.

"We're happy to report that a portion of the Scranton Flats project is a national test model for creating a fish habitat in an urban shipping lane."

"Advancing nature tourism through collaborative coastal interpretation provides a powerful means to leverage the natural assets, jobs, and economic potential of our lakefront destinations to travelers from near and far," added Congresswoman Kaptur.

Senator Brown and Congresswoman Kaptur also commented on the fact that Scranton Flats received the largest combined Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Funding - \$3 million - for a single project as well as the largest Clean Ohio Conservation Fund award - \$3.175 million - in the state's history. Additional funding sources include the State of Ohio Cultural Arts Facilities, a Clean Ohio Trail Grant and an award from U.S. Fish & Wildlife.

Creating Connections

Scranton Flats increases public access to the river and builds a critical section of the popular Towpath Trail that will connect the Tremont neighborhood to the doorstep of downtown Cleveland.

"The collaboration at the heart of this project is a true testament to the working spirit of our region," added FitzGerald. "Every level of government prioritized the revitalization of the Cuyahoga River, one of our greatest assets, and today we celebrate that shared vision. Cleveland, particularly Downtown, is beginning to truly regain its confidence thanks to these transformative projects."

After the ribbon cutting, the site officially opened to public use. In keeping with the area's importance to Cleveland's history, ceremony visitors were met by historical characters along the trail, courtesy of Cleveland Metroparks and the Take a Hike program offered through the Historic Gateway District.

"Cleveland Metroparks is proud to be a partner in this historic project," said Cleveland Metroparks CEO Brian Zimmerman. "The trail is part of our ongoing commitment to re-connect the people of Greater Cleveland with our waterways, help establish urban greenspaces and contribute to improving the health of the watershed we all share."

Setting the stage for Canal Basin Park

"Scranton Flats is a welcome addition to the Ohio & Erie Canalway National Heritage Area," said Canalway Partners Executive Director Tim Donovan. "This partnership project not only moves us toward the completion of the Towpath Trail in Cleveland, it also provides the momentum to create a signature National Heritage Area park and an innovative public space in Cleveland's Flats at our upcoming Canal Basin Park. Collectively, we're looking forward to creating an interactive experience for visitors to explore the industrial contributions of our region, discovering even more ways in which Cleveland and Northeast Ohio helped shape the world."

Canal Basin Park will be built around the historic point where the Ohio & Erie Canal met the Cuyahoga River. Donovan added, “The park also will provide a natural launching point to journey through the National Heritage Area by Towpath Trail or America’s Byway.”



Attached Scranton Flats Ribbon Cutting Photo: L to R

- The Honorable Judge Anthony J. Russo
- Canalway Partners Executive Director Tim Donovan
- Ward 3 Councilman Joe Cimperman
- U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown
- City of Cleveland Chief of Sustainability Jenita McGowan
- Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur
- Cleveland Metroparks Brian Zimmerman
- Cuyahoga County Councilman District 8 Pernel Jones, Jr.
- Cuyahoga County Executive Ed FitzGerald

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