

RAPID 5

MORPC Commission Update

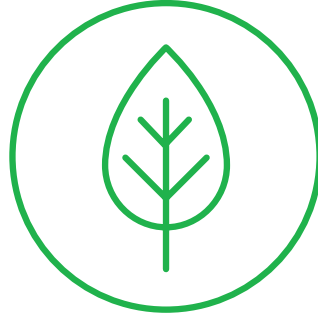
November 9, 2023

RAPID 5 Purpose

Creating of a single integrated regional open space system along the five major water corridors and their tributaries which protects and replenishes our natural water systems and connects all residents of Central Ohio to nature.



Health &
Wellbeing



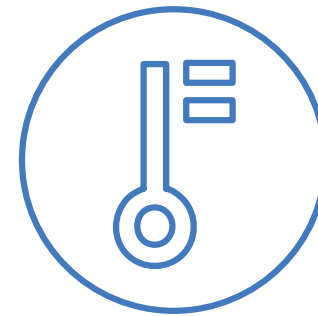
Environmental
Stewardship



Economic Vitality



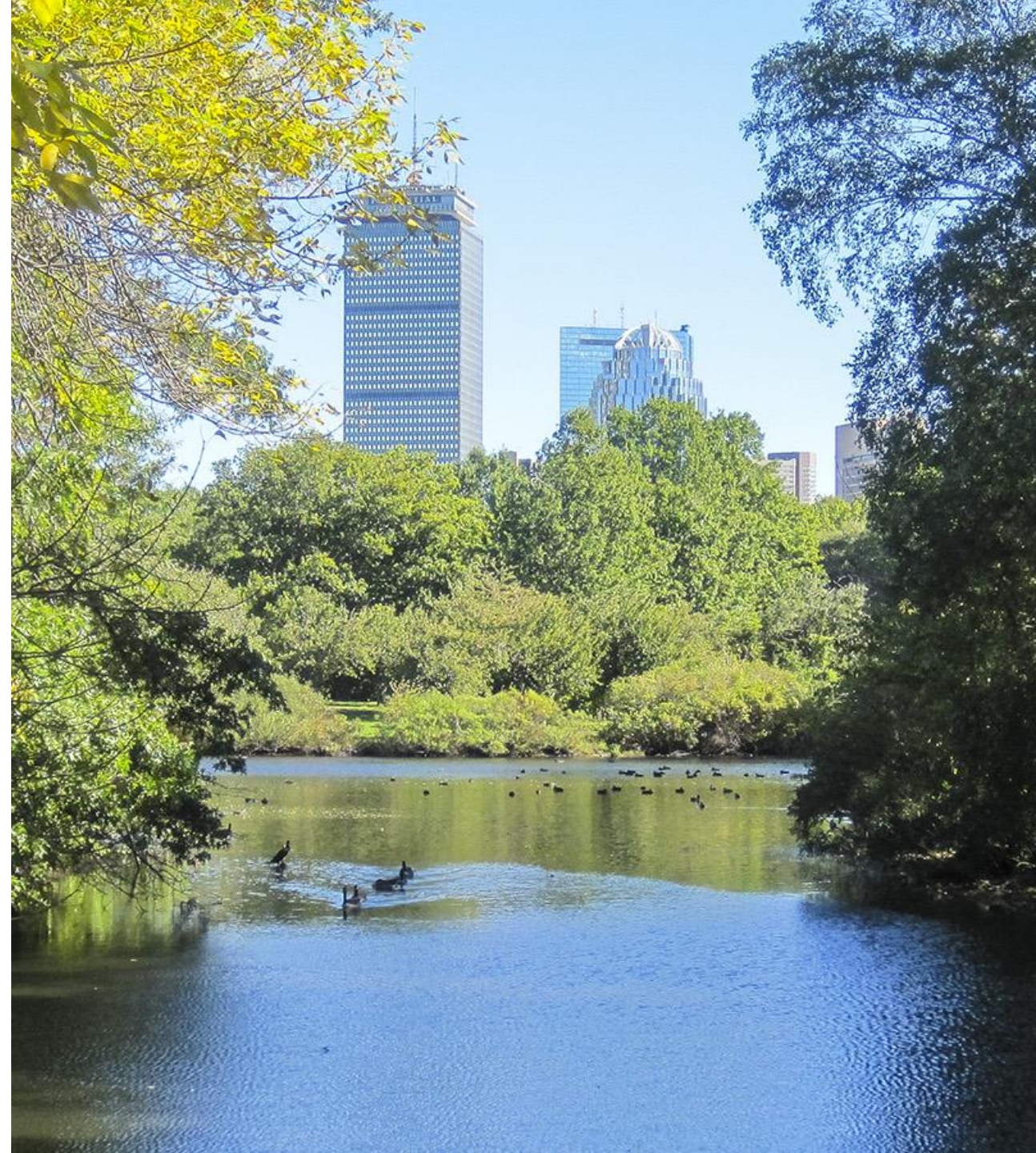
Recreation



Equitable Access

Emerald Necklace

- **19th Century** greenways example
- Considered **America's 1st greenway** network
- Designed by **Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr.**, NYC Central Park landscape architect
- **Connects** colonial era public green with newly created public parks via trail, waterway and parkway
- Urban / city scale – **1,100 acres; seven miles** in length
- **Parks and an arboretum are the emerald "jewels"** in the Necklace
- Nonprofit **Emerald Necklace Conservancy** created in 1997



Emerald Necklace

- **20th Century** example
- **Ohio's first metropolitan parks board** created to implement and manage parks and greenway system
- Planned by William Stinchcomb with **Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr.**
- County-wide scale, **23,000 acres**, 18 "reservations" and **300 miles** of trails, outside of the city.
- Significant park, trail and infrastructure built during the Great Depression
- Sections of the necklace still being completed in the 21st Century



BeltLine

- **21st Century** example
- Will eventually connect **45 in-town neighborhoods**
- **22-mile loop** of multi-use trails, modern streetcar, and parks (former rail lines).
- Nonprofit **Atlanta BeltLine, Inc.**
- **Private investment:** \$10 billion of the \$20 billion goal
- Housing Affordability commitments and **investments to counter gentrification**
- **Companion project**, Chatahoochee Riverlands, 100 miles of new trails connecting 19 cities and seven counties to the BeltLine



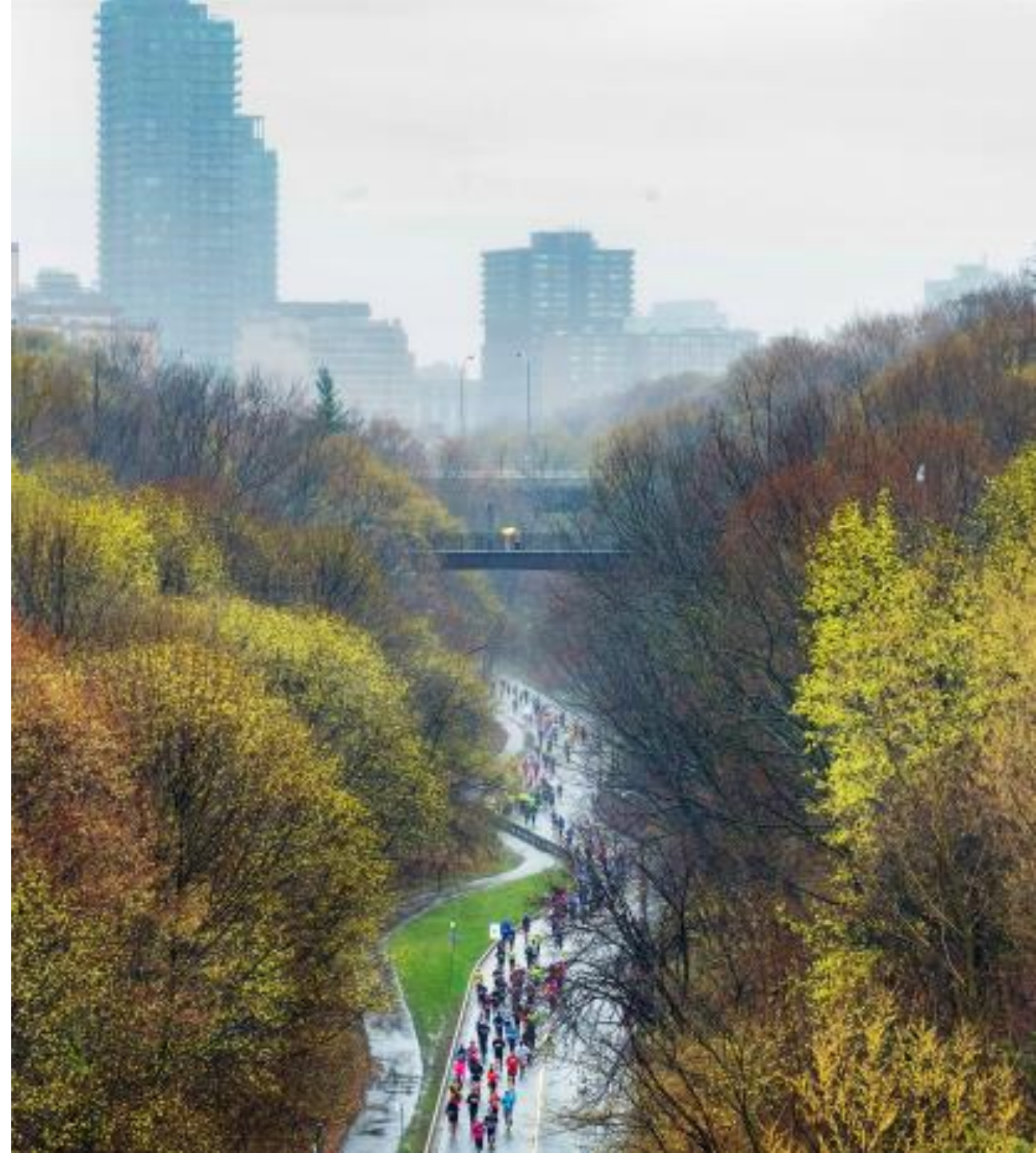
Bayous

- **21st Century** example
- Houston Parks Board, **501-c-3 nonprofit**
- **134 miles** of trail open to public; 32 miles in progress
- **\$100 MM public** funding; **\$125 MM private** / charitable fundraising
- Serves recreational, environmental / flood control purposes
- Benefits Study (**\$90MM annual: health, environment, economy**) key to large support network
- Their advice: **acquire land rights early**



Ravines

- Where you can "traverse the **city beneath the streets**"
- Approximately **1,500 urban parks** within the ravine system
- **924,486 hikers** and **398,240 cyclists** used the ravine system (2017)
- Passive recreational activities, including cycling, hiking, and cross-country skiing.
- 2002, Toronto municipal government enacted **formal protection** for the ravine system.
- 2017 estimate of **C\$822 million in eco-system services** provided by the Ravines
- City of Toronto's "**Toronto Ravine Strategy**" guides future operations, maintenance and capital improvements.

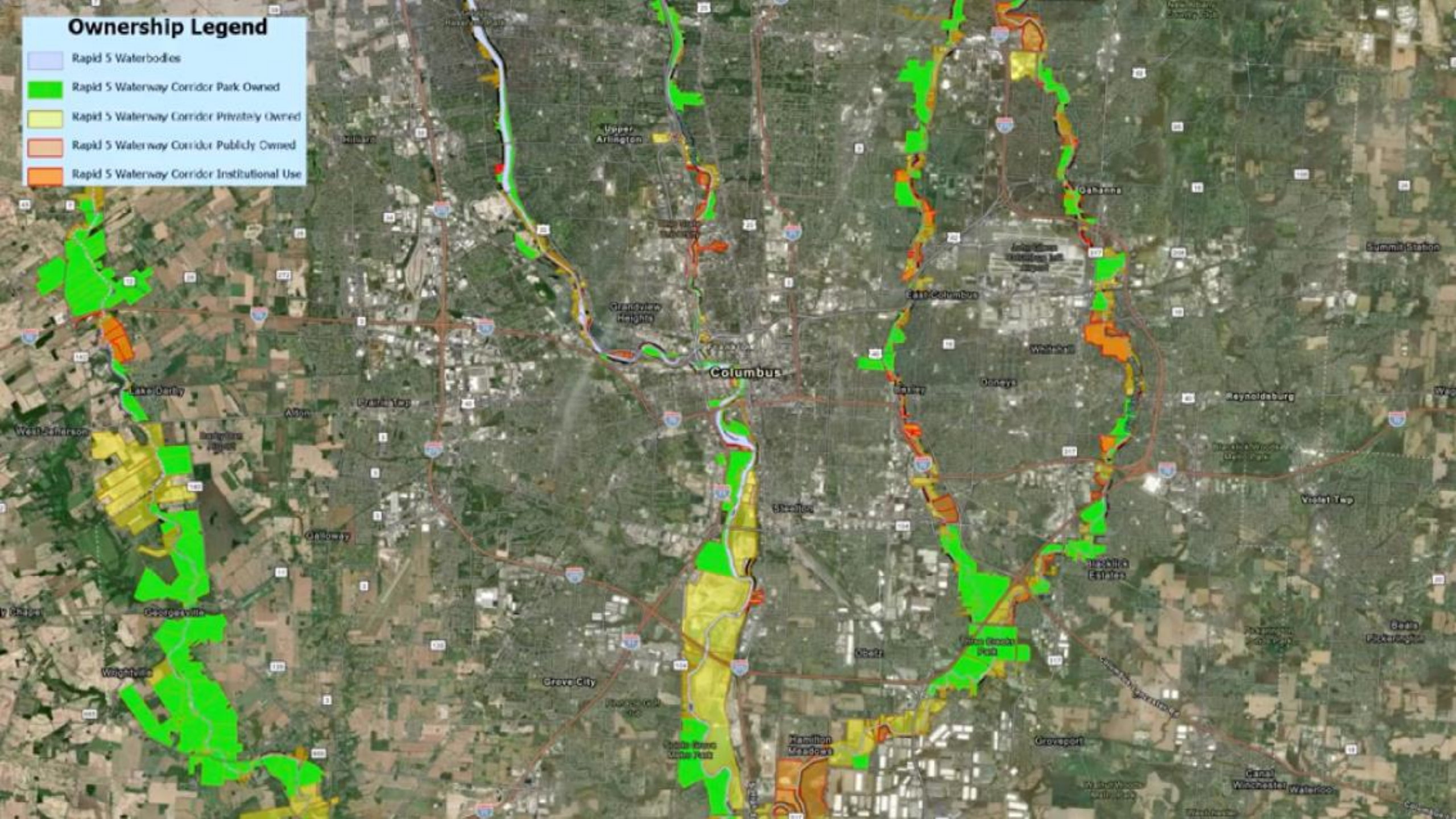




What do WE have?

Ownership Legend

- Rapid 5 Waterbodies
- Rapid 5 Waterway Corridor Park Owned
- Rapid 5 Waterway Corridor Privately Owned
- Rapid 5 Waterway Corridor Publicly Owned
- Rapid 5 Waterway Corridor Institutional Use



RAPID 5 Acreage along 5 rivers

Total land acres adjacent to a waterway
in the 5 corridors:

➤ **30K acres (50 sq mi)**

Publicly owned land:

~21,000 acres (34 sq mi)

Privately owned land:

~12,000 acres (16 sq mi)



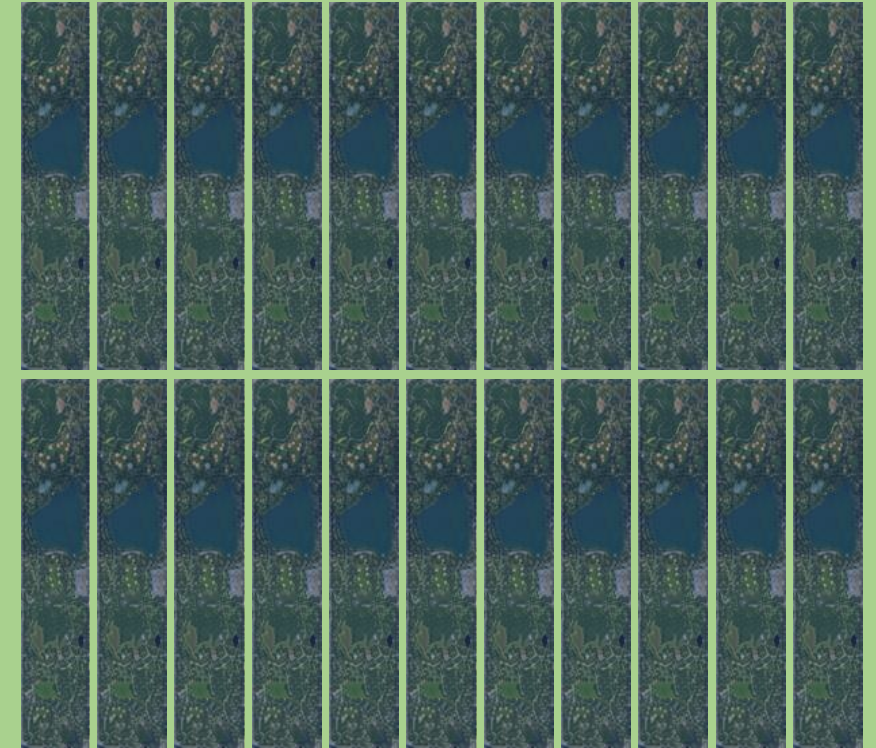
Salt Fork State Park, the **largest State Park** in Ohio, is **20,000 acres**.

R5 corridors have ~**21,000 acres** of public land today.

Of the 21,000 ac. of public land, **over 16,000 acres** is already in public parks.

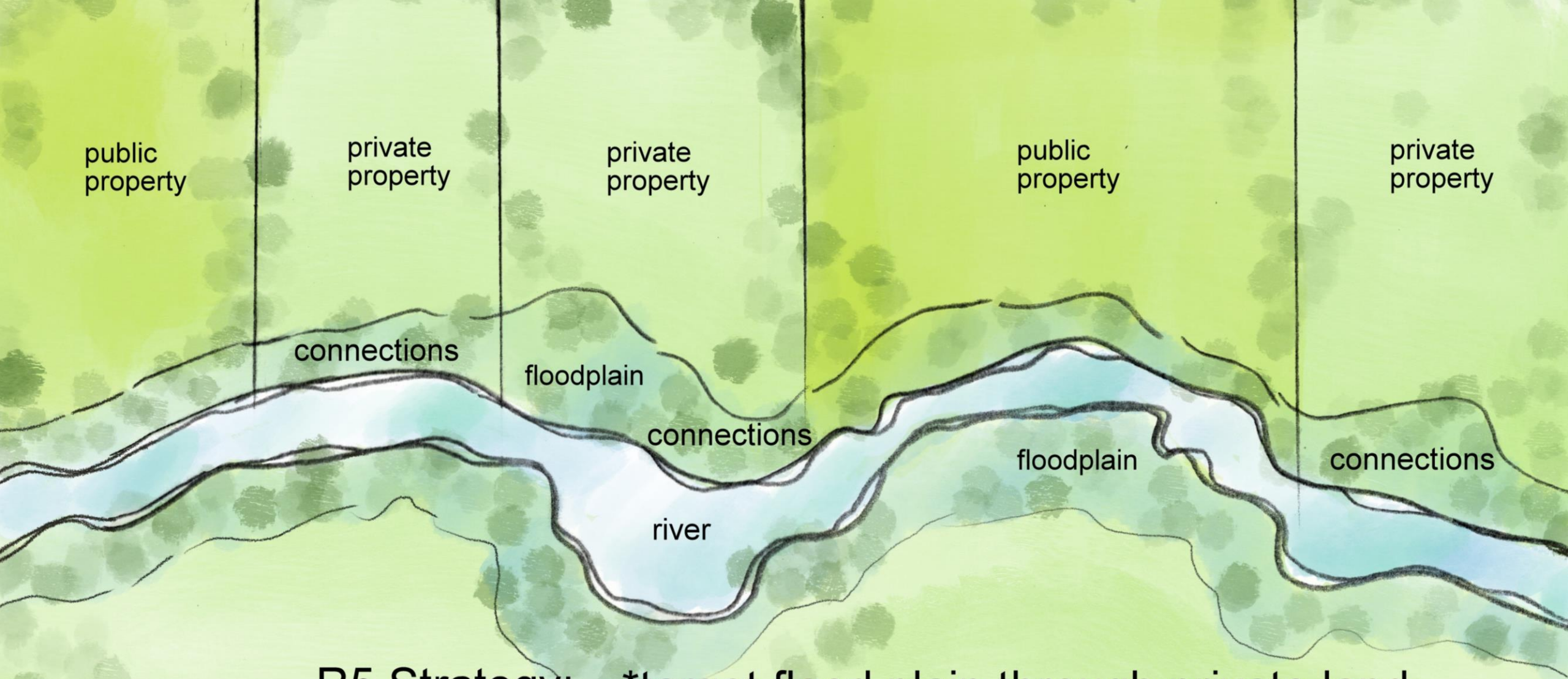
Total of what is already publicly-owned land is equivalent to **25 Central Parks**.

NYC's Central Park:
834 acres



An aerial photograph of a river meandering through a verdant landscape. The river is dark and calm, reflecting the surrounding greenery. On the left bank, there are dense clusters of trees and a small building. The right bank features a mix of green fields, some with hedges, and more trees. In the background, rolling hills and a small town are visible under a clear sky. The overall scene is peaceful and scenic.

**How do we harness our
amazing land resources,
creating access for all?**



R5 Strategy: *target flood plain through private land

*conservation easement

*fee-simple donation

*someday "maybe" purchase

Flood Plain

There are approx. 20,000 total acres of **flood plain** within the five corridors.

~700 acres
on institutional land

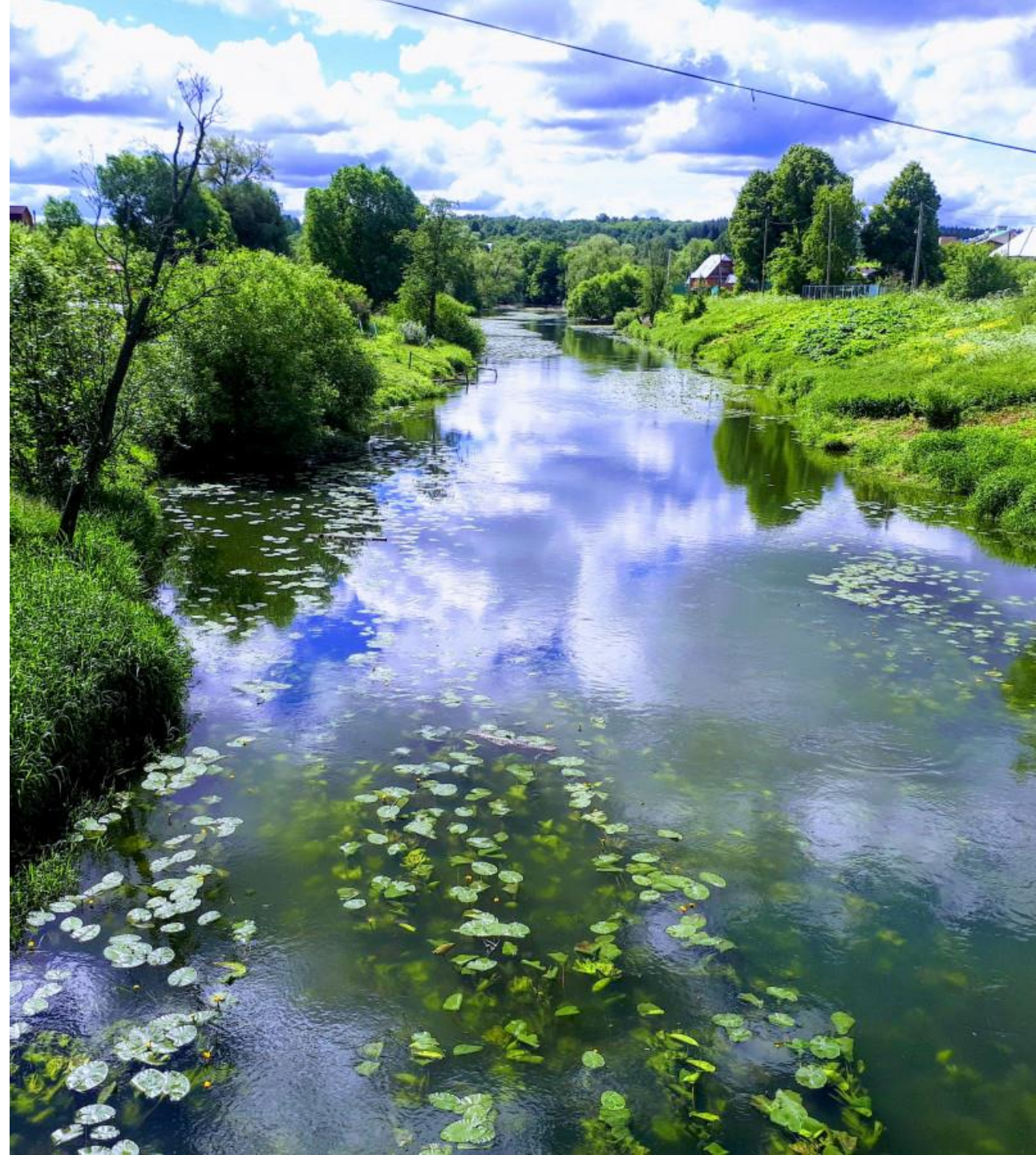
~6,000 acres
on private land

~13,000 acres
on public land



Various entities could acquire property rights to flood plain land.

- Neighboring Communities (city, county, township, etc.)
- The Nature Conservancy
- Metro Parks
- Existing Land Trusts
- **Or...a RAPID 5 Land Trust?**

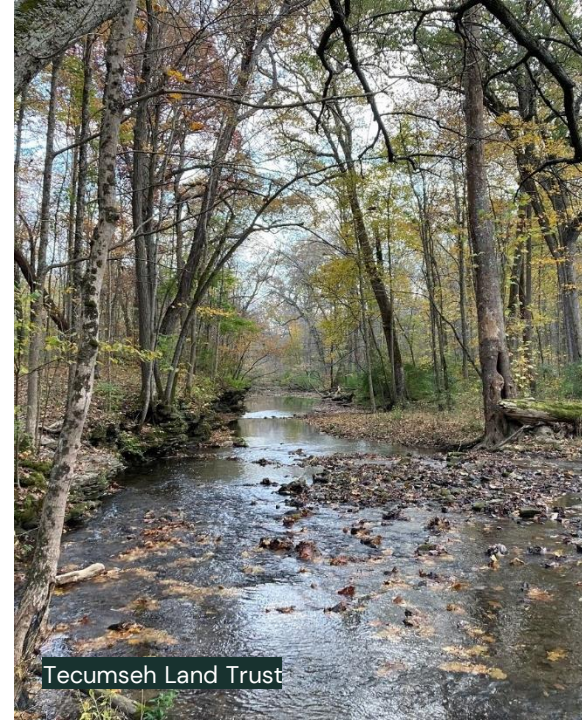


Information Gathering Process

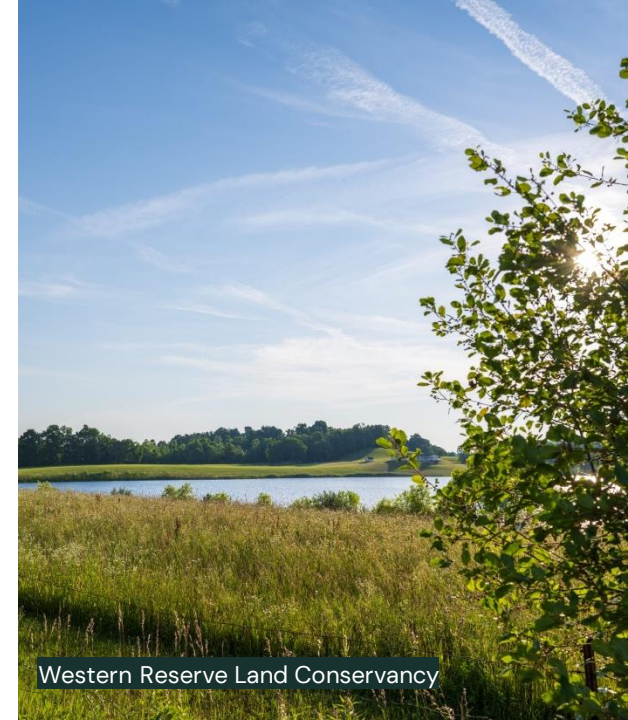
Conversations with **3 large** land trusts in Ohio

- **Tecumseh Land Trust** (~35k ac)
— Yellow Springs/Greene County
- **Cardinal Land Conservancy** (~9k ac)
— Milford/Hamilton County
- **Western Reserve Land Conservancy** (~70k ac)
— Moreland Hills/Cuyahoga County

Conversations with **Land Trust Alliance** national office staff & Midwest Senior Program Manager



Tecumseh Land Trust

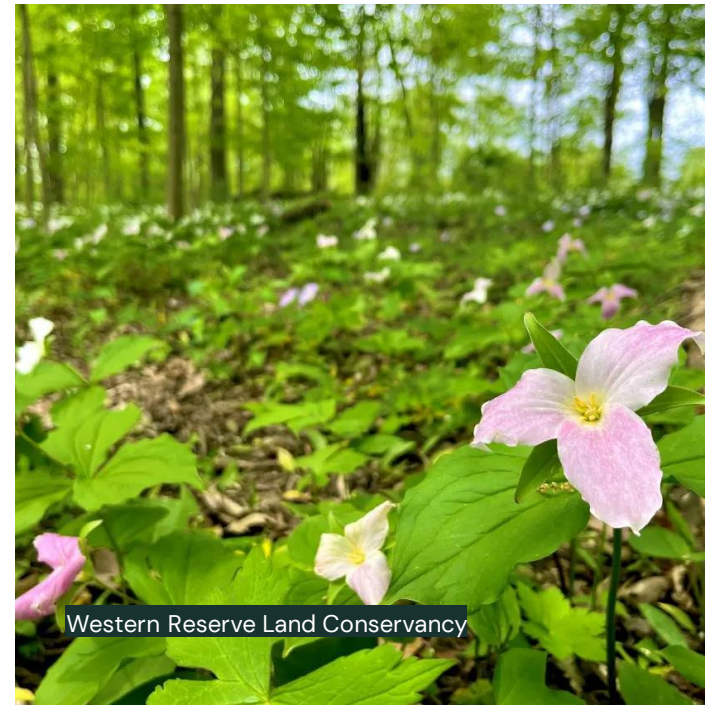
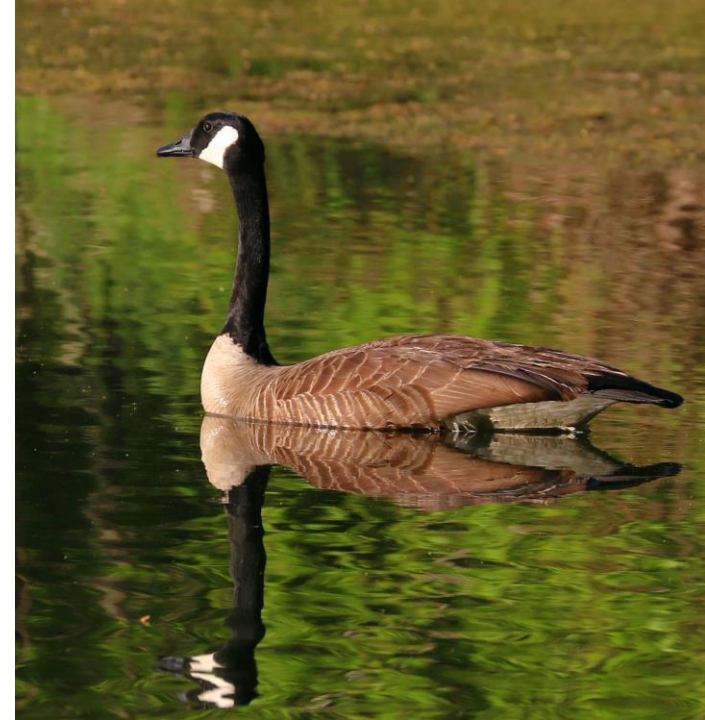


Western Reserve Land Conservancy



Cardinal Land Conservancy

- Voluntary agreement that **permanently limits use of land** for different purposes, such as outdoor recreation, protection of natural habitat, open space, or historically important areas.
- **Landowner retains ownership** but releases certain rights that either restrict or allow select public use of the land.
- **Significant tax benefit** to the landowner for up to 15 years.



Benefits of RAPID 5 becoming a land trust

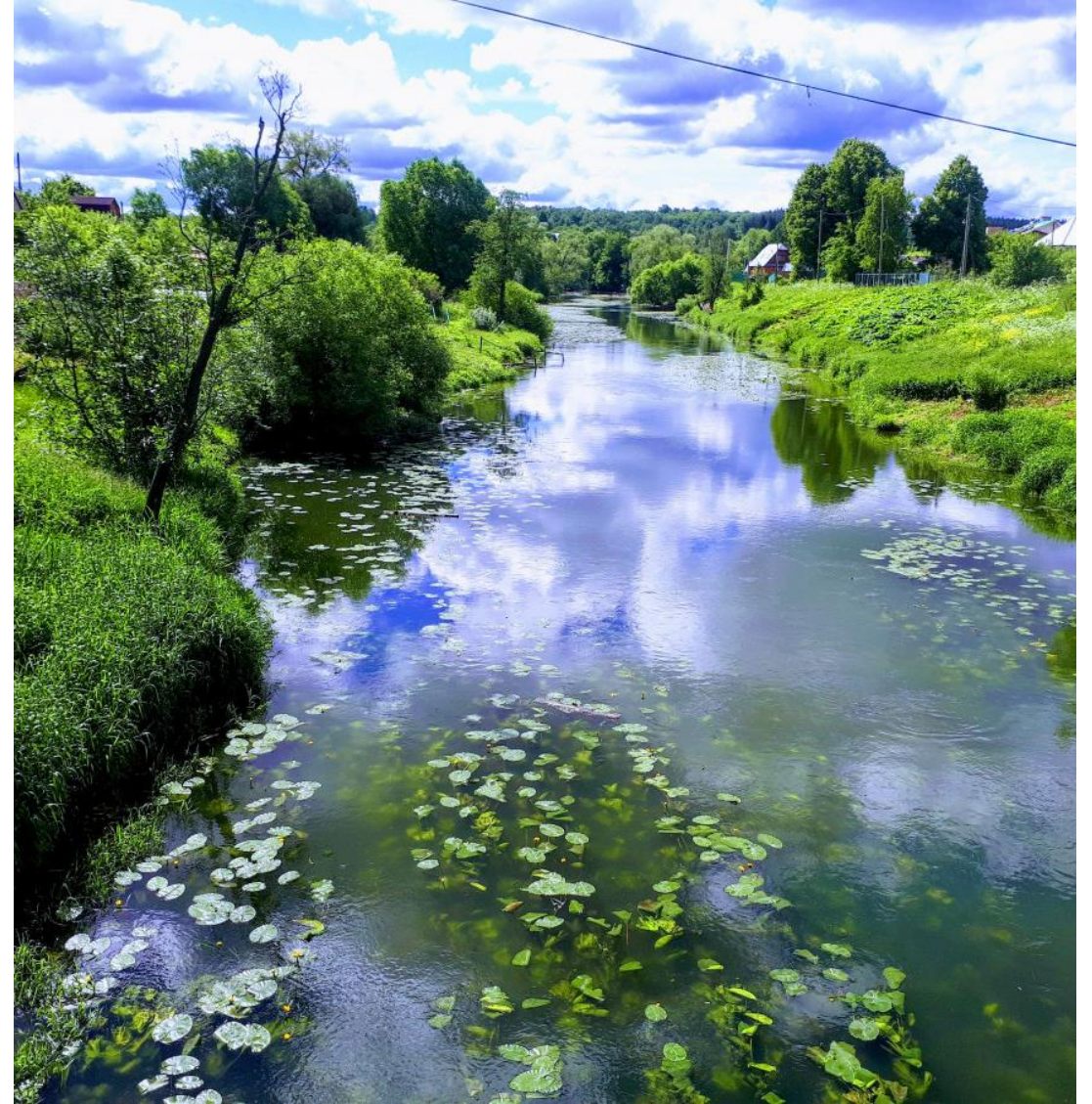
Long term method for accomplishing land conservation.

Landowners are incentivized to utilize the Land Trust mechanism to protect their land.

Establishes the **mechanism for supporting the implementation of the regional trail vision** for recreational access throughout the region.

Creates focus for the organization that can help accessing **significant state and federal grants**.

Possible **accreditation** by the Land Trust Alliance will give additional credibility and preference in grant applications.



- File appropriate documents for RAPID 5 to become a land trust
- Join Land Trust Alliance and Coalition of Ohio Land Trusts
- Hire new Executive Director to help with strategic direction
- Develop guidelines and technical assistance to support local governments



Website

RAPID5.ORG

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RAPID **5**