

BUFFALO RIVER NATURAL HABITAT PARKS

(Bailey Peninsula Natural Habitat Park [Now known as - Thomas F. Higgins Riverfront Bridge and Park], Red Jacket Natural Habitat Park, Seneca Bluffs Natural Habitat Park, Times Beach Nature Preserve)

DESCRIPTION

Erie County has continued to take a leadership role in the preservation and enhancement of the environment along the Buffalo River. This former industrialized corridor has seen much improvement with regard to water quality and habitat restoration. The County has worked closely with the City of Buffalo, New York State, and various Federal agencies to remediate, restore, and revitalize three small, but notable, park sites along the Buffalo River, including Thomas F. Higgins Bridge and Riverfront Park (Bailey Peninsula Natural Habitat Park), Red Jacket Natural Habitat Park and Seneca Bluffs Natural Habitat Park.

Thomas F. Higgins Riverfront Bridge and Park (Bailey Peninsula Natural Habitat Park) site lies at the confluence of the Buffalo River and Cazenovia Creek. Both Red Jacket and Bailey Peninsula park sites have become favorite fishing locations.

Red Jacket Natural Habitat Park, lies at the foot of Smith Street along the Buffalo River, with excellent southerly views of the River and historic grain elevators. It also has a naturalized wetland / pond area which is reminiscent of an earlier time in history, before industries took over the landscape.

Seneca Bluffs Natural Habitat Park lies just east of Bailey Avenue at Seneca Street and Avon Place. The County has recently obtained additional land to expand the habitat park.

Times Beach Nature Preserve runs along Fuhrmann Boulevard on the Outer Harbor and is owned by the City of Buffalo. Erie County manages maintenance and operations of the park. Over the last five years, extensive invasive species removal, control and native plant



All four natural habitat parks are located in the City of Buffalo

PARK SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

- **Continue efforts in partnering with local agencies and stakeholders to maintain, restore, and enhance parks.**
 - Continue to pursue grants and partnerships that can enable stewardship and caretakers for the habitat parks.
 - Actively seek community and neighborhood volunteer participation for clean-ups, plantings, and invasive species control.
- **Install security camera system at parks – tie into City of Buffalo Police Department blue light security camera system.**
- **Produce interpretive signage in key areas within the parks.** Educate park users about local wildlife, unique flora and fauna, past use/history of the site, etc.



View towards the Lighthouse and Times Beach

restorations were funded by the US Army Corps of Engineers, and will be turned back over to the County in 2018 for full responsibility of the habitat maintenance and operations.

PARK AND AREA HISTORY

All four properties have a history along and near the Buffalo River. There was a point in Buffalo's history when the city was one of the largest and most powerful industrial centers in the country, and the Buffalo River was at the epicenter of this industrial might. Ships once traveled up and down the river, servicing the numerous grain elevators, steel mills and other factories. It's hard to believe that heavy industry once dominated this urban river-scape. Although some industry still exists and some ships do pass through, it is a fraction of its former use, and now fish, wildlife and vegetation have come back to reclaim their historical homes.

LOCAL CONTEXT

During the completion of the original Erie County Parks Master Plan, South Buffalo and the Outer Harbor were in need of revitalization efforts. Over the last several years South Buffalo and specifically areas near the Buffalo River are witnessing a renaissance. From Buffalo Riverworks to the Ohio Street Complete Streets Project, this area has seen tremendous improvements. New apartments/lofts, restaurants, and parks have made South Buffalo and up-and-coming vibrant destination. Likewise, the Outer Harbor is now a haven for bikers, joggers, park-goers, and nature enthusiasts, as new parks like Wilkeson Pointe and Outer Harbor State Park have sparked regional interest in the area as a recreational asset. The Habitat Parks contribute to this rebirth providing natural sanctuaries, wildlife habitats, and scenic views of the Buffalo River.

Thomas F. Higgins Riverfront Bridge and Park formerly known as Bailey Peninsula Natural Habitat Park, lies in a small triangular piece of land between the Buffalo River, Cazenovia Creek and Bailey Avenue. It is just south of the major intersection of Elk Street, Seneca Street and the I-190, and just north of the major city intersections of McKinley Parkway and South Park Avenue. Southside Elementary School lies across Bailey Avenue further to the east, adjacent to the restored natural site.

Red Jacket Natural Habitat Park is located at the foot of Smith Street, off of South Park Avenue. Many industrial uses and single family homes to the north surround the park site which fronts the Buffalo River. Active railroads are also present to the east and west of the site.

Seneca Bluffs Natural Habitat Park is located just a short kayak trip up river from Baily Peninsula Habitat Park. Located off of Seneca Street and just a couple blocks from Bailey Avenue, this park has approximately over 3,000 feet of shoreline frontage on the Buffalo River. Several industrial sites front Seneca Bluffs on the opposite side of the river with businesses and single family homes residing south and east of the park site.

Times Beach is located on the Outer Harbor, accessible off of Fuhrmann Boulevard via the Buffalo Skyway. Wilkeson Pointe Park lies directly south of the park site while the Buffalo Lighthouse is directly to the north. In close proximity to Times Beach is access to the Queen City Bike Ferry, which provides waterborne transportation back and forth to Canalside. The Outer Harbor in recent years has become a beacon for people in the City to escape urban life to bike, walk, kayak, and enjoy breath-taking views of Lake Erie.



Buffalo River

RECREATIONAL CONTEXT

All of the habitat park sites are passive, nature-based sites. However, many other area parks offer both formal recreational and nature-based opportunities including:

- Tifft Nature Preserve (passive/habitat preserve)
- Wilkeson Pointe
- Outer Harbor State Park
- Mutual Riverfront Park
- Conway Park
- Houghton Park
- Riverfest Park

CURRENT MAINTENANCE OF THE HABITAT PARKS

With funded construction, restoration and invasive species control efforts ending in 2018, maintenance responsibility, funding, and dedicated staffers will be a concern for all habitat parks moving forward. Invasive species is a major issue within these parks, as well as several other County Parks. Long-term management of these parks needs to be addressed in order to monitor and preserve habitats, plant life, and the Buffalo River. Typically Parks crew members maintaining natural habitat parks have not always had the necessary training to preserve and maintain natural parks. Long-term/trained dedicated staffers as well as local partners/community groups need to work together as caretakers and stewardship advocates for these important urban natural habitats.

- **Thomas F. Higgins Riverfront Bridge and Park** – Area across Cazenovia Creek being restored to parkland, and will be turned over to the County in 2018 for ongoing maintenance and invasive species control.
- **Red Jacket** – Currently in a post-construction warranty period with LDC Construction. Park will receive additional invasive species control spraying in the spring. Park will be turned over to the County in 2018 for ongoing maintenance and invasive species control.
- **Seneca Bluffs** – Army Corps of Engineers has Federal funding for maintenance and invasive species control of the 50' riparian shoreline buffer. The County is responsible for the rest of the land. County will be responsible for the entire park as of 2020.
- **Times Beach** – Full maintenance and operations will be transferred back to the County in 2018 with the end of the US Army Corps 5-year invasive species management and native planting investment. This park needs a grant or increased parks operations budget to maintain this nature preserve.
- An extensive invasive species management plan and policy is needed to:
 - mitigate the impacts of invasive species,
 - reduce the rate of invasive species introduction (prevention),
 - eradicate new invader populations, and
 - reduce damages by slowing the spread of

invasions across the landscape or adapting to an invader's presence through control or altered management practices.

In addition, monitoring is key to most invasion mitigation strategies—for knowing what and where to control and for evaluating the effectiveness of management actions. Native plants communities are indispensable to ecosystem health, resiliency, and productivity. Recognizing the need to maintain native plant communities, the County should create and implement a Policy for promoting the use of native plants in revegetation projects within the Parks System, as well for other projects on County-managed lands.



Times Beach

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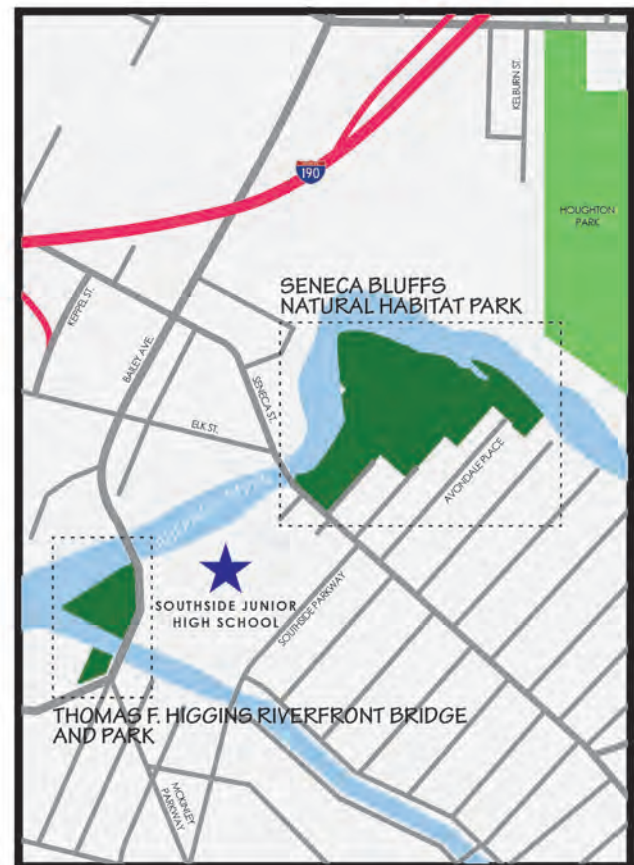
THOMAS F. HIGGINS

RIVERFRONT BRIDGE & PARK

(Formerly known as Bailey Peninsula Natural Habitat Park)

CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS

- Finished construction in 2017 to restore natural ecological systems. These restoration efforts have improved many issues such as (On-going construction and restoration to continue):
 - Invasive Species
 - Shoreline erosion/loss of habitats
 - Loss of wildlife/natural habitats
- At least half of the trees that were planted recently have been destroyed by beavers.
- Site continues to suffer from park users disobeying critical rules which protect and maintain important habitats and wildlife (i.e. litter, disruption of peaceful habitats, etc.).
- Encroachment of businesses, industrial practices, unlawful dumpings, poor care of the Buffalo River.
- Lack of a 'greenway' connection to other riverfront parks/trails.
- Impacts from urban conditions and abuse.
- Due to lack of staff and the small acreage of the park (moderate maintenance needed) security is problematic .
- Additional signage is needed off of Bailey Avenue
- Fast traffic and difficult sight lines on Bailey Avenue make pedestrian access difficult.
- Aggressive invasive species control needed



Park Location Map: Bailey Peninsula is located off of Bailey Ave.



View of Buffalo River from Thomas F. Higgins Riverfront Bridge & Park





MASTER PLAN

THOMAS F. HIGGINS RIVERFRONT BRIDGE & PARK

ERIE COUNTY PARKS MASTER PLAN UPDATE

MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS:

Specific Action Items - Ex. (A1)

- (A: 1.0-1.2)** Improve park signage; Provide typical park signage on Bailey Avenue. Provide wayfinding and directional signage to new parking area.
- (C: 1.0)** Produce interpretive signage in key areas within the park. As restoration efforts come to a close, new signage can help educate park users about the natural systems that have been restored as well as, local wildlife, unique flora and fauna, past use/history of the site, etc.
- Replant trees in spring which were decimated by beavers. Identify funding for tree wrapping to prevent further destruction of newly planted trees.
- Promote public access to the River; through trails, overlooks and possible kayak launches. Long-term capital improvements could include formalized fishing deck/platform.

MASTER PLAN HIGHLIGHTS:

- Maintain, restore, and enhance park. Continue efforts in partnering with local agencies and stakeholders.
- Continue to monitor natural systems to assure future sustainability and habitat enhancement.
- (P: 1.0)** Install security camera system - tie into City of Buffalo Police Department blue light security camera system.
- Encourage passive activities to take place, promoting positive use of the park while discouraging negative activities. Activities may include kayaking, public art installations/projects, fishing classes, and neighborhood gatherings.
- (P: 2.0)** Improve the health of the Buffalo River and Cazenovia Creek. Focus projects should include stream bank stabilization and erosion control, habitat conservation and restoration, stormwater management, and contaminant reduction.

Increase connectivity to Habitat Parks via new 'greenway' corridors, 'rails to trails' initiatives, bike routes, etc.
* Trail connection to Seneca Bluffs

SOUTHSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

NOTE: Aerial Does Not Reflect New Park Which Remains in Construction

Future Park Trails

CAZENOVIA CREEK

BUFFALO RIVER

BAILEY AVENUE

MCKINLEY PARKWAY



Legend:

- Potential Major and Minor Park Gateway Locations
- Destination
- Natural Features
- Playground
- Existing Trails
- Park Boundary

MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Key - (Project Type: Project Number)

A - Action Item: Completed at low to no cost by Parks Staff
 P - Assistance or completion of project by potential partner/user group
 C - Capital project

- **Maintain, restore, and enhance park.** Continue efforts in partnering with local agencies and stakeholders.
 - Continue to pursue grants and partnerships that can enable stewardship and caretakers for the habitat park.
 - Actively seek community and neighborhood volunteer participation for clean-ups, plantings, and invasive species control.
 - Priority: High
 - Partner: City of Buffalo/Local schools and community groups
- **(A: 1.0-1.2) Improve park signage;**
 - Provide typical park signage on Bailey Avenue.
 - Provide wayfinding and directional signage to new parking area.
 - Priority: High
 - Partner: In-House
- **Continue to monitor natural systems to assure future sustainability and habitat enhancement.**
 - Priority: High
 - Partner: In-House
- **(C: 1.0) Produce interpretive signage in key areas within the park.** As restoration efforts come to a close, new signage can help educate park users about the natural systems that have been restored as well as; local wildlife, unique flora and fauna, past use/history of the site, etc.
 - Priority: High
 - Partner: Niagara River Greenway/In-House
- **Increase connectivity to Habitat Parks**
 - Coordinate with City of Buffalo and local stakeholder groups
 - via new/future 'greenway' corridors, 'rails to trails' initiatives, bike routes, etc.
 - Priority: High
 - Partner: City of Buffalo, WNY Land Conservancy, Niagara River Greenway
- **(P: 1.0) Install security camera system – tie into City of Buffalo Police Department blue light security camera system.**
 - Coordinate with Sheriffs and other agencies to increase security at the park.
 - Priority: High
 - Partner: City of Buffalo, Erie County Sheriffs



View of natural habitat park

- **(P: 3.0) Enhance habitats for both resident and migratory birds;**
 - Emphasize the plantings of native vegetation which provides food, cover, and nesting locations for birds.
 - Seek input and technical expertise from groups such as the NYSDEC and US Fish and Wildlife Service.
 - **Priority: High**
 - **Partner: NYSDEC, US Fish and Wildlife Service**
- **(P: 4.0) Provide pollinator friendly plants and pollinator gardens for the presence of Hummingbirds, Butterflies, Bumblebees, Clear-winged moths, and others.**
 - Plant late season nectar sources such as New England Aster, which would improve late summer/early fall migrating periods.
 - Prioritize protection and enhancement of sensitive ecological areas;
 - Propose appropriate additional native plantings throughout the park;
 - **Priority: High**
 - **Partner: NYSDEC/Cornell Cooperative Extension/ECSWD/In-House**
- **Encourage passive activities to take place, promoting positive use of the park while discouraging negative activities.**
 - Activities may include kayaking, public art installations/projects, fishing classes, and neighborhood gatherings.
 - **Priority: Medium**
 - **Partner: Neighborhood community groups and stakeholders**
- **(P: 2.0) Improve the health of the Buffalo River and Cazenovia Creek.**
 - Focus projects should include stream bank stabilization and erosion control, habitat conservation and restoration, stormwater management, and contaminant reduction.
 - **Priority: Medium**
 - **Partner: Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper, NYSDEC, ECSWD, local businesses dependent on the River**
- **Encourage and emphasize natural features and opportunities to connect with park ecology.**
 - Increase awareness of park by providing guided nature walks with Erie County Park Rangers. Tours could include other habitat parks.
 - **Priority: Medium**
 - **Partner: In-House**
- **Prioritize protection and enhancement of areas deemed appropriate for additional native plantings.** Native plant gardens will promote educational and interpretive elements while increasing habitats for insect/bird habitats.
 - **Priority: Low**
 - **Partner: NYSDEC/Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper/In-House**
- **Promote public access to the River;**
 - through trails, overlooks and possible kayak launches.
 - Long-term capital improvements could include formalized fishing deck/platform.
 - **Priority: Low**
 - **Partner: In-House**



Restored native plants and trees



New sign and landscaping

THOMAS F. HIGGINS RIVERFRONT BRIDGE & PARK: ACTION ITEMS

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
P	1.0	Install security camera system – tie into City of Buffalo Police Department blue light security camera system.	Coordinate with Sheriffs and other agencies to increase security at the park.	High	Ongoing	City of Buffalo, Erie County Sheriffs
P	3.0	Enhance habitats for both resident and migratory birds;	Seek input and technical expertise from groups such as the NYSDEC and US Fish and Wildlife Service.	High	1-2 Years	Partner
P	4.0	Provide pollinator friendly plants and pollinator gardens for the presence of Hummingbirds, Butterflies, Bumblebees, Clear-winged moths, and others.	Coordinate with NYSDEC/Cornell Cooperative Extension/ECSWD	High	1-2 Years	Partner
A	1.0	Improve park signage;	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce park signage	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
A	1.1	Provide typical park signage on Bailey Avenue.	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce park signage	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
P	2.0	Improve the health of the Buffalo River and Cazenovia Creek.	Focus projects should include stream bank stabilization and erosion control, habitat conservation and restoration, stormwater management, and contaminant reduction.	Medium	Ongoing	Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper, NYSDEC, ECSWD
A	1.2	Provide wayfinding and directional signage to new parking area and park.	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Low	6-10 Years	In-House
C	1.0	Provide interpretive signage in the park	Engage a consultant to develop high resolution graphics and produce sign panels	Low	6-10 Years	\$3,500

KEY:

A: Action Item: Completed at low to no cost by Parks staff

P: Assistance or completion of project by potential partner/user group

C: Capital Project

POB: Parks Operating Budget

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RED JACKET RIVERFRONT NATURAL HABITAT PARK

CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS

- Finished construction in 2017 to restore natural ecological systems. These restoration efforts have improved many issues such as;
 - Invasive Species
 - Shoreline erosion/loss of habitats
 - Loss of wildlife/natural habitats
- Site suffers from park users disobeying critical rules which protect and maintain important habitats/wildlife (i.e. litter, disruption of peaceful habitats, etc.).
- Mistreatment of the Buffalo River.
- Lack of a 'greenway' connection to other riverfront parks/trails.
- Impacts from urban conditions and abuse (graffiti on boulders and railings)
- Railings at overlook are deteriorating, contains missing rails, and is covered in graffiti.
- Due to lack of staff and the small acreage of the park (moderate maintenance needed) security is problematic .
- Signage at Smith Street and South Park Avenue does not conform with typical County park signage.
- Sidewalk along Smith Street terminates at St. Stephens Place. Local users have to walk on the street south of St Stephens Place to access park.
- Lack of interpretive signage
- Aggressive invasive species control needed



Park Location Map: Red Jacket Riverfront Park is located off of Smith Street.



Overlook area





MASTER PLAN RED JACKET RIVERFRONT PARK

ERIE COUNTY PARKS MASTER PLAN UPDATE



MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Key - (Project Type: Project Number)

A - Action Item: Completed at low to no cost by Parks Staff

P - Assistance or completion of project by potential partner/user group

C - Capital project

- **(P: 5.0) Maintain, restore, and enhance park.** Partner and coordinate with local agencies and stakeholders
 - Continue to pursue grants and partnerships that can enable stewardship and caretakers for the habitat park.
 - Actively seek community and neighborhood volunteer participation for clean-ups, plantings, and invasive species control.
 - Coordinate with local user-groups like Valley Community Association, neighborhood block clubs, and local schools to provide programs and stewardship opportunities at park.
 - **Priority: High**
 - **Partner: City of Buffalo/Local schools and community groups**



New native tree plantings along path

- **(A: 1.0) Improve the tree health of the park, in particular within maintained areas.**
 - Remove dead, dying or diseased trees.
 - Prune deadwood from trees.
 - Routinely monitor the tree population for indications of pest infestations.
 - Provide new tree plantings throughout the park, particularly along the roadway edges.
 - Develop a multi-pronged approach to tree planting strategy including contracted work, in-house staff and volunteer group plantings.
 - Develop annual tree and native planting program to restore tree canopy and improve natural character of the park.
 - Apply for funding from NYSDEC for example for purchase of trees and materials and for the tree inventory.
 - **Priority: High**
 - **Partner: WNY PRISM/ECSWD/Forestry**
- **Continue to monitor natural systems at property to assure future sustainability and habitat enhancement.**
 - **Priority: High**
 - **Partner: In-House**
- **Maintain park as 'natural habitat park'**
 - Apply no (or limited) mowing and limited weed whacking policy. Reducing lawn maintenance will increase natural habitats and would help divert park crew members to work on additional tasks.
 - **Priority: High**
 - **Partner: In-House**
- **(P: 6.0) Continue the removal and treatment of invasive species.**
 - **Priority: High**
 - **Partner: WNY PRISM**
- **(P: 3.0) Enhance habitats for both resident and migratory birds;**
 - Emphasize the plantings of native vegetation which provides food, cover, and nesting locations for birds.
 - Seek input and technical expertise from groups such as the NYSDEC and US Fish and Wildlife Service.
 - **Priority: High**
 - **Partner: NYSDEC, US Fish and Wildlife Service**



Pathway between Buffalo River and small pond area



Railings in poor shape at the overlook area

- **(P: 4.0) Provide pollinator friendly plants and pollinator gardens for the presence of Hummingbirds, Butterflies, Bumblebees, Clear-winged moths, and others.**
 - Plant late season nectar sources such as New England Aster, which would improve late summer/early fall migrating periods.
 - Prioritize protection and enhancement of sensitive ecological areas;
 - Propose appropriate additional native plantings throughout the park;
 - **Priority: High**
 - **Partner: NYSDEC/Cornell Cooperative Extension/ECSWD/In-House**
- **(C: 1.0) Produce and install interpretive signage in key areas within the park.** As restoration efforts come to a close, new signage can help educate park users about the natural systems that have been restored as well as; local wildlife, unique flora and fauna, past use/history of the site, etc.
 - **Priority: High**
 - **Partner: Niagara River Greenway/In-House**



Great panoramic views

- **Increase connectivity to habitat parks;**
 - via new/future 'greenway' corridors, 'rails to trails' initiatives, bike routes, etc.
 - Coordinate with City of Buffalo and local stakeholder groups, specifically with the proposed DL&W Greenway trail.
 - **Priority: High**
 - **Partner: City of Buffalo, WNY Land Conservancy, Niagara River Greenway**
- **Install security camera system** – tie into City of Buffalo Police Department blue light security camera system.
 - Coordinate with Sheriffs and other agencies to increase security at the park.
 - **Priority: High**
 - **Partner: City of Buffalo, Erie County Sheriffs**
- **(A: 3.0) Repair and improve rails at overlook;**
 - Replace missing rails and provide new paint. Replace entire sections if needed to ensure proper safety.
 - **Priority: High**
 - **Partner: In-House**



Shoreline conditions



Park signage off of Smith Street

- **Encourage passive activities to take place**, promoting positive use of the park while discouraging negative activities.
 - Activities may include kayaking, public art installations/projects, fishing classes, and neighborhood gatherings.
 - **Priority: Medium**
 - **Partner: Neighborhood community groups and stakeholders**
- **(P: 2.0) Improve the health of the Buffalo River.**
 - Focus projects should include stream bank stabilization and erosion control, habitat conservation and restoration, stormwater management, and contaminant reduction.
 - Continued improvements to the ecological status of the river/creek can contribute to educational nature programs and trail/water recreation.
 - **Priority: Medium**
 - **Partner: Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper, NYSDEC, ECSWD, local businesses dependent on the River**
- **(A: 4.0) Promote public access to the River;**
 - through trails, overlooks and possible kayak launches.
 - Long-term capital improvements could include formalized fishing deck/platform.
 - **Priority: Low**
 - **Partner: In-House**
- **(P: 7.0) Replace or provide space for murals and public art on concrete walls on either side of Smith Street.**
 - Collaborate with local artists and interested neighborhood residents.
 - **Priority: Low**
 - **Partner: Local artists/Community groups/Schools**
- **(A: 2.0) Replace existing gateway signage to be in conformance with the branding of the Parks System.**
 - In the event the sign requires repairs or needs to be reconstructed it should conform to the signage used on the other parks.
 - **Priority: Low**
 - **Partner: In-House**



Artwork off of Smith Street

RED JACKET RIVERFRONT PARK: ACTION ITEMS

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
A	1.0	Increase tree health and tree canopy throughout the park. Develop a multi-pronged tree planting strategy including contracted work, in-house staff and volunteer group plantings to increase tree canopy and renew the resource over time.	Prune and/or remove trees if determined to present an increased risk to park patrons and employees.	High	Ongoing	In-House, Forestry
A	3.0	Repair and improve rails at overlook;	Replace missing rails and provide new paint. Replace entire sections if needed to ensure proper safety.	High	1-2 Years	P.O.B
P	1.0	Install security camera system – tie into City of Buffalo Police Department blue light security camera system.	Coordinate with Sheriffs and other agencies to increase security at the park.	High	Ongoing	City of Buffalo, Erie County Sheriffs
P	3.0	Enhance habitats for both resident and migratory birds;	Seek input and technical expertise from groups such as the NYSDEC and US Fish and Wildlife Service.	High	1-2 Years	Partner
P	4.0	Provide pollinator friendly plants and pollinator gardens for the presence of Hummingbirds, Butterflies, Bumblebees, Clear-winged moths, and others.	Coordinate with NYSDEC/Cornell Cooperative Extension/ECSWD	High	1-2 Years	Partner
P	5.0	Maintain, restore, and enhance park.	Partner and coordinate with local agencies and stakeholders Continue to pursue grants and partnerships that can enable stewardship and caretakers for the habitat park.	High	Ongoing	Partner
P	6.0	Continue the removal and treatment of invasive species.	Coordinate with WNY Prism, ECSWD, and others.	High	Ongoing	Partner
A	2.0	Improve park signage;	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce park signage	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House

KEY:

A: Action Item: Completed at low to no cost by Parks staff

P: Assistance or completion of project by potential partner/user group

C: Capital Project

POB: Parks Operating Budget



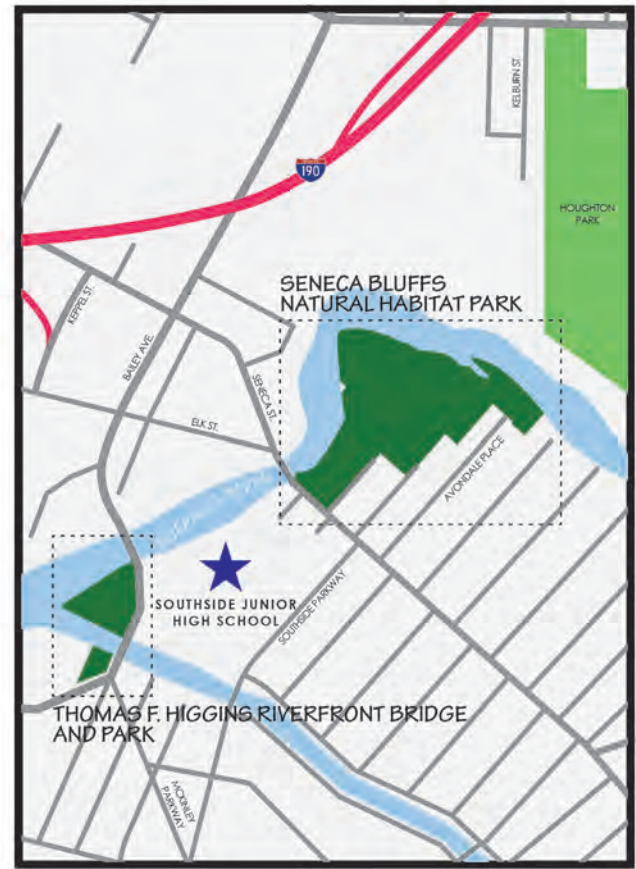
Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
P	2.0	Improve the health of the Buffalo River	Focus projects should include stream bank stabilization and erosion control, habitat conservation and restoration, stormwater management, and contaminant reduction.	Medium	Ongoing	Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper, NYSDEC, ECSWD
A	2.1	Provide wayfinding and directional signage to the park.	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Low	6-10 Years	In-House
A	4.0	Promote and provide public access to the River;	through trails, overlooks and possible kayak launches. Long-term capital improvements could include formalized fishing deck/platform.	Low	3-5 Years	\$15,000
C	1.0	Provide interpretive signage in the park	Engage a consultant to develop high resolution graphics and produce sign panels	Low	6-10 Years	\$7,000
P	7.0	Replace or provide space for murals and public art on concrete walls on either side of Smith Street.	Collaborate with local artists and interested neighborhood residents.	Low	3-5 Years	Partner

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SENECA BLUFFS NATURAL HABITAT PARK

CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS

- Finished construction in 2017 to restore natural ecological systems (more improvements on-going). These restoration efforts have improved many issues such as;
 - Invasive Species
 - Shoreline erosion/loss of habitats
 - Loss of wildlife/natural habitats
- Site suffers from park users disobeying critical rules which protect and maintain important habitats and wildlife (i.e. litter, disruption of peaceful habitats, etc.).
- Encroachment of businesses, industrial practices, unlawful dumpings, poor care of the Buffalo River.
- Lack of a 'greenway' connection to other riverfront parks/trails.
- Impacts from urban conditions and abuse.
- Due to lack of staff and the large acreage of the park (moderate maintenance needed) security is problematic.
- Does not have typical park signage visible off of Seneca Street.
- Lack of interpretive signage
- Aggressive invasive species control needed



Park Location Map: Seneca Bluffs is located off of Seneca Street in South Buffalo.



Trail and signage from parking area





MASTER PLAN SENECA BLUFFS PARK

ERIE COUNTY PARKS MASTER PLAN UPDATE

MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS: *Specific Action Items - Ex (A-1)*

- ① (C: 1.0) Produce interpretive signage in key areas within the park. As restoration efforts come to a close, new signage can help educate park users about the natural systems that have been restored as well as; local wildlife, unique flora and fauna, past use/history of the site, etc.
- ② (C: 2.0) Provide typical park signage on Seneca Street. Provide gateway treatment including landscaping with seasonal interest.
- ③ (A: 4.0) Promote public access to the River/Creek Through trails, overlooks and possible kayak launches. Long-term capital improvements could include formalized fishing deck/platform.
- ④ (C: 3.0) Install water line at the site to properly manage native plantings and possible community gardens.
- ⑤ Provide area for community gardens - coordinate with community groups for active participation of these gardens.
- ⑥ (C: 4.0) Provide expanded trail system and potential elevated boardwalk on lower terrace to access shoreline and minimize disturbance to sensitive habitats/communities.



- ### MASTER PLAN HIGHLIGHTS:
- Maintain, restore, and enhance park. Partner with local agencies and stakeholders.
 - (A: 1.0) Improve the tree health of the park. Remove dead, dying or diseased trees. Prune deadwood from trees.
 - Monitor natural systems at property to assure future sustainability and habitat enhancement.
 - Maintain park as 'natural habitat park'. Apply no (or limited) mowing and limited weed whacking policy. Reducing lawn maintenance will increase natural habitats and would help divert park crew members to work on additional tasks.
 - Continue the removal and treatment of invasive species.
 - (P: 1.0) Install security camera system - tie into City of Buffalo Police Department blue light security camera system.
 - Encourage passive activities to take place, promoting positive use of the park while discouraging negative activities. Activities may include kayaking, public art installations/projects, fishing classes, and neighborhood gatherings.
 - (P: 2.0) Improve the health of the Buffalo River/Creek. Focus projects should include stream bank stabilization and erosion control, habitat conservation and restoration, stormwater management, and contaminant reduction.

Legend:

- Potential Major and Minor Park Gateway Locations
- Destination
- Natural Features
- Playground
- Existing Trails
- Park Boundary



View of the Buffalo River

MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Key - (Project Type: Project Number)

A - Action Item: Completed at low to no cost by Parks Staff

P - Assistance or completion of project by potential partner/user group

C - Capital project

- **(P: 5.0) Maintain, restore, and enhance park.** Partner with local agencies and stakeholders.
 - Pursue grants and partnerships that can enable stewardship and caretakers for the habitat park.
 - Actively seek community and neighborhood volunteer participation for clean-ups, plantings, and invasive species control.
 - Priority: High
 - Partner: City of Buffalo/Local schools and community groups
- **(A: 1.0) Improve the tree health of the park.**
 - Remove dead, dying or diseased trees.
 - Prune deadwood from trees.
 - Routinely monitor the tree population for indications of pest infestations.
 - Provide new tree plantings throughout the park, particularly along the roadway edges.
 - Develop a multi-pronged approach to tree planting strategy including contracted work, in-house staff and volunteer group plantings.
 - Develop annual tree and native planting program to restore tree canopy and improve natural character of the park.
 - Apply for funding from NYSDEC for example for purchase of trees and materials and for the tree inventory.
 - Priority: High
 - Partner: WNY PRISM/ECSWD/Forestry
- **Monitor natural systems at property to assure future sustainability and habitat enhancement.**
 - Priority: High
 - Partner: In-House
- **(C: 3.0) Install water line at the site to properly manage native plantings and possible community gardens.**
 - Priority: High
 - Partner: In-House
- **Maintain park as 'natural habitat park'**
 - Limit mowing and weed whacking. Reducing lawn maintenance will increase natural habitats and would help divert park crew members to work on additional tasks.
 - Priority: High
 - Partner: In-House
- **(C: 1.0) Produce and install interpretive signage in key areas within the park.** As restoration efforts come to a close, new signage can help educate park users about the natural systems that have been restored as well as; local wildlife, unique flora and fauna, past use/history of the site, etc.
 - Priority: High
 - Partner: Niagara River Greenway/In-House

- **Increase connectivity to habitat parks;**
 - via new/future 'greenway' corridors, 'rails to trails' initiatives, bike routes, etc.
 - Coordinate with City of Buffalo and local stakeholder groups
 - **Priority:** High
 - **Partner:** City of Buffalo, WNY Land Conservancy, Niagara River Greenway
- **(P: 1.0) Install security camera system – tie into City of Buffalo Police Department blue light security camera system.**
 - Coordinate with Sheriffs and other agencies to increase security at the park.
 - **Priority:** High
 - **Partner:** City of Buffalo, Erie County Sheriffs
- **(P: 6.0) Continue the removal and treatment of invasive species.**
 - **Priority:** High
 - **Partner:** WNY PRISM
- **(C: 2.0) Provide typical park signage on Seneca Street.**
 - Provide gateway treatment including landscaping with seasonal interest.
 - **Priority:** High
 - **Partner:** In-House



Buffalo River



- **(P: 3.0) Enhance habitats for both resident and migratory birds;**
 - Emphasize the plantings of native vegetation which provides food, cover, and nesting locations for birds.
 - Seek input and technical expertise from groups such as the NYSDEC and US Fish and Wildlife Service.
 - **Priority: High**
 - **Partner: NYSDEC, US Fish and Wildlife Service**
- **(P: 4.0) Provide pollinator friendly plants and pollinator gardens for the presence of Hummingbirds, Butterflies, Bumblebees, Clear-winged moths, and others.**
 - Plant late season nectar sources such as New England Aster, which would improve late summer/early fall migrating periods.
 - Prioritize protection and enhancement of sensitive ecological areas;
 - Propose appropriate additional native plantings throughout the park;
 - **Priority: High**
 - **Partner: NYSDEC/Cornell Cooperative Extension/ECSWD/In-House**
- **Provide area for community gardens** - coordinate with community groups for active participation of these gardens.
 - **Priority: Medium**
 - **Partner: Community members/groups**
- **(C: 4.0) Provide expanded trail system and potential elevated boardwalk** on lower terrace to access shoreline and minimize disturbance to sensitive habitats/communities.
 - **Priority: Medium**
 - **Partner: In-House, NYSDEC**
- **Encourage passive activities to take place**, promoting positive use of the park while discouraging negative activities.
 - Activities may include kayaking, public art installations/projects, fishing classes, community gardens and neighborhood gatherings.
 - **Priority: Medium**
 - **Partner: Neighborhood community groups and stakeholders**
- **(P: 2.0) Improve the health of the Buffalo River/Creek.**
 - Focus projects should include stream bank stabilization and erosion control, habitat conservation and restoration, stormwater management, and contaminant reduction.
 - Continued improvements to the ecological status

of the river/creek can contribute to educational nature programs and trail/water recreation.

- **Priority: Medium**

- **Partner: Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper, NYSDEC, ECSWD, local businesses dependent on the River**

- **(A: 4.0) Promote public access to the River/Creek;**
 - Through trails, overlooks and possible kayak launches.
 - Long-term capital improvements could include formalized fishing deck/platform.
 - **Priority: Low**
 - **Partner: In-House**



Informal parking area



Existing trail

SENECA BLUFFS: ACTION ITEMS

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
A	1.0	Increase tree health and tree canopy throughout the park. Develop a multi-pronged tree planting strategy including contracted work, in-house staff and volunteer group plantings to increase tree canopy and renew the resource over time.	Prune and/or remove trees if determined to present an increased risk to park patrons and employees.	High	Ongoing	In-House, Forestry
A	3.0	Repair and improve rails at overlook;	Replace missing rails and provide new paint. Replace entire sections if needed to ensure proper safety.	High	1-2 Years	In-House
C	1.0	Provide interpretive signage in the park	Engage a consultant to develop high resolution graphics and produce sign panels	High	6-10 Years	\$10,500
C	2.0	Establish gateway signage for the park; Provide typical County Park sign on Seneca Street	Engage a consultant to develop sign types including copy, structure and landscape.	High	1-2 Years	\$17,800
C	3.0	Install water line at the site to properly manage native plantings and possible community gardens.	Engage a consultant to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	High	1-2 Years	\$5,000
P	1.0	Install security camera system – tie into City of Buffalo Police Department blue light security camera system.	Coordinate with Sheriffs and other agencies to increase security at the park.	High	Ongoing	City of Buffalo, Erie County Sheriffs
P	3.0	Enhance habitats for both resident and migratory birds;	Seek input and technical expertise from groups such as the NYSDEC and US Fish and Wildlife Service.	High	1-2 Years	Partner
P	4.0	Provide pollinator friendly plants and pollinator gardens for the presence of Hummingbirds, Butterflies, Bumblebees, Clear-winged moths, and others.	Coordinate with NYSDEC/Cornell Cooperative Extension/ECSWD	High	1-2 Years	Partner
P	5.0	Maintain, restore, and enhance park.	Partner and coordinate with local agencies and stakeholders Continue to pursue grants and partnerships that can enable stewardship and caretakers for the habitat park.	High	Ongoing	Partner

KEY:

A: Action Item: Completed at low to no cost by Parks staff

P: Assistance or completion of project by potential partner/user group

C: Capital Project

POB: Parks Operating Budget



SENECA BLUFFS: ACTION ITEMS

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
P	6.0	Continue the removal and treatment of invasive species.	Coordinate with WNY Prism, ECSWD, and others.	High	Ongoing	Partner
A	2.0	Improve park signage;	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce park signage	Medium	3-5 Years	In-House
A	2.1	Provide wayfinding and directional signage to the park.	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce the sign panels, and coordinate with the road jurisdiction regarding placement of the signs.	Medium	6-10 Years	In-House
C	4.0	Provide expanded trail system and potential elevated boardwalk on lower terrace	Engage a consultant to develop plans and a contractor to construct the improvements	Medium	3-5 Years	\$220,000
P	2.0	Improve the health of the Buffalo River	Focus projects should include stream bank stabilization and erosion control, habitat conservation and restoration, stormwater management, and contaminant reduction.	Medium	Ongoing	Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper, NYSDEC, ECSWD
A	4.0	Promote and provide public access to the River;	Through trails, overlooks and possible kayak launches.	Low	3-5 Years	\$75,000

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TIMES BEACH NATURE PRESERVE

CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS

- Impacts from urban conditions and abuse
- Some graffiti found on boardwalk and signs
- Due to lack of staff and the large acreage of the park (moderate maintenance needed) security/patrol becomes an issue at times.
- Does not have typical park signage visible off of Fuhrmann Blvd.
- Aggressive invasive species control needed

MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

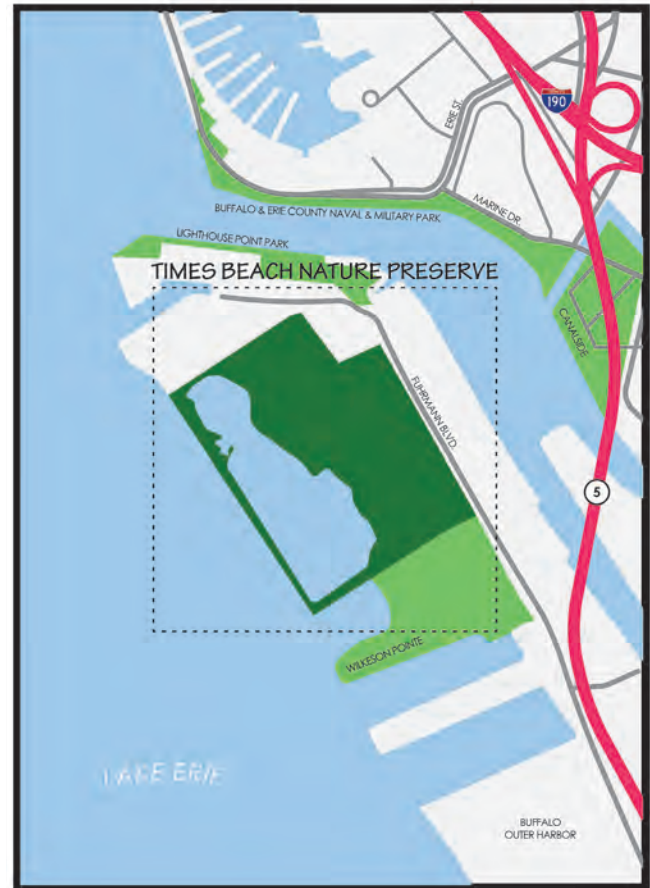
Key - (Project Type: Project Number)

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- **(P: 5.0) Maintain, restore, and enhance park.** Partner with local agencies and stakeholders
 - Continue to seek grants and partnerships that can enable stewardship and caretakers for the habitat park.
 - Partner and collaborate with Friends of Times Beach group.
 - Actively seek community and neighborhood volunteer participation for clean-ups, plantings, and invasive species control.
 - Priority: High
 - Partner: City of Buffalo/Local schools and community groups



Park Location Map: Times Beach is located on the Outer Harbor off of Fuhrmann Blvd.



View of the marsh at Times Beach





MASTER PLAN

TIMES BEACH NATURE PRESERVE

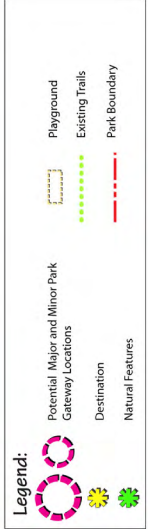
ERIE COUNTY PARKS MASTER PLAN UPDATE

MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1 (A-2.0) Provide typical park signage off of Furhmann Blvd. Provide gateway treatment including landscaping with seasonal interest to entrance sign.
- 2 (A-3.0) Improve and maintain park trails and boardwalks.

MASTER PLAN HIGHLIGHTS:

- Continue efforts in partnering with local agencies and stakeholders to maintain, restore, and enhance park.
- (A-1.0) Improve the tree health of the park. Remove dead, dying or diseased trees. Prune deadwood from trees.
- Continue to monitor natural systems at property to assure future sustainability and habitat enhancement.
- Continue the removal and treatment of invasive species.
- Increase connectivity to Habitat Parks and other nearby parks via new/future 'greenway' corridors, 'rails to trails' initiatives, bike routes, etc.
- (P-1.0) Install security camera system – tie into City of Buffalo Police Department blue light security camera system.
- (P-2.0) Improve the health of Lake Erie. Focus projects should include bank stabilization and erosion control, habitat conservation and restoration, stormwater management, and contaminant reduction.

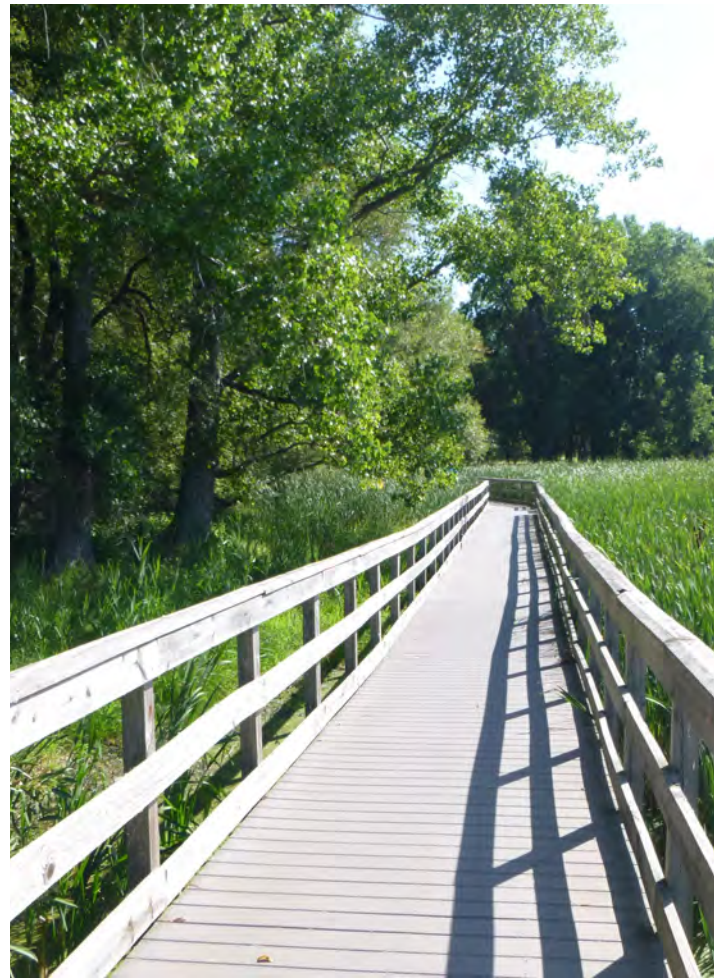


- **(A: 1.0) Improve the tree health of the park.**
 - Remove dead, dying or diseased trees.
 - Prune deadwood from trees.
 - Routinely monitor the tree population for indications of pest infestations.
 - **Priority: High**
 - **Partner: WNY PRISM/ECSWD/Forestry**
- **(P: 3.0) Enhance habitats for both resident and migratory birds;**
 - Emphasize the plantings of native vegetation which provides food, cover, and nesting locations for birds.
 - Seek input and technical expertise from groups such as the NYSDEC and US Fish and Wildlife Service.
 - **Priority: High**
 - **Partner: NYSDEC, US Fish and Wildlife Service**
- **(P: 4.0) Provide pollinator friendly plants and pollinator gardens for the presence of Hummingbirds, Butterflies, Bumblebees, Clear-winged moths, and others.**
 - Plant late season nectar sources such as New England Aster, which would improve late summer/early fall migrating periods.
 - Prioritize protection and enhancement of sensitive ecological areas;
 - Propose appropriate additional native plantings throughout the park;
 - **Priority: High**
 - **Partner: NYSDEC/Cornell Cooperative Extension/ECSWD/In-House**
- **Monitor natural systems at property to assure future sustainability and habitat enhancement.**
 - **Priority: High**
 - **Partner: In-House**



Boardwalk and bird viewing area

- **(P: 6.0) Continue the removal and treatment of invasive species.**
 - Priority: High
 - Partner: WNY PRISM
- **(A: 2.0) Provide typical park signage off of Fuhrmann Blvd.**
 - Provide gateway treatment including landscaping with seasonal interest to entrance sign.
 - Priority: High
 - Partner: In-House
- **(P: 1.0) Install security camera system – tie into City of Buffalo Police Department blue light security camera system.**
 - Coordinate with Sheriffs and other agencies to increase security at the park.
 - Priority: High
 - Partner: City of Buffalo/Erie County Sheriffs
- **(A: 3.0) Improve and maintain park trails and boardwalks.**
 - Priority: High
 - Partner: In-House/Stakeholder and Volunteer Groups
- **(P: 2.0) Improve the health of Lake Erie.**
 - Focus projects should include bank stabilization and erosion control, habitat conservation and restoration, stormwater management, and contaminant reduction.
 - Continued improvements can contribute to educational nature programs and trail/water recreation.
 - Priority: Medium
 - Partner: Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper/NYSDEC/ECSWD



Boardwalk



Trail adjacent to Fuhrmann Blvd.

TIMES BEACH NATURE PRESERVE: ACTION ITEMS

Project Type	Project #	Recommendation	Implementation Strategies	Priority	Term	Estimated Cost
A	1.0	Increase tree health and tree canopy throughout the park. Develop a multi-pronged tree planting strategy including contracted work, in-house staff and volunteer group plantings to increase tree canopy and renew the resource over time.	Prune and/or remove trees if determined to present an increased risk to park patrons and employees.	High	Ongoing	In-House, Forestry
A	2.0	Improve park signage; Provide typical park signage off of Fuhrmann Blvd.	Coordination between Parks & Highways to develop and produce park signage	High	3-5 Years	In-House
A	3.0	Improve and maintain park trails and boardwalks.	Parks staff and partners	High	Ongoing	In-House
P	3.0	Enhance habitats for both resident and migratory birds;	Seek input and technical expertise from groups such as the NYSDEC and US Fish and Wildlife Service.	High	1-2 Years	Partner
P	4.0	Provide pollinator friendly plants and pollinator gardens for the presence of Hummingbirds, Butterflies, Bumblebees, Clear-winged moths, and others.	Coordinate with NYSDEC/Cornell Cooperative Extension/ECSWD	High	1-2 Years	Partner
P	5.0	Maintain, restore, and enhance park.	Partner and coordinate with local agencies and stakeholders Continue to pursue grants and partnerships that can enable stewardship and caretakers for the habitat park.	High	Ongoing	Partner
P	6.0	Continue the removal and treatment of invasive species.	Coordinate with WNY Prism, ECSWD, and others.	High	Ongoing	Partner
P	1.0	Install security camera system – tie into City of Buffalo Police Department blue light security camera system.	Coordinate with Sheriffs and other agencies to increase security at the park.	Low	Ongoing	City of Buffalo, Erie County Sheriffs
P	2.0	Improve the health of Lake Erie	Focus projects should include bank stabilization and erosion control, habitat conservation and restoration, stormwater management, and contaminant reduction.	Low	Ongoing	Waterkeeper, NYSDEC, ECSWD

KEY:

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