

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. *It is Geauga Park District's intent to manage this natural area and to protect water quality for aquatic life and downstream neighbors.*

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. Through the years, protection of the watershed has remained a priority when determining the types of activities that would be permitted.

Gauga 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 and boating.

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.

NATURAL HABITATS

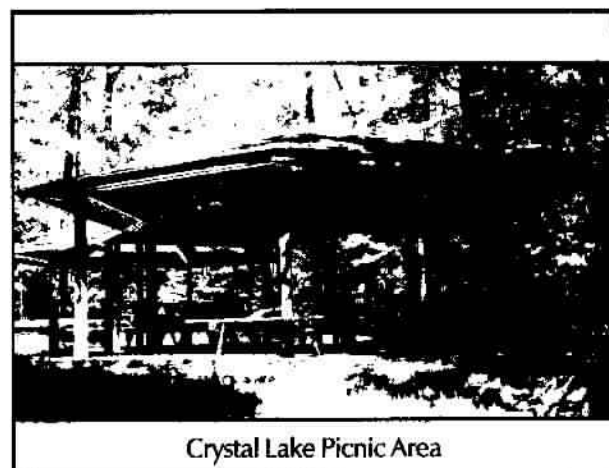
Beech-maple forests, meadows and evergreen plantations surround the waters of East Branch Reservoir, home to wild turkey, fox, mink, owls, hawks and a wide variety of song birds. Abundant wildflowers carpet the forest floor in spring.

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. Sandpipers and plovers visit the reservoir in late summer.

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.



Crystal Lake Picnic Area