



Take The Challenge

CINCINNATI WILDFLOWER PRESERVATION SOCIETY ISSUES CHALLENGE GRANT. Art Wiseman, Treasurer

Mr. James R. Innis, Jr., President of the Cincinnati Wildflower Preservation Society, recently announced that the members of the Society have voted to support the Oxbow, Inc. Land Acquisition Fund by offering a challenge grant of \$2,000. Beginning with the issuing of this announcement in the Newsletter, and ending April 15, 1988, the Wildflower Society will match "dollar-for-dollar" to a maximum of \$2,000, the receipts from NEW memberships and donations. Mr. Innis pointed out that those who enjoy wildflowers and wish to support Oxbow, Inc. can "double their money" under this offer. This program was developed by the Wildflower Society to encourage donors to support the conservation and preservation work of Oxbow, Inc. We are greatly indebted for their strong support of our project.

The Society has also supported Oxbow, Inc.'s efforts to preserve the flood plains and wetlands by conducting a survey this past summer of the plant life that can be found in the area. Under the direction of Ruth and Stan Trosset, David Styer and other dedicated volunteers, the group spent literally every Saturday working the hillsides near Shawnee Lookout Park between Lawrenceburg Road and the Great Miami River. Every plant was carefully observed and, when possible, identified. Specimens from plants that could not be identified in the field were taken back for more careful and critical examination. Working with several 'keys' in a wide variety of botanical textbooks, the plants were identified as to family and Genus.

This has been a great beginning toward a complete survey of the plant life in the Oxbow and we thank all of the Wildflower Society members who assisted in the project. We hope the coming summer will add greatly to the impressive list accumulated thus far.

Let's get busy and match the Wildflower Society's challenge grant.

Keep in mind that all contributions made to Oxbow, Inc. are tax deductible.

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GILMORE PONDS IN GOOD CONDITION AS RAINS IMPROVE WATER LEVELS.

Conditions at Gilmore Ponds have improved greatly after the recent rains and snow. Jim Becker, unofficial agent for the area, reports that after two or three dry years the water level in the various ponds is quite high and holding steady. This wetlands area, a "sister" project to Oxbow, Inc., is another nearby area that needs protection from development. Located in Butler County just south of the Hamilton Airport, Gilmore Ponds is the lowest land in the county.

With adequate water the Ponds should provide some interesting observations for birders. For example, look for ducks and other waterfowl in March, shorebirds and blackbirds in April and nesting species in May.

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Among the latter are the pied-billed grebes, coots, mallards and wood ducks. Gilmore Ponds is one spot we can occasionally see chicks of these species. Other species that can be seen in season are the swamp sparrow, rusty blackbirds and numerous warblers, both migrants and nesting species. For more information about Gilmore Ponds, call Art Wiseman, 513-481-4302.



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OXBOW PLANT SURVEY, 1987.

Ruth Trosset

The 1987 blooming season has ended, but the Oxbow Plant Survey has not! Identification of collected specimens is continuing, so that our listing of plant species and our project report can be completed. Meanwhile, we're anticipating "Oxbow Plant Survey 1988" to fill in gaps in the 1987 data. Participants familiar with the area expect to take a look in March (perhaps even in February!) for species that bloomed too early for the 1987 survey. Starting in April, there will be some visits to specific locations and habitats that were not discovered until later in the 1987 season. These field trips are tentatively planned for Saturdays at 9 AM, but they will not necessarily be held every week. The Wildflower Preservation Society will need to know how many people will attend. If you would like to participate in the project, please call Cay Tuck, Volunteer Coordinator, 513-631-5933.

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Wetlands Are Not Wastelands

Early in our history, wetlands were viewed by many Americans as physical obstacles to progress with little or no inherent value. They were often dangerous places to travel through, especially during periods of flooding. They were difficult to farm, so had no real economic value. Because of their bleak landscape and foreboding appearance, they were considered poor places to settle near.

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For nearly 200 years, the idea prevailed that the only "good wetland" was one that was drained and developed. Because most wetlands had flat topography, 100 million acres have been lost to date and an annual loss of several hundred thousand acres continues.

In Ohio, 1,600,000 acres of wetlands existed in 1788. Today, we have 136,000 acres left with much of it located adjacent to Lake Erie. Over 90% of our natural heritage of diverse wetland habitat has been lost forever!

Wetlands are the second most threatened ecosystem in our state, nation and the world. In the past 25 years, a growing number of citizens in both public and private sectors have come to realize the many significant values of acquiring and preserving these vanishing natural features.

Wetlands are rich and diverse biological communities existing in every geographical area of our country. They include costal marshes, wet meadows and prairies, bogs and fens, ponds and seasonally flooded bottomlands or riparian areas.

We have to learn to let Mother Nature be. It's an attitude that's long overdue.

Volumes have been written on the values of wetlands. They are fantastic, self-sustaining energy systems which produce more wildlife, both plants and animals, than any other ecosystem in the world. Over 12 million ducks nest and breed each year in northern U.S. wetlands. Wildlife habitat in wetlands provides food and shelter for one third of our nation's threatened or endangered species.

Because of their abundance of natural resources, these areas have been heavily utilized by anglers, trappers and hunters from prehistoric times to the present. Boating and wildlife observation have also become very popular recreational activities.

Ohio spends \$48 million per year to purify water. Natural wetlands have been accomplishing this for centuries, acting as efficient water treatment plants absorbing and filtering pollutants to protect water quality. Because of their locations near streams and rivers, they effectively store flood waters reducing downstream loss of property. Their replenishing of ground water supplies may well be their most critical function with contamination of these sources on the rise.

Scenic and recreational values are also vitally important. Interest and participation in water-oriented outdoor recreation has been increasing for years. Economic value is considerable with \$720 million spent annually in Ohio on fishing, \$12 million spent on trapping and \$750 million spent on hunting. Both active and passive forms of outdoor recreation frequently occur in the same wetland area.

Wetlands' real importance is only now being fully understood.

Because the ecological importance of wetlands was misunderstood, their value as unique "living museums" has only been realized in the last 10 to 15 years. With their wealth and diversity of organisms, these natural areas are being studied at an increasing rate by qualified researchers. Such work will result in accelerated acquisition and protection of the areas, plus more effective land management.

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Looking closer to home in our own backyard, Hamilton County contains 264,960 acres. Without considering the Ohio River, we possess 727 acres in the Little Miami River and East Fork, 1,309 acres in the Great Miami River and 170 acres in the Whitewater River. Lakes and ponds total about 549 acres and wetlands comprise only about 2,000 acres.

The Hamilton County Park District has acquired and preserved a significant two acre fresh-water marsh and associated wet meadow at Richardson Forest Preserve. They also protect several small wetland areas adjacent to park lakes. Perhaps the most significant riparian area preserved is the Uhlmansiek Wildlife Sanctuary, 289 acres of bottomland hardwoods, grasslands and contractually farmed fields in Shawnee Lookout Park. More importantly, this sanctuary is located immediately adjacent to our largest local wetland, the Oxbow area which is a 2,500 acre natural gem located near the confluence of the Great Miami and Ohio Rivers. This seasonally flooded wetland includes about 1,070 acres in Ohio and 1,430 in Indiana.

Focusing on Hamilton County, approximately half of the 2,000 acres of wetlands remaining are in the Oxbow area. What makes this area even more valuable is that geologists indicate there is only one other area in Ohio with equal significance, a wetland at the mouth of the Muskingum River!

**The remaining
wetlands can be saved.
We must begin today if
we are to be the
stewards of our natural
resources and the
stewards of the future.**

Two years ago a small group of concerned citizens formed Oxbow, Inc. to explore creative ways to preserve this unique natural habitat. Working with their minds, hands and money in addition to their hearts, they have matched two challenge grants of \$5,000 from the Audubon Society of Ohio and \$10,000 from a local conservationist, Mr. Sherwood McIntire, acquired 27.58 acres and encouraged involvement of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources which is now investigating purchase of additional acreage.

The Cincinnati Wildflower Preservation Society, sponsors of a current \$2,000 challenge grant, conducted a year long volunteer vascular plant survey in Uhlmansiek Sanctuary, during which potentially threatened plant species were discovered. The list of birds and waterfowl sighted in the area now totals an impressive 270 species. Contractual researchers working in the sanctuaries for the Park District discovered one uncommon moth, one rare and one never recorded before in Ohio. Valuable information on geology, history and cultural features of the Oxbow has been gathered. Reptile and amphibian research is currently being conducted by the Greater Cincinnati Herpetological Society. Oxbow, Inc. members are now working on a long range plan for the area which emphasizes traditional uses of natural resources including wildlife observation, hunting, fishing, boating, research and farming.

As funds become available, the Hamilton County Park District is interested in acquiring and preserving additional wetlands in the Oxbow area adjacent to Shawnee Lookout Park.

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Steps to preserve wetlands must occur in both the public and private sectors.

The greatest value in the Oxbow area will be its continued preservation by conservationists from the private and public sectors, wise use by many visitors to the area and a multi-purpose management plan designed to maximize conservation and recreation in the area. Future generations in our region deserve more than a sad story of how this area was lost to the wheels of progress.

STEWART L. WELSH
Deputy Director
HAMILTON COUNTY PARK DISTRICT

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SPEAKERS' BUREAU EXPANDS PROGRAM.

Selected color slides of Oxbow wildflowers and habitat, taken by Ruth and Stan Trosset during the 1987 plant survey, have been donated to Oxbow, Inc. for use by the Speakers' Bureau.

Members of the Cincinnati Wildflower Preservation Society who participated in the survey will be available to Garden Clubs and other interested groups to present illustrated programs about the plants in the Oxbow area. To set up a speaking engagement for this new program call Donna Wagner, 513-831-7606.

Our thanks go to the Trossets for donating these valuable additions to our speakers programs.



CINCINNATI ZOO AND BOTANICAL GARDEN

is having a "GARDENING WITH WILDLIFE" weekend, April 23rd and 24th. Oxbow, Inc. has been offered a booth for this Spring Floral Festival. Hours are 10 AM to 4:30 PM Saturday and Sunday. Volunteers will work short shifts ten to twelve, twelve to two and two to four-thirty either or both days. The Zoo is expecting 18,000 visitors so this is a great opportunity to spread the word about our

goals for the Oxbow. Names of our volunteers must be turned in by April 20th to be admitted through the Exit Gate on Erckenbrecher Avenue.

If you would like an opportunity to see the Zoo in full spring bloom call Cay Tuck, 513-631-5933, and volunteer your time for this program.

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OXBOW, INC. TO FLY WITH BIRDATHON!



Participants will be out the first weekend in May to identify as many species of birds, either by sight or song, within a 24 hour period of time. Each birder must be sponsored by friends, neighbors, businesses, clubs or others who are willing to commit to a negotiated amount for each species recorded. Teams may be made up to compete against other teams. Boundaries are determined only by how much the birders can cover in the time limit of the BIRDATHON. Money raised by the participants will go to the Land Acquisition Fund.

Prizes will be awarded to the birder scoring the highest total of species and the birder turning in the most money solicited from the sponsors.

For more information and to register call Art Wiseman 513-481-4302.

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The Greater Cincinnati Herpetological Society, under the direction of Sue Simon, is conducting a research project in the Oxbow. Research will concentrate on amphibians and reptiles and their habitat. As always, volunteers are needed to help with this important work. Are you a person who enjoys looking for (and finding) creepers, crawlers and hoppers? If so, call Cay Tuck, 513-631-5933 and volunteer for this interesting project.



The Land Acquisition Committee is presently working to secure a contract to purchase another strategically located parcel of ground at the Oxbow. If successful, the purchase would substantially increase our holdings in the area.



Dr. Jay D. Hair, President, National Wildlife Federation - in an article appearing in U.S. Water News about saving wetlands -

"In the United States, more than 90% of wetlands are in the hands of private landowners - who will determine the future of our most fragile resource."



Participation by Oxbow, Inc. in the Bob Hart Boat and Travel Show resulted in 15 new memberships and a net income of \$256 from raffle ticket sales. Winning ticket stubs were drawn by Kani Meyer. Winners of the two William Zimmerman prints of "Mallards in Flight" were:

William Kameron
8800 Woodview Drive
Cincinnati, Ohio 45231

David Styer
4 Creekwood Square
Cincinnati, Ohio 45246



The Farm Bill, enacted in 1986, contains an innovative "swampbuster" provision that halts Federal subsidies to farmers who convert wetlands to farm lands.



The following is the 1987 Financial Statement for Oxbow, Inc. submitted to our members by Treasurer, Art Wiseman. Oxbow, Inc. is pleased to point out that expenses for the year were held to 7.1%.

Statement of Revenue, Expenses Year Ended 1987

OXBOW, INC.

TREASURER'S REPORT - 1987

ARTHUR J. WISEMAN, TREASURER

CASH RECEIPTS

Cash on hand (1/1/87)	\$ \$1,000.00
Cash Balance, Checking Account (1/1/87)....	2,836.37
Membership Dues	3,955.00
Donations	83.00
Challenge-Grant from Audubon Society of Ohio	5,000.00
Matching Funds, Audubon of Ohio Challenge-Grant ..	6,547.00
Challenge-Grant from Mr. & Mrs. S. W. McIntire ...	10,000.00
Matching Funds, McIntire Challenge-Grant	11,728.92
Interest earned on Checking Account	740.64
Zimmerman prints sold: three at \$125.00	375.00
Framing of Print (reimbursement)	130.00
Photos sold: six R. Scott prints at \$40.00	240.00

<u>TOTAL CASH ON HAND AND CASH RECEIPTS</u>	<u>\$ 42,635.93</u>
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EXPENSES

Legal Fees, title search	250.50
Supplies, Postage, Phone, etc.	606.58
Publicity, Membership brochures, Newsletters	1,932.96
Meeting expenses, hall rentals	35.00
Travel expenses to meet State Officials	90.00
Framing of Print at cost, (reimbursed)	130.00

<u>TOTAL EXPENSES</u>	<u>3,045.04</u>
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ASSETS PURCHASED

Liability Insurance, Deposit (12/7/87) ...	50.00
Cash refund	8.70
Net cost.....	41.30
LAND PURCHASED, including closing costs	10,551.60
Cash in Checking Account (12/31/87)	28,997.99

<u>TOTAL EXPENSES AND ASSETS</u>	<u>\$ 42,635.93</u>
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The above figures represent a full and complete report of all monies received and/or disbursed by the Treasurer of OXBOW, INC. during the year from January 1, 1987 through December 31, 1987.

Dated:

12 Jan 1988

Arthur J. Wiseman
Arthur J. Wiseman, Treasurer



VOLUNTEERS WANTED! ! !

Cay Tuck has installed three more telephone answering sets to handle the calls from all of you who are going to volunteer your time and talent for the projects needing your help. Oxbow, Inc. would like you to participate in:

- The BIRDATHON being conducted in May by Oxbow, Inc.

Manning the booth at the Zoo's "Gardening with Wildlife", April 23rd and 24th.

- The Oxbow Plant Survey, 1988, being conducted by the Cincinnati Wildflower Preservation Society.

- The Amphibian and Reptile research being conducted by the Greater Cincinnati Herpetological Society.

- Please participate in any other way that you feel you may be of help to Oxbow, Inc.

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MEETINGS.

TUESDAY, MARCH 8TH, 7:30 P.M. The auditorium of the Cincinnati Museum of Natural History, 1720 Gilbert Avenue. Enter through the side door by the Elsinor Towers. Morris Mercer will present a history of the Oxbow area to members of the Museum of Natural History and Oxbow, Inc.

TUESDAY, APRIL 12TH, 7:30 P.M. Greendale Cabin, Greendale, Indiana. The speaker will be Bob Nuhn, Ranger, Hamilton County Park District, who will conduct a program on butterflies commonly found in this area. His interest in butterflies is contagious. Plan to attend.

FIELD TRIPS.

SATURDAY, MARCH 26TH 9 A.M. Meet Morris Mercer at the 50's Root Beer Parking Lot to find waterfowl in the Oxbow.

SUNDAY, APRIL 24TH ALL DAY. Join in the Annual Audubon Birding Festival. Call Bill Bocklage to participate, 513-922-2445.



MOVING?

Make sure your NEWSLETTER goes with you.

Name

New Address

Old Address

City/State/Zip

City/State/Zip

Effective Date

Mail to: Oxbow, Inc. 2073 Harrison Ave Cinti, OH 45214

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President, John Miller812-438-3920
Vice President, Ned Keller .	.513-941-6497
Secretary, Norma Flannery .	.513-471-8001
Treasurer, Art Wiseman513-481-4302
Agent, David Styer513-772-4395

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

Fund Raising, Greg Mendell812-926-1966
Preservation, Rick Bramstedt . .	.513-662-4456
Program, Judy Bramstedt513-662-4456
Research, Vacant	-
Speakers' Bureau, Donna Wagner .	.513-831-7606
Volunteer Coordinator, Cay Tuck.	.513-631-5933

EDITOR

Norma Flannery	.513-471-8001
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OXBOW, INC.

A non-profit organization formed by conservation groups and concerned citizens of Ohio and Indiana for the purpose of preserving and protecting a wetlands area known locally as the Oxbow, Hardintown, or Horseshoe Bottoms, from future industrial development and to preserve the existing agricultural floodplain at the confluence of the Great Miami and the Ohio Rivers for use as a staging area for the seasonal migrations of waterfowl. This is an agricultural area rich in geological, archaeological and anthropological history.

Help us save this unique wetland. You can make your state a richer place in which to live by helping us preserve this precious resource.

Membership in Oxbow, Inc. is solicited and encouraged.

Individual	\$10	Organization/Club	\$25	Cornerstone	\$250
Family	\$15	Supporting	\$50	Sponsor	\$500
Contributing	\$25	Patron	\$100	Benefactor	\$1000

Mail to: OXBOW, INC.	2073 Harrison Avenue	Cincinnati, Ohio 45214
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Oxbow, Inc.
2073 Harrison Ave.
Cincinnati, OH 45214

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