

City of Akron Hosts Cuyahoga River Homecoming – Friday June 21st

Fifth annual “Homecoming” event will celebrate 50 years of environmental progress along the Cuyahoga River and its tributaries

Akron, Ohio, June 19, 2019 – The City of Akron is proud to host its 5th Annual Blue Heron Homecoming, this year called the Cuyahoga River Homecoming, on **Friday, June 21st, 2019**. The event will take place from **10 AM to 3 PM** at the Cascade Valley Metro Park, rain or shine. The City is hosting the [Cuyahoga River Homecoming](#), in coordination with other Northeast Ohio events, to celebrate 50 years of water-quality improvement and progress on the Cuyahoga River and its tributaries.

“Each year, we come together as a community for this Homecoming event to celebrate environmental progress and learn about what our community must do to continue on this path,” Akron Mayor Dan Horrigan said. “This year’s event is extra special, as we will invite our local and national partners to join us in celebrating all we’ve accomplished regionally to ensure the Cuyahoga River and its tributaries thrive for generations to come.”

The Cuyahoga River Homecoming is an environmental festival that provides the community with an opportunity to learn about the Akron Waterways Renewed! (AWR!) program as well as history of the Cuyahoga River and tributaries. The festival is held in conjunction with several events during the weekend including the Xtinguish Torch Fest. The Xtinguish Torch Fest starts its journey in Geauga County on Wednesday, traveling to Kent on Thursday, then moving through Akron on Friday during the Cuyahoga River Homecoming event. The grand Xtinguishing in Cleveland will take place on Saturday. Representatives from the City of Akron, firms involved with the AWR! program, and community partners, including local non-profits and environmental groups, will be featured at the event.

Other highlights of the event include:

- vouchers for free rain barrels, available to the first 300 Akron families to attend;
- vouchers for free trees;
- hikes to the Gorge Dam and Signal Tree; as well as a Geology Hike;
- free lunch;
- an Augmented Reality sand box, fishing & kayak demonstrations; and
- Eco’s Enviro Party – which will feature kid-centric hands-on educational activities; and
- live acoustic music from Zach Freidhof.

Hikes, demonstrations, and the Xtinguish Torch Fest will be scheduled throughout the day as follows:

- Fish Shocking Demonstration – 10:00 AM and 2:00 PM
- Signal Tree Hike -- 10:15 AM, 11:15 AM, 1:30 PM, and 2:30 PM
- Gorge Dam Hike -- 10:30 AM and 1:30 PM
- Geology Hike -- 10:30 AM and 1:30 PM
- Fish Netting Demonstration -- 11:00 AM
- Torch Fest Ceremony -- 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM
- Kayak Demonstration -- 1:00 PM

There is a significant amount of AWR! construction on Cuyahoga Street adjacent to the park. Despite the temporary inconvenience, this construction represents the exact program that has led to the environmental progress made in the Cuyahoga River and its tributaries. Event attendees should use the lots listed below for parking. Shuttles will run regularly to each location throughout the day.

With the exception of handicap parking, **all public parking for the event is off-site** (please see attached map). Parking will be available on Uhler Street (which will be barricaded for the event for on-street parking), at Stonehedge Entertainment, at Patterson Park ball fields, and at community centers with bus pick-up to and from the event. Community Centers with public parking and pick-up include: Northwest Community Center, Patterson Community Center (limited parking onsite), Joy Park Community Center, Firestone Park Community Center, Ellet Community Center, and Summit Lake. Summer camp children and their families will also be picked up from Lawton Street Community Center, Northwest Community Center, and Joy Park. Buses will run in loops throughout the day to and from the designated sites.

For more information, please visit www.akronwaterwaysrenewed.com/community/blue-heron-homecoming.