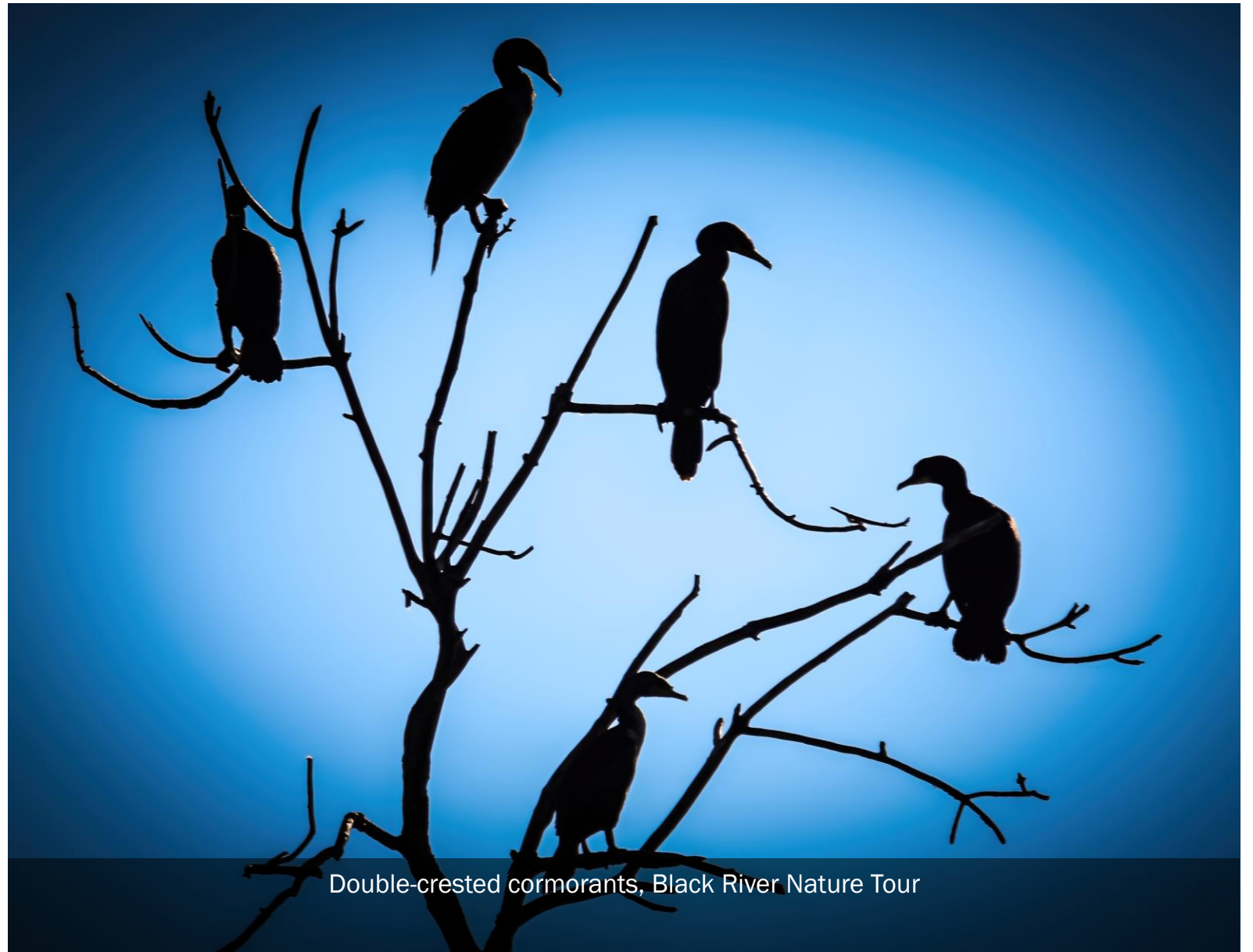

BLACK RIVER AUDUBON SOCIETY

PRESENTATION: CROMWELL PARK



AGENDA

- About Us
- Important Bird Areas
- Birding by the Numbers
- Landfill to Nature Preserve
- Cromwell Park
- Final Thoughts



Double-crested cormorants, Black River Nature Tour

BLACK RIVER AUDUBON: EDUCATION, CONSERVATION & ADVOCACY

- Established in 1958
- Volunteer 12-member Board of Directors
 - Diverse backgrounds
- Education
 - Scholarships, Audubon Adventures
 - Monthly speakers
- Conservation
 - Known for our Bluebird program. Almost 500 boxes, fledging thousands of cavity-nesters. (almost 500 bluebirds in 2021)
- Advocacy
 - Plastic Pollution
- Over 550 members



“Committed to protecting birds and other wildlife while preserving their ecosystems and natural environment in our community.”

IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS

Audubon

- Global initiative aims at identifying and conserving the most important places for bird populations
- The foundation of the Important Bird Areas Program is its emphasis on science-based identification, assessment, and conservation of birds and the habitats they need to survive.
- Important Bird Areas are large enough to safeguard a viable population of a species, group of species, or entire avian community during at least part of its life-cycle, but are small enough to be conserved in their entirety.

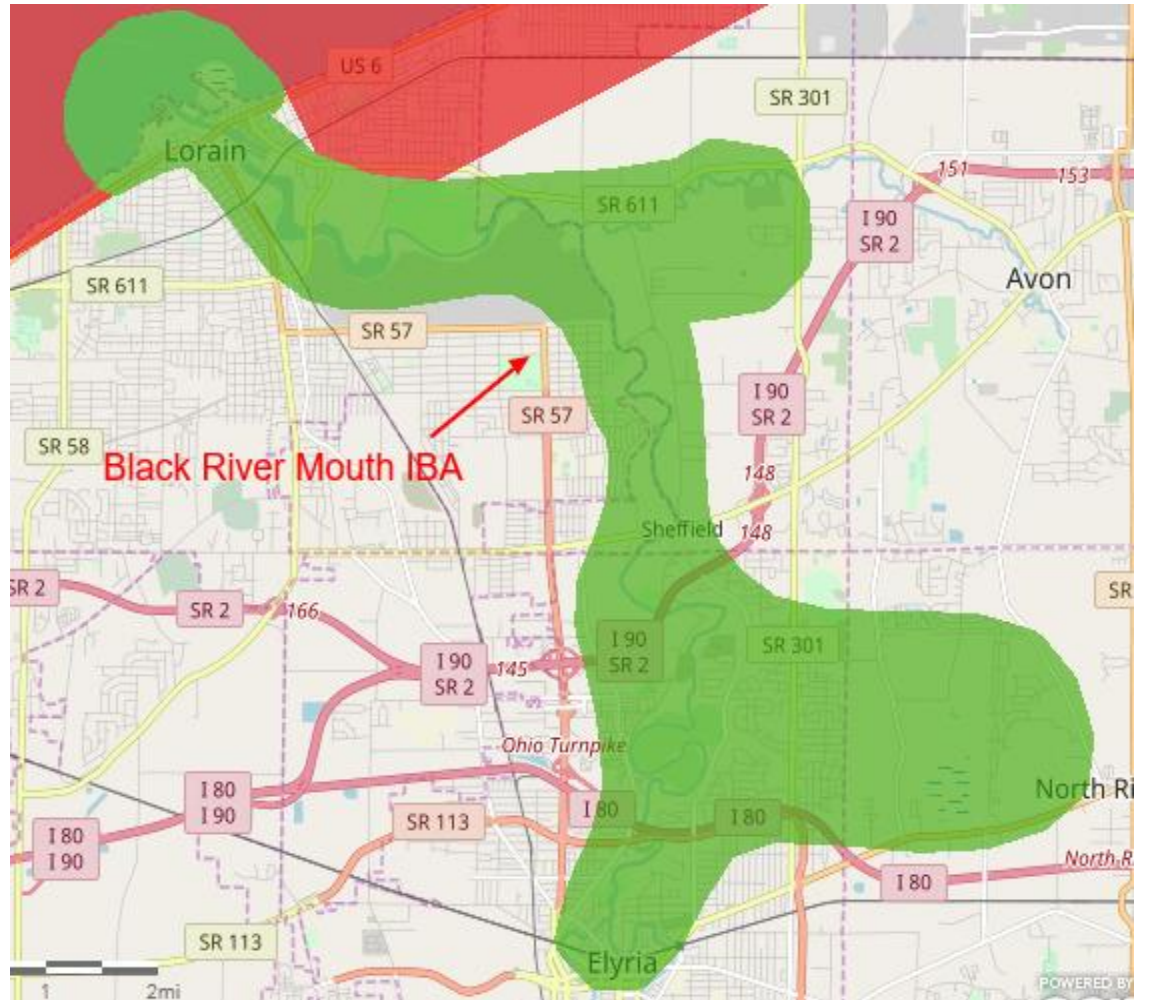
Ohio Important Bird Area Program

- The Ohio Important Bird Areas Program began in 1999, with a gathering of bird conservation stakeholders critiquing the IBA concept and establishing the first cut of potential IBAs in the state.
- In 2000, Audubon Ohio hired an IBA coordinator and then the Ohio IBA Technical Committee was formed, to develop the state level criteria, procedures, and nomination forms.
- This process has resulted in the documentation and research of over 100 sites, of which 66 are recognized as Important Bird Areas for Ohio
- Community partners are receptive and actively engaged in the program (Birding in Ohio)

IMPORTANT BIRD AREA

About the Birds

- This is about protecting bird and other wildlife habitats (our mission),
- Not about the birders– although they obviously benefit.
- City of Lorain can benefit too.



CROMWELL PARK

Protecting IBAs

- A major study states that we have lost 3 billion birds since 1970.
- Important bird areas not only provide habitat, but also stopover places for migrating birds.
- Across the country, bird, nature and wildlife organizations are working to protect birds and natural habitats.
- Encouraging development while protecting birds.
- Everyone has a stake in nature, especially when supported by federal funding.

The Crisis for Birds Is a Crisis for Us All

The mass disappearance of North American birds is a dire warning about the planet's well-being. (NY Times)

Skokie tower proposal shows why buildings must be made safer for migrating birds (Carvana bldg.)

Throughout the Chicago area, too few rules are in place that require buildings to be avian-friendly. (Chicago Sun Times)

SpaceX Destroys Habitat Of Endangered Species, Defies Federal Approval Process

Endangered birds and sensitive habitats at risk in Boca Chica, Texas

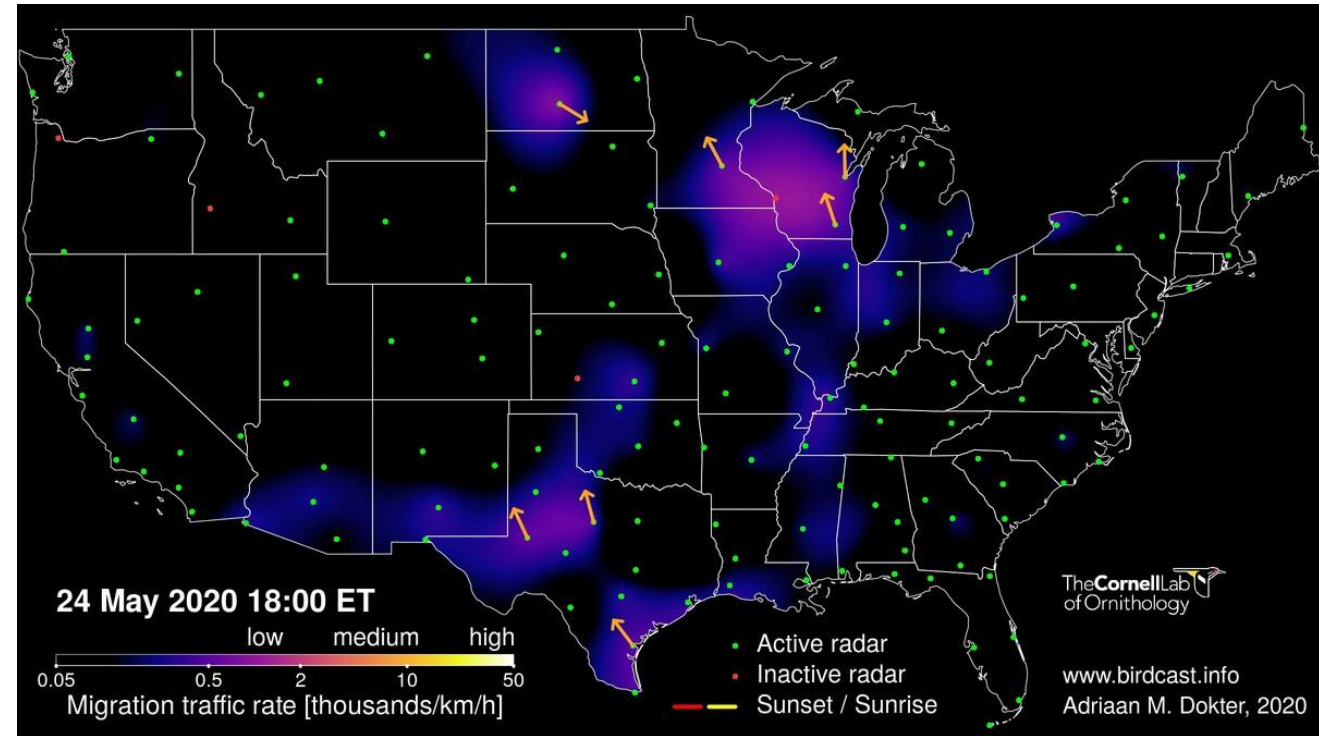
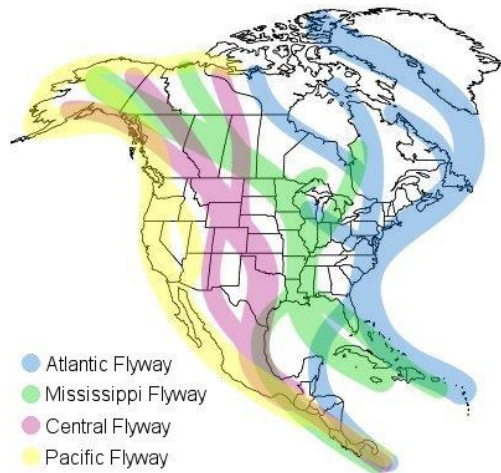
New York's Heritage Wind Decision Aims To Reduce Project's Impact On Birds

The state's new Office of Renewable Energy Siting sets a precedent acknowledging the need to minimize environmental impacts

IMPORTANT BIRD AREA

Major flyways

- Songbirds use multiple stopover locations to rest and refuel for subsequent flights while migrating between breeding and non-breeding areas.
- Selection of high-quality stopover habitat allow migrants to minimize time and energy spent in migration and maximize fitness.(Patrick Lyon Johnson)



- Migrating birds, some from as far away as South America, stopover from Toledo to Cleveland to refuel before crossing lake to Canada.
- Migration can be tracked by radar (birdcast)

IMPORTANT BIRD AREA

Case Study: Blackpoll Warbler

- Blackpoll Warblers are long-distance athletes, and they hold the record for the longest overwater flight for a songbird
- This long-distance athlete weighs less than half an ounce yet makes the longest overwater journey of any songbird—nearly 1,800 miles nonstop over the Atlantic Ocean to its wintering grounds. (AllAboutBirds)
- Although still numerous, it has lost an estimated 88% of its population in the last 40 years.
- Blackpolls have been seen in Cromwell Park



IMPORTANT BIRD AREA

Wildlife of Crowell Park



BIRDWATCHING AND BIRDERS: BY THE NUMBERS

Facebook Followers

Birding Lorain County **1K**
Black River Audubon **1K**
Western Cuyahoga Audubon **1.7K**
Ohio Chase Birds **2.7K**
Avon Lake Eagles **4K**
Ohio Backyard Birding **22.2K**
NE Ohio Backyard Birding **27.7K**
Ohio Wildlife & Nature **26K**
National Audubon **1.4 Million**

2019 USFW Analysis: **45 million**
birdwatchers/birders



Economic Impact

Biggest Week in Birding, Ottawa
(2013 BSBO Study)

77,000 visitors

\$37,000,000 into the community

“The connection between habitat conservation and the economic impact of birding tourism. To continue to provide the world-class birding experience that attracts birders from all over the globe, we must be good stewards of the habitat that supports these glorious birds.”
– story from Toledo Chamber of Commerce

2019 USFW Analysis: **\$96 Billion total industry output**

LANDFILL TO NATURE PRESERVE

New York's Fresh Kills Landfill Gets New Life as Garden of Eden

Old dumps, new tricks: Turning landfills into nature preserves
The Brookfield landfill was a neighborhood menace for decades. Now, it's becoming a park with woods and wetlands -- something the experts didn't think could be done.

Keys to Success when Revegetating Landfill Surfaces

- Ensure proper planning, design, and funding
- Provide adequate soil quality and depth
- Determine appropriate target habitat and native plant selection
- Allow for appropriate planting and establishment
- Conduct routine monitoring and management

(USEPA Fact Sheet)

Dike 14, Cleveland, Ohio: Containing Pollution in the Age of Ecology



CROMWELL PARK

The green outline is what is known as Cromwell Park

The sale (yellow) and the optional parcels (pink) almost completely consume Cromwell Park and beyond

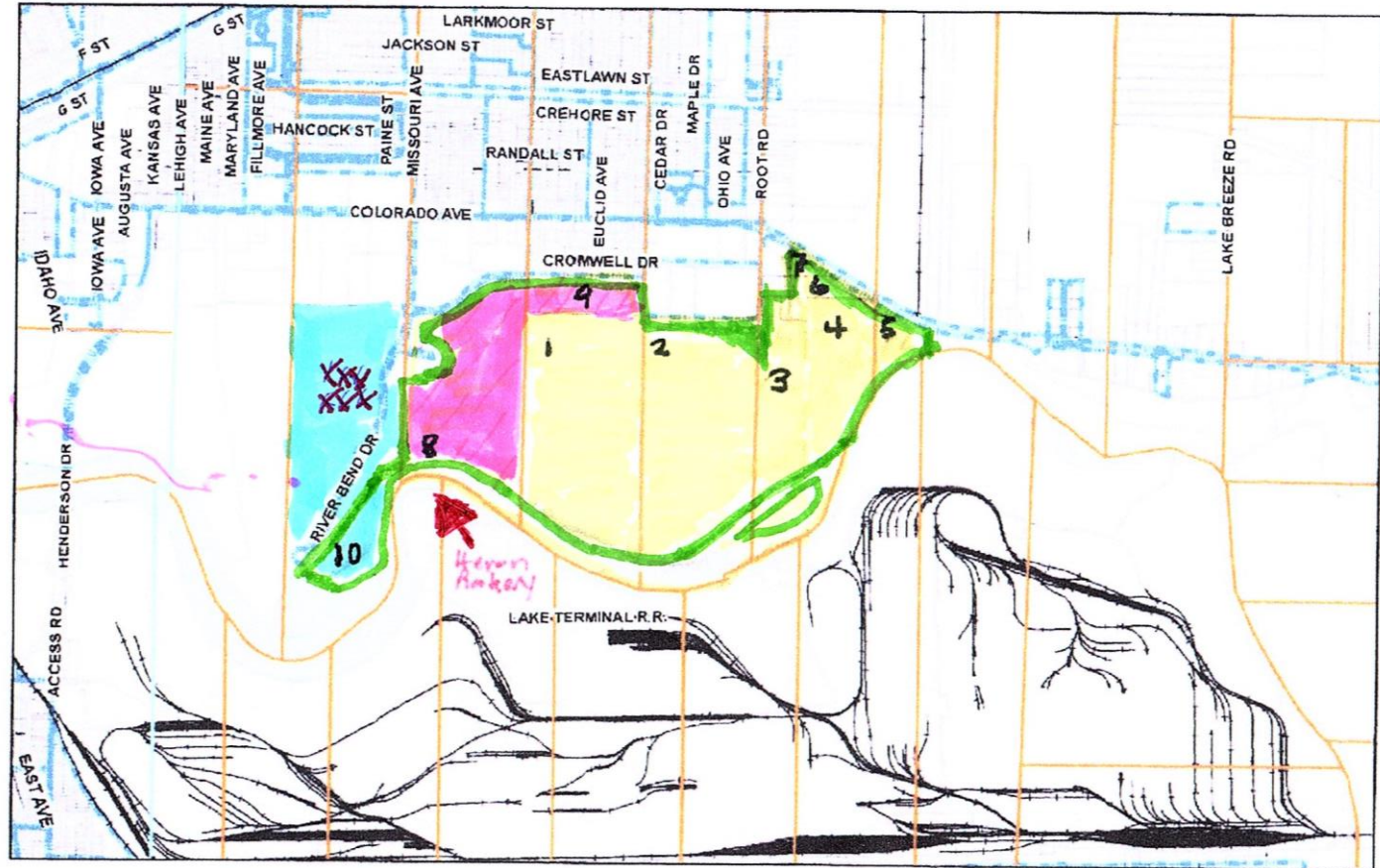
The blue is not considered Cromwell Park. This is where the trees were cut down.

Areas of wetlands may not be touched, but heavily fragmented.



J. Craig Snodgrass, CPA, CGFM
Lorain County Auditor

Cromwell Park



1-7 SALE

8-9 OPTIONAL

10 INQUIRY

XXX CUT TREE

CROMWELL PARK

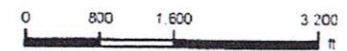
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Legend

- PLSS Boundaries
- Original Lot Lines
- Township Lines
- Road Centerlines
- Railroads
- Subdivisions
- Right of Ways
- Waterways
- Parcels_Black



1 inch = 1,505 feet



CROMWELL PARK

Habitat Fragmentation

- **Loss of Original Habitat.** The most significant adverse impact of fragmentation is simply the loss of original habitat. Research findings suggest loss of habitat has a much greater impact on wildlife populations than the change in spatial arrangement of habitat areas.
- **Reduced Habitat Patch Size.** As remnants of native habitats become smaller, they are less likely to provide food, cover and the other resources necessary to support the native wildlife community
- **Increased Edge.** some researchers believe that increasing edge may be detrimental to the protection of native biodiversity. Edges act as barriers causing some predators to travel along them

Source: USDA

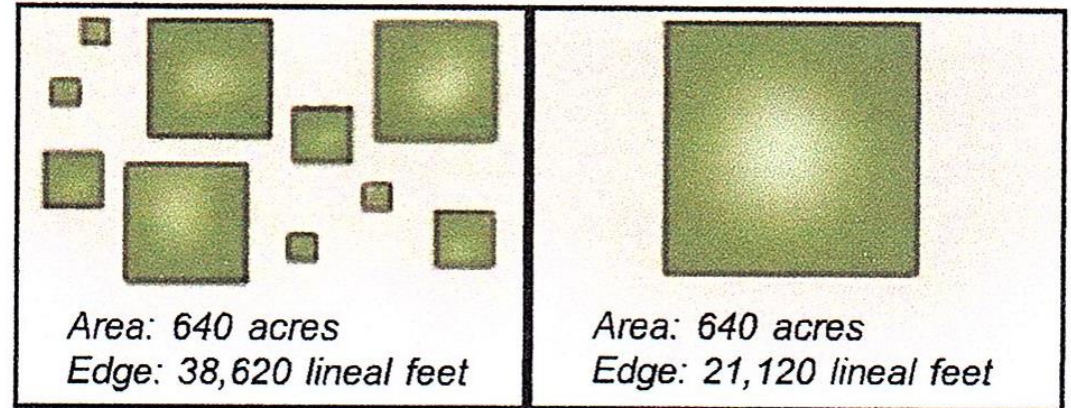


Figure 2-5: The fragmented landscape on the left has less interior habitat and over 50% more edge than the block of habitat on the right.

Effect on Cromwell Park

Even with the best of intentions to leave some areas untouched, such as wetlands and natural borders, wildlife habitat will suffer.

For Cromwell Park, unfortunately “balance” isn’t an optimal solution.

CROMWELL PARK

Sound and Motion

- Birds and other wildlife have rough lives. In addition to having to find food almost every day, they have to be aware of potential predators. That means for many of them, they have to be ready to run (or fly) for the lives at any moment.
- There is a reason that hunters sit in a tree dressed up like a tree. Vantage point sure, but it is easiest to hunt quietly and motionlessly.
- You do not want to be the birder who moves too fast or speaks too loudly and scares the bird!

Effect on Cromwell Park

Plans for the racetrack include three racing tracks, including a dirt oval track with stand for fans. It is difficult to assert that the sound and motion of the cars won't have an effect on wildlife.



CROMWELL PARK

Final Thoughts and Comments

- It is our mission to protect birds and other wildlife by preserving ecosystems and natural habitats.
- As we have often shared, we favor Kart Racing in Lorain – our only objection is the location
- If this project is successful, it will for all intents and purposes decimate Cromwell Park, including most of its natural habitats and wildlife. Optional parcels will infringe on the great blue heron rookery.
- There are opportunities, as other communities have done, to turn former landfills into nature preserves.
- Trespassers and junk cars are not a good enough reason to destroy almost 300 acres (including options) of natural habitat.
- In our opinion, balance is not an optimal solution. We shouldn't sugar-coat it. The choice is really: a racetrack or a natural habitat with a focus creating a nature preserve.
- Birding and birdwatching is an underappreciated economic benefit/opportunity to the City of Lorain.

