



April 24, 2007

Mr. Mike Farley
Cleveland Area Mountain Bike Association
P.O. Box 771471
Cleveland, Ohio 44107

Dear Mr. Farley,

Administrative Offices

4101 Fulton Parkway
Cleveland, Ohio 44144
(216) 635-3200
FAX (216) 635-3286
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**Board of Park
Commissioners**

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Vice President

**Executive
Director-Secretary**

Vern J. Hartenburg

Cleveland Metroparks has reviewed the progress to date on the Ohio & Erie Canal Reservation single-track trail. Since this project was an experiment in constructing a trail in a rugged urban setting, the fact that there have been some successes and some challenges should not be surprising. In light of the challenges that have developed, Cleveland Metroparks offers the following direction on proceeding with the project. Each section referred to is identified on the attached map.

1. Filled Area Adjacent to the Visitor Center, Section A—Based on the amount of trash uncovered in the construction of the beginners loop, and given the steepness of the slope along the canal; Cleveland Metroparks cannot approve the construction of the section of trail flagged along the steep slope. The chances of uncovering more trash and the risk of slope ability are too great to begin cutting into the slope. It would appear that a section of the existing beginners loop could double as the connection from the trail to the north to any future trails to the south of the Visitor Center.
2. Slope Stability Issues –
 - a. Existing Trail Sections, Section B— Several sections of trail behind the Settlers Bluff area were constructed in steep side slopes and large uphill cuts were employed to create the bench for the trail. This practice is not only contrary to the IMBA guidelines, but has resulted in one major slope failure already. Cleveland Metroparks is investigating whether these areas can be restabilized and will forward recommendations when available. There should be no laying back of the cut slopes at a lesser angle or adding any weight to the slopes by placing rock along the cuts, at least until an evaluation of the stability is complete. Cleveland Metroparks will work with CAMBA to try to identify a method to connect the upper and intermediate trails to bypass the failed area.
 - b. Future Trail Construction – One of the major reasons Cleveland Metroparks agreed to the trail building experiment was the commitment of CAMBA to use sustainable trail building practices. In many ways this was accomplished. The use of high bench cuts is not in keeping with sustainable trail building practices and cannot be used in the future. Any future trail alignments will be rigorously reviewed to make sure construction is possible with minimal cuts into the uphill slope (generally 2' or less).



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3. Cinder Piles, Section C – Correct treatment and use of the cinder piles as a part of the trail is currently being reviewed by environmental counsel to determine whether any restrictions or notifications are necessary. There should be no more work in this area until this issue is resolved.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dick Kerber".

Richard J. Kerber, P.E.
Director of Planning, Design and Natural Resources

RJK:jiv/WORD/CANAL/CORRESPONDENCE/CAMBA.LET

c: Vern J. Hartenburg, Executive Director
Patti Barz, Law Director
Maureen Brennan, Baker & Hostetler
Bill Binggeli, Director of Park Operations
Nancy Desmond, Visitor Center Manager