

Good Morning,

I appreciate each of you for giving me the opportunity to join you this event. As Chair of the Recreation and Parks Committee for Columbus City Council I am excited about the **Low Head Dam Removal and Corridor Restoration Project** because it reflects the collective commitment to making our community better, especially our waterways! This is first low head dam to be removed in the City of Columbus.

This is a **wonderful collaboration** with the city of Columbus, the City of Bexley, MORPC, and the EPA. It's exciting to see how each of these entities has supported FACT with in-kind assistance.

I'd like to thank **Kimberly Williams**, (Dir); **Joe Bonnell**, (Chair); and the entire **FACT Board, members & volunteers** for all that you have done over the past ten years to provide **stewardship to the Alum Creek watershed** which includes many of our adjoining city parks and the Alum Creek Greenway Trails that you have unselfishly adopted.

Thank you for your work at

- **planting native trees** and shrubs,
- **for removing Honeysuckle** bushes and other invasive species,
- **cleaning up trash** from within the creeks, streams, and surrounding parks. This is so important to our community.

You have been the **diligent environmental watchdogs** and **community based advocates** that assist us with preserving, protecting, and restoring our watershed, wetlands, greenways, and riparian (**repair-ian**) corridor – which runs from the Alum Creek reservoir dam to Three Creeks Park near Groveport.

FACT has provided many free educational opportunities to students, you've led recreational events such as bike rides, hikes, canoe & Kayak floats to help the public appreciate and respect the beauty of our local waterways.

Today, the City of Columbus thanks FACT for your exceptional efforts and tremendous work over the past three years in obtaining and administering the US EPA grant of \$250,000 which made this low head dam removal project possible. It's just a great example of citizens coming together to effect positive change.

BENEFITS

Removing this dam will:

- **Restore this stream** to a more natural condition which will **improve the water quality** for the **fish** and other **aquatic life** and will allow them to **thrive**.
- **Improve safety** by **preventing drowning hazards**.
- **Reduce the maintenance/liability** to Columbus Recreation and Parks Department. (In terms of keeping it clean)
- **Increase recreational use** for canoers/kayakers/and people who fish.

We are here today because of the grass roots volunteer community based efforts of your outstanding organization. It's amazing what you've been able to achieve with only one paid staff person!

Our city salutes you and looks forward to using your shining example in the removal of future low head dams. Again we thank you. Job well done!

FACT BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2007-08

Joe Bonnell, Chair; Membership & Development Committee

Jerry Holloway, Vice Chair; Education Committee

Leslie Fowler, Treasurer

Carol Elder, Secretary

Margaret Ann Samuels, Watershed Watch Committee

David Hohmann, Service Committee Chair

Brian Wilke, Recreational Events Leader

David Roseman, Communication Chair (newsletter, web, PR)

Chad King, Member at Large

Richard Lorenz, Member at Large

Barbara Bhattacharya, Member at Large