



Anderson park lake may have to move

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A planned lake in Johnson Hills Park may have to be relocated.

The Anderson Township Park District planned to start work on the a 5-acre lake this spring, but the plan hit a snag when a stream specialist from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency expressed concern about [possible endangered species being affected by the lake construction](#).

The Park District needed to hire a firm to classify all streams running toward the planned lake site, on the eastern half of the park, but the stream consultant recommended officials spend the money redesigning the lake's location, Executive Director Ken Kushner reported at Wednesday's Board of Park Commissioners meeting.

Kushner said it could cost between \$5,000 and \$10,000 to have the streams classified and how they are classified could determine whether the Park District can continue with the lake as planned or if the design and location must be modified.



This is the Anderson Township Park District's master plan for the development of Johnson Hills Park. (Provided)

The lake's location in Johnson Hills Park, off Bridle and Little Dry Run roads, was selected because of the natural springs and storm water run-off that could fill the lake, said Park Commissioner Nadine Gelter.

"There is not much that we can do without the lake," she said.

The lake position is integral to the location of the rest of the park core, also scheduled to begin this year, and Park District staff planned to use dirt from digging the lake to build a new entrance and driveway, Kushner said.

"The entrance also has a stream so we are essentially stuck at this point," he said.

"We want to move forward but all agencies have to sign off on the plan."

Operations Manager Mike Smith said the Army Corps of Engineers has jurisdiction and was more open to finding a solution to allow the project to continue.

While official determine what to do with the lake and its location, Park Commissioner Duffy Beischel asked if work could begin on the disc golf course or camping areas.

"We should try to figure out somewhere else to work and see what we can do now before we spend the money on engineering (to relocate the lake)," he said.

Other planned park amenities will include trails, a large event shelter, an off-leash dog field, tent camping, gardens and a disc golf course. Complete development is expected to take decades.

Endangered species

Most of what are considered streams are small, dry channels leading to the planned lake, which is proposed to be built in a wooded ravine, said Park District Executive Director Ken Kushner.

The stream specialist from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency expressed her concerns about the lake construction affecting habitats for small organisms like salamanders, running buffalo clover and the Indiana bat.

Both the [running buffalo clover](#) and the [Indiana bat](#) are on the endangered species list.

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