



Endangered species snag park plan

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A bat, a rare plant and a host of microorganisms could delay development at an Anderson Township park.

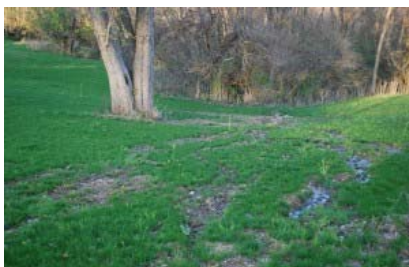
The Anderson Township Park District applied for a permit to build a 5-acre lake at Johnson Hills Park, off Bridle and Little Dry Run roads, and work was scheduled to begin this spring.

After meeting with a number of state and local agencies on March 28, the Park District learned it has to hire a firm to classify all streams running toward the lake site, Executive Director Ken Kushner reported at the Board of Park Commissioners meeting.

A 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, Kushner said.

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

“This is just government out of control,” Park Commissioner Duffy Beischel said. “There is only one real waterway on the property.”



The Anderson Township Park District will hire a consultant to classify all streams that flow toward a planned lake, such as the one seen here.

Most of what are considered streams are small, dry channels leading to the planned lake, Kushner said.

How the streams are classified by the hired firm will determine whether the Park District can continue with the lake as planned or if the lake design and location must be modified, he added.

Park Commissioner Dale Bartholomew said the water running down these streams only comes from the Johnson Hills Park property.

The stream study and classification project will take a few months to complete and the Ohio EPA can take up to a year to approve or deny the permit for the lake, Kushner said.

He added that lake position is integral to the location of the rest of the park core, also scheduled for construction this year.

Beischel asked if they could begin work on the camping areas or disc golf course this year to have some development work occur while waiting for permits for the lake.

Kushner said they have to map trails around the disc golf course and have a lot of work to do before starting on other amenities in the park.

Last year, the Park District demolished a former stable and barn on the site and cleared old fencing around the park, which is located on roughly 137 acres of mostly wooded land.

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.

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