

Sledding At Fort Miamis

Generations of Maumee residents have enjoyed sledding on the “hills” at Fort Miamis Park. So why the change?

The “hills” are actually the remains of the walls of the historic fort, constructed by British soldiers over 215 years ago.

Metroparks of the Toledo Area took ownership of Fort Miamis from the City of Maumee in 2009.

Under an agreement with the National Park Service, Metroparks has a responsibility to maintain the fort as a National Historic Site and preserve it for future generations. Specifically, the NPS has said that years of sledding and bicycling at the fort have caused significant damage to the man-made earthen walls and must cease.

The NPS has stated that if these activities do not cease, it will take steps to remove Fort Miamis from the Fallen Timbers Battlefield and Fort Miamis National Historic Site. That would be a major setback to plans to develop a nationally significant historical attraction here in Lucas County.

How will the new rule be enforced?

Metroparks understands that some residents are not aware of the historical significance of Fort Miamis. Some have commented that they were unaware the “hills” were once the walls of the fort. This winter, Metropark is using signage, one-on-one communications by park rangers and volunteers, and publicity through the media to inform people and request their compliance with the no-sledding rule.

Beginning next winter (2010-2011) sledding will no longer be allowed at the historic site. Metroparks rangers will require sledders to leave the property.

Why is Fort Miamis important?

- 1)** Fort Miamis played an important role during General Anthony Wayne’s campaign of 1794 and again during the War of 1812.
- 2)** American servicemen were held prisoners of war and died at the fort during the War of 1812.
- 3)** Constructed by British soldiers in 1794, it is an architecturally significant type of fort rarely built on the American frontier.
- 4)** The fort was deemed by the U.S. Congress and our local community to be worthy of National Historic Site designation.

Why can't we have sledding and the historical designation?

Archeologists and the National Park Service have determined that in some areas the walls of the fort have eroded down to the mineral soil as a result of sledding and other active recreation. NPS must ensure that all laws pertaining to National Historic Sites are followed at Fort Miamis. This includes a requirement that the resource be left "unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."

Because Fallen Timbers Battlefield and Fort Miamis National Historic Site is affiliated with the National Park System, rather than a unit of the System, NPS must rely on the designated management entity, Metroparks of the Toledo Area, to preserve the resources of this National Historic Site. NPS has clearly stated that Fort Miamis cannot continue to be recognized as a National Historic Site if these recreational uses are allowed to continue.

Why the change, now?

During the late 1990s, the community asked Metroparks to accept ownership of and manage the future Fallen Timbers Battlefield and Fort Miamis National Historic Site if it became an affiliated unit of the National Park Service. Metroparks agreed and, in turn, agreed to preserve the battlefield and fort for future generations to enjoy.

Fort Miamis became a part of a National Historic Site and an Affiliated Unit of the National Park Service in 2000. Over the next several years, Metroparks, the City of Maumee and NPS held a series of public meetings while preparing an extensive management plan for the Fallen Timbers Battlefield, Fallen Timbers Monument and Fort Miamis. In late 2009, ownership of the fort was transferred to Metroparks to manage as part of the National Historic Site in accordance with those plans.

**Metroparks is asking the community to join us in honoring
the history of the fort and the soldiers who died there.**



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