

CITY OF COLUMBUS
COMPREHENSIVE WATERWAYS
MANAGEMENT PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PHASE III -- GRIGGS RESERVOIR

February 8, 1995



PREPARED BY
COLUMBUS RECREATION AND PARKS DEPARTMENT
WATERWAYS MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE

A COLUMBUS RECREATION AND PARKS COMMISSION PROJECT

PREAMBLE

"...these views calm thoughts and feelings, and afford escape from the petty things of life...living water, ever in motion, and ever changing in color and in the forms of its waves...in every aspect it is a living thing, delighting man's eye and refreshing his spirit. Not a foot of its shores should be appropriated by individuals to the exclusion of people. On the contrary, everything possible should be done to enhance its natural beauties, thus fitting it for the part it has to play in the life of the whole city. It should be made so alluring that it will become the fixed habitat of the people to seek its restful presence at every opportunity."

Daniel Burnham
From the Plan of Chicago, 1909

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**INTRODUCTION
TO THE COMPREHENSIVE WATERWAYS MANAGEMENT PLAN
FOR
GRIGGS RESERVOIR**

Faced with reports of encroachments on City owned property adjacent to the reservoirs by contiguous landowners, of conflicts between the many users of the reservoirs, and general concerns for the management of the reservoirs and river corridors in the late 1980's, the Columbus Recreation and Parks Commission appointed a citizen task force to study and make recommendations for the management of these waterways.

The Waterways Management Task Force began its studies in the summer of 1989. The Task Force is composed of representatives of the many groups with interests in the waterways including boaters, fishermen, rowers, water skiers, adjacent property owners and representatives of environmental groups. The first objective of this Task Force was to prepare a Mission Statement which now reads:

THE MISSION OF THE WATERWAYS MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE IS TO DEVELOP PLANS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE RECREATION AND PARKS COMMISSION DIRECTING THE COLUMBUS RECREATION AND PARKS DEPARTMENT TO TAKE APPROPRIATE STEPS TO PROTECT THE WATERWAYS AND PARK RESOURCES IN CENTRAL OHIO, ENHANCE WATER QUALITY, AND MANAGE THE WATERWAYS FOR MULTIPLE USE RECREATION.

Recognizing the enormity of its responsibilities, the Task Force decided to do its work in phases starting with Hoover Reservoir. Drawing on the resources of the Recreation and Parks Department and Water Division, the expertise of the Task Force members and interviews with representatives of the many user groups, adjacent property owners and other interested citizens, the Task Force prepared its Phase I plan and recommendations. Recognizing that public involvement was essential in this process, this plan with recommendations was presented in public workshops and the resulting public comments were a vital to the preparation of the final document.

Each of these comprehensive management plans is intended to be an ongoing, working document. The Phase I - Hoover Reservoir plan was adopted by the Recreation and Parks Commission and presented to the Columbus City Council in May of 1990. A similar process was followed for Phase II - O'Shaughnessy Reservoir and that plan was adopted in May of 1991. This plan now contains recommendations for Phase III - Griggs Reservoir. It is proposed that the City of Columbus Recreation and Parks Department adopt the goals and implement the recommendations contained in this report to address the growing recreational demands on the waterways of Columbus.

The elements detailed below are included in the formation of this waterways plan.

**STUDY ORGANIZATION
EXHIBIT I-1**

Recreation and Parks Commission

Director
Recreation and Parks Department

Waterways Management Task Force

Technical Committee

Recreation & Parks
(Columbus)

- Forestry Division
- Land/Waterways & Wildlife Mgmt.
- Planning & Design
- Permits

ODNR

- Natural Areas & Preserves
- Wildlife
- Outdoor Recreation Services
- Watercraft
- Soil & Water Conservation

Col. Div of Water

OPRA

Col. Police Division

City of Upper Arlington

City of Hilliard

Public Involvement

Public Workshops

Periodic Newsletters

City Contact Information
and Telephone Number

Public Hearing

Special User Groups

Scioto Boat Club

Greater Columbus
Rowing Association

Sierra Club

Audubon Society

Open Space Alliance

Local Fishing Clubs

Columbus Aqua Ski
Club

Indian Village Day
Camp Staff

Neighborhood Civic
Associations i.e., Scioto
Trace

Wickliffe Elementary
School

DEPARTMENT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES:

The management strategies developed for this plan seek to redefine the direction for long range maintenance operations relating to the watercourses. These directions relate to signage, mowing, preventive maintenance, property management, and neighbor relations.

WATER QUALITY CONSIDERATIONS:

The primary purpose of Columbus's reservoirs is to provide safe drinking water for public consumption, this plan is concerned with the supply of water from the point of origin and entry into the stream. The quality of untreated water in the reservoirs and streams is important when considering recreational activities.

BOATING CARRYING CAPACITY:

The ODNR, Office of Outdoor Recreation, has developed a formula to determine safe Boat Carrying Capacity that can be applied to Columbus waterways. This formula takes into account the different types of boating opportunities such as rowing, water skiing, fishing, pleasure, etc., to determine a maximum number of vessels that should occupy a given waterway without putting the public's safety at risk. The Carrying Capacity rating system will assist the Task Force in developing recommendations relating to public and private docks and stakes, launch ramps and special activities for Griggs Reservoir.

RECREATION DELIVERY SYSTEMS:

The role of this element of the plan is to address the inter-relationships of various forms of recreation, both passive and active, which provide areas for an optimum mix of open space and recreational opportunities. This element classifies existing areas and identifies known user groups of current recreational activities. Details will include the present use of each area and the services and facilities available, and recommendations for improvements. This element will also attempt to identify the potential to meet new and different recreational opportunities not currently being provided.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY:

This element focuses on enforcement from a strategy perspective, e.g., proactive v reactive and an operations format similar to those of public boating agencies on the State level. The role of public safety and security is to protect both the public and the watercourse resources. This element focuses on enforcement, public boating safety, and updating existing park codes.

ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT NEEDS:

This component of the plan examines wildlife, fisheries, forest management and other related disciplines to formulate a program for the protection and preservation of the natural and environmental resources of the waterways.

The completion of the Hoover and O'Shaughnessy management plans has resulted in the following: Hoover Reservoir Park (1,789 acres), 75 recommendations, and the possibility of reviewing and approving over 150 vegetative management plans. O'Shaughnessy Reservoir Park (1,159 acres), 160 recommendations and a prioritized Long Range Needs Assessment, and the possibility of reviewing and approving approximately 200 vegetative management plans. Griggs Reservoir Park (520 acres) contains 214 recommendations that are included in this comprehensive report and, in addition, the proposal for 156 land stewardship plans.

Collectively, this results in the need to implement 449 recommendations and 506 vegetative management and land stewardship plans for the reservoir parks totaling 3,468 acres.

ISSUE NO. 2. ENFORCEMENT

This was the issue that generated the greatest public concern in the workshops. It has two aspects. First is the regulatory function or enforcement of rules regarding use of park facilities. In recent years law enforcement staffing has been inadequate to assure safety and enforcement of boating, alcohol, traffic, littering, and other applicable laws.

Second is the protection of park resources against encroachment and vegetative destruction. This problem predates the formation of the Task Force, and was the primary impetus for its establishment. Since the inception of the Task Force (having convened in August, 1989), significant destruction of the park vegetation has occurred, including removal of mature trees valued by the department in excess of \$90,000+. The department has made efforts to increase enforcement.

ISSUE NO. 3. OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGET RESOURCES

The Division of Water and the Department of Recreation and Parks entered into an interim joint agreement, which outlined each of its unit's responsibilities for operating and maintaining the reservoir lands, park and recreation facilities. It is anticipated that the joint agreement will be formalized by ordinance with Council action. This agreement will alter both the operating and capital budgets for reservoir and park resources.

In response to Ordinance 1615-91 which established fees for private docks along the reservoir, the Task Force at its January 5, 1993 meeting recommended to the Recreation and Parks Commission that fees for the private docks be established as follows: Private floating docks and boat club docks, \$180.00 annually. Public marina and permanent private docks, \$340.00 annually. Future increases in dock fees should maintain the same fee for public marina and permanent private docks.

The Task Force discussed the possibility of charging a launch fee for boats using the public launch ramps. It was concluded that this would be an unfair assessment for specific users, as well as necessitating increased administrative costs in collecting this fee.

The Task Force considered a proposal to construct a pathway along the west bank. The proposal presented a method to generate greater public use area which were not readily accessible to the public at this time. It was proposed that with greater use, observation of park lands would inherently increase, including greater opportunity to observe encroachments and other illegal activities along the west bank. The Task Force expended considerable time in reviewing this appropriate solution to the problems that have existed along the west bank. It acknowledged that future growth might necessitate consideration of the proposal at a future time. The Task Force concluded that increased enforcement of current laws and regulations was the appropriate and necessary response to the problems.

The Task Force was presented with the question of the validity of the property lines and ownership of some of the reservoir lands as acquired. Information had circulated for many years that the property lines and acquisition method, particularly along a portion of the west bank, were in question. This resulted in confusion as to where some property lines in fact were. The City Attorney's office researched property records and reported to the Task Force that available records indicated that transfers at the time of acquisition were legal and information was available to ascertain the specific location of the property lines. The Task Force concluded that with the accurate property line information available, the surveying of properties and the placement of boundary markers could realistically proceed.

ELEMENTS OF THE WATERWAYS MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR GRIGGS RESERVOIR

INTRODUCTION:

The following recommendations for Griggs Reservoir were prepared by the Waterways Task Force for the Recreation and Parks Commission. Public comment was received on each recommendation and taken into consideration by the Task Force. As a result of four public workshops, the following elements summarize the input and review received from the community for Griggs Reservoir.

ELEMENT NO. 1. PUBLIC AWARENESS AND EDUCATION

The role of public awareness and education is to inform visitors of the park rules, increase awareness of management strategies (e.g. the respecting of sensitive nesting areas, etc.), enhance the protection of the resources and reduce the possibility of vandalism.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Place simplified signs at all user areas explaining park rules. Post additional signs where needed for specific restrictions. These sign should clearly and simply state park hours, use restrictions and prohibitions.

uniforms, park interpreters and specialists.

6. Work with Safety Department to ensure adequate police are assigned to the reservoir parks, adding reservoir officers and Ohio Department of Natural Resources officers as necessary. Also use Power Squadron and Coast Guard Auxiliary member volunteers to assist in boater education and safety.
7. Organize annual or semi-annual community clean-ups for all waterways.

ELEMENT NO. 3. WATER QUALITY CONSIDERATIONS

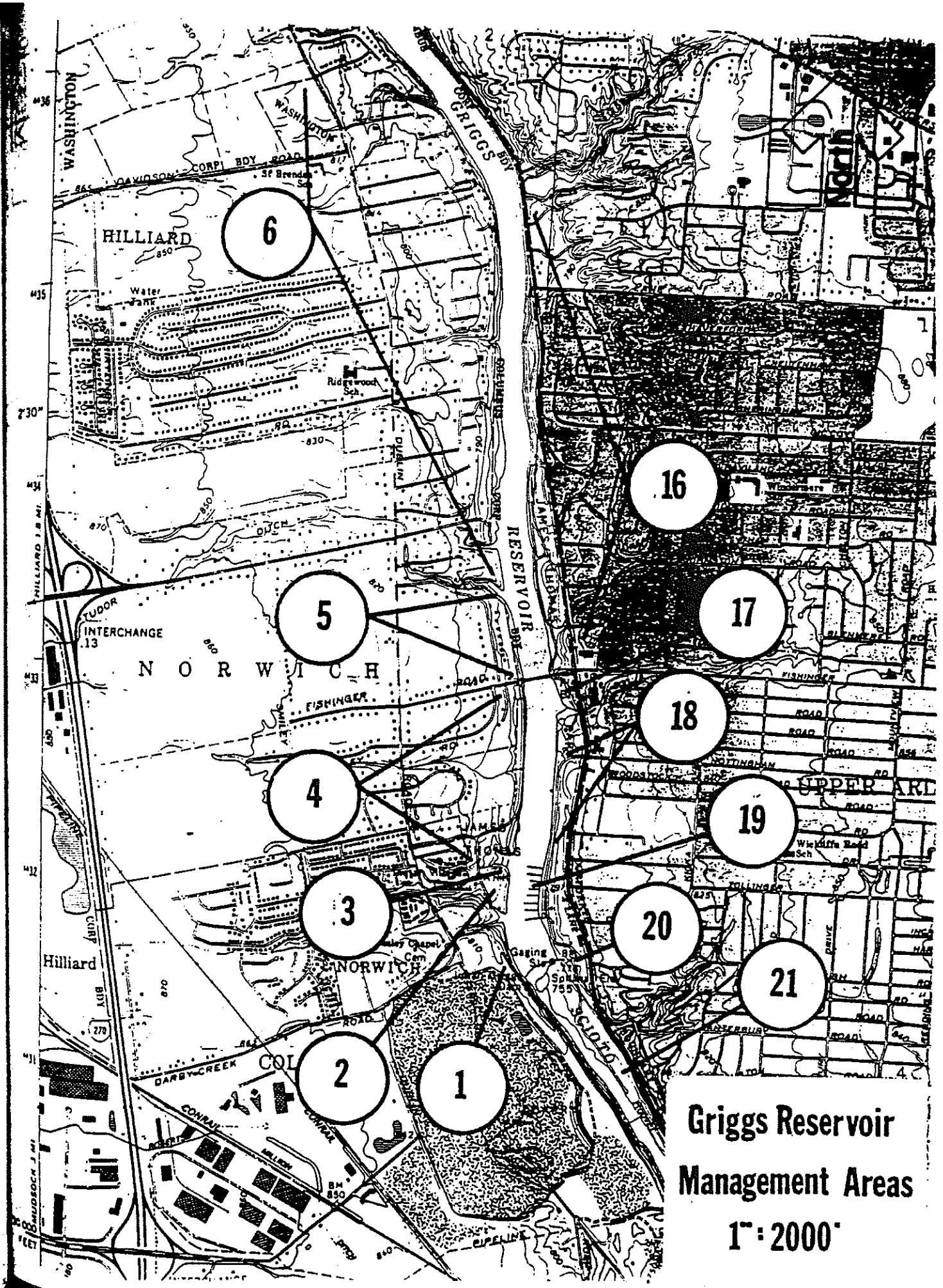
The primary role of Columbus reservoirs is to provide safe, clean drinking water for public consumption. This element is concerned with the supply of water from the point of origin and entry into the stream and ultimately the reservoir. The quality of untreated water in the reservoirs and streams is important and needs to be considered in conjunction with recreational activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

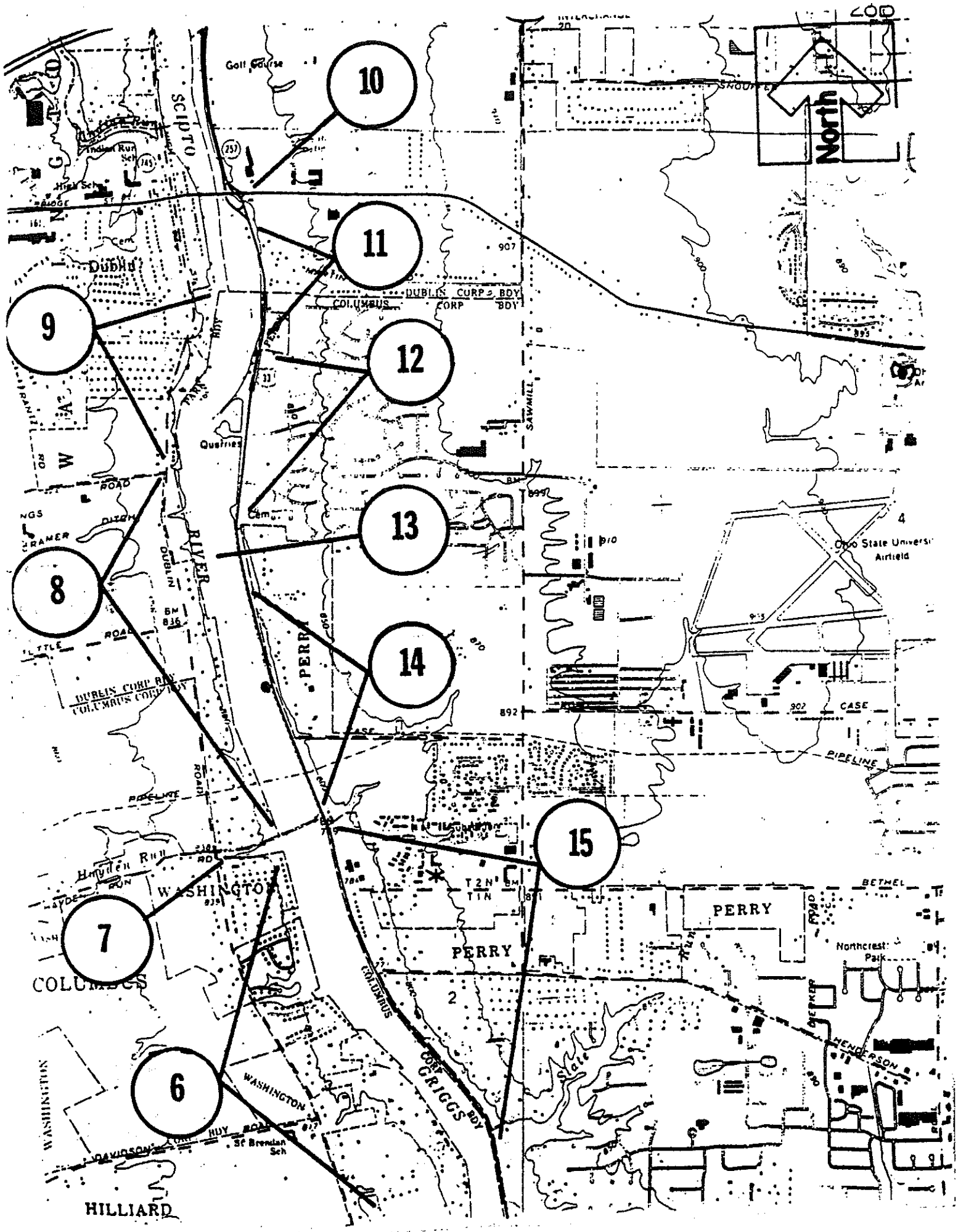
1. Prepare and implement a riparian management plan for the park and reservoir lands. (See Element No. 5, Recreation Delivery Systems, specific management area recommendations, Element 7, Ecosystem Management recommendations, and the Land Stewardship Plan, Appendix VI).
2. Notify contiguous property owners of Columbus Division of Water in promoting water conservation in park programs and park facilities.
3. Cooperate with the Division of Water in promoting water conservation in park programs and at park facilities.
4. Support the adoption and implementation of storm water management programs by all political jurisdictions in the Griggs Reservoir watershed in an effort to diminish the impact of point source storm water pollution.
5. Prohibit the storage of hazardous materials on park and reservoir lands contiguous to the water supply reservoirs.

ELEMENT NO. 4. BOAT CARRYING CAPACITY

The safe use of the reservoir for recreational boating is a prime concern. The Task Force utilized a formula of the ODNR, Office of Outdoor Recreation, to better determine what the safe limits of boat usage were for this specific reservoir with its unique characteristics. The recommendations listed are also found in Major Issue No. 4.



**Griggs Reservoir
Management Areas**
1" = 2000'



4. Include in the lease agreement the Club's assistance in protecting the small population of the snow trillium flowers that remain in the first peninsula across the cove from the club (on the west bank). These plants are threatened and need to be monitored and protected.
5. Conform to requirements of the Land Stewardship Plan in maintenance of property. Make this a condition of the lease.

AREA #4.....Duranceaux Park

1. This management area is one of the primary focal points of the park. Higher priority should be given to the recommendations for this management area when implementing this plan.
2. Remove current restrooms and replace them with screened port-a-john units.
3. Renovate the open sided shelterhouse.
4. In the small field adjacent to the shelterhouse, place a new playground and park benches.
5. In the large field, place a back stop and line the field for pick-up games of softball and soccer.
6. Place park benches in strategic vista locations along the west bank of the Scioto River along the Park Drive.
7. Construct a small paved parking lot at the base of the Fishinger Road Bridge. Provide an information kiosk.
8. Plant new park trees along the park drive near the open fields and picnic areas. Also plant new trees for regeneration where needed.
9. Evaluate trash receptacle needs and place as needed.
10. Provide the following traffic control features:
 - a. Traffic one way south bound from Fishinger Road.
 - b. Bike/pedestrian path on east side of roadway (reservoir side).
 - c. Intermittent parking spaces on west side of roadway (where roadway width safely permits).
 - d. Install speed bumps on Duranceaux Park roadway.

2. Preserve the two larger forested areas including their respective coves and feeder streams in a completely natural state for wildlife habitat purposes.
3. The remaining park land in Area 6 should be managed with individual Land Stewardship Plans.

AREA #7.....Hayden Falls Park

1. Remove unauthorized pipe from park and clean up landscape litter with appropriate enforcement measures.
2. Close the footpath to the base of the falls, and design a safe trail down with appropriate handrails.
3. Place proper signage and a picnic table. (Upper level)
4. Install an "Exit to the Right Only" sign as traffic leaves the parking area for improved safety.
5. Study the access for the parkland to the north for a potential overlook.
6. Design appropriate barriers to protect the fragile environment from abuse.
7. Attempt to grow more of the rare plants in a greenhouse space in an attempt to enhance existing populations of rare and endangered species.

AREA #8.....Hayden West Bank Management Area

1. Implement the Land Stewardship Plans.

AREA #9.....Upper Griggs Nature Preserve

1. Resolve all encroachments.
2. Restrict access to the area, only allowing access to private docks with the limitations of current regulations for dock access.
3. Manage the area in a manner which enhances native flora and fauna. The current natural landscape needs to be retained. This area is not to utilize the Land Stewardship Plan program.
4. Sign the area as a protected refuge for wildlife and encourage conservation projects and management.

Place sign along Riverside Drive to identify area. The Ski Club may wish to donate a sign and indicate that the club dock is located in the area.

Enter into a license agreement with the Ski Club. Require the club to take over the routine maintenance of the site (mow lawn areas along road and by the dock, and participate in litter control. It shall be similar to the agreement with the Mid-Ohio Ski Club at the O'Shaughnessy Reservoir.

The area will be open to the public and special event users.

Cooperate with public jurisdictions and interested user groups in extending the Scioto River Bikeway adjacent to this area.

Conform to requirements of Land Stewardship Plans in maintenance of property. Make this a condition of the lease.

AREA #15.....East Bank Urban Wildlife Management Area

1. Evaluate car parking/pull-offs for traffic safety.
2. Upgrade pull-offs which are to be retained.
3. Close pull-offs which are considered unsafe traffic hazards.
4. Maintain the area in a natural state.
5. Cooperate with public jurisdictions and interested user groups in extending the Scioto River Bikeway adjacent to this area.

AREA #16.....Upper East Bank Recreation Area

1. Repair the shelterhouse and storage structure. The storage structure could house maintenance equipment or related waterway buoys.
2. Replant native trees along the riverbank. Provide scenic vistas. The tree cover is declining and extensive replanting is necessary.
3. Repair all park roads and parking areas.
4. Consider placing a small tot-lot near the shelterhouse to enhance family participation.
5. Evaluate signage and replace/repair as needed.
6. Replace restrooms with screened port-a-john type facilities.

3. Place a second courtesy dock near the boat gas concession area with a fifteen minute to a half hour time limit for boaters' convenience for the use of restrooms, gassing their boat, or getting something to eat.
4. Evaluate the need for a screened port-a-john facility near the concession area.
5. Repair safety rails and inspect security lights for adequate coverage.
6. Restripe the parking stalls and launch lane markers and ensure sufficient handicapped spots and boat trailer spots are included. (See Boat Carrying Capacity Recommendation No 6).
7. Plant native trees along shoreline and in the general area. Consider Redbud trees, since the park was once known for the beautiful Redbuds that blossomed along the banks.
8. Redesign the Nottingham Road entrance to enhance the park. Use flower beds, stone-work and related materials.
9. All parking areas shall be asphalt. Post "No Parking" areas and prohibit parking on the grass. Enforce no parking on the grass.
10. Install a public phone near the concession area or launches.
11. Evaluate the current trash receptacles and pick-up program. Consider the inclusion of a recycling program. Provide additional trash receptacles.
12. Cooperate with public jurisdictions and interested user groups in extending the Scioto River Bikeway through this area.

AREA #18....Lower East Bank Recreation Area

1. This management area is one of the primary focal points of the park. Higher priority should be given to the recommendations for this management area when implementing this plan.
2. Prohibit parking between roadway and reservoir.
3. Provide head-in parking on the east side of the roadway.
4. Maintain two-way traffic.
5. All parking areas shall be asphalt. Post "No parking" areas and prohibit parking on the grass. Enforce no parking on the grass.

9. Re-plant native trees through this area.
10. Replace safety rail along the river's edge.
11. Place signage on the shelterhouses to identify them. Allow for reservation by permit.
12. Provide a park information board at the marina for boater education and public awareness.
13. Provide adequate trash receptacles and recycling containers.
14. Install a public emergency telephone.
15. Install a drinking fountain (wheelchair accessible).
16. Cooperate with public jurisdictions and interested user groups in extending the Scioto River Bikeway through this area.

AREA #20.....Service Area Maintenance and Patrol

1. Paint the maintenance building and clean up the grounds.
2. Resurface access park road.
3. Replant the formal fountain area.
4. All parking areas shall be asphalt. Post "No Parking" areas and prohibit parking on the grass. Enforce no parking on the grass.
5. Upgrade the intersection of U.S. 33 and the park road ingress/egress with the installation of a traffic signal.
6. Create a new park entrance sign with landscaping compatible with other entry features.
7. Develop an east bank canoe portage around the dam.
8. Provide a park information board. Place either outside the Police Building or the maintenance building for public use.
9. Cooperate with public jurisdictions and interested user groups in extending the Scioto River Bikeway adjacent to this area.

2. Relocate safety cables at Griggs Dam to the 100 foot setback as mandated by Chapter 921 of the Columbus City Code. Provide and locate buoys for the dam which meet the necessary safety warning standards.
3. Hold semi-annual meetings with representatives from Marine Park Police, City Attorney's Office, Waterways Advisory Council, Recreations and Parks Department and the Division of Water, to examine waterways code sections and recommend amendments as appropriate to the Recreation and Parks Commission and City Council to improve safety conditions and/or provide better service to the public.
4. Assign police detectives from the Crimes Against Property Section of the Detective Bureau to investigate all encroachments of public lands at Griggs Park. (Personnel from these units are trained in the procedures outlined by the City Attorney in his memo of 11-15-91 to the Recreation and Parks Director. This unit has the equipment and resources available for the gathering of evidentiary materials).
5. Provide for minimum staffing levels of the Patrol. The Columbus Police Department should provide minimum staffing levels for summer and winter seasons as well as holidays and weekends, when the Park is at its busiest.
6. Provide for rapidly increasing the number of patrol staff levels in response to emergency situations or for special events by drawing directly from the Patrol Bureau.
7. Provide training programs to familiarize Patrol Subdivision officers with the sections of the law pertaining to Columbus City Park and Waterway Codes. Encourage these programs to be given during the Patrol Bureau's annual in-service training sessions by Marine Park and Ohio Department of Natural Resources personnel.
8. Institute a Park Watch Program at Griggs Park and Reservoir, in order to complement the efforts of the individual officer during their 8 hour patrolling shift while he/she perform the necessary boating safety activities and crime prevention efforts for the area. (Public involvement in identifying and reporting criminal activity or hazardous situations in the Park can increase the safety of persons using the park).
9. Increase enforcement of laws pertaining to destruction of park and reservoir lands. Fines, other than applicable court costs, for these violations should be deposited in the Waterways Improvement Fund. Vegetation destroyed should be replaced whenever possible. Mature trees and shrubs destroyed should be replaced with mature stock.
10. Increase enforcement of alcohol related offenses.
11. Increase enforcement of speed related offenses for boats.

9. Provide funds for the Recreation and Parks Department to protect and propagate the rare, threatened and endangered species harbored in relatively undisturbed areas around the reservoir, especially by Hayden Falls. These plants include the snow trillium, spreading rockcress and grape honeysuckle. Specific activities include putting up signs and erecting protective fencing; ridding the sites of non-native plants such as garlic mustard; and using city-owned greenhouses to propagate plants from collected seed. The greenhouse-reared plants should be replanted along the reservoir where native plants have been destroyed. Encourage these activities to be performed jointly with local conservation groups such as the Nature Conservancy, Sierra Club and Columbus Audubon Society.
10. Encourage the Recreation and Parks Department to reforest reservoir banks with native tree species, especially on sites cleared illegally through encroachment. Use money obtained from the prosecution of cases of property destruction on the reservoir to obtain the trees and to use city-owned greenhouses to propagate native trees from collected seed. Carry out seed collection and replanting jointly with local conservation groups such as the Nature Conservancy, Sierra Club and Columbus Audubon Society, and with local neighborhood groups.
11. Establish a joint effort with the ODNR to inventory the fish population and compare the results to previous ODNR studies to determine the population's status and provide an indication of environment degradation due to increased sewage and chemical pollution.
12. Establish a joint effort with the ODNR to determine the effects of increased boat traffic and increased sewage and chemical pollution on the reservoir's biological life.

ELEMENT NO. 8. LONG RANGE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

I. Introduction

Griggs Reservoir Park is unique among waterways in the greater Columbus area. Special qualities include its urban setting, the many long-established residential properties abutting the reservoir, the simplicity and parochial quality of its public parklands, and unparalleled opportunities for recreational boaters and water-related programs. It is important that long-range goals and programs be established in order to safely and fully exploit these qualities.

Consequently, long range needs to be examined in light of ultimate usage, to include at least: a limited roadway system; non-contact sporting and recreational areas; concessions; nature preserves and nature study areas; fishing habitats; barefoot and slalom waterskiing areas; rowing regattas and rowing facilities; access for canoes and kayaks; and special use functions and opportunities, where and when appropriate, for other use by recreational boaters.

b. Compliance (government inspection, enforcement)

The environmental preservation features of the plan must be reviewed by natural resource professionals including periodic review assistance from staff of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and similar government agencies. Non-professionals in this field should not make decisions regarding habitat management practices. For Individual Stewardship Plans, adjacent neighbor support is a critical element. There is a great need to solicit and maintain their support in order to minimize possible encroachments and habitat destruction.

III. Improvements

While the Department of Recreation and Parks does not have as its primary responsibility a requirement to provide convenient vehicular access to all parklands, the Department should develop a plan to manage and control such access in order to protect natural resources. Attention can thus be given to creating or improving active recreation and support areas as distinguished from protecting environmentally sensitive areas.

Accordingly, any plan should include an analysis of:

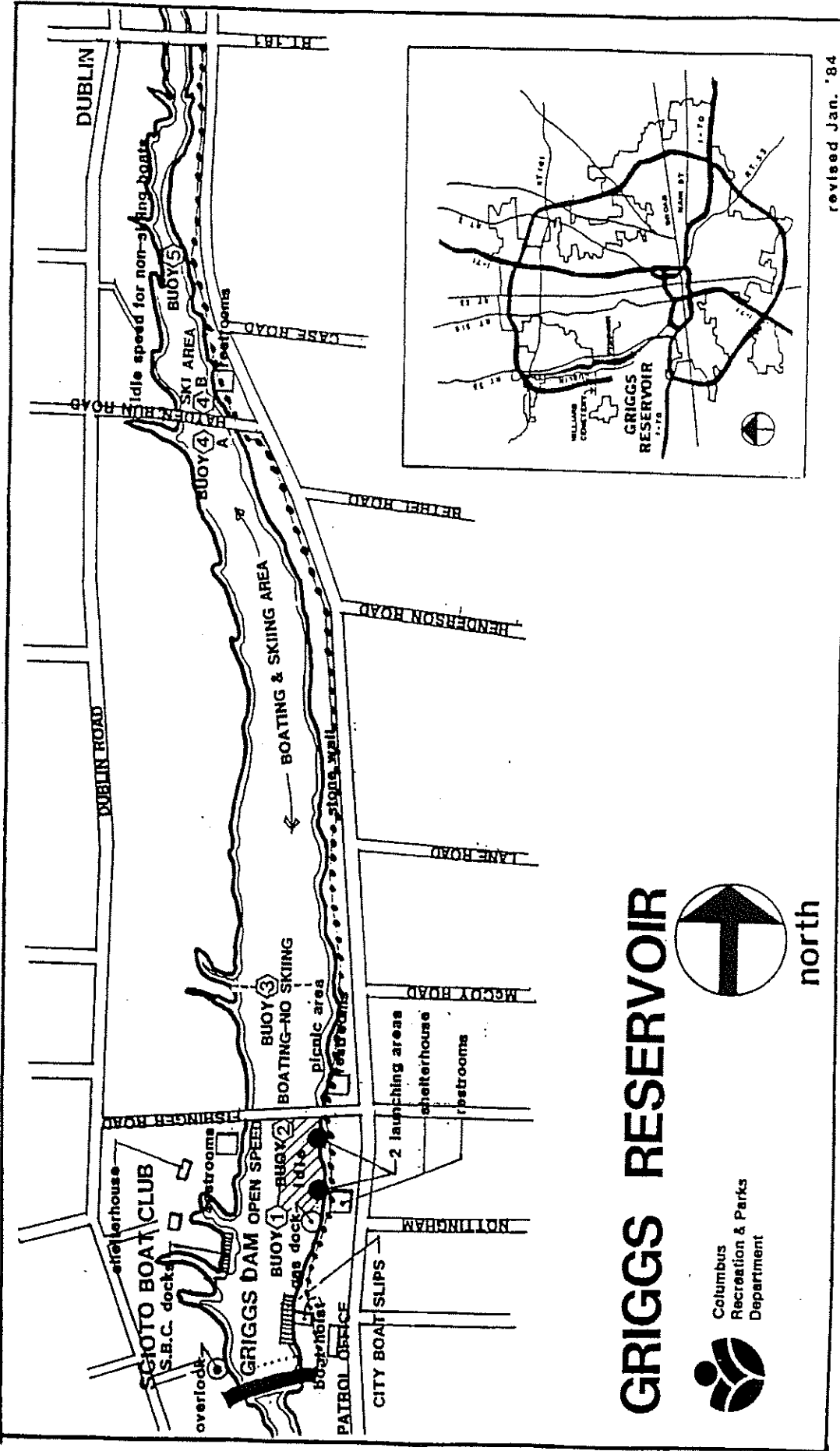
- A. Road entrance and access routes.
- B. Road relocation and closures.
- C. New roadways and parking areas.
- D. Existing roadway and parking areas.
- E. Connector development, including designated pathways, bike trails, and jogging trails.
- F. Beautification through planting, landscaping, and maintenance control.

(For specific recommendations see Element No. 5 Recreation Delivery System Areas 1 through 21.)

IV. Capital Improvements, Utilities, and Service Areas

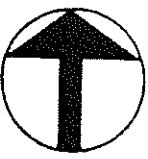
Priorities need to include development of a plan and budget for:

- A. Capital Improvements and Facilities Repair.
 - 1. Law enforcement and maintenance facilities.
 - 2. Recreation facilities.

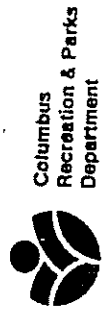


revised Jan. '84

GRIGGS RESERVOIR



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Columbus
Recreation & Parks
Department