



November 15, 2021

RE: Protecting Cuyahoga Valley National Park by Preserving Theiss Woods

To Whom it May Concern,

Since 1919, the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) has been the leading voice of the American people in protecting and enhancing our National Park System. We work with advocates across the country, including more than 50,000 members and supporters in Ohio, to preserve our nation's natural, cultural and historic heritage for future generations. NPCA advocacy comes in many forms, but our work is often centered around protecting the landscapes and waterways that are outside of park boundaries but are nonetheless intertwined with park ecosystems.

NPCA is opposed to the proposal to develop a large housing project on what is now Theiss Woods. This 45-acre landscape has clear benefits to both the Cuyahoga River and Cuyahoga Valley National Park. Cuyahoga is one of the most prominent national parks in the Midwest and is enjoyed by more than 2 million visitors each year. The health of the park, the visitor experience, and the economic benefits that come with visitation, are all connected to the vitality of the Cuyahoga River. Theiss Woods is a key part of the Cuyahoga River watershed and serves as a natural buffer that protects the river from both flood damage and dangerous run off. Replacing this wooded landscape and its wetlands and streams with the concrete and gray infrastructure that come with development will make the river, and the park, more vulnerable.

NPCA urges the city of Akron to conserve this landscape in a way that continues to benefit both the park and the surrounding community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Mesle".

Mark Mesle
Midwest Senior Outreach Coordinator
National Parks Conservation Association