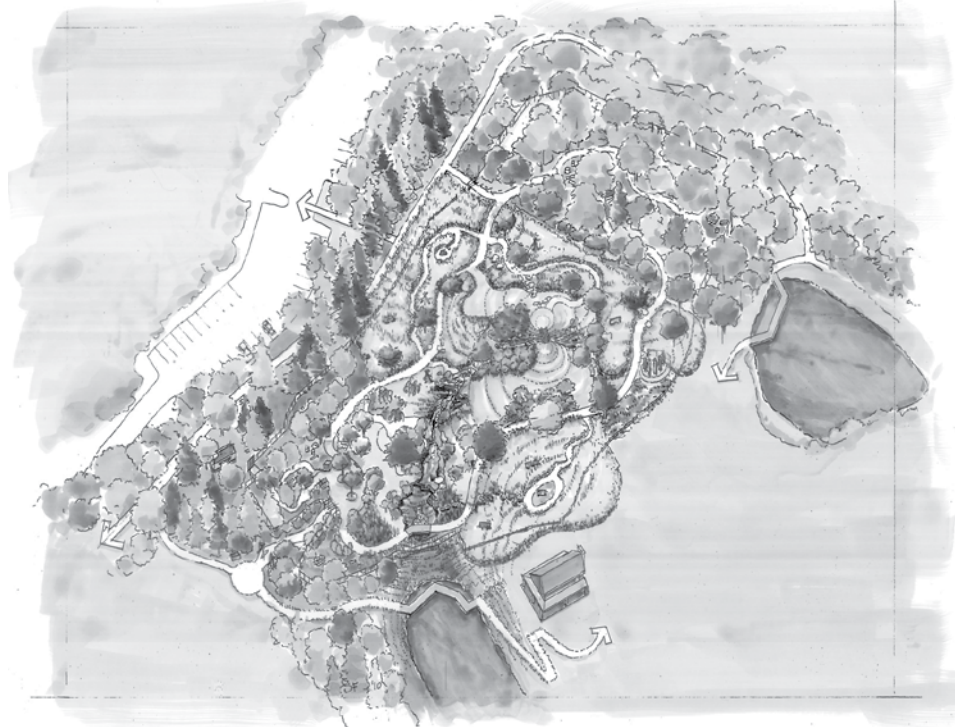


Marge and Charles Schott Nature Playscape

In the winter 2008–2009 issue of *Newsleaf*, I announced CNC's plans to build a nature playscape to facilitate frequent, child-directed play in nature for children in Greater Cincinnati (see the article online at www.CincyNature.org/directors-message.html). Research over the past few years shows the critical importance of unstructured nature play for healthy child development – physically, intellectually, emotionally and spiritually. The Leave No Child Inside movement is spreading this message nationally (learn more at www.childrenandnature.org) and CNC, along with many others, is working locally.

Children today spend less time outdoors than any previous generation. Many feel that electronic media are the primary cause of this trend. However, parental fear also plays a significant role. Parents perceive the outdoors as dangerous and do not want their children to play unsupervised. Nature playscapes provide a safe place for children to have the opportunity for free play in a natural setting.

In 2008, CNC and the Arlitt Child & Family Research & Education Center at University of Cincinnati collaborated to create the Cincinnati Playscape Initiative. The Initiative serves to promote nature play, design and build two natural playspaces, carry out research on children's interaction with nature and train adults in facilitating play. In addition, we will use both sites as models to encourage the creation of additional playspaces in Greater Cincinnati. Visit www.uc.edu/connect/featured/



Playscape rendering illustrated and painted by Sharon Floro, designed by GroundWork Design Cincinnati LLC - Rachel Robinson Design, Landscape Architecture LLC - Luke Schelly

playscapes.html to learn more about the collaboration.

A generous gift from the Marge and Charles J. Schott Foundation will make construction of the CNC playscape possible. Our one-and-a-half acre playscape will be located in the field and surrounding woods between Abner Hollow Cabin and the Krippendorf parking lot. We began clearing dead trees and limbs in April. The majority of construction will take place this summer with plants being added in the fall. The playscape will officially open for play in spring 2011.

The Marge and Charles Schott Nature Playscape is one of several elements of Phase I of a site and facility master plan for Rowe Woods approved by the CNC Board of Trustees in March 2009. Phase I also includes development

of the All Person's Discovery Trail, installation of a sanitary wastewater treatment system to replace our current package plants and renovations on Abner Hollow Cabin.

In every modification we make to Rowe Woods, we seek to tell our four stories (Natural History, Cultural Heritage, Incredible Community and Sustainability and Restoration) to give our members exceptional experiences on this land. Your thoughts are always welcome. Contact me via email at bhopple@cincynature.org or discuss online at www.Facebook.com/cincinnatiaturecenter.

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