



Wilma H. Schiermeier Olentangy River Wetland Research Park

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **MAYOR, STATE ENERGY CHIEF, AND CORPORATE PRESIDENT DEDICATE SOLAR-POWERED BIKEPATH “GAS STATION” AT OLENTANGY RIVER WETLANDS**

On Friday, September 11, 2009, Ohio State University’s Olentangy River Wetland Research Park (ORWRP), a Ramsar Wetland of International Importance located in Columbus, Ohio, USA, dedicated their new AEP Solar-Powered Bikepath Shelter.

Key dignitaries who gave short addresses at the ribbon-cutting event were **Michael B. Coleman**, Mayor, City of Columbus; **Nadeane Howard**, Chief, Ohio Energy Office, Ohio Department of Development; and **Joe Hamrock**, President of American Electric Power (AEP) Ohio. The bikepath shelter is located at the Olentangy River Wetland Research Park where the City’s major north-south Olentangy bikepath passes through the wetland site. Solar energy panels on the roof power a bicycle tire pump available to all bikers who use the City’s bikepath. The Olentangy bikepath is among the busiest in Ohio.

Mayor Michael Coleman likened the solar-powered bikepath shelter to a “bikepath gas station” and suggested that the City of Columbus will investigate providing more such stops along its bicycle trails.

The bike sheleter was the result of a gift to Ohio State University from American Electric Power (AEP) and a grant from the Ohio Department of Development’s Energy Office.

The Wilma H. Schiermeier Olentangy River Wetland Research Park (50 acres or 21 hectares), 40°01’N 083°01’W) is a complex of created and natural freshwater riverine wetlands on the campus of The Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio, USA. The wetlands include freshwater, forested wetlands, permanent rivers/streams/creeks, seasonal/intermittent freshwater marshes, and permanent freshwater marshes. It is a unique combination of 1) a biologically diverse assemblage of different wetland and riverine habitats both representative and unique to the region; 2) high-quality university teaching, research, and publishing related specifically to wetland ecology and management; and 3) significant wetland ecotourism and outreach for an urban community where few wetlands remain. The ORWRP was designated by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service as the USA’s 24th Ramsar Wetland of International Importance on 18 April 2008; that designation was approved by the Ramsar Convention in Switzerland in June 2008. A Ramsar certificate was presented to OSU President Gordon Gee at a Swampfest held at the ORWRP in Columbus on September 25, 2008. Research and teaching at the wetlands are supported by local, state, and federal grants and by donations from corporations, foundations, and individuals.



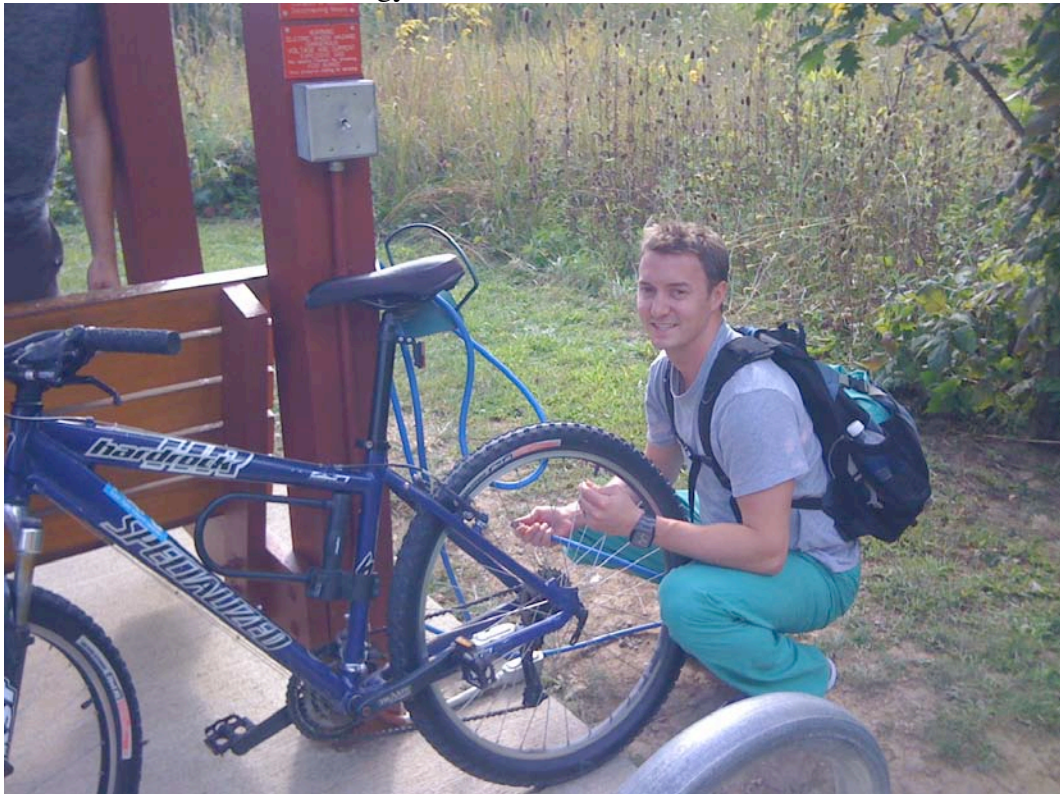
Columbus Mayor Michael B. Coleman addresses audience at AEP bikepath shelter dedication on September 11, 2009



Some of the audience at the bikepath shelter dedication



Bill Mitsch, Director, Olentangy River Wetland Research Park; Joe Hamrock, President of AEP Ohio; Nadeane Howard, Chief, Ohio Energy Office, Ohio Department of Development; and Michael B. Coleman, Mayor, City of Columbus at the Ramsar designation sign on the AEP Bikepath shelter at the Olentangy River Wetland Research Park



Biker on the Olentangy bikepath using the solar-powered tire pump at the AEP bikepath shelter at the Olentangy River Wetland Research Park