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COUNTIES CURRENT
CCAO
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ASSOCIATION OF OHIO

July 14, 2025

The 2025 NACo Annual Conference in Philadelphia began late last week and ends tonight! Thank you to all the county leaders from across Ohio who are attending and ensuring that NACo hears from the Heart of it All!

Association and Member News | State and Federal News | Education and Grants | County News | Job Postings

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ASSOCIATION AND MEMBER NEWS

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Ten counties fully online to NG 9-1-1, additional 15 begin process

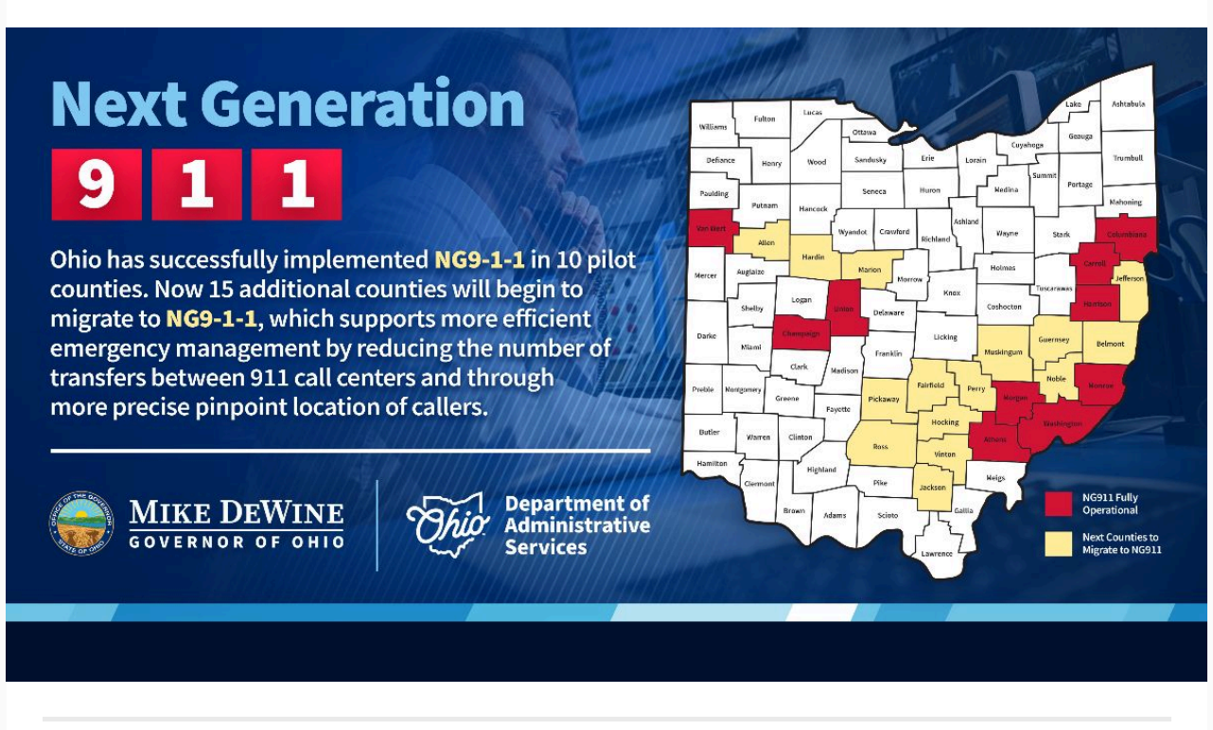
Last week, Governor Mike DeWine announced that the Next Generation 9-1-1 system was fully implemented in the ten pilot counties and rollout to an additional 15 counties had begun.

NG 9-1-1 modernizes the 911 system, allowing Ohioans to text and use smartwatches and other wearable technology to contact 911. NG 9-1-1 technology also saves critical seconds when Ohioans call emergency services by reducing the number of call transfers between 911 call centers and by more precisely pinpointing the location of callers using cell phones.

Statistics from Washington County, one of the first counties in Ohio to fully implement the system, demonstrate the impact of NG 9-1-1 on saving time by reducing call transfers. Since implementing NG 9-1-1, call centers in the area have noted significant increases in correctly routed calls, and fewer emergency calls are being unnecessarily routed to and from the Washington County Sheriff's Office.

The NG 9-1-1 system is supported by a monthly user fee of $0.40 on devices. Thanks to successful advocacy by counties and other interested parties, that fee will soon increase to $0.60 per month with more revenue flowing to counties to assist coming online.

The map below shows the counties that have fully come online to the NG 9-1-1 system and the 15 counties beginning the process. All counties must be operational on the new system by 2030.


Next Generation
9 1 1
Ohio has successfully implemented NG9-1-1 in 10 pilot counties. Now 15 additional counties will begin to migrate to NG9-1-1, which supports more efficient emergency management by reducing the number of transfers between 911 call centers and through more precise pinpoint location of callers.
MIKE DEWINE
GOVERNOR OF OHIO
Ohio Department of Administrative Services
NG911 Fully Operational
Next Counties to Migrate to NG911

NOTICE: MARCS radio authentication deadline extended, fines to be imposed on truancy

The following is a message from the Department of Administrative Services' MARCS Program Office.

MARCS Radio Users:

Thank you to all of you who have authenticated your MARCS radios and met the July 1 deadline. There are over 100,000 of you who have done so. As you know, radio authentication is important to protect the emergency communications infrastructure of the MARCS radio system throughout Ohio.

Unfortunately, the radio authentication project cannot yet be fully implemented at this time, as there are still many radios that have yet to be authenticated and 100% of our radios need to be completed in order for this project to go forward. Therefore, the original deadline is being extended to Dec. 31, 2025, to allow for everyone to complete radio authentication.

For those entities who have yet to authenticate their radios, and who go beyond the newly extended deadline, fines will be imposed beginning Jan. 1, 2026. Fines will increase every 30 days if radios remain unauthenticated. We regret having to take this action; however, the MARCS Program Office has been actively encouraging customers to have radios authenticated to provide the best and most secure service for everyone since July 1, 2020.

What is Radio Authentication and why?

Radio Authentication is a necessary step to protect the MARCS (Multi-Agency Radio Communication System) system and is an industry standard in public safety/first responder communications.

Each radio – base, mobile, and portable – must have Radio Authentication to operate on the MARCS system by Jan. 1, 2026.

Radio Authentication (also known as Link Layer Authentication) is an increased safety and security measure to ensure only authorized users have access to the radio system. This increased security helps safeguard against unauthorized people using and listening on the system and helps to protect against those attempting to disrupt the system.

Since July 1, 2020, the MARCS Program Office has been actively encouraging customers to have their radios authenticated to provide the best and most secure service to everyone.

Some radios purchased after July 1, 2019, may already have been authenticated. If you have a radio purchased prior to July 1, 2019, the radio may have the ability to be updated to comply with Radio Authentication, without the need to purchase a new radio.

If you are a MARCS customer who hasn't had your radios authenticated, immediately take the following two actions:

- Contact your radio manufacturer or programming vendor today to begin the authentication process.
- Email MARCSRadioAuthentication@DAS.Ohio.gov explaining your plan, including a timeline, to complete the process to authenticate your radios.

For questions, contact:

MARCS Program Office
Ohio Department of Administrative Services
Email: MARCSRadioAuthentication@DAS.Ohio.gov
Call: 866-OHMARCS (866-646-2727)
Website: DAS.Ohio.gov/MARCS

2025 County Classic Golf Outing is just a month away!

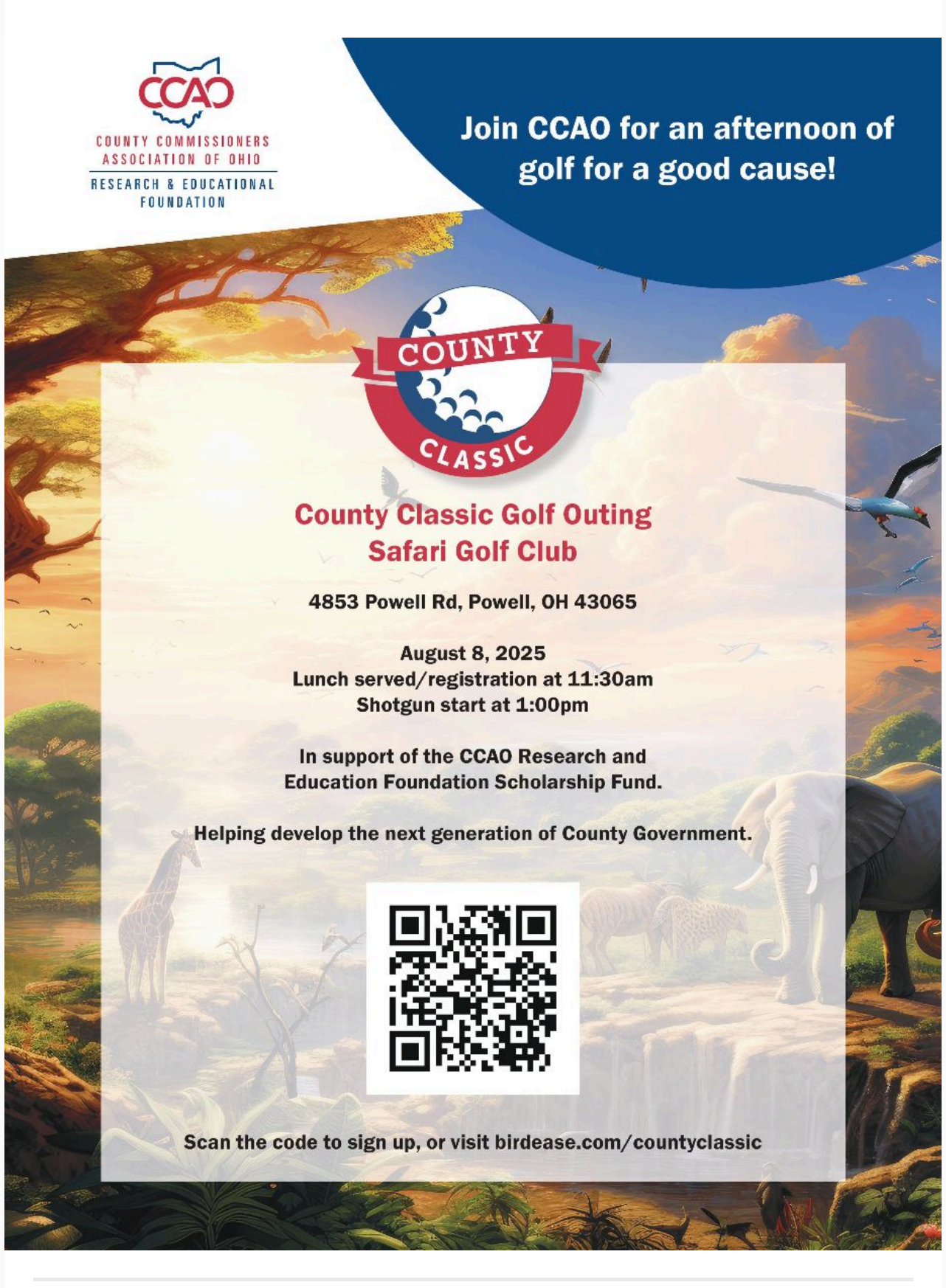
The third annual CCAO Education and Research Foundation COUNTY CLASSIC GOLF OUTING is just a month away – Friday, August 8th – at Safari Golf Club next to the Columbus Zoo.

We have received great event and hole sponsors showing a tremendous amount of support for our outing … however, we really need golfers!

If you are a golfer, we ask you to gather a few of your friends and sign up to play – if you are not a golfer, please share the word among those you know and encourage them to join us for a great day, great golf, and great fun.

It's easy to sign up – right here: **https://birdease.com/countyclassic**

We appreciate your support for this outstanding event and thank you!


CCAO
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ASSOCIATION OF OHIO
RESEARCH & EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

Join CCAO for an afternoon of golf for a good cause!

COUNTY CLASSIC

County Classic Golf Outing
Safari Golf Club

4853 Powell Rd, Powell, OH 43065

August 8, 2025
Lunch served/registration at 11:30am
Shotgun start at 1:00pm

In support of the CCAO Research and Education Foundation Scholarship Fund.

Helping develop the next generation of County Government.

Scan the code to sign up, or visit birdease.com/countyclassic

CCAO endorses Stark County Commissioner Harold for OPERS Board of Trustees

In October, members of the Ohio Public Employee Retirement System (OPERS) Board of Trustees will be hosting an election for three seats:

- County Employees - Those working at a county job.
- Miscellaneous Employees - Those working at jobs for other governmental groups, such as townships, public libraries, health districts, and conservancy districts.
- Retirees - Those who have retired, including re-employed retirees.

At CCAO's May Board of Directors meeting, **the board formally endorsed Stark County Commissioner Alan Harold for the County Employee seat**.

For a member seeking an employee seat to be on the ballot, they must obtain 500 signatures from active members of their employee group, with at least 20 signatures from 10 counties.

Completed petitions with signatures must be submitted by August 4. Voting information will be sent to qualified voters on August 26, and votes must be cast by midnight of October 3.

If you have questions concerning the OPERS Board of Trustees election, you can contact OPERS outreach staff at either 888-400-0965 or employeroutreach@opers.org.

A Special Thanks to our Pinnacle Partner

RUMPKE

STATE AND FEDERAL NEWS

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Audit of State issues audit, LGS cost bulletin

The Auditor of State recently issued Bulletin 2025-006, "State Fiscal Year 2026 Hourly Billing Rates and Allocation of Audit Costs." As the name suggests, the bulletin is intended to provide local governments information regarding audit costs for SFY 2026 (July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026).

The bulletin begins with a note that it may need to be revised based on the final appropriation levels provided to the Auditor of State in the biennial budget. CCAO will provide members information about any revisions that may be issued.

The Auditor will bill local governments $42/hour for services from the Audit Division.

In addition to the audit costs, the Auditor of State offers other financial reporting complication, consulting, and advisory services to local governments through the department's Local Government Services (LGS) division. The costs for these services is based on a tiered rate based on the government's total combined revenues.

For counties, the LGS tiered rates are as follows:

- Tier I, Combined Revenue of more than $132 million: $90/hour
- Tier II, Combine Revenue of between $60 million and $132 million: $80/hour
- Tier III, Combine Revenue of less than $66 million: $64/hour

The bulletin also provides guidance on how local governments can allocate costs of audits and LGS options.

Empower provides insights on One Big Beautiful Bill Act

Empower recently provided a high-level overview of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act of 2025's effects on retirement savings, health savings accounts (HSAs), and other specialized accounts.

The four-page overview, available here, shares that the bill does not make any changes to retirement plans, makes three changes to the scope of HSAs and who can contribute to one, and makes changes to 529 educational savings accounts, ABLE accounts, and creates a new tax-deferred savings called "Trump Accounts."

EDUCATION AND GRANTS

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Visit the Grants and Funding Opportunities page on the CCAO website for a detailed listing of open grant programs.

USDA opens applications for rural housing and economic development grants

The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) has opened the application window for the Rural Community Development Initiative Program (RCDI) until August 7.

Grants through the RCDI are intended to provide capacity-building assistance to improve housing, community facilities, and community and economic development projects in eligible rural areas. The grant program defines "eligible rural area" as "any area other than a city or town with a population greater than 50,000 and the area adjacent to such a city or town."

Examples of projects funded through the RCDI in the past include providing technical assistance on strategic plan development, training to conduct homeowner and entrepreneur training, and more.

Grants range from a minimum of $50,000 and a maximum of $500,000 and require a 1:1 local match.

Questions about the grant program should be directed to the Ohio field office of USDA's Rural Development agency.

Workforce conference to be held in late September

On September 18 and 19, the Ohio Workforce Association (OWA) and the Ohio Chapter of the International Association of Workforce Professionals (IAWP) will host a workforce training conference in Lewis Center. The conference is titled, Future of Work Ohio 2025: Innovate. Elevate. Connect.

Sessions on the tentative agenda include a history of the public workforce system, a panel discussing the recently-released regional behavioral health workforce toolkit, and how to create a children's services workforce pipeline, among many other sessions.

The registration fee is $395 until August 31. Registrations after this date will be $425. Members of OWA or IAWP receive a discounted rate of $365.

The registration link, as well as more information about the conference agenda and how to reserve a room, can be found here.

COUNTY NEWS

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Each week Counties Current highlights the happenings in our counties in the words of their local media. One story from each of the CCAO's five districts is highlighted, and on occasion other stories may be highlighted as well.

Northwest District

Allen commissioners approve incentives for proposed American Township data center

LimaOhio.com, July 10, 2025

Another hurdle has been cleared in the effort to bring a data center to American Township, as Allen County commissioners voted Thursday to enter into a Community Reinvestment Area agreement with Bistrozzi, LLC, the company representing the as-yet-unnamed company behind the proposed data center.

The agreement includes a 15-year, 75-percent real property tax exemption for any new development on the property along North Cole Street between Irvin and Beery Roads, terms that are typical in such agreements, as commissioners were told in previous discussions.

Speaking at the meeting, Allen Economic Development Group President and CEO Cynthia Leis touted the projected economic benefits for the county as it expands into a new and burgeoning industry.

"The revenue will be based upon a minimum of $500 million in capital investment and a minimum of 50 full-time, high-paying jobs, as well," she said after the meeting. "It would generate a minimum of $4 million in payroll."

For Commissioner Beth Seibert and her fellow commissioners, this was the first time they have worked with a CRA, and they wanted to make sure they did it right while also being mindful of the concerns raised by several property owners in the affected area.

Northeast District

Commissioners hire executive director for Mahoning County

The Morning Journal, July 7, 2025

Mahoning County government is in good hands again, commissioners say.

At Thursday's regular meeting of the Mahoning County Board of Commissioners, members approved the hiring of Hollie Musolino-Goodin as executive director, effectively filling the role vacated by Audrey Tillis, who retired as county administrator last week.

"In her new role, Hollie will oversee daily administrative operations, coordinate interdepartmental initiatives and support the strategic goals and priorities of the Board of Commissioners," the board said in a prepared statement. "She will serve as a key liaison between county leadership, staff, and the public, helping to ensure effective communication and efficient government services."

Human Resources Manager Dina Wilson said Goodin's role is not quite the same as Tillis' role was.

"Much of the heavy finance work that Audrey did will go back to the Office of Management and Budget [run by Jennifer Pangio], I'll handle much of the human resources work, and some other duties will be handled either by the commissioners or department heads," she said.

Goodin has worked for the county since 2021, working her way up from deputy clerk to her most recent position, chief deputy clerk.

The commissioners' statement also said: "During her tenure, she has demonstrated strong leadership, deep knowledge of county operations, and a clear commitment to public service. Hollie's experience, professionalism, and dedication make her the ideal person to step into this important role."

Central District

Commissioners to revisit Commercial Point annexation on July 15

Circleville Herald, July 7, 2025

On April 29, the Pickaway County Commissioners voted against the request from the Village of Commercial Point and the owners/developers for a "Expedited Type II Annexation Petition" that would have allowed the village to annex a parcel of 344 acres of Scioto Township land, commonly referred to as the "Struckman Property." After hearing comments from all parties involved, a motion to deny the petition was made by Commissioner Gary Scherer, seconded by Commissioner Harlod Henson, and then unanimously approved when Commissioner Jay Whippel also voted to deny the petition.

On July 15, these same parties will meet again with the Pickaway County Commissioners for a second vote on the Village's effort to annex the 344-acre Struckman parcel.

Cory Wasmus, founder of Teays Valley Against Overgrowth (TVAO), started his involvement in civic affairs when he and so many of his Pickaway County neighbors were hit with a 30% increase in their property taxes stemming from the 2023 Pickaway County Reappraisal of property values. Shortly after receiving those notices of their new property tax rates, the Teays Valley School District proposed a new $96.5 Million bond levy to build additional schools which appeared on the March 19, 2024 ballot.

"It was just one property tax increase too many," said Wasmus. The voters voted 1,566 in favor (25%) and 4,666 against (75%). The Teays Valley School District placed a second bond levy, this time for $74.4 Million, on the May 6, 2025 ballot and it was also defeated — 1,556 in favor (32%) to 3,364 against (68%).

Wasmus' organization, TVAO, has been active in fighting against the "overdevelopment" of land within the Teays Valley School District. He is currently collecting signatures for a petition that would place a 12-month moratorium on any new housing developments in this school district. His goal is to qualify for a referendum to be placed on the November 4, 2025 ballot.

Southwest District

Over $2.5 million in road resurfacing planned

Daily Advocate and Early Bird News, July 7, 2025

Darke County and several local townships will perform over $2 million on roadways this year. The Darke County Commissioners approved a bid from Walls Brothers Asphalt to resurface over 23 miles of local roads.

According to the Notice of Award, Walls Brothers Asphalt will resurface 11.744 miles of 11 different township roads in 10 townships. The cost to the townships is $1.2 million. The county will have 11.86 miles of road resurfaced on four county roads. The cost to the county is $1.2 million. Although the cost exceeds $2.5 million, the county and townships will not be paying all of the cost. The Ohio Public Works Commission is participating and will pay 32.9% of the total project cost, not-to-exceed $900,000. Commissioners Matt Aultman, Marshall Combs and Aaron Flatter approved the award.

The projects are expected to be completed by Sept. 15.

Commission President Aultman shared the county is a step closer to completing one of its Critical Infrastructure Grant projects. Commissioners approved a revenue decrease and an appropriation increase of $16,900 for one of the projects in Gettysburg. Aultman said the project came in less than the estimate. The county can have three projects open at a time. Once one project is complete, they can move onto the next project. "We're talking about a couple of different projects," said Aultman. He said a project in Palestine may be the next project that uses Critical Infrastructure Grant funding. Arcanum, Ansonia, and Versailles also have projects in the works, but engineering isn't completed for those.

Southeast District

Hocking Hills is grappling with the challenges of booming crowds

Statehouse News Bureau, July 8, 2025

Hocking Hills sees more than 4 million visitors every year — a number that exploded in recent years. One 2023 study found the area gained popularity faster than almost any other state park in the country, based on an analysis of web searches.

"We certainly love the beauty of our county, so we're happy to share that with as many people as possible," said Hocking County Commissioner Michael Linton.

The booming tourism industry has spelled economic growth for the region, he said, but it's also led to challenges, from increased traffic and congestion to concerns over affordable housing.

During the COVID pandemic, tourism to Hocking Hills grew exponentially, said Karen Raymore, executive director of the Hocking Hills Tourism Association.

"Everyone was being told to go outside. That was the activity of choice because not only was it good for you, but it was safe," she said. "People were a little uncomfortable being in close quarters with people they didn't know, and the lodging makeup of the Hocking Hills is predominantly cabins, lodges and single-family detached [homes], so you could have your getaway, do things outside and never have to interact with anyone outside your travel group. And back in 2020 and 2021, that was really attractive."

In the years since, tourism to the park has leveled off.

"But we have seen consistent growth each year," Raymore said.

As a result, the region's economy blossomed.

"Our county budget is very dependent on sales tax revenue and of course sales tax revenue increased along with tourism," she said. "If you owned a tourism business, a restaurant, a gift shop, a lodging business, it was great news for you."

But other residents of the region grew concerned.

"There certainly are challenges connected to having that many people show up in your neighborhood every year," Commissioner Linton said.

Topping his list is funding for emergency services. According to him, up to a fifth of runs for emergency services relate to out-of-county citizens.

Raymore hears this issue come up too.

"Every time somebody goes off trail and has an accident, then our EMS has to respond," she said. "When you have a population that swells to those numbers — we're a rural Ohio county. We don't have those kinds of resources or the staffing level for what that demand is."

DATES TO REMEMBER

Please view the CCAO Calendar for a comprehensive list of events to note.

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JULY 25
CEBCO Board of Directors Meeting

AUGUST 8
2025 County Classic Golf Outing

AUGUST 15
CORSA Board of Directors Meeting

AUGUST 24 - 26
2025 CCAO Summer Symposium
CCAO Board of Directors Meeting (August 26)

AUGUST 29
CEBCO Board of Directors Meeting

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