

Eagle Scout Tyler Shadoan creates only kayak launch on Little Portage River

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The Park District of Ottawa County hosted a ribbon cutting on Thursday, May 25 for the new Little Portage Unit Kayak Launch constructed by Eagle Scout Tyler Shadoan. From left to right are: Tyler's mother, Shawna Shadoan; Park District Director Jannah Wilson; Tyler; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Refuge Manager Jason Lewis; Tyler's father, Mike Shadoan; and Tyler's sister, Katie Shadoan. (Photo by Sheri Trusty)

BY SHERI TRUSTY

Thanks to Tyler Shadoan, kayakers now have an access point on the Little Portage River. Tyler constructed a kayak launch on the edge of the river last fall as his Eagle Scout project, and the Park District of Ottawa County hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the launch site on Thursday, May 25.

The launch is situated along the Portage River Water Trail, a connecting route of recreational access points along the Portage River. The Little Portage Unit Kayak Launch, located at 7899 West Little Portage East Rd. in Oak Harbor, sits on land owned by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

"None of this was here. Tyler did the excavating and put the gravel down," said Park District Executive Director Jannah Wilson. "The nice thing is, this is the only kayak launch on the Little Portage."



Eagle Scout Tyler Shadoan gets a push into the water by his father, Mike Shadoan. Mike, who is on the board of the Park District of Ottawa County, assisted Tyler as he constructed the Little Portage Unit Kayak Launch. (Photo by Sheri Trusty)

Tyler, who has been kayaking since he was 8, is the son of Mike and Shawna Shadoan. Mike is on the Park District of Ottawa County board, and that connection gave Tyler inspiration for his Eagle Scout project.

"The board was trying to get a launch started, and I thought I could help," he said. "I picked this site because I like it."

Tyler worked with his father, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the park district, and local businesses to complete the project.

"The Wildlife Service donated the skirt underneath the stone, and the park district donated the signage," Tyler said. "Buehler Excavating donated all the labor, and Precision Aggregates donated all the stone."



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Refuge Manager Jason Lewis, on the right, said he couldn't thank Tyler Shadoan enough for constructing a new kayak launch site on the Little Portage River. (Photo by Sheri Trusty)

Wilson is grateful for the time and effort Tyler invested into the kayak launch.

"Tyler spent a great deal of time developing the project, participating in the on-site work, and installing the signs," Wilson said.

Jason Lewis, Refuge Manager with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, said the kayak launch will encourage even more people to utilize the Portage River Water Trail, as well as support local businesses like Portage River Paddling Company in Port Clinton.



Tyler Shadoan kayaks just off the kayak launch site he constructed on the Little Portage River as his Eagle Scout project. (Photo by Sheri Trusty)

"Ohio is really blessed with fabulous natural resources, and the view here is beautiful. It's part of a connected system that will help get people outdoors. This access area will provide visitors with the opportunity to enjoy the water. It will be used for fishing and birdwatching, and businesses will be supported with this launch," Lewis said. "Tyler did a great job. I can't thank him enough."

Tyler said his experience in Boy Scouts and the work he put into his Eagle Scout project helped develop him as a person.

"Personally, Boy Scouts helped me with leadership skills and with patience. It just helped me all around," he said. "This whole project helped a lot. I was in a lot of meetings with a lot of people."

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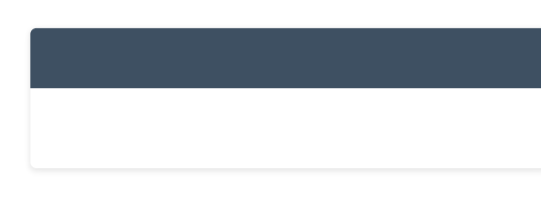
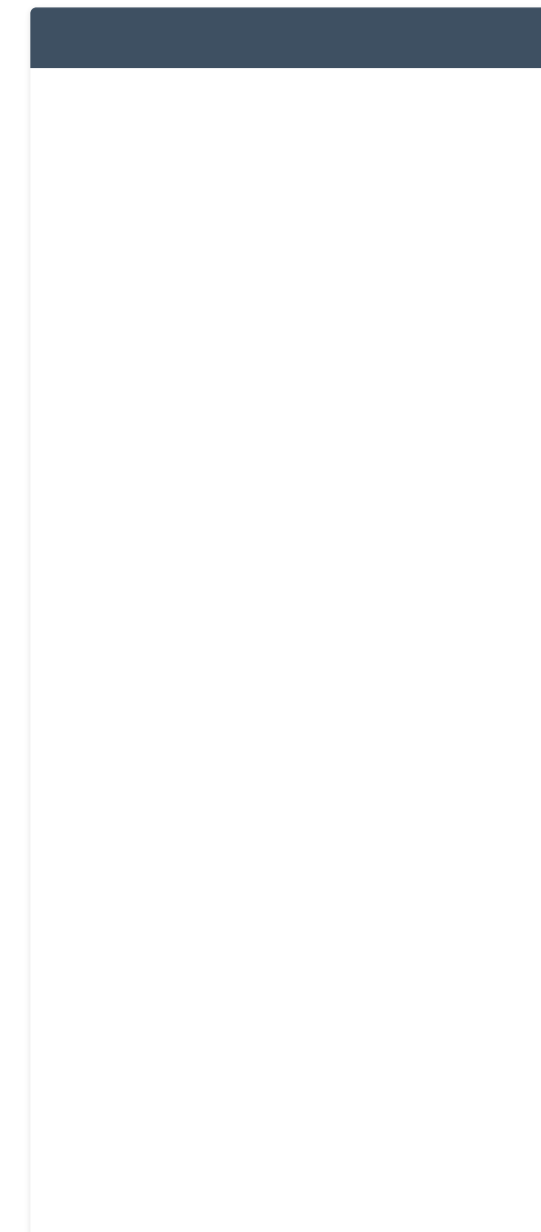
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