

Testimony of Richard E. Moseley, Jr., Retired Chief
ODNR Division of Natural Areas & Preserves

On the Proposal by DNR to Sunset the Ohio Natural Areas Council
Before the Sunset Review Committee

May 10, 2016

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, my name is Richard E. Moseley, Jr. I was the first chief of the Division of Natural Areas and Preserves and served for 20 years as the head of the natural areas and scenic rivers programs. I retired in 1993 from the Department of Natural Resources as Deputy Director and supervised this Division as well as the other land management and law enforcement divisions of the Department. I wish to speak against the Department of Natural Resources' proposal to do away with the Ohio Natural Areas Council.

It is imperative that the Ohio Natural Areas Council be retained as it was originally created in the 1970 Natural Areas Act (Am. S.B.113). In the twenty years of working with this seven member citizen advisory board, I found their input to be invaluable to the Division and the Natural Areas Program. By their representation on the council, the scientists and land managers from metropolitan park districts, colleges and universities, outdoor education centers, and natural history museums as well as citizens appointed for their interest in natural areas preservation provided input to the Division that helped us to look at acquisition, preservation and management from a different perspective. Their advice helped us to avoid problems and directed the program in a positive way that led to great citizen support of the program over the years and making the Ohio Natural Areas program a national leader in natural area preservation.

Now that Natural Areas and Preserves is embedded in the Division of Parks and Recreation because of budget cuts in recent years and is not a stand-alone Division, the Division needs the Natural Areas

Council more than ever as the care of these unique and fragile sites will be managed by an agency whose primary mission is to provide **recreation** opportunities for Ohioans rather than an agency whose sole goal and mission is **preservation**. The scientific, management, preservation, and educational advice provided by the council is even more critical in light of where the Division is now located within the Department.

Therefore, I urge you not to adopt this proposal to sunset this important and valuable resource to the Division. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to express my opinion on this important matter.