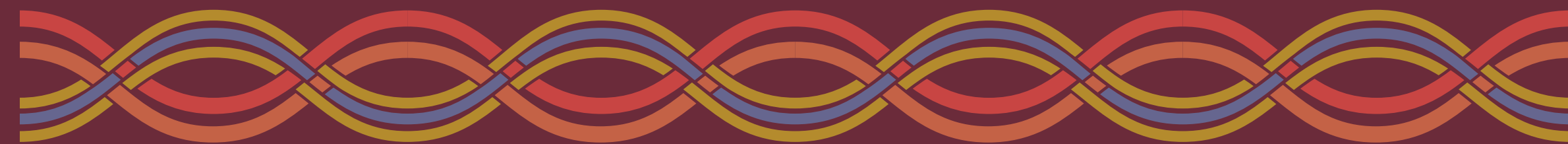


Blackfish Trail

G R E A T C O U N C I L S T A T E P A R K

For centuries, the Little Miami River has been a source of beauty and inspiration for people. It is home to many historical sites, including the Fort Ancient site, a UNESCO World Heritage Site that housed the Ancestors of many modern Native American tribes, and the Shawnee Village that stood on its banks in 1780.



As you walk the trail, imagine canoes floating down the river, the smell of food cooking, and the sounds of children playing with their dogs. From 1777-80, life in “Old Chillicothe” was one of peace, away from the conflicts at the colonial borders that would lead to the American Revolution. Chief Blackfish, the Hokiima or “chief” of this town, was killed defending it from colonial raids in 1779. He remains a symbol of resilience and hope in the face of challenges.

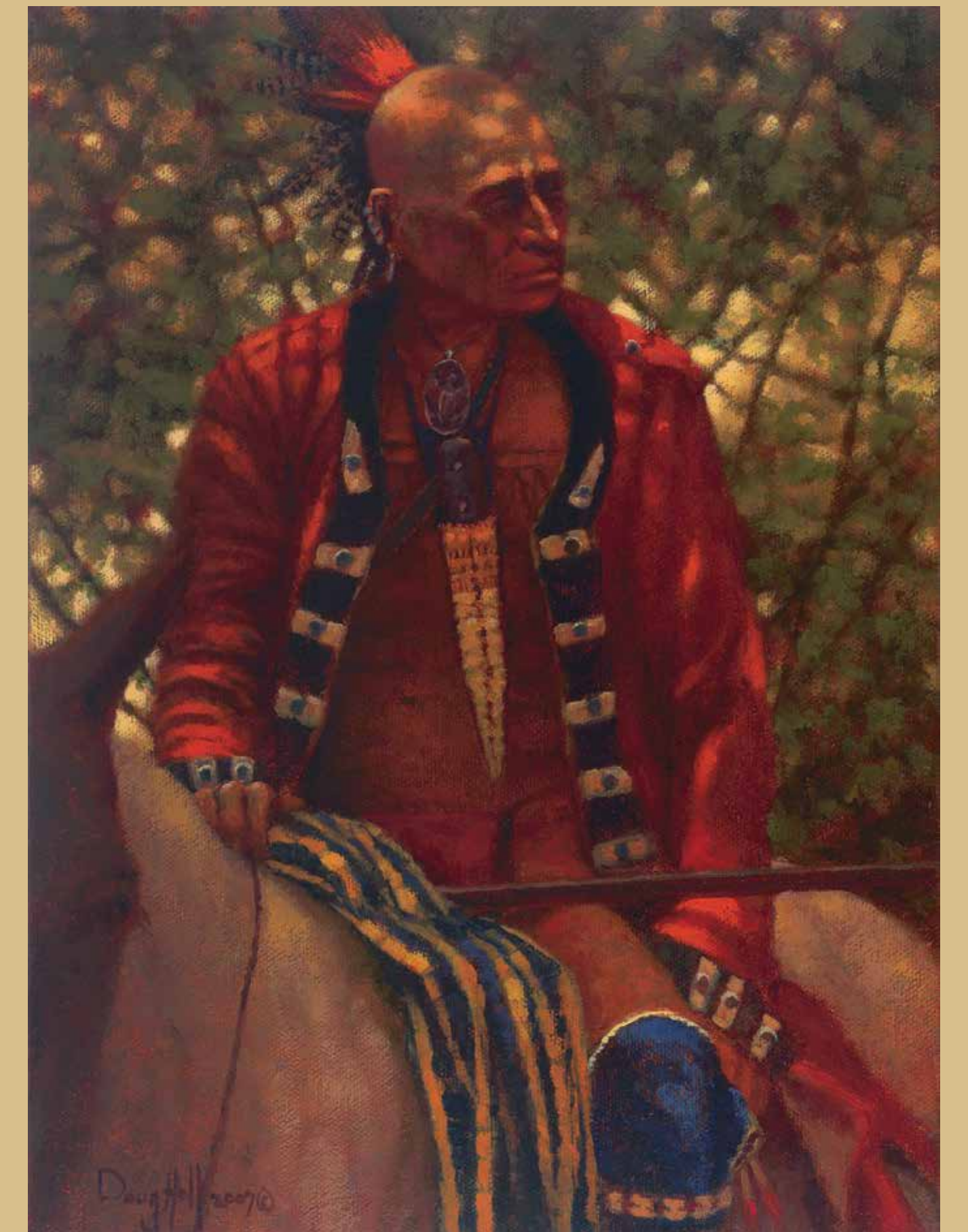


What scents do you notice when you stroll through the prairie? Pay attention to how each plant has its own special smell!

WHO WAS CHIEF BLACKFISH?

Hokiima M'katemwa

Not much is known about the life of Hokiima M'katemwa, also known as Chief Blackfish, apart from the fact that he was a leader and a speaker in his community. When Chief Hokolesskwa (Cornstalk) and his son died in 1777, Blackfish was entrusted with the responsibility of protecting his people from any further harm. To achieve this, a new community called Chillicothe (now referred to as Oldtown) was established in 1777 on the banks of the Little Miami River. This new settlement sought to provide a safe distance from the violent frontier and enabled the Shawnees to continue living in their homelands while attempting to find common ground with white settlers.



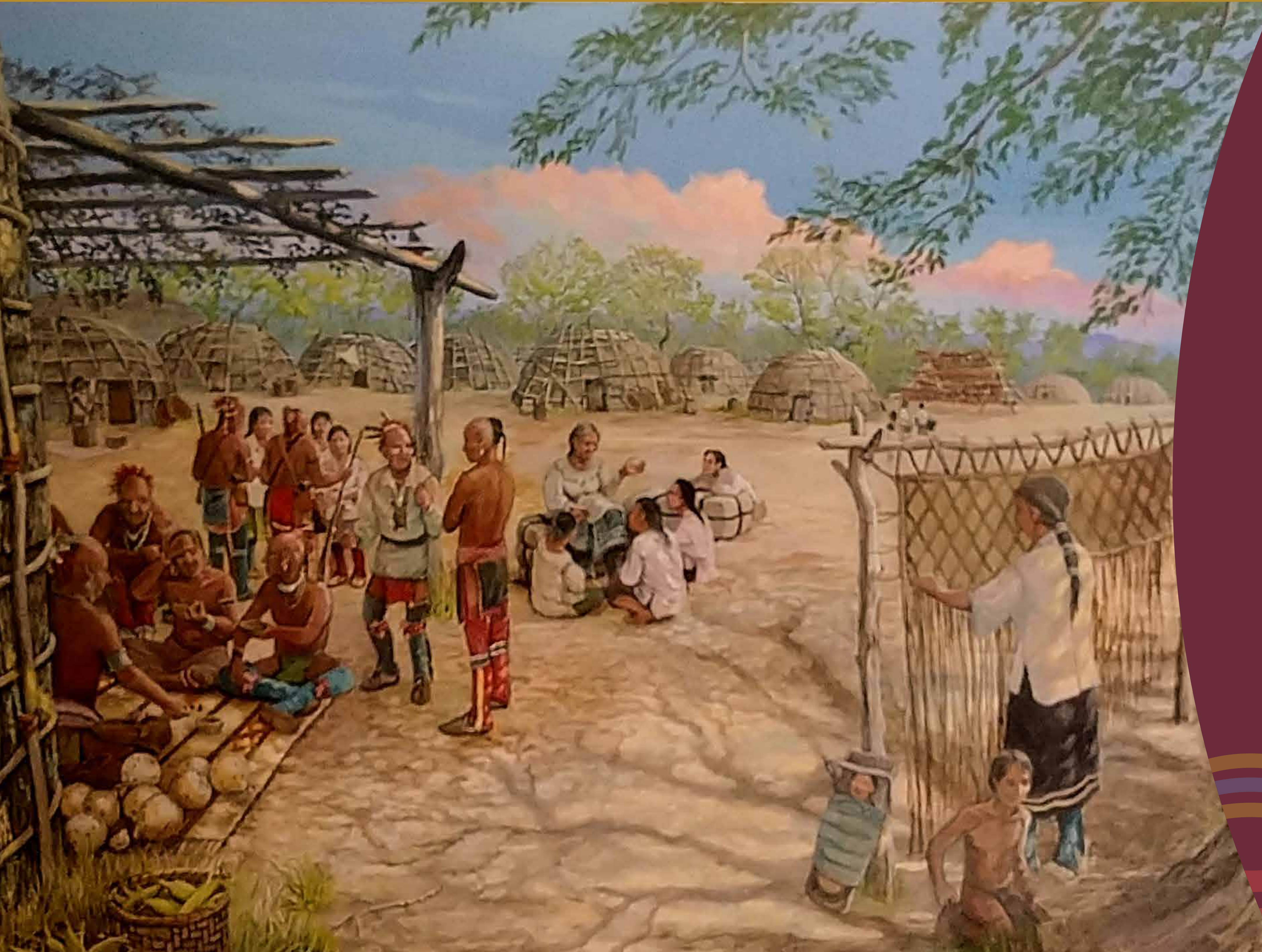
Victory Coat by Doug Hall, artist



O H I O D E P A R T M E N T O F N A T U R A L R E S O U R C E S

Life in Old Chillicothe

G R E A T C O U N C I L S T A T E P A R K



From 1777-1780, a town of possibly 1,000 Shawnee people stood right where you are now, once called Old Chillicothe, but later known as Oldtown. Imagine the sounds of daily life in the village, such as chopping wood, grandparents teaching the young ones, and dogs barking at squirrels. The Shawnee people who lived in the village were a matriarchal (women-led) culture. Women played an essential role in government and delegated power to male figureheads. They relied on agricultural crops like corn, beans, and squash as their main source of food along with fruits, nuts, berries, and tubers. The Shawnee people are likely descendants of Ohio's archeological cultures, such as the Adena, Hopewell, and Fort Ancient.

Artist attribution goes here once confirmed

O H I O D E P A R T M E N T O F N A T U R A L R E S O U R C E S

Shawnee Perspective

G R E A T C O U N C I L S T A T E P A R K

In the Shawnee worldview, we inhabit what is known as the “middle world,” a place where opposing forces of peace and conflict coexist. This worldview is based on the relationship between the Sky world and Lower world. The Thunderbird, a Sky World being, and the Underwater Panther, one of the chief spirits of the Lower world, often symbolize these opposing forces. However, in the Shawnee worldview, it is often people who possess the power to shape the world around them, not spirits. Human beings are responsible for maintaining balance, continuing natural cycles, and participating in the world around them.

Late Prehistoric period village in Ohio. Ancient Ohio Art Series, Susan Walton, artist



O H I O D E P A R T M E N T O F N A T U R A L R E S O U R C E S

The Value of a River

G R E A T C O U N C I L S T A T E P A R K



The Little Miami River has played an important role in shaping the history and development of Ohio as we know it today. For the Shawnee Tribe and other tribal peoples, the Little Miami River was a lifeline, providing transportation for trade, communication, and cultural exchange. Tributaries connected the Little Miami to major regional trade routes and allowed easy access to other parts of the Ohio Country. The river provided water for agriculture and supported diverse plant and animal populations. The river continued to be a source of life for the European settlers that lived at this site following the Shawnee, and today we enjoy its gifts of recreation and natural beauty.

Native American Life in the Archaic Period, Susan A Walton, artist, 2003

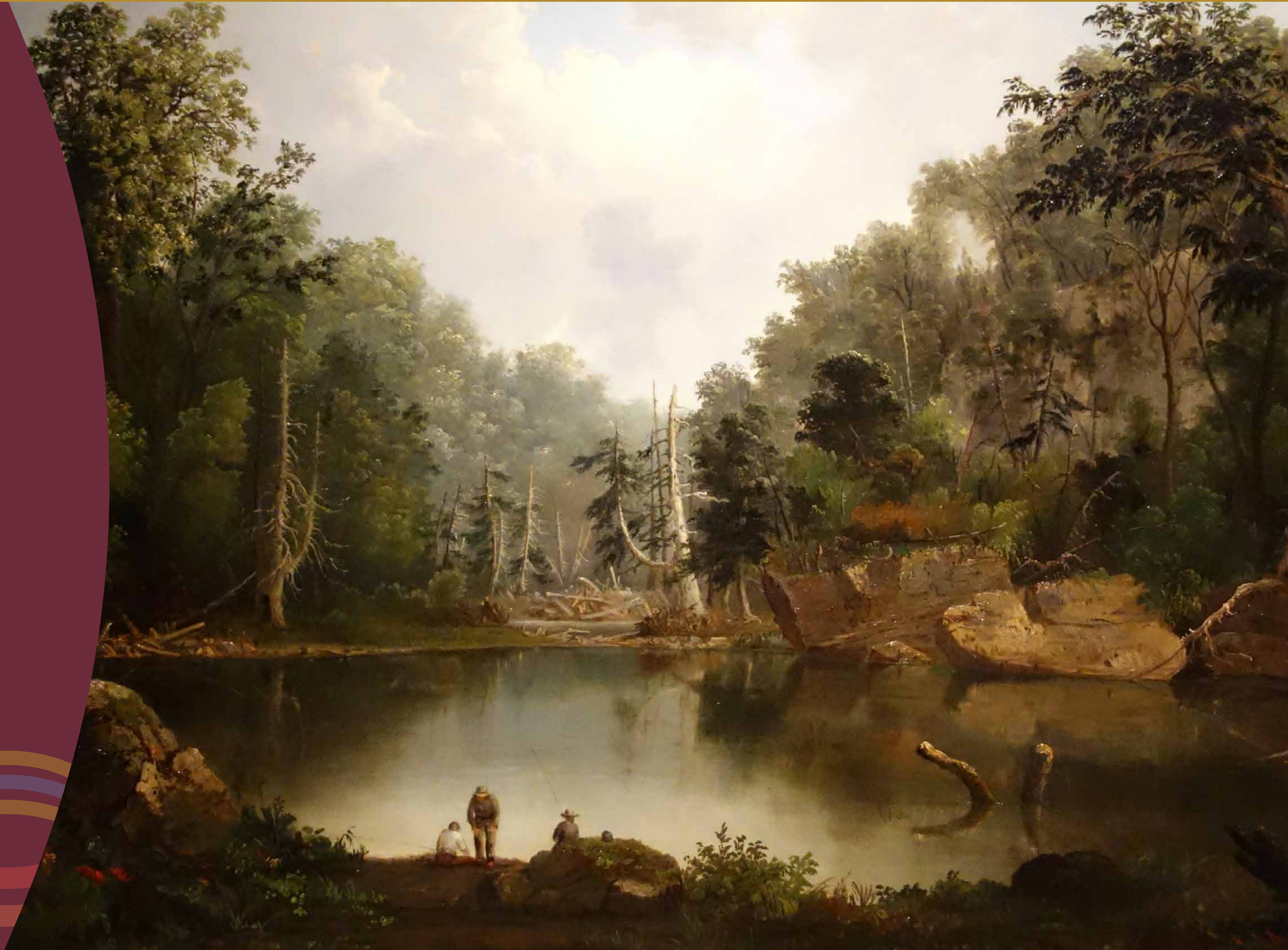
O H I O D E P A R T M E N T O F N A T U R A L R E S O U R C E S

On the Banks of History

G R E A T C O U N C I L S T A T E P A R K

As you look out at the steady flow of the Little Miami River, now a State and National Scenic and Historic River, think about how human history has unfolded. Smell the water and hear its slow, melodic voice. Feel the solid ground underneath your feet as you imagine the women of Old Chillicothe unloading the corn harvests from the canoes. Hear the Carolina parakeets and passenger pigeons overhead 1,000 years ago. Then imagine the European settlers of Oldtown whose farms later dotted the landscape. The stories of many people began and ended on this river, and with careful conservation of this place, we can share it with generations to come.

Blue Hole Flood Waters Little Miami River, Robert Seldon Duncanson, 1851



O H I O D E P A R T M E N T O F N A T U R A L R E S O U R C E S

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O H I O D E P A R T M E N T O F N A T U R A L R E S O U R C E S