

# Case Studies: Brownfield Re-Development/ Natural Areas Establishment & Management

## FERNALD PRESERVE

### Hamilton County

**Date Completed:** 2006

**Description:** The Fernald Preserve is located on the site of the former Feed Materials Production Center, a uranium processing facility that produced high-purity uranium metal products as the first step in America's nuclear weapons production cycle. The site's production mission began in 1951 and continued until 1989, when production operations ceased and Fernald's mission changed to environmental remediation. Remediation at the Fernald Preserve was conducted in accordance with Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) regulations. The Fernald Preserve is currently open to the public as a nature preserve. The site's ecological restoration has made the Fernald Preserve attractive to a large number of nesting and migrating birds, including locally rare species.



**Project Size:** 1050 acres

*Below: Dedication of the Fernald Preserve  
(Photo: Fernald Closure Project Homepage)*



# FERNALD PRESERVE VISITORS CENTER

Client: U.S. Department of Energy  
Location: Harrison, Ohio  
Size: 26 acre site/ 1,050 acre property



The roughly 1,050 acre site was formerly a secret uranium processing facility that became national headline news when environmental contamination was detected in 1984. The U.S. Department of Energy and many subcontractors decontaminated the facility, removed all buildings but two and shipped contaminants to disposal sites or buried them on site. The site was transformed into a nature preserve with wetlands, prairies and forests.

Glaserworks Architects transformed an existing rectangular box steel warehouse into the new Visitors Center. The entry walk and arrival space inside the building is aligned with the sunrise on the summer solstice. The solstice is symbolic of rebirth and renewal, and this project is the beginning of a new period in the history of this land.

The Visitors Center entry garden includes rain gardens, interpretive panels, restored wetlands, bioswales, and future walking trails.



1987



2007



## AWARDS

LEED Platinum Certification from USGBC  
2009 COTE Cincinnati Sustainability Award  
2009 Build America Award - First Place



***Developer/Client/Owner:***

U.S. Department of Energy  
Office of Legacy Management  
2597 Legacy Way, Grand Junction, CO 81503  
<http://energy.gov/lm/office-legacy-management>

***Designers / Consultants:***

Meisner and Associates / Land Vision  
1118 Pendleton Street Suite 301  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202  
[www.meisnerandassociates.com](http://www.meisnerandassociates.com)

University of Cincinnati's College of Design, Architecture, Art, and Planning  
5470 Aronoff  
University of Cincinnati  
PO Box 210016  
Cincinnati, OH 45221-0016  
<http://daap.uc.edu/>

***Features:***

- The property's natural features have been restored to pre-settlement conditions using native plants and grasses.
- Restoration activities at the site have created one of the largest man-made wetlands in Ohio, open water, upland forests, a lengthy riparian corridor, and 360 acres of grassland, including tallgrass prairie and savanna.
- The Preserve features seven miles of trails that provide access to the site's varied habitats. Over two hundred species of birds have been observed, and nearly 100 different species have been documented as nesting at the Fernald Preserve.
- The award-winning Fernald Preserve Visitors Center is the focal point of the site. Completed in August 2008, the Visitors Center began as a warehouse that was redesigned in cooperation with the University of Cincinnati's College of Design, Architecture, Art, and Planning

***Project Cost:*** \$4.4 Billion, including environmental remediation.

***Funding Sources & Incentives:*** U.S. Department of Energy

***Maintenance Cost:*** Not available

***Applicable Zoning Regulations:*** Not applicable