



# News from the Ohio Turnpike

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

## **Ohio Turnpike's busiest service plazas will feature Ohio-native plant gardens**

*Project announced for Earth Day and will feature 17 pollinating perennial plants native to Ohio*

**BEREA** (April 21, 2016) -- Two of the Ohio Turnpike's busiest service plazas will soon feature "Ohio Turnpike Native Plant Gardens." Located at the Middle Ridge and Vermilion Valley Service Plazas in Amherst, the gardens will feature 17 different Ohio-native plant species.

The Ohio Turnpike is partnering with Keep Ohio Beautiful and The Davey Tree Expert Co. on the beautification project and students from Lorain County Joint Vocational School will help install the gardens at an event on **May 20**.

Native plants are adapted to Ohio soil and climate, are easy to care for and are naturally drought-resistant. They attract birds, butterflies and other wildlife. The garden design plans are being provided by Davey Tree.

"The native plant gardens will serve as a model to educate and encourage people to grow native species in their own gardens," said Ohio Turnpike Executive Director Randy Cole. "These gardens will display a sense of beauty and place that is uniquely Ohio."

"We are proud to join with the Ohio Turnpike, Davey Tree, Keep Lorain County Beautiful and our other partners to educate Ohioans and those traveling our beautiful state about the role of native plants in a healthy ecosystem, as well as in community beautification and pride," said Michael Menett, Executive Director, Keep Ohio Beautiful. "Our focus this year on pollinators will bring attention to their important role in Ohio's food supply and the delight they can bring to residential gardens."

The Gardens will have 17 different species of plants and shrubs:

Yarrow

Swamp Milkweed

Sullivant's Prairie Milkweed

Butterfly Weed

New England Aster

White Turtlehead

Purple Cone Flowers

Rattlesnake Master

Swamp Rose Mallow

Northern Blue Flag

Gayfeather

Great Blue Lobelia

Bee Balm

Prairie Cone Flower

Ohio Goldenrod

Ceanothus americanus

Cephalanthus Occidentalis

“The Ohio Turnpike continues to explore innovative and exciting initiatives that add value to the customer travel experience. With the installation of these native plant gardens on May 20th and in combination with the 60th Anniversary Exhibit at Vermilion Valley, the Commission is working hard to enrich the Turnpike travel experience,” added Cole.

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