

# Cuyahoga River RAP-Up

To the Cuyahoga River RAP Coordinating Committee

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## CUYAHOGA RIVER WATERSHED SYMPOSIUM A SUCCESS

Over 100 people from throughout the Cuyahoga River watershed attended the Cuyahoga River Connections symposium held on October 18 and 19 at the Sheraton Suites Hotel in Cuyahoga Falls.

Attendees gave high marks to the symposium, its location, agenda and the quality of the presentations. They also noted that one of the highlights was the opportunity to network with other attendees during lunch and at the special afternoon session.

The responses during the wrap up session and evaluation forms help to reinforce the direction that the RAP has been pursuing. These top issues or priorities include:

1. Education of the general public and elected officials
2. Strategic and sustainable funding

3. Collaboration among tributary watershed groups, political entities and stakeholder partners
4. Consistent and effective land use planning and regulations
5. Continuing implementation of restoration projects
6. Strategic land conservation initiatives

If you were unable to attend the symposium and would like to see or download any of the presentations, they are available online at: [www.crcpo.org](http://www.crcpo.org)

Thank you to the sponsors who helped to make our event possible: **Ohio EPA; USEPA Great Lakes National Program Office; Davey Resource Group; Enviroscience, Inc.; Biohabitats, Inc.; CDM; and Hull & Associates, Inc.**



Cuyahoga River RAP staff and tributary watershed group representatives

## Cuyahoga River Fish Community Survey Finds Significant Improvement

This past summer Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District personnel have been electrofishing the mainstem of the Cuyahoga River upstream and downstream of their Southerly wastewater treatment plant discharge. Their latest survey found 34 species of fish, indicating that the fish community is reaching attainment with state biological criteria. For the first time, pollution-sensitive species such as flathead catfish and mimic shiner were found. Ohio EPA will be reviewing their data to confirm that this river segment is now in attainment with fish community goals.



Mimic Shiner

Flathead Catfish



## Revised Water Quality Trading Rules Package Proposed - Ohio EPA to Hold Public Hearing on November 15

After reviewing public comments, Ohio EPA is proposing a different

version of rules aimed at reducing phosphorous and other nutrients in Ohio's streams.

The Agency will take public comments on the proposed rules at a public hearing at 1:30 p.m. on November 15, 2006, in Conference Room C, Ohio EPA, Lazarus Government Center, 122 S. Front St., Columbus.

Statewide, excess nutrients (particularly phosphorus) are the second largest cause of water pollution; excess silt ranks first among stream pollutants. The new rules would allow municipalities and farmers to develop incentive packages to help reduce phosphorus in Ohio's streams.

Some changes that were made from the draft rules include:

- allowing concentrated animal feeding operations to participate in the program, however, significant restrictions would still apply;
- adding specific guidelines to define when the Director may waive or reduce the scope of economic evaluations and assessments of the overall environmental and economic effectiveness of the trading activities;
- clarifying what additional information the Director might require in a trading application; and
- requiring that only permit holders and administrators of approved trading plans make records relating to trading activities available to the Director

Numerous other changes were made to clarify the rules and

address comments raised by the interested parties.

The Agency will accept comments regarding the proposed rules until November 16, 2006. Comments or requests to be placed on a mailing list for more information about this proposal may be sent to Elizabeth Bailik, Ohio EPA, Division of Surface Water, P.O. Box 1049, Columbus, OH 43216-1049 or by e-mail to: [elizabeth.bailik@epa.state.oh.us](mailto:elizabeth.bailik@epa.state.oh.us)

The Agency will consider all comments before a final decision is made on the proposed rules.

## Munroe Falls Celebrates River Restoration and Dam Removal

On October 27 Munroe Falls area residents gathered for a ribbon cutting ceremony at Brust Park. Summit County Executive James McCarthy, Munroe Fall Mayor Frank Larson and Ohio EPA District Chief Bill Skowronski cut the red ribbon across the newly constructed observation deck overlooking the site of the former dam.



Munroe Falls Dam

The Cuyahoga River near the dam was nearly stagnant much of the year prior to the dam's removal. It was identified in the Middle Cuyahoga TMDL as a

cause of water quality problems in this stretch of the river as well as restricting fish movement.

After construction began in August 2005 to lower the dam a natural rock ledge was found beneath it. Ohio EPA, Summit County Department of Environmental Services and the City of Munroe Falls agreed to remove the dam completely, allowing the river to flow freely and exposing a river feature that had been hidden for over 100 years. In October 2005 the dam removal was completed.



**During Removal**

The former dam site is marked by a set of rapids, a reconstructed abutment, and an amphitheater constructed from the old dam blocks. The dam site is now an attractive gathering spot on the banks of a scenic natural river.



**After Removal**



For details about the Munroe Falls dam removal and river restoration project, visit the website at:

<http://www.co.summit.oh.us/executive/mfd/mfdhome.htm>

## **Proposed Ohio EPA Rulemaking Governing Wastewater Discharge Permits**

Ohio EPA is proposing to adopt an amendment to Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) 3745-33-07 on establishing wastewater discharge permit conditions.

OAC Chapter 3745-33 contains the administrative and technical requirements for writing and obtaining National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits from Ohio EPA. OAC rule 3745-33-07 covers procedures for deciding when limits to protect water quality standards are needed for chemicals and toxicity. The rule also contains variance provisions for cases where meeting water quality-based effluent limits would cause substantial and widespread economic impact. OAC rule 3745-33-07 is proposed to be amended to clarify language related to variances from water quality standards (OAC Chapter 3745-1) and to change the procedures for renewing mercury variances.

The public comment period will run until **5:00 p.m. on November 17, 2006**. A public hearing on this proposed rule will be held to consider public comments in accordance with Section 119.03 of the Ohio Revised Code. This hearing will be held in Room C at the Ohio EPA Central Office at 2:30 p.m. on **November 16, 2006**. For details, go to the Agency website at:

[http://www.epa.state.oh.us/dsw/rules/prop\\_mercury\\_variance\\_oct06.html](http://www.epa.state.oh.us/dsw/rules/prop_mercury_variance_oct06.html)

## **Ohio EPA Seeks Comment on Urban Setting Designations**

Ohio EPA is considering a request by Home Depot USA, Inc., for an Urban Setting Designation at a proposed development site in Garfield Heights.

If approved, the Urban Setting Designation (USD) would cover 16.6 acres of land located at the City View Center shopping plaza at the intersection of Interstate 480 and Transportation Boulevard. Home Depot proposes to construct a store on the site of the former Matousek Landfill which closed in 1970.

Ohio EPA is also considering a request by the city of Akron for an Urban Setting Designation at a redevelopment site near the Akron Fulton International Airport.

If approved, this USD would cover 393 acres of land in southern Akron, including portions of the airport and the Akron Airdock property.

The Agency is seeking public comments on both projects before making a final decision.

These properties are undergoing cleanups through Ohio's Voluntary Action Program (VAP). Under VAP, contaminated ground water on the property must be treated if it poses a risk to the community or environment. However, if there is no current or anticipated future use of that ground water (for drinking, bathing, cooking), a USD may be requested.

Granting a USD will reduce ground water cleanup requirements, lower costs and promote economic redevelopment while still protecting public health and the environment. Ohio EPA's director can approve the USD if a state-certified environmental professional verifies that USD requirements are met and existing or future ground water uses have been evaluated.

Ohio EPA's Voluntary Action Program allows someone to voluntarily clean up contaminated property in Ohio without the risk of state civil liability. Under VAP, a certified professional must review the cleanup to verify that it meets VAP standards before Ohio EPA issues a covenant not to sue, releasing the organization from state civil liability. Ohio EPA has access to cleaned-up properties and documents and audits at least one-fourth of the properties to confirm that cleanup standards are met.

Written comments concerning both applications may be sent to Vanessa Steigerwald-Dick, Ohio EPA Northeast District Office, 2110 East Aurora Road,

Twinsburg, Ohio 44087 or to [vanessa.steigerwald@epa.state.oh.us](mailto:vanessa.steigerwald@epa.state.oh.us). Public comments received by November 17, 2006, will be considered before a final decision is made.

The USD applications are available for review by first calling (330) 963-1200.



## Tributary Watershed Group Spotlight – Yellow Creek Watershed Committee

The Yellow Creek Watershed Committee was created in January of 2006 by a Resolution of Bath Township as a citizen committee to ensure the preservation and protection of the Yellow Creek and its tributaries. It is guided by the strategies defined in [The Yellow Creek Watershed Action Plan](#) created by the Northeast Ohio Four County Regional Planning and Development Organization (NEFCO).

The Yellow Creek watershed receives run-off from 9 communities with varying land use patterns from agriculture to large retail shopping areas to trucking terminals to upscale residential development.

Yellow Creek is rated as one of only two high water-quality tributaries of the Cuyahoga River, but it is also threatened by effects of development.

For details on their programs and projects, check out their website at: [www.yellowcreekwatershed.org](http://www.yellowcreekwatershed.org)

## Upcoming Meetings

Several meetings and events that may be of interest include:

- **Cuyahoga River RAP Coordinating Committee – November 16 at 5:00pm.** Contact Jim White at 216-241-2414 ext 307 for details.
- **Follow The Flow - November 15-16** in Columbus, OH. The Water Management Association of Ohio's 35th Annual Fall Conference, this meeting will address such issues as hydrology and watershed management, monitoring and assessment of water resources, and policy and administration Issues related to water management. For details phone 614-882-5489 or email: [wmao@ngwa.org](mailto:wmao@ngwa.org)
- **Yellow Creek Watershed Committee – November 20 at 7:00pm** at Bath Township Hall.



**Best Wishes for a Wonderful Holiday Season!!!**

