

# Cuyahoga River RAP-Up

To the Cuyahoga River RAP Coordinating Committee

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## MITTAL STEEL GIVES GRANT TO IMPROVE CUYAHOGA RIVER ECOSYSTEM

On June 4 officials of Mittal Steel USA presented a \$30,000 check to the Cuyahoga River RAP to support the organization's operations and its Green Bulkhead initiative, aimed at restoring fish to the river's navigation channel. The company is also donating areas along its riverbank, as well as design and manufacturing expertise, to test the prototype shoreline systems.

Mittal Steel's grant will contribute to the organization's research, planning and watershed stewardship programs, and help it to develop and test prototype High Performance Shoreline Edge Systems, or Green Bulkheads, that could replace or enhance the aging steel bulkheads along the shipping channel south of the river's mouth on Lake Erie.

The check presentation was made at a ¾ acre property that Mittal Steel is donating to the City of Cleveland with the expectation

that it will be used for a green bulkhead prototype. The site is located on the west bank of the

river under the I490 bridge. The public will eventually be able to view the shoreline restoration from a spur of the planned extension of the Towpath Trail near West 3<sup>rd</sup> Street.

Green bulkheads will provide habitats for fish to feed, reproduce and migrate, add oxygen to the river in areas, and help to improve water quality along this segment of the river. Existing steel bulkhead structures do not allow for aquatic habitat supporting fish populations, nor do they contribute to water quality.

The Cuyahoga RAP's project is designed to create opportunities for economic development in support of environmental restoration by involving local and regional businesses in the design and manufacture of prototype "green" bulkheads.

"Support from our industrial community is critical if we are to develop effective local solutions. Mittal's support for this project has been longstanding, and it shows that we can promote recovery of key river systems, preserve maritime commerce along the river and, at the same

time, use environmental restoration as an economic development tool," said Jim White. "It's a win-win situation."



Rich Zavoda and Chuck Glazer of Mittal Steel USA present the check for \$30,000 to Jim White and Jack Cox of the RAP.

"This is another example of Mittal Steel's commitment to environmental stewardship," said Chuck Glazer of Mittal. "The Cuyahoga River has been vital to Cleveland since the area was first settled and continues today as an important waterway for both business and recreation. The green bulkheads project will further demonstrate that industry and ecology can coexist and thrive together. We are proud to do our part with this leadership gift."

(This article is from the news release prepared by Jane Goodman)

## The Cuyahoga Headed for the Small Screen!

Florentine Films, the company that has been making documentary films since 1978, has known that the Cuyahoga story needed to be told. Producer Lawrence Hott has been in contact with RAP stakeholders and OEPA staff for several years to learn more, and to find out how the river has fared in the years since the infamous 1969 fire. In 2003 OEPA staffers Steve Tuckerman, Bill Zawiski and Roger Thoma let the film crew join them at a “fish shocking” in the Upper Cuyahoga in Geauga County’s Russell Park. (Fish shocking, or electrofishing, is a method of sorting and inspecting fish populations by applying a pulsed DC current to the water, which temporarily immobilizes the fish, who float to the surface to be netted.) Unfortunately, the film’s funding ran dry shortly afterward, and the project was shelved.

Hott didn’t forget about it, though, and decided to finish the project with the remaining funds from Cleveland’s PBS affiliate WVIZ. Filming resumed last month. The scene this time was the Lower Cuyahoga’s navigation channel in Cleveland, where they used fish shocking again to compare the results from the relatively unimpacted Upper Cuyahoga to “the environmental insults from our use of the river at the end of the Cuyahoga’s journey,” said Tuckerman.

The one-hour program, *The Return of the Cuyahoga*, will

wrap production this year and air in Cleveland and across the country sometime in 2008. More information about the film can be found on Florentine Film’s Web site at

[http://www.florentinefilms.org/production/04\\_cuy.htm](http://www.florentinefilms.org/production/04_cuy.htm)



Roger Thoma on camera in front of Florentine Films crew in 2007

## Ohio EPA Awards Environmental Education Grant for RAP Watershed Awareness Campaign

Building a better watershed will be the focus of a new public awareness campaign made possible through a \$49,954 grant from Ohio EPA’s Environmental Education Fund (OEEF).

The grant was awarded to the **Cuyahoga River Community Planning Organization** – one of 10 Ohio organizations or communities to receive a total of \$399,377 to support environmental education programs.

The CRCPO will use the money to conduct watershed workshops for residents and elected officials living around Furnace Run, Brandywine Creek, Sagamore

Creek and Mud Brook – four Cuyahoga River tributaries being impacted by rapid development. The workshops will focus on local water quality issues and the land use planning process. A 96-page comprehensive watershed owner’s manual will supplement the training.

The Cuyahoga River Community Planning Organization will collaborate with the Cleveland Metroparks, Cuyahoga Valley National Park, Summit County Engineer, Temple Beth Shalom and the URS Corporation to coordinate and conduct the workshops.

The OEEF is administered by Ohio EPA. Grants up to \$50,000 are funded from one-half of the civil penalties collected by the Agency for air and water pollution control violations. Eligible grant recipients include environmental groups, public and private schools, colleges and universities, trade or professional organizations, businesses and state and local governments.



## Corps Selects Euclid Creek Project for Funding

The Corps of Engineers has announced that two projects from the Great Lakes region were selected from a nationwide competition for habitat restoration funding under the Estuary Restoration Act of 2000. The projects selected are at Euclid Creek in Cleveland, Ohio and at Fort Sheridan Forest Preserve in Lake County, Illinois.

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The Euclid Creek project was sponsored by the Cuyahoga Soil and Water Conservation District in partnership with the City of Cleveland, Euclid Creek Watershed Council, and Friends of Euclid Creek. The project will restore five acres of estuary wetlands in the lower 1.5 miles of Euclid Creek, a small tributary to Lake Erie located primarily in Wildwood State Park in Cleveland, Ohio. The stream channel will be restored to improve the habitat of the estuary zone of this freshwater system and restore the migration and spawning of aquatic species upstream into the creek's upper watershed. In addition, the project will contribute to meeting state water quality standards for full attainment of the Euclid Creek. The estimated total cost for the project is \$820,000 and the Federal share \$515,000.

## Using a Rapid Method to Predict Recreational Water Quality at the Cuyahoga Valley National Park

Conventional methods for determining recreational water quality are based on concentrations of fecal-indicator bacteria, such as *Escherichia coli*. When found in water, *E. coli* indicates contamination from human and animal waste and the possible presence of disease-causing organisms. Determining levels of fecal-indicator bacteria by conventional methods requires at least 18 hours to process and culture samples before results

are available. This length of time is too long to assess water quality, take adequate control measures, and warn recreational users of a health hazard. Decay, dilution, dispersion, and transport of fecal-indicator bacteria in water cause concentrations to change greatly over short periods of time. Because results from conventional methods are not available until the following day, the safety of the water for recreational use may not be accurately assessed. The need for a rapid method that provides reliable results of the current day's bacteria concentrations is widely recognized.

U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) scientists, in partnership with the National Park Service (NPS), have been testing a rapid method in Cuyahoga Valley National Park, Ohio, that provides estimates of *E. coli* concentrations in approximately one hour. Previous studies at the University of Michigan showed a strong, significant correlation between the rapid and conventional methods for *E. coli* in samples collected from two Great Lakes beaches, two inland beaches, and the Huron River. The purpose of this study is to compare the results of the rapid method to results of the conventional method for determining concentrations of *E. coli*. Water samples were collected during the May-through-September recreational seasons of 2004 and 2005 at three sites on the Cuyahoga River within Cuyahoga Valley National Park.

The Cuyahoga River connects the national park with the largest

system of freshwater in the world: the Great Lakes. The fabled river that burned brought international attention to water-quality issues and encouraged cleanup through the passage of environmental legislation, especially the Clean Water Act. Over the past few decades, the water quality of the Cuyahoga River has improved considerably and the river was designated in 1998 as one of 14 American Heritage Rivers; however, the water quality of the Cuyahoga River is still a primary concern of park managers and visitors. The 23-mile reach of the river within the park receives discharges of stormwater, combined-sewer overflows, and incompletely disinfected wastewater from urban areas. Park visitors are discouraged from canoeing, swimming, and wading in the river because these discharges can be a threat to their health.

Until improvements in the treatment, disinfection, and detention of sewage and storm-water overflows upstream of the park's boundary become a reality, resource managers need an interim approach to protect human health and to provide safe, water-based recreation for park visitors. Without a realistic method to determine daily water-quality conditions, use of the river will be discouraged, even when fecal indicator concentrations are at safe levels.

You can view the entire article at:

<http://www2.nature.nps.gov/ParkScience/index.cfm?ArticleID=150>

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## Ohio Brownfield Conference

Ohio EPA's Site Assessment and Brownfield Revitalization (SABR) Program will be hosting Ohio's first Brownfield Conference on **November 27 & 28, 2007**, at Cherry Valley Lodge in Newark, Ohio, 43055.

This two-day conference will cover a variety of topics and will address the issues, trends and challenges facing brownfield redevelopment today. Public and private sector experts will share their knowledge and interact with participants in educational sessions.

### Who Should Attend?

- Local government leaders
- Financial and insurance providers and risk management practitioners
- Economic development officials
- Community development organizations
- Environmental and civil engineers
- Planners and public work officials
- Real estate developers and investors
- Attorneys

### Why Attend?

- Central location
- Low cost
- Relevant and timely session topics
- Networking opportunities
- Outstanding exhibits
- Fascinating Keynote Speakers
- Excellent Presenters
- Conference CD with all presentational content
- Breakfast, Lunch and Refreshments are included!!

The complete conference agenda and registration information is available at:

[http://www.epa.state.oh.us/derr/Brownfield\\_Conference/index.html](http://www.epa.state.oh.us/derr/Brownfield_Conference/index.html)

## Upcoming Meetings

Several meetings and events that may be of interest include:

- **CRCPO Board of Directors/RAP Steering Committee – July 12 at 9:00am** at NOACA. Contact Jim White at 216-241-2414 ext 307 for details.
- **Cuyahoga River RAP Coordinating Committee – July 26.** Time and place TBA. Contact Jim White at 216-241-2414 ext 307 for details.
- **Lake Erie LaMP Public Forum – July 27-28** at the Toledo Riverfront Hotel. Contact the Ohio Environmental Council at 614-487-7506 for details.
- **Mill Creek Technical Advisory Committee – August 16 at 9:00am.** Location TBA. Contact Chuck Hambly at 216-241-2414 ext 253 for details.
- **Yellow Creek Watershed Committee – August 20 at 7:00pm** at Bath Township Hall. Check out their website at <http://www.yellowcreekwatershed.org/index.htm>
- **The Great Euclid Creek Clean Up – September 15** at various locations. Contact

Lynn Garrity at 216-524-6580 ext 16 for details.

- **34<sup>th</sup> Annual Natural Areas Association Conference – October 9 - 12** in Cleveland. Visit the conference website at <http://www.naturalarea.org/07conference/>



*If you have any items or meeting notices for the next RAP-Up newsletter – please contact me at 330-963-1117 or email at [kelvin.rogers@epa.state.oh.us](mailto:kelvin.rogers@epa.state.oh.us)*