

A CASE FOR FEDERAL INVESTMENT IN THE OHIO RIVER BASIN



OHIO RIVER BASIN
ALLIANCE

The Ohio River basin spans 204,000 square miles, encompassing parts of 14 states and the ancestral lands of over 40 federally recognized Tribal Nations. More than 30 million basin residents rely on the Ohio River, and the rivers, lakes and streams connected to it, for drinking water, recreation, and as a driver of local economies.

However, there is significant concern among Ohio River residents about toxic pollution, such as PCBs and mercury, and sewage contamination, which can endanger drinking water sources and threaten public health.

The Ohio River Basin Alliance and the National Wildlife Federation have collaborated with river communities, businesses, non-profit organizations, universities, agencies, and Tribal Nations to create a report that prioritizes federal investments in the basin, titled “Healthy Waters, Healthy Communities, Healthy Economies: A Collaborative Plan to Restore and Protect the Waters of the Ohio River Basin.” The report examines practical solutions to clean up pollution, reduce runoff, restore wildlife habitats, modernize water infrastructure, and prevent invasive species.

The draft report was developed with input from over 500 residents across 31 Ohio River basin communities. It focuses on local clean water priorities to support workforce development and to aid those communities most impacted by pollution and environmental harm. It is being released for public comment and will then be delivered to U.S. Congress, with the goal of securing long-term investments to implement the restoration and protection solutions proposed in the document.

KEY MEMBERS OF CONGRESS HAVE SHOWN BIPARTISAN SUPPORT FOR KEY ISSUES IN THE REPORT, RECOGNIZING THAT OUR REGION DESERVES CLEAN WATER, A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT AND A ROBUST ECONOMY!

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS:

INCREASED FEDERAL INVESTMENT IN PROVEN RESTORATION PROGRAMS.

INCREASED MONITORING AND RESEARCH TO GUIDE FUTURE ACTIONS.

INCREASED COORDINATION ACROSS THE REGION TO MANAGE HEALTHY ECOSYSTEMS.

INCREASED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO ENSURE LOCAL COMMUNITIES CAN BENEFIT FROM RESTORATION ACTIONS.



Photo Credit: Joe Wolek



ohioriverbasinalliance.org

CURRENT FEDERAL INVESTMENTS IN ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION



PROPOSED RESTORATION SOLUTIONS

THE REPORT SUPPORTS SOLUTIONS THAT WILL HELP LOCAL, STATE AND TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS PROTECT THEIR DRINKING WATER, PUBLIC HEALTH AND QUALITY OF LIFE.

Clean up toxic pollution and mine waste to protect the health of communities.

Build nature-based infrastructure to mitigate flooding and pollution.

Update infrastructure to provide safe and affordable drinking water and to safeguard public health.

Remove old, unsafe dams to increase fish habitat and support safe recreational opportunities.

Prevent and manage invasive species to support flourishing local fish and wildlife.

Restore habitat, such as wetlands, to provide a home for fish and wildlife, filter pollutants, absorb rainwater, prevent flooding, and support outdoor recreation.

Support farm conservation to improve soil and water health and reduce toxic algal blooms.



**NATIONAL
WILDLIFE
FEDERATION**



**OHIO RIVER BASIN
ALLIANCE**

**UNIVERSITY OF
LOUISVILLE**
CHRISTINA LEE BROWN
ENVIROME INSTITUTE