

# River Waves

FALL 2011

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Water quality testing with electronic meters



Seining for fish (photo: Melinda Hartong)

## River Explorer Reaches 10,000 Student Milestone

In only 6-1/2 years, our River Explorer education program has reached 10,000 students in Ohio, Kentucky, and Indiana. Students from more than 45 schools have participated in our unique hands-on approach to environmental learning. Teachers and students routinely comment how the River Explorer experience is the best field trip they have ever had! Also, teachers relate that this program clearly enables students to better understand difficult concepts, and their improved math and science test results underscore the benefit of participating in River Explorer.

We thank the following for their support in helping us reach this level of achievement: The Toyota Foundation, The Charles Dater Foundation, The Greater Cincinnati Foundation, The Ohio Environmental Education Fund, The Stillson Foundation (5th Third Bank, Trustee), The Robert Reakirt Foundation (PNC Bank, Trustee), The Gannett Foundation, Anonymous Donors, and our ORF members.



Learning about water conservation – Bucket Brigade



Microscopic examination of macroinvertebrates



# DRINK BEER. SAVE A RIVER.

We're extremely pleased to have been selected by Sierra Nevada Brewing Company as a beneficiary of their 3rd annual "Wild rivers" campaign. Wild Rivers is a campaign dedicated to helping preserve vital waterways across the country.

For every 12-pack of Pale Ale and Sierra Nevada seasonal beer purchased in the U.S. from August 1 through September 10, Sierra Nevada will donate a portion of proceeds to river-focused partners across the country, including Ohio River Foundation.

"Great water is essential to making great beer," said Ken Grossman, Founder and President of Sierra Nevada Brewing Co. "We are committed to preserving natural waterways both in the Sierra Nevada that offer our inspiration, and across the nation.

"We measure the success of our business not only on the quality of our beer, but also our contribution to a healthy environment," Grossman said.

The "Wild Rivers" partnership aims to raise awareness and increase stewardship of rivers that sustain our communities and ecosystems. Since the program's start in 2009, Sierra Nevada Brewing Co. has donated more than \$170,000 to help its partners preserve vital waterways across the country.

"We are honored and excited to have been selected by Sierra Nevada as a partner in their Wild Rivers campaign. With many wild rivers within the Ohio River watershed, and our increasing efforts at restoring and protecting them, this support comes at a crucial time in our program development. We look forward to supporting this campaign and enjoying a cold, refreshing Sierra Nevada brew!" commented Rich Cogen, Executive Director, Ohio River Foundation.

Besides Ohio River Foundation, the 2011 Wild Rivers campaign will also support Western Rivers Conservancy, Delaware Riverkeeper Network, The River Project, and the Southeast Watershed Forum.

For more information, visit [www.savewildrivers.com](http://www.savewildrivers.com)

*River Waves* is published by the Ohio River Foundation. Ohio River Foundation is a citizen led, non-profit, non-governmental organization that works through education and conservation programs to protect and improve the natural condition of the Ohio River and its tributaries for the health and employment of present and future generations.

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*Printed on recycled paper*

# Youth Conservation Teams Mark First Season With Historic Success

Streams and rivers in Hamilton and Clermont County got some much needed help this summer from ORF's newest program: Youth Conservation Teams (YCT). This program, patterned after similar programs in other regions of the country, is the only one of its kind in the entire Ohio River watershed.

In just 6 weeks, two teams of 6 high school students successfully completed 49 habitat conservation projects in the Great Miami and Little Miami River Watersheds. By the end of the summer they had:

- Planted 720 trees, shrubs, small plants, and grasses
- Installed 2,850 sq. ft. of deer-resistant fencing
- Hand-placed 4.5 tons of stone
- Constructed 4 water bars to divert stormwater
- Installed 100 ft. of 6-inch pipe to reduce runoff
- Removed 100 lbs. of trash from riverbanks
- Transported 2,400 gallons of water for irrigation

The 10 students (some of whom worked both weeks) selected from 55 high school applicants, were: Taylor Batty (Madeira), Dylan Calahan (Clark Montessori), Caroline Dill (McNicholas), Tony Losekamp (McNicholas), Quinn Moore (Fayetteville-Perry), Ben Poehlmann (Roger Bacon), Hailey Rolfes (William Henry Harrison), Dawn Thomas (St. Ursula), Andrew Utrecht (Gamble Montessori), and Noah Yasgur (Sycamore).

“This was an exciting employment and learning opportunity for these students,” said Bernie Moller, YCT Crew Director. “In addition to the field work they performed, they also got to spend time with scientists and experts from the natural resource and academic fields for in-depth learning about habitat protection.”

Primary project sites and partners: Great Miami River, Grandview (Hamilton County Park District); Children's Home of Cincinnati; Avey's Run, Shor Park (Clermont County Park District).

Special thanks to our YCT Education Days partners: Chris Lorentz, Thomas More College Ohio River Research and Education Field Station; Mike Miller, University of Cincinnati, Field Station for Biological Studies; and Chris Neitch, USEPA Stream Research Facility.



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500 newly planted cottonwood and sycamore trees dot the landscape.



Thousands of plants and shrubs now inhabit this 6,000 sq. ft. rain garden.



# National Water Quality Jeopardized by Congressional Legislation

Perhaps emboldened by majority power or just naïveté, House Representatives have gone hog-wild in drafting dozens of dirty water bills that jeopardize decades of progress in cleaning up and protecting our nation's waters. "It's astonishing that where the country has flourished and grown with (and in many cases because of) these regulatory protections and improved conditions in place, that legislators now believe that any economic woes are due to the existence of these same regulations. It's a perverted logic that defies rational explanation," said Rich Cogen, Executive Director, Ohio River Foundation. One possible explanation is that industrial and commercial businesses see an opportunity to muddy the waters by pushing for rolling back protections that would enable them to pursue unfettered opportunities for development and expansion and profits, without responsibility for environmental pollution and public health.

Below is one of the many examples of dirty water bills pending in Congress:

The so-called Clean Water Cooperative Federalism Act of 2011 (H.R. 2018) passed the House on July 13th, 2011 without any legislative hearings. This bill would strip away long-standing protections provided by the Clean Water Act. H.R. 2018 attacks the heart of the Clean Water Act and would shred this federal safety net by preventing the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) from ensuring adequate water quality standards to protect public health and the environment. This federal role is necessary to ensure that states do not give a pass to polluters at the expense of their downstream or adjacent neighbors. There is no state in the lower 48 that does not share a body of water with a neighbor. That fact alone should shut down debate. Americans need a minimum level of clean water and safe drinking water regardless of which state they live in. H.R. 2018 would force states into a race to the bottom.



In addition to crippling EPA's ability to set a minimum "floor" for a state's water quality standards, H.R. 2018 would make America's water dirtier by handcuffing the EPA's oversight of discharges of dredged or fill material, which pollute the nation's waters. H.R. 2018 proponents claim that they are merely "reining in" EPA's oversight, but the fact is that in 40 years, EPA has only exerted its oversight authority to veto projects 13 times, compared with over two million discharge permits that were approved by the Army Corps of Engineers. That's a veto rate significantly less than half of one percent. The Agency has only used this authority sparingly to stop the most egregious of projects that would have a devastating and irreversible impact on critical resources and the environment.

**Ohio River Foundation is now on  
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[www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)**



# Save Water. Save Energy. Save Money.

ORF now has available high performance high efficiency showerheads (**for as low as \$20**) to citizens in OH, KY, and IN. Through our website ([www.ohioriverfdn.org](http://www.ohioriverfdn.org)), ORF is offering these showerheads at rock bottom prices. **Each new showerhead reduces household water use by thousands of gallons per year and saves you energy costs by not having to heat all that water you won't be using!**

Simple to install, high efficiency showerheads reduce homeowner water use and water heating costs by as much as 40%. State-of-the-art low-flow showerheads are designed to deliver fewer gallons of water per minute but with the same pressure as a traditional showerhead.

Example: A family of three...1,000 showers per year, ten minutes per shower, traditional showerhead using 4 gallons of water per minute, all equals 40,000 gallons! Using a high efficiency low-flow model rated at 1.5 gallons per minute, water use is cut by more than half, saving more than 20,000 gallons annually! If this water is heated, savings include reduced hot water costs. Save up to \$90 per year!! \$20 showerheads save up to \$90 every year!! Check it out at [www.ohioriverfdn.org](http://www.ohioriverfdn.org).

**For more information on water saving ideas, and to purchase a high performance showerhead, visit [www.ohioriverfdn.org](http://www.ohioriverfdn.org) or call 513-460-3365.**



**Please Make a Donation Today  
to Ohio River Foundation!**  
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# Rain Gardens Flourishing With Ohio River Foundation Green Thumb



*Children's Home of Cincinnati – installed summer 2011*



*Greene Intermediate School (2 years old)*



*Children's Home – installed summer 2011*



*Sycamore High School (2 years old)*

# West Milton Dam on Track for 2012 Removal



After a snowy winter and the wettest spring in decades, work resumed to prepare the West Milton Dam for removal. Those tasks include surveying the land above the water level and the river bottom. Such studies are necessary to determine the best areas for access to the work site(s), verify property ownership, and clarify project needs (i.e., how much sediment is behind the dam and may require removal). Work continues this summer and fall with wetland delineation, endangered species investigations, and historic preservation research.

Hundreds of dams and other obstacles exist throughout Ohio River watershed states that impede water flow, result in fractured habitat, diminish water quality, and alter natural species composition. "It's exciting that removal of this dam will result in the longest free-flowing river in the state of Ohio," said Julie Haidle, Senior Educator.

Ohio River Foundation is looking for other opportunities to restore rivers, creeks, and streams in the Ohio River watershed. If you are an owner of a structure that you are interested in removing please contact us at 513-460-3365 to find out if we can help.



**Ohio River Foundation is now on  
FACEBOOK. Find us at  
[www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)**

# GORP Delivers Sumptuous Experience for Adventurous Paddlers



*Birds-eye view of paddlers inside Meldahl Lock.*

Beautiful weather accompanied paddlers on June 11-12, for Great Ohio River Paddle (GORP), as the ORF education team led paddlers on an ecological safari along the Ohio River and several tributaries. We again acknowledge the generous support of event sponsors Whole Foods, Dick's Sporting Goods, and Enterprise Rent-a-Truck.

And a huge congratulations and thanks to board member Harold Watson, under whose management this year's GORP was one of the best ever. Big changes and plans are already being considered for next year's event. To lend a hand and volunteer your support PLEASE contact us at [orf@ohioriverfdn.org](mailto:orf@ohioriverfdn.org).