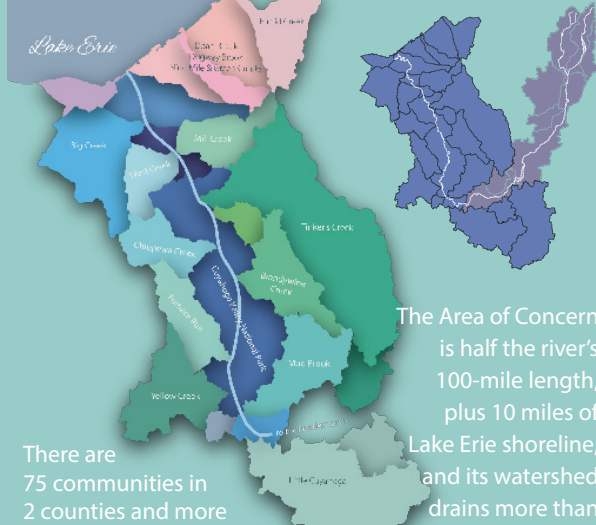


YOUR GUIDE TO THE



There are 75 communities in 2 counties and more than a dozen subwatersheds in the AOC. The Area of Concern is half the river's 100-mile length, plus 10 miles of Lake Erie shoreline, and its watershed drains more than 500 square miles.

Akron • Aurora • Bainbridge Twp • Bath Twp • Beachwood
Bedford • Bedford Heights • Boston Heights • Boston Twp
Bratenahl • Brecksville • Brimfield Twp • Broadview Heights
Brooklyn • Brooklyn Heights • Brookpark • Cleveland • Cleveland Heights • Copley • Cuyahoga Falls • Cuyahoga Heights • East Cleveland • Euclid • Fairlawn • Franklin Twp • Garfield Heights
Glenwillow • Granger Twp • Highland Heights • Highland Hills
Hudson • Independence • Lakemore • Linndale • Lyndhurst
Macedonia • Magadore • Maple Heights • Mayfield Village
Mayfield Heights • Newburgh Heights • North Randall • North Royalton • Northfield Village • Northfield Center Township
Oakwood • Orange Village • Parma • Parma Heights • Peninsula
Pepper Pike • Randolph Twp • Reminderville • Richfield Twp
Richfield Village • Richmond Heights • Sagamore Hills • Seven Hills • Shaker Heights • Sharon Twp • Silver Lake • Solon • South Euclid • Springfield Twp • Stow • Streetsboro • Suffield Twp
Tallmadge • Twinsburg • Twinsburg Twp • University Heights
Valley View • Walton Hills • Warrensville Heights • Willoughby Hills

WHAT'S THE CONCERN?

There are several "Beneficial Use Impairments" (BUIs) in the Cuyahoga River Area of Concern that the U.S. and Canada identified as problems that affect the health of Lake Erie and the Great Lakes.

Four of the original BUIs have been removed from the list - Fish Consumption Restrictions, Degraded Aesthetics, Eutrophication, and Lack of Public Access. Six remain.

IMPAIRMENTS TO AQUATIC LIFE:



DEGRADED FISH POPULATIONS
DEGRADED BENTHOS (BUGS)

LOSS OF FISH HABITAT

WHAT WE NEED: We need more fish overall, more different kinds of fish, more bugs in the streambeds, more habitat for fish to shelter and reproduce, clean flowing water, and less sediment.

SOLUTIONS: Remove dams and barriers, improve habitat for fish and their food (bugs), plant trees and shrubs along banks to reduce erosion and provide shelter and food (leaves), and reduce polluted stormwater runoff.

HOW YOU CAN HELP: Don't mow to the water's edge. Plant trees and green buffers instead, to shade and cool the water, and reduce erosion and sediment that smothers tiny organisms.

IMPAIRMENTS TO HUMAN HEALTH:



PENDING REMOVAL 2024:

BEACH CLOSINGS and LIMITS on RECREATIONAL CONTACT due to BACTERIAL CONTAMINATION

WHAT WE NEED: We need to reduce the amount of sanitary waste (pet and people poop) running into Lake Erie and streams that drain to the lake.

SOLUTIONS: Eliminate Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs) that carry waste into waters during heavy rain, reduce impervious surface runoff that overloads storm sewers, and reduce septic system discharges to streams.

HOW YOU CAN HELP: Pick up and responsibly dispose of pet poop and don't let it get into storm drains. Reduce impervious paving to slow the flow of pollutants into drains or streams.

REMOVED IN 2023:



FISH DEFORMITIES, ERODED FINS, LESIONS, TUMORS (DELTs)

WHAT WE NEED: We need to reduce the prevalence of tumors in Brown Bullhead catfish, which are above acceptable levels in the river's ship channel, mainstem, and Euclid Creek.

SOLUTIONS: More sampling will be done. Levels are expected to drop.



REMOVED IN 2021:

EUTROPHICATION (LOW OXYGEN) or UNDESIRABLE ALGAE

WHAT WE NEED: We need to verify that the level of dissolved oxygen in the water is high enough to sustain aquatic life, and that the levels of algae, especially toxic algae, caused by excessive nutrient runoff, are safe.

SOLUTIONS: Reduce runoff of nutrients from human and animal waste, farm and yard fertilizers, and other sources.

HOW YOU CAN HELP: Don't over-fertilize, and don't let poop or fertilizer run off into storm drains.



RESTRICTIONS on DREDGING in the NAVIGATION CHANNEL

WHAT WE NEED: We need to be able to safely put the sediment dredged from the navigation channel to beneficial use or unrestricted disposal on land.

SOLUTIONS: Remove historically contaminated sediment from the industrial channel and old river channel, and verify that the levels of contamination in new dredged sediment are safe.

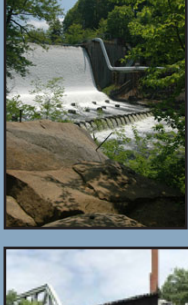
DELISTING AND YOU

"Delisting" is getting the AOC off the EPA's list of degraded waterways by removing these BUIs. You can help. Support your local watershed group. Plant trees by streams, and install raingardens to keep water where it lands. Pick up your pet's poop. Keep anything that isn't water out of storm drains.

PROJECTS = PROGRESS IN THE AREA OF CONCERN

Restoring streams, giving them room to twist and turn, space to overflow, forest canopy and plant life to shade the water and feed aquatic life, all lead to healthier watersheds and move the AOC closer to meeting delisting goals.

These are some of the projects underway or on the way in the Cuyahoga AOC.



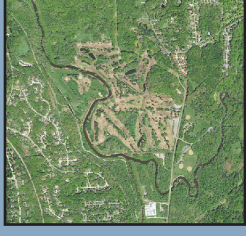
Removal of the Gorge Dam opens the river from Lake Rockwell to Lake Erie, removes contaminated sediment in the dam pool, improves water quality, increases fish population and improves aquatic health. This project received major state funding in 2022 and is underway.



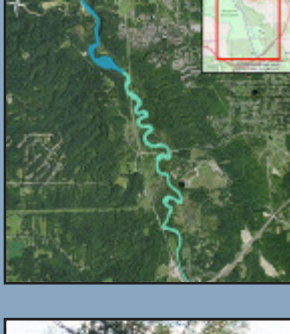
Little Cuyahoga River Dam Removals will eliminate three fish barriers at River St. and Kent St. in Akron.



Little Cuyahoga River Memorial Parkway Project will restore floodplain, stabilize banks, and naturalize a heavily channelized section of Akron's tributary to the main Cuyahoga..



COMPLETED 2022: Summit Metro Parks Cascade/Valley View Restoration Project restored nearly a mile of the Cuyahoga River, expanding its floodplain and improving instream fish habitat.



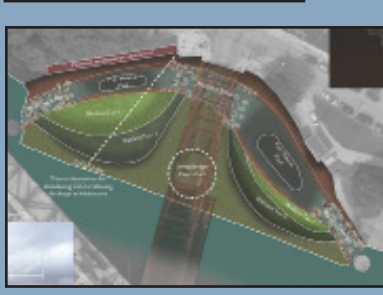
East of Boston Mills / Station Road Restoration Projects will restore stream function, reduce erosion, and improve riparian forest along the river's mainstem in the Cuyahoga Valley National Park.



West Creek Flume Removal will naturalize a section of stream, restore habitat and fish passage, and slow flows in this tributary. This project is underway.



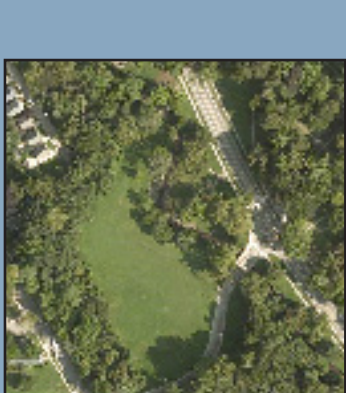
Ship Channel Green Bulkhead Habitat Project will include fish habitat in a major park project along Irishtown Bend.



Center Street Swing Bridge Habitat Project will create fish habitat in the ship channel to support fish between the natural river and Lake Erie.



Cuyahoga River Old Channel Project will dredge nearly 100,000 cubic yards of contaminated sediment from the Cuyahoga's original river mouth.



Sowinski Park Doan Brook Project will restore flood plain and stream function, and reduce erosion in the brook as it runs through Rockefeller Park . This project will be completed in 2023.



Mayfield Sandridge Euclid Creek Project will restore the creek, reduce erosion, and provide fish habitat near its headwaters.



E. 185th St. Spillway Removal will open part of Euclid Creek to fish passage and improve fish habitat.

These projects are among those designated as priority actions that will allow the AOC to meet the goals related to fish - passage, population, species diversity, macroinvertebrates (bugs,) and the habitat that supports them.

For more information, visit cuyahogaaoc.org

This publication was financed through a grant from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency and the United States Environmental Protection Agency, with funds from the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.

