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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Nichole Lopez, Watershed Coordinator- Cuyahoga AOC
Phone: 216/524-6580, ext. 1015
Email: nlopez@cuyahogawcd.org

Cuyahoga River Area of Concern Celebrates the Removal of the Fish Tumors/Deformities Impairment Designation on the Cuyahoga River and the Champion of the River Award

Cleveland, OH - The Cuyahoga River Area of Concern's (AOC) Advisory Committee is holding a public celebration of the successful removal of the Cuyahoga River's Fish Tumors/Deformities Beneficial Use Impairment (BUI) and awarding Share the River as the annual Champion of the River recipient on Thursday, November 16, 2023 from 5:00pm – 6:30pm at Collision Bend Brewery (1250 Old River Road – Cleveland, OH). Attendance is free and open to the public, but registration is required - <https://CuyahogaBUICelebration.eventbrite.com>. The event is currently sold out due to capacity limits, however there is a waitlist should additional tickets become available.

Members of the Cuyahoga AOC Advisory Committee and the Ohio Lake Erie Commission will speak on progress made restoring the Cuyahoga River, highlighting this milestone in the river's ecological recovery. The Cuyahoga River AOC restoration plan and management action projects are geared toward removal or remediation of impairments which restrict uses of the waterways and Lake Erie, degrade water quality, or present obstacles to healthy fish populations. The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) has supported the river's restoration and monitors the status of each BUI. Of the 10 identified BUIs in the Cuyahoga River, five (5) have been removed, including the recent removal of BUI #4 – Fish Tumors and Deformities. This significant milestone represents a major step forward in revitalizing the ecological health of the Cuyahoga River, its watershed, and the surrounding communities.

"The Cuyahoga River AOC Advisory Committee is thrilled with the removal of yet another impairment to our beloved Cuyahoga River," said Jennifer Grieser, Chair of the Committee. "Decades of

intentional removal of contaminants from our waterways have led to a healthier fish population. We are grateful for previous and ongoing dedication to improving our environment, and we are now one step closer to delisting the Cuyahoga River as an Area of Concern."

While the removal of this BUI is indeed cause for celebration, the work is far from over. The Cuyahoga River AOC Advisory Committee, along with U.S. EPA and the Ohio Lake Erie Commission (OLEC), will continue efforts to address other remaining impairments in the Cuyahoga River, with the ultimate goal of eventually delisting the Cuyahoga River as an Area of Concern.

The Cuyahoga River AOC Advisory Committee is a 25+ member group of stakeholders representing community groups, businesses, government agencies, and other organizations working for clean water, watershed stewardship, and restoration. The Committee's role is to develop strategic priorities for removing Beneficial Use Impairments and delisting the AOC, and to advise Ohio EPA on measures to implement such strategies. Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) is the facilitating organization that staffs the Advisory Committee. www.cuyahogaaoc.org

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