

M·N·R·G



Midwest Natural  
Resources Group



## Background

The Ohio River watershed includes 204,000 square miles. Physiographically the basin consists of three major landforms: the Appalachians line the eastern basin; glaciated plains and their till cover the northwest; and rolling, mostly karst, hills cover the southwest.

Agricultural uses dominate throughout most of the region. The ready availability of water, coal, natural gas, and other mineral resources made the river corridors very attractive to many industries. Currently, 2,582 miles of eight rivers are channelized and maintained with over 60 locks and dams.

All, or parts of, 11 National Forests, four large National Wildlife Refuges, the Smoky Mountain and Cumberland Gap National Parks, 102 major, and over 300 minor flood control lakes are within the region. Numerous reaches of rivers are designated National Wild and Scenic Rivers, while nearby reaches are listed among the nation's worst polluted streams. Regional wildlife is rich and diverse. There are over 150 species of fish and 116 species and subspecies of mussels, of which 28 are endangered and 18 more are under agency review. Delicate cave ecosystems of the karst areas are likewise threatened. Waterfowl resources are depressed due to habitat loss, but they are steadily recovering after decades of habitat protection and restoration.

Sedimentation and water quality problems are impacting fish and wildlife habitats throughout the region. Although manifestation of the problem is beyond the Ohio River Focus Area, about 30 percent of the nutrients aggravating Gulf hypoxia come from the Ohio River drainage. Invading exotics are also diminishing native populations, and altering native ecosystems and habitats.

## Activities

The Focus Area Team Member's focus remains on assisting established local groups with what they have initiated.

## Partners

Partners include industry, recreationists, outdoor sporting groups, national and local conservationists and preservationists groups, local and federal government agencies.

## For More Information

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## On-The-Ground Project

Monday Creek Watershed

