

Cincinnati Nature Center Stream Workshop

On October 2, 2006 Jay Dorsey hosted a Stream Workshop at the Cincinnati Nature Center Rowe Woods property for nearly forty Cincinnati Nature Center Volunteers. Jay spent three years as the East Fork Watershed Coordinator and now is a Water Resource Engineer for ODNR Division of Soil and Water Conservation. Jay's presentation focused on four main topics: 1) stream management goals; 2) the effect geology, climate, and land use change has on streams; 3) stream morphology; and 4) what can we do to protect, enhance, and restore stream integrity. Workshop participants enjoyed an hour long power-point presentation and discussion followed by an hour spent in Avey's Run.



Jason Brown, East Fork Watershed Coordinator, participated in the workshop and provided geologic content to in-the-field portion of the workshop. Jason will be hosting another workshop for Cincinnati Nature Center volunteers on May 14th, 2007. This workshop will focus on the invaluable role freshwater mussel's play in the East Fork Little Miami River watershed.

MBI Biological Sampling

During the summer of 2006 Clermont Soil and Water Conservation District contracted the Midwest Biodiversity Institute, Inc. to conduct biological and habitat surveys at six stream reaches in the East Fork watershed. Fish, macro-invertebrate, and habitat assessments were conducted at two locations on the East Fork mainstem (above and below the Williamsburg Dam), two locations in Stonelick Creek, and two locations along the East Branch of Avey's Run.



Habitat assessments and biological surveys conducted below the Williamsburg Dam provided evidence for exceptional warmwater habitat. The site above the dam supported warmwater habitat but not exceptional warmwater habitat.

Habitat was surveyed using the Ohio EPA's Qualitative Habitat Evaluation Index (QHEI). Below the dam an exceptional QHEI score of 94 (out of 100) was recorded. The site upstream of the dam only had a QHEI score of 75. A QHEI score of 75 is good but not exceptional. The result of this survey reveals that the impounded segment of the East Fork mainstem, above the dam, is nearly twenty points below the exceptional warmwater habitat site.

Fish survey results supported the habitat data above and below the dam. The average Index of Biotic Integrity (IBI) score below the dam was 53. The IBI criteria for exceptional warmwater habitat is 50. The average IBI score for the site above the dam was 46, just below exceptional warmwater habitat criteria.

Anyone wishing to learn more about any of the above projects or activities please call Jason Brown, East Fork Watershed Coordinator, at (513) 732-7075 or visit us on the web at www.eastforkwatershed.org



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EAST FORK NEWS AND NOTES 2006

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Our Mission:

“To protect and enhance the biological, chemical, and physical integrity of the East Fork of the Little Miami River and its tributaries.”

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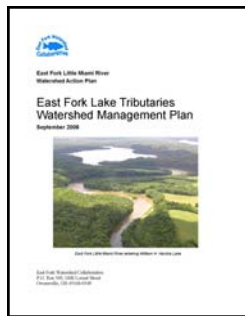
A Personal Note from Watershed Coordinator Jason K. Brown

My first year as the East Fork watershed coordinator was full of excitement and inspiration. It is exciting to be involved in the continued enhancement and protection of the East Fork Little Miami River watershed and I am inspired by the ongoing effort by numerous partners to ensure enhancement and protection of the East Fork for future generations.

I am proud to announce that due to effective management of the East Fork, over the past six years, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) has awarded the East Fork Watershed Collaborative with a three year watershed coordinator implementation grant. Funding for this grant will provide the collaborative and its partners with the necessary resources to continue the East Fork watershed coordinator position until 2010. I am honored to be given the opportunity to provide leadership to an outstanding watershed effort that began six years ago.

Watershed Planning

During the fall of 2006 the East Fork Headwaters Watershed Action Plan (WAP) and East Fork Lake Tributaries Watershed Action Plan (WAP) received full endorsement by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) and the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA). Both watershed action plans were developed by the watershed coordinator and colleagues. Watershed Action Plans can be viewed and downloaded at <http://www.oeq.net/default.php?section=wataction>



Watershed Action Plans for the Middle East Fork and Stonelick watersheds are in development and are expected to be submitted for endorsement by March 2007.

The East Fork watershed coordinator is also working with the Clermont Water and Sewer District to develop a Source Water Protection Plan for the Bob McEwen Water Treatment Plant. The plan will be an addendum to the East Fork Lake Tributaries Watershed Action Plan and will be submitted for endorsement to the Ohio EPA Division of Drinking and Ground Waters. Submittal for endorsement is expected by the end of March 2007.

Middle East Fork Issue Framing Meeting

On November 8, 2006 fifteen community leaders gathered at the Clermont County Engineers Conference room to identify water quality and quantity issues effecting the Middle East Fork watershed. The Middle East Fork watershed represents the drainage area beginning at the Harsha Dam output to the confluence between Stonelick Creek and the East Fork. Several issues were identified by meeting representatives (e.g., riparian protection, education, stormwater, pathogens). The identified issues will be combined with Ohio EPA and Clermont County water quality data to create problem statements and action items that will be included in the Middle East Fork Watershed Action Plan (WAP). I would like to thank everyone that participated in the Middle East Fork Issue Framing meeting.

Lower East Fork Water Quality Improvement Project

The East Fork Watershed Collaborative and its partners are entering their final year of the \$335,000 Lower East Fork Water Quality Improvement project. During the last twelve months, grant activities have primarily focused on locating a stream enhancement/restoration site within the Lower East Fork watershed. As a part of this effort the Collaborative contracted the Environmental Team at Ohio University's Voinovich Center for Leadership and Public Affairs to conduct a detailed geomorphologic assessment of Hall and Shayler Run's.

The goals of the assessment were to characterize the geomorphology of Hall and Shayler Run's and to identify potential stream enhancement/restoration opportunities. A geomorphologic approach provides a quantitative understanding of the processes that continue to shape stream channels over time. As a result of this assessment the Collaborative now has geomorphologic data for over 100 sites along Hall and Shayler Run's and twelve potential stream enhancement/restoration sites have been identified.



The East Fork Watershed Collaborative and its partners are excited to announce that a site has been chosen for stream enhancement in the Lower East Fork. Steps have begun to enhance 1700 feet of the East Branch of Avey's Run located along property owned and protected by the Cincinnati Nature Center. This section of stream channel is currently de-stabilizing due to partial channelization and land use changes (i.e., increased stormwater runoff). The primary goals of the stream enhancement project are: 1) to improve water quality in the Lower East Fork watershed by improving stream and riparian function of this headwater stream; and 2) to enhance stream and riparian habitat consistent with the educational mission of the Cincinnati Nature Center.



East Fork River Sweep

The clouds opened up and the rain stayed away on Saturday, April 29, 2006 for a spring cleaning in the East Fork watershed. By our count, 270 volunteers turned out for the 14th Annual East Fork River Sweep, including families, area students, scout troops, 4-H clubs, and the Batavia Rotary Club. Hard working crews cleaned up over 10 miles of streambank and shoreline at Sycamore Park in Batavia, Valley View in Milford, East Fork State Park and Stonelick State Park, collecting 243 bags of trash, 186 tires, a television, microwave oven, hot water heater, engine manifold, propane tank, 7 (55 gallon) barrels, 20 (5

gallon) buckets, barbed wire, numerous phonebooks, and a swing slide and steps. To view photo highlights of this event, visit eastforkwatershed.org and click on "River Sweep."



The 15th annual East Fork River Sweep is scheduled for Saturday April 28th, 2007. We are excited for another year of spring cleaning along the banks of the East Fork. Due to seasonal flooding that occurred in 2006 we are expecting numerous amounts of litter and debris along the East Fork, so mark your calendars now and come out join hundreds of volunteers on April 28th to help sweep the banks of the East Fork.

East Fork Aerial Tour

In an effort to inventory factors threatening and influencing the East Fork Little Miami River and its tributaries the East Fork Watershed Collaborative teamed up with Rivers Unlimited to scout the East Fork from high above. Nearly a thousand digital aerial photos have been taken of the East Fork in an effort to document the East Fork landscape. Aerial photography provides a great opportunity to view and document River landscapes at varying scales and gives valuable insight to landscape factors influencing the quality of rivers.

The aerial photos that were taken help the collaborative document wooded riparian cover and floodplain land use. Wooded riparian habitat is important to streams and rivers because it provides shade to moderate water temperatures and acts as a buffer that absorbs nutrients and other urban and agricultural runoff.

