

Cuyahoga American Heritage River

USDA Forest Service
Northeastern Area
State and Private Forestry



Bringing Forestry to the People through Collaborative Stewardship

Description

The American Heritage Rivers Initiative is a program to help communities restore, protect, and revitalize rivers, neighborhoods, and waterfronts. The initiative melds State, local, Federal, and private expertise to help a community reach its goals, including natural resource management, environmental protection, economic development, and cultural preservation. A core group of organizations called the American Heritage River Partners for the Cuyahoga leads the Cuyahoga American Heritage River (AHR) Initiative.

Key Issues

The Northeastern Area is the Federal sponsoring agency that coordinates resources and provides assistance to the "River Navigator," who is the liaison between the partners and Federal agencies.

- Partners and local communities design and implement projects.
- USDA funding is planned through 2006, when the program will be self supporting.

Accomplishments

- Coordination – Jim White of the Cuyahoga River Remedial Action Plan has served as the Cuyahoga AHR River Navigator from November 2002 to the present.
- Education – A river symposium, three community workshops, and more than 100 programs have been offered to promote the watershed and its history, water quality, and current opportunities.
- Public Outreach – Developed relationships with local communities, governments, and civic groups and established a list of action projects.
- Projects – Removed an abandoned railroad trestle; completed a land management study for the Geauga County Planning Commission; submitted grant applications for watershed improvement, wetland inventory, land use planning, wetland restoration, and economic revitalization; joined with the NASA Glenn Research Center and Ohio-View Universities to help sponsor the *Scientific Outreach and Applications Using Remote Sensing (SOARS) Program*; and developed the Cuyahoga/Lake Erie Environmental Resource Technology Center (CLEERTEC).
- Partners – Partnered with the U.S. Geological Survey and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to develop a GIS transportation decision tool. Joined with the National Park Service, Ohio Canal Corridor, and Cuyahoga County Planning Commission to promote coordinated approaches to protecting and restoring green space and parks; and with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to develop a fish haven project in navigation channels.

Budget History

Cuyahoga American Heritage River Program				
(\$ Thousands)				
	FY 2003	FY2004	FY2005	FY2006
Total	\$120	\$120	Deferred	\$60

Future Direction

- Promote education and outreach to improve understanding of watershed and restoration issues.
- Promote local capacity building to increase the number of effective tributary watershed organizations.
- Organize local efforts to increase the number of remediation and restoration projects completed.

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