



Ohio Environmental
Education Fund

Nine Outstanding Projects for the General Public Audience

Selected by a team of independent reviewers, December, 2006

Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (TMACOG), *“Give Water A Hand” Education Campaign*, \$49,989 (and mini grant for \$4,999), #03G-044 and #04M-018, Lucas and Wood Counties, Contact: Kurt Erichsen, kurt@tmacog.org.



Educational campaign to increase citizen understanding of water quality problems in the Maumee River Area of Concern. Provided 145,000 households with a series of six quarterly brochures on water conservation; lawn care; septic systems and illicit discharges; stream bank stabilization; native plants; household hazardous waste disposal; and storm drains and ditches. Messages were reinforced with television, cinema and print advertising. Fourteen urban and two rural jurisdictions and six local organizations were collaborators with TMACOG and the Maumee Remedial Action Plan (RAP). A subsequent mini grant extended the campaign to reach 1,663 additional households in rural communities that are experiencing significant development pressures. The campaign messages are downloadable from the program Web site at www.maumeerap.org/GWAH.html.

Rural Action, New Landowner Forest Welcome Wagon Project: Building on the Southeast Ohio Forest Congress, \$49,961, Athens, Belmont, Carroll, Harrison, Hocking, Jackson, Meigs, Monroe, Perry and Washington Counties, Audience: General Public, #04G-070, contact: Colin Donohue, colind@ruralaction.org



Informed 2,500 new forest owners in 10 Appalachian counties about sustainable forestry and environmental issues associated with forest ownership, including information about best management practices, invasive exotics, threatened and endangered species. Provided in-depth field activities and peer-sharing of land management experiences for 50 participants and programming on sustainable forestry for 300 landowners at the Appalachian Ohio Landowners Conferences in 2004 and 2005. OSU Extension collaborated on the project

Ohio Environmental Council, *Communicating Safe Fish Consumption Information to At-Risk Communities in the Ohio River Basin*, \$5,000, multiple southern Ohio counties, #04M-015, Contact: Keith Dimoff, keith@theoec.org

A FAMILY'S GUIDE
TO EATING FISH
FROM THE
LAKE ERIE BASIN
2004-2005
*Catch and Eat Cleaner Fish
Protect Your Health*



Extended a successful fish consumption advisory program from the Lake Erie Basin to the Ohio River Basin, to help citizens understand potential risks from eating fish contaminated with mercury and PCBs, steps to avoid those risks and steps to reduce the pollution prompting the advisories. Materials focus on safer places to catch fish, safer types and amounts of fish to eat and safer ways to prepare fish. Project included train-the-trainer workshops for health care providers, watershed organizations, sporting and fishing groups who helped distribute the materials. Collaborators included Rural Action, Ohio Smallmouth Alliance, Marietta College Environmental Science Program and the Ohio River Foundation.

Greenacres Foundation, *Saturday Stream Snapshot: Citizen Monitoring Program*, \$4,967, Clermont, Hamilton and Warren Counties, #04M-039, Contact: Anne Lyon, alyon@green-acres.org



Provided reagents, supplies and equipment to support a successful community outreach and volunteer monitoring program in the lower Little Miami Watershed. The program trained local residents to collect water samples and perform nitrate-nitrogen, total phosphorus, turbidity, conductivity, pH, and fecal coliform analysis. The resulting data is shared with local residents and Ohio EPA. Collaborators included the Izaak Walton League, Little Miami Inc., Little Miami River Partnership, Hamilton County Wet Weather Initiative and a number of other local organizations.

Little Cities of Black Diamonds Council/Sunday Creek Associates, *The Environmental History of the Little Cities of Black Diamonds: Tour & Booklet*, \$5,000.00, Athens, Hocking, Morgan and Perry Counties, #04M-043, Contact: John Winnenberg, jwinnenb@frognet.net



Highlighted the region’s environmental history and recent environmental restoration activities through a two-day bus tour for 25 residents, educators and journalists. Tour visited an acid mine drainage discharge site, a “gob pile” of coal mining waste, wetlands, a forest restoration and medicinal herb reintroduction project, a reclaimed strip mine site, a working underground coal mine, farmland tracts in transition to native hardwood forest, and a state park and Army Corps of Engineers dam. Local college faculty and historians helped develop an introductory booklet on the region’s environmental history. The project laid the groundwork for more in-depth efforts to educate residents and encourage low-impact tourism focused on environment and heritage. Multiple collaborators included Hocking College, the Wayne National Forest, OSU Extension, ODNR Division of Forestry, Rural Action and local watershed groups and recycling agencies.

Geauga Park District, *Save Our Stream - S.O.S.*, \$4,799, Cuyahoga and Geauga Counties, #05M-008, Contact: John Oros, oros@geaugaparkdistrict.org



Project spearheaded by three local high school students, to educate 3,000 4th-9th grade students and residents of the Chagrin River watershed about the sensitive native brook trout population, its threatened cold water habitat and the effects of non-point source pollution, by providing seminars utilizing the EnviroScape non-point source pollution model, storm drain stickers, pamphlets, brochures for property owners on riparian buffers and informational trail signs. Collaborators included the Chagrin River Land Conservancy, Chagrin Watershed Institute, and Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Wildlife. The students, Karoline Evin McMullen, Angela Primbas, and Amanda Weatherhead, received the President’s Environmental Youth Award for their efforts. All were ninth graders at Hawken School in Geauga County.

Ohio Environmental Council, *“Vernal Pool Education Program”*, \$5,000, Statewide, Audience: General Public, #05M-033, Contact: David R. Celebrezze, David@theOEC.org



Provides training to help naturalists, educators, landowners, local officials and watershed groups inventory and monitor the health of intermittent bodies of water that play an important role in preserving ecosystem diversity. Workshops in the Black and Cuyahoga River Watersheds will provide classroom and field activities to give 100 participants the tools to conduct field surveys. An online data warehouse and Web site will enable sharing of data that can help local officials in water quality planning, storm water management and inventorying wetlands. The Nature Conservancy and the Ohio EPA Division of Surface Water are collaborating.

Clermont Soil and Water Conservation District, *“Paddling Programs Improve Awareness and Pride in the East Fork”*, \$4,980, Brown, Clermont, Clinton and Highland Counties, #05M-034, Contact Paul Berringer, paul-berringer@oh.nacdnet.org



Provided equipment to implement a new in-stream educational program and support the Adopt-A-Waterway program and annual river sweeps in the East Fork of the Little Miami Watershed. The program paired professionals such as biologists, ecologists and hydrologists with members of the agricultural community, developers, civic organizations, business and community leaders for canoe tours of the River to study the effects of urbanization, hydrologic modification, agricultural runoff and other sources of water quality impairment. Participants examined healthy areas of the river with thriving riparian corridors, clean substrates and access to floodplains, and unhealthy areas where siltation has degraded aquatic life and where excessive stream bank erosion has occurred. Collaborators included the East Fork Watershed Collaborative, Clermont County Park District and Clermont County Office of Environmental Quality.

Lucas Soil and Water Conservation District, *“Exposing the Native Mussel Fauna of Northwest Ohio”*, \$5,000, Lucas County, #06M-015, Contact: Jeff Grabarkiewicz, jeff-grabarkiewicz@oh.nacdnet.org

Project included three exhibits on native Ohio mussels and printing of a new K-12 publication on native and exotic mussels based on recently completed Maumee basin survey work conducted by Jeff Grabarkiewicz of the SWCD and Todd Crail of the University of Toledo. A limited number of copies are available from the SWCD or the guide may be downloaded at www.farmertodd.com/musselguide/.



For more information

Ohio EPA's Office of Environmental Education is located in Columbus, Ohio at the Lazarus Government Center, 50 W. Town Street, Suite 700. We welcome your questions and look forward to assisting you with your project. Please feel free to contact us in writing or at the phone number below.

Ohio EPA
Office of Environmental Education
P.O. Box 1049
Columbus, OH 43216-1049
Phone (614) 644-2873
Fax (614) 728-1275
E-mail: oeef@epa.state.oh.us