



Public Interest Center | P.O. Box 1049 | Columbus, OH | 43216-1049

**FOR RELEASE:** January 17, 2012  
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## **Ohio EPA to Hold Hearing about Draft Construction Storm Water Permit to Protect Big Darby Creek Watershed**

Ohio EPA will hold a public hearing on Tues., Jan. 31, 2012, to accept comments about a draft alternative general [permit renewal](#) for storm water discharges associated with construction activities in the Big Darby Creek watershed, which is among the most biologically diverse stream systems of its size in the Midwest and home to several endangered species.

The information session and public hearing will be held at 4 p.m. at Ohio EPA's Central Office, Conference Room A, Lazarus Government Center, 50 W. Town St., Suite 700, Columbus. Ohio EPA places a high priority on public involvement and encourages citizens to become involved in the decision-making process. During the information session, Ohio EPA will explain the draft permit and answer questions about it. During the hearing, the public can submit comments for the record that will be considered before Ohio EPA issues or denies the final permit.

The general permit covers the entire 555-square mile Big Darby Creek watershed, including parts of Champaign, Clark, Franklin, Logan, Madison, Pickaway and Union counties. It would authorize construction activities disturbing one or more acres (i.e., storm water discharges, including those from on-site concrete and asphalt batch plants, and trench dewatering, etc.). There are no significant changes in this draft permit compared to the original permit issued in 2006.

It is known as a general permit because it applies to a certain category of discharges rather than a specific project. The permit conditions and requirements are determined up front and then followed by all dischargers who meet the criteria. The permit identifies who can apply to be covered, how an entity obtains coverage and how a permittee terminates coverage. The permit also contains requirements for permittees to prepare and implement plans to minimize storm water discharged to Ohio's rivers and streams.

The Big Darby general permit contains additional requirements that differ from Ohio EPA's standard general permit for storm water discharges from construction. One significant difference is a requirement to leave green space between construction activity and streams in the watershed. The setback distance is aimed at keeping sediment and other pollutants out of waterways, including the Big and Little Darby Creeks, which are designated state and national scenic rivers. In addition, the general permit contains requirements to maintain ground water recharge.

In addition to oral comments provided at the public meeting, Ohio EPA will equally consider written comments received through Tues., Feb. 7, 2012. Interested parties can send comments to Ohio EPA, Division of Surface Water, Permits Processing Unit, P.O. Box 1049, Columbus, OH 43216-1049.

The draft permit renewal, fact sheet and related documents are available for review at Ohio EPA's [website](#) and Division of Surface Water (50 W. Town St., Columbus) by first calling (614) 644-2001. Interested parties also may write to Ohio EPA at the above address for more information.