



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

FOR RELEASE: May 30, 2012
MEDIA CONTACT: Erin Strouse, (614) 644-2160
CITIZEN CONTACT: Amber Finkelstein, (614) 644-2160

Ohio EPA Launches Study of Stillwater Creek Watershed

As part of Ohio EPA's continuous effort to monitor and report on the quality of rivers and streams throughout Ohio, the Agency is launching a study this year of the [Stillwater Creek watershed](#). Stillwater Creek flows into the Tuscarawas River at Midvale in Tuscarawas County, and streams in four subwatersheds flow through Harrison, Belmont, Guernsey and Carroll counties, as well. Cadiz and the Twin City Water District both obtain drinking water from the surface waters in the watershed.

Studies take about two years to complete. A report will be published and made available to the public, though preliminary findings should be available next year.

Sampling Protocol and Purpose

Ohio EPA employees will collect water and stream sediment chemistry samples, survey aquatic communities and evaluate stream habitat from dozens of sites in each study area. Samplers all carry a photo ID and may request private property access from landowners if needed.

The Agency has one of the most advanced water quality monitoring programs in the nation, determining the health of rivers and streams by sampling aquatic biology and habitat in addition to water chemistry. Biology and habitat information can be used to show long-term trends in the quality of the water resource.

Ohio EPA analyzes information about the abundance and variety of fish and aquatic insects, especially those species sensitive to pollution, and the amount of bacteria, metals and nutrients in the stream system. The Agency also takes a comprehensive look at all pollution sources. This includes point sources, such as wastewater treatment plants and industrial facilities, and nonpoint sources, like urban and rural runoff. To help address impairments, Ohio EPA may develop a watershed restoration report, known as a [Total Maximum Daily Load \(TMDL\)](#) report.

The Agency shares its information with local governments, landowners and citizens so they also can develop plans to maintain and/or restore impaired waterways. Stakeholders can use Ohio EPA's information to request [grants](#) and additional assistance from the Agency and other funding sources for projects that alleviate water quality problems and protect the resource for drinking water and recreational enjoyment.

Other material related to the Stillwater Creek watershed study is [online](#) and also available for review by calling Ohio EPA's Division of Surface Water at (614) 644-2001 or Southeast District Office at (740) 385-8501.