



**PUBLIC INTEREST CENTER**

P.O. Box 1049, 122 South Front Street  
Columbus, OH 43216-1049

**Tele:** (614) 644-2160 **Fax:** (614) 644-2737

**NEWS RELEASE**

**Contact:** Heather Lauer, (614) 644-2160 – Ohio EPA

**Study Outlines Water Quality in Mad River Watershed**

A water quality report recently completed by Ohio EPA concludes that nearly 80 percent of sites surveyed in the Mad River watershed meet or exceed aquatic life standards. However, bacterial sampling shows streams in the watershed are not meeting standards for recreational use.

The Ohio EPA report considered the composition of fish and bug communities, along with pollutant and bacteria levels to assess conditions in the Mad River watershed. This study is used to provide a picture of stream health and roadmap for improvement.

The report documents conditions at 110 study sites in Logan, Champaign, Clark, Miami, Greene and Montgomery Counties. Ohio EPA used the variety, number and health of bug and fish in streams to determine that nearly 80 percent of streams met either the currently designated or recommended standards; 15 percent of the sites partially met; and 6 percent of the sites are not attaining their currently designated or the recommended use.

Bacteria sampling indicated elevated levels throughout the watershed, potentially causing concerns for direct contact with the water. High precipitation rates in 2003 and the resulting runoff contributed to the elevated bacteriological levels. The primary sources leading to designated use impairment were largely associated with agriculture, combined sewer overflows, and urban runoff. Total numbers of bacteria must be low in order for water to be considered safe for recreation.

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), in cooperation with Ohio EPA is assessing the amount of selected pollutants entering the Mad River from point (pipes) and nonpoint (runoff) sources. The USGS will estimate in-stream concentrations and loads of the pollutants under existing and possible future conditions. A public meeting to discuss this work and ways to improve the water quality in the Mad River will be held **Thursday, November 17, 2005 at 7:00pm at the Champaign County Community Center, 1512 S. US Hwy 68, Urbana Ohio 43078.**

Local involvement in developing solutions and implementing water quality improvements is critical to the future health of the Mad River watershed. The report is available on the Web at <http://www.epa.state.oh.us/dsw/documents/MadRiverTSD2003.pdf>.

People who wish to be placed on an interested parties list and receive updates how they can become involved in improving the Mad River watershed may e-mail Susan Aman at [susan.aman@epa.state.oh.us](mailto:susan.aman@epa.state.oh.us).