

OHIO RIVER WEST VIRGINIA

Project Name: Ohio River Aquatic Restoration

Project Type:

- Restoration (Freshwater Mussels)

Project Description:

The Ohio River is home to 116 of North America's native freshwater mussel species. Freshwater mussels play an important role in water filtration. The spread of non-native species, particularly zebra mussels, has led to the loss of several of these native mussels, resulting in decreases in water quality and affecting ecosystem integrity.



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



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In West Virginia, nine miles of the Ohio River were impacted by the release of a toxic contaminant into the water, losing over 1 million mussels, 12 million snails, and 8,600 fish. This project aims to restore water quality and ecosystem integrity to this portion of the River for the benefit of the public and native mussels. A natural community of 20 species of freshwater mussels in the affected portion of the River will be restored through the development and application of mussel population restoration technology. Mussel bed habitat will be improved and mussels will be translocated and stocked to restore their populations.

Lead Federal Agencies:

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Non-Federal Partners:

- West Virginia Division of Natural Resources
- Ohio Department of Natural Resources
- Columbus Zoo
- The Ohio State University
- Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission
- Other academic, state, and federal partners

Outcomes for 2012:

- Translocate and stock ten species of mussels to establish mussel bed habitat and restore populations