
Ohio River Basin Fish Habitat Partnership

Rob Simmonds, Project Leader, USFWS, Cartersville Fish and Wildlife
Conservation Office

and

Interim Coordinator for the Ohio River Basin FHP

John Stark, Ohio Freshwater Program Director, Ohio Chapter of TNC

Et al.

Ohio River Basin



Mission

The Ohio River Basin Fish Habitat Partnership focuses **conservation**, **restoration**, and **enhancement** efforts on **priority habitat for fish and mussels** in the watersheds of the **Ohio River Basin** for the benefit of the **public**.

Ohio River Basin



Ohio River Basin

Ohio River Basin Fish Habitat Partnership

Partnership Area



Legend

Urban Areas

Ohio River Basin FHP

Map Courtesy of August Froehlich, TNC



Our Targets

- **Large and great rivers** and signature fish including sauger, paddlefish, sturgeon sp, and blue sucker
 - **Medium rivers** and signature fish including smallmouth and spotted bass, tippacanoë, and logperch darters
 - **Headwater and small streams** and signature fish such as long-ear sunfish, rainbow, and orangethroat darters
 - **Off-channel systems** and signature fish including largemouth bass and grass pickerel
 - **Sensitive mussels** (non-pool species)
 - **Native aquatic vegetation**
-

Key Ecological Attributes of Habitat Targets (Using Signature Organisms)

Really a key ecological requirement which often indicates critical habitat need.

Example

Large and Great Rivers (Signature fish include paddlefish, sturgeon, sauger, & blue sucker)

KEAs of most include:

- **Rock/cobble substrate bars/riffles for spawning**
 - **Range over many stream miles**
-

Threats to Target(s)

Determine and develop conservation strategies that treat the highest sources of stress to KEAs.

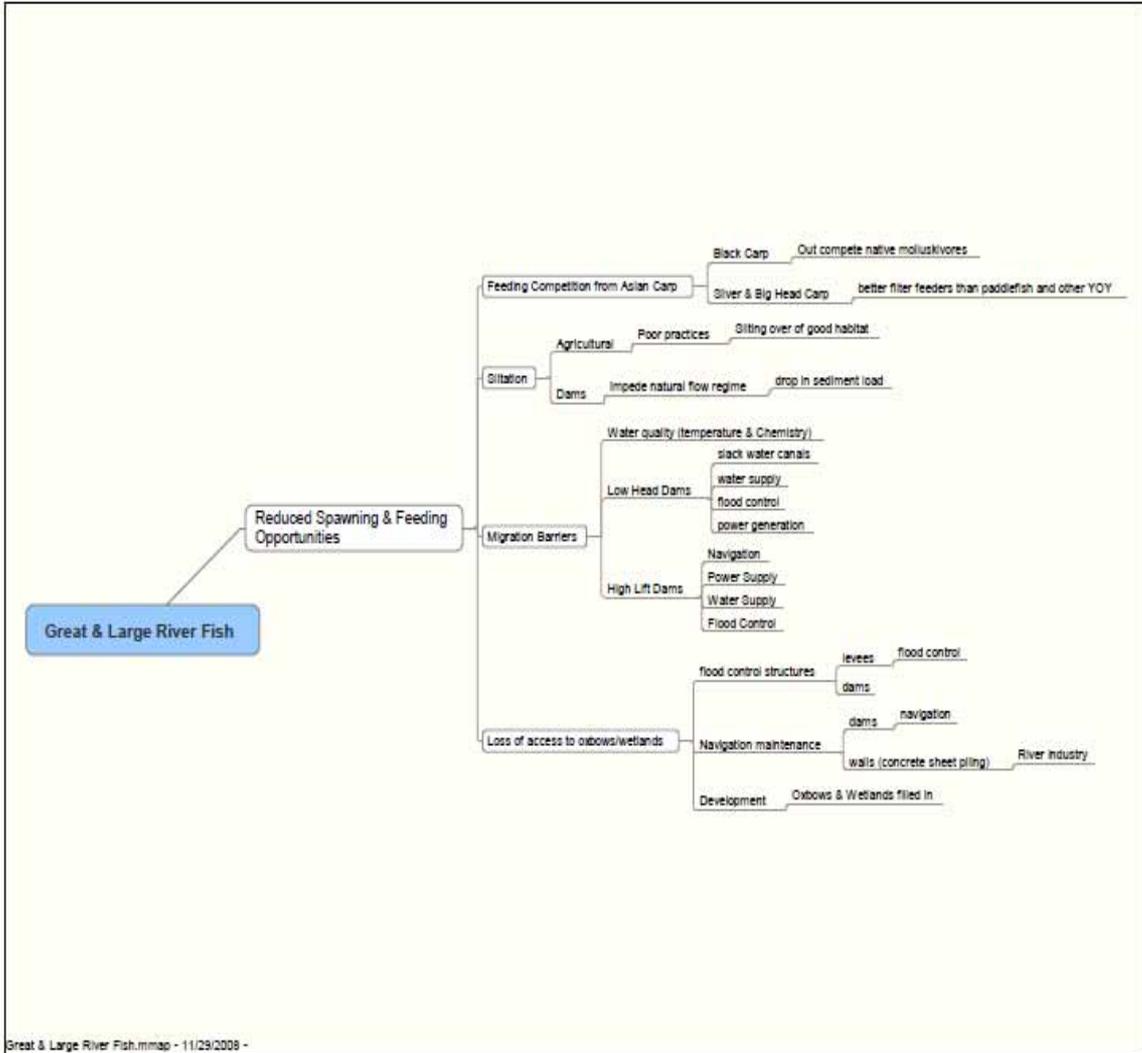
High ranked threat to KEA of Large and Great River Fish (rock/cobble/gravel substrate) is....

Sedimentation from various sources:

- **Incompatible Ag practices (row crop and livestock grazing)**
Incompatible Forestry practices
- **Unpaved road const & maintenance**
- **Bank failures (historic vs navigational impacts).**

In each case the habitat stress is the same but the habitat protection/restoration strategies selected differ according to the source.

Situational Analysis- Finding Habitat Threat Sources



ORBFHP Threats to Habitat

The most urgent threats fall into 4 general groupings consisting of:

- Direct habitat degradation (channelization, stream bottom removal, stream valley filling, & suitable substrate starvation)
 - Altered water quality (toxic pollutants, excess silt and sedimentation, altered temperature regime, & excessive nutrients)
 - Altered population dynamics (limited reproduction)
 - Altered hydrology (reduced channel/flood plain width, & inappropriate scour)
-

Strategies

- Protect intact waters
 - Restore natural flows
 - Reconnect fragmented habitat
 - Reduce sediment, phosphorus, and nitrogen runoff
 - Reduce other key pollutants or degrading environmental conditions (e.g., acid drainage, altered temperatures)
 - Reduce effect of invasive species
-

Targeted Strategic Actions with Objectives

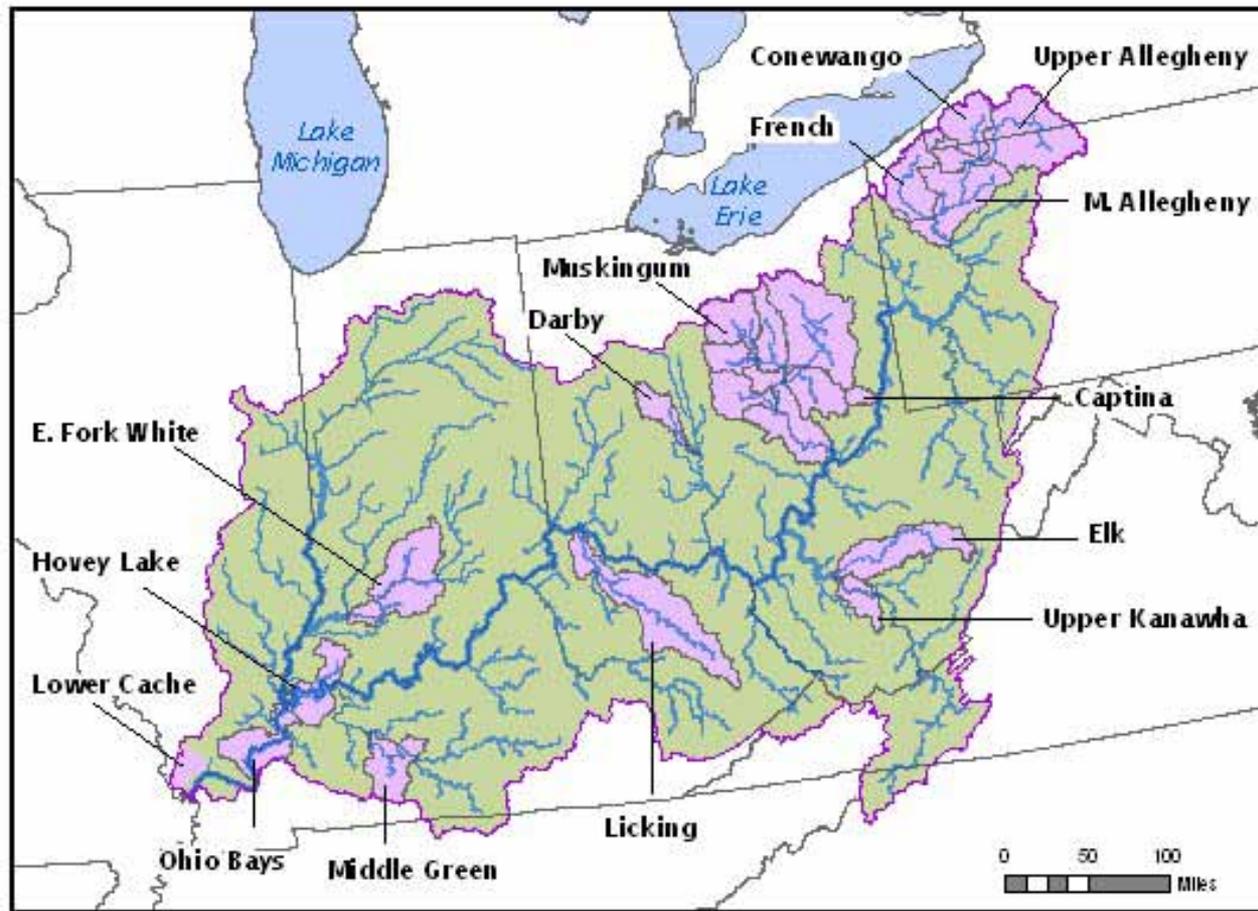
Strategy 3 – Reconnect fragmented river, stream, reservoir, coastal, and lake habitat to allow access to historic spawning, nursery and rearing grounds.

- ❑ **Remove or modify where possible 40 dams and other barriers that prevent aquatic organism movement by 2020.**
 - ❑ **Modify operational regimes to improve fish and aquatic organism passage through 30 locks, dams and other structures by 2020.**
 - ❑ **Reconnect 1000 acres of floodplain and off-channel habitat along priority rivers to allow access to key habitat areas for priority conservation targets by 2020.**
-

Early Action Sites

Ohio River Basin Fish Habitat Partnership

Early Action Sites



Legend

-  Early Action Sites
-  Ohio River Basin FHP

Priority Areas – Right Actions, Right Places

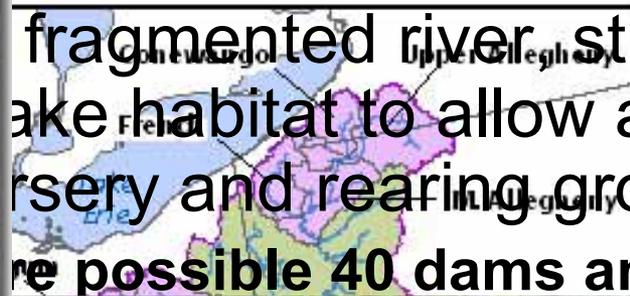


Ohio River mussels

Partnership

Early Action Sites

fragmented river stream, make habitat to allow access nursery and rearing grounds. re possible 40 dams and other



and other structures by

- Reconnect 1000 acres of habitat along priority river habitat areas for priority 2020.

Legend

- Early Action Sites
- Ohio River Basin FHP

Healthy habitats, healthy mussels, healthy fish...all good for the American public.



28 11:20 AM
