



Ohio River
Basin Alliance

Uniting in Vision,
Strategy, Voice



The Ohio River Basin Alliance Restoration and Protection Report

August 27, 2025

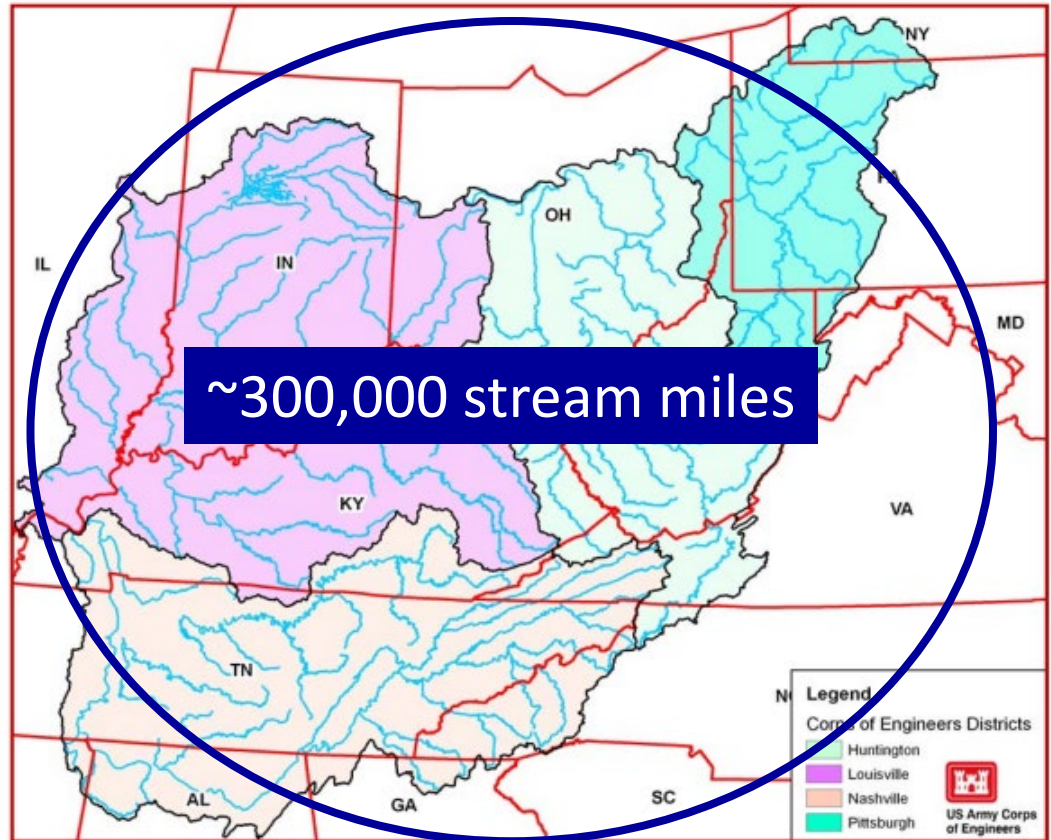
Chris Lorentz, ORBA Chair

Professor of Biological Sciences, Thomas More University

Mainstem vs. Watershed



Mainstem



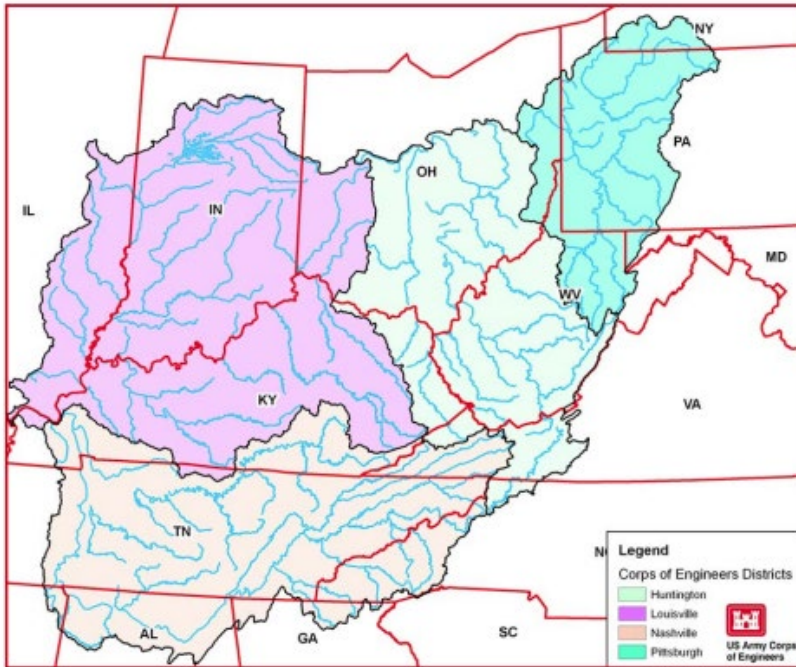
Watershed

In a recent poll of 3,070 ORB residents, only 24% realized that they live in the Basin.



December 2009

Ohio River Basin Comprehensive Reconnaissance Report

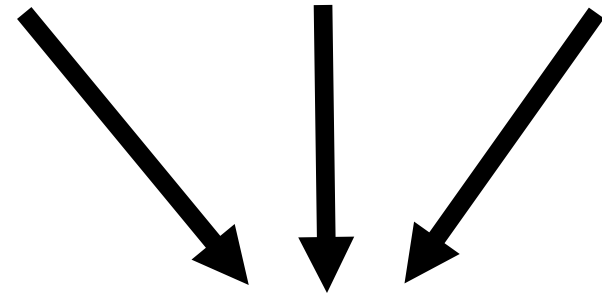


US Army Corps of Engineers

Pittsburgh–Nashville–Louisville–Huntington
Great Lakes and Ohio River Division



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**



OHIO RIVER BASIN
ALLIANCE

Ohio River Basin Alliance (ORBA)

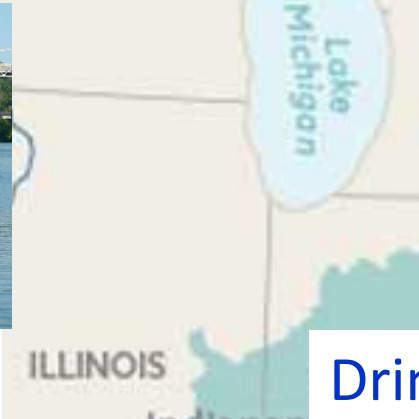


- Established in 2009, the Ohio River Basin Alliance (ORBA) is a **collaborative voice of stakeholders** for water resource priorities of the Ohio River Basin striving to sustain healthy ecosystems, healthy river communities and vibrant water-dependent economies. Composed of **academics, governmental agencies, industries, NGOs, and individuals**.
- **Six priorities**
 - ✓ Abundant Clean Water
 - ✓ Healthy and Productive Ecosystems
 - ✓ Nature-based Recreation
 - ✓ River Transportation and Commerce Corridor
 - ✓ Reliable Flood Risk Management
 - ✓ Knowledge and Education to Inform Decisions
- From the Strategic Planning Process, a need for a large-scale, basin-wide plan was identified that emphasizes **environmental protection, economic viability, and public health**.
- Framework for the Report: Identify **Values—Threats—Solutions**

Benefits and Value of the Waterways of the ORB



Recreation & Tourism



Drinking Water



Transportation

Share of Each Party's Voters Calling These Actions "Very Important"

	Republicans	Democrats	Independents
that all communities have to safe drinking water	72%	78%	70%



Rich Biodiversity



Economic



Aesthetics and Culture



Public Health



Ecosystem Services

Recreational Value—National Water Trail

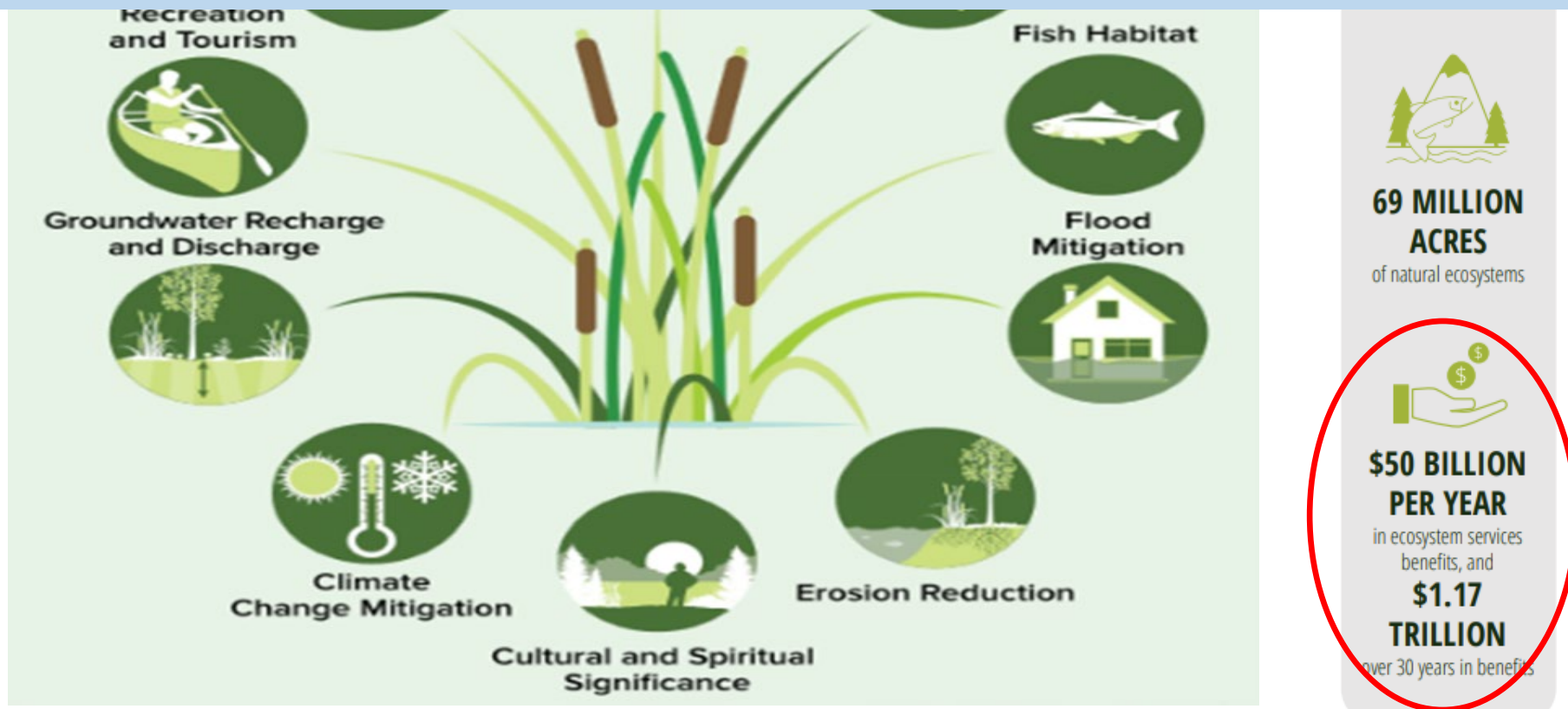


“National Recreation Trails create opportunities for locally managed tourism to boost economies and benefit hikers, bikers, paddlers and other recreationists alike. This investment into conservation and outdoor recreation will benefit the American people for generations to come,” said Secretary of the Interior Doug Burgum.

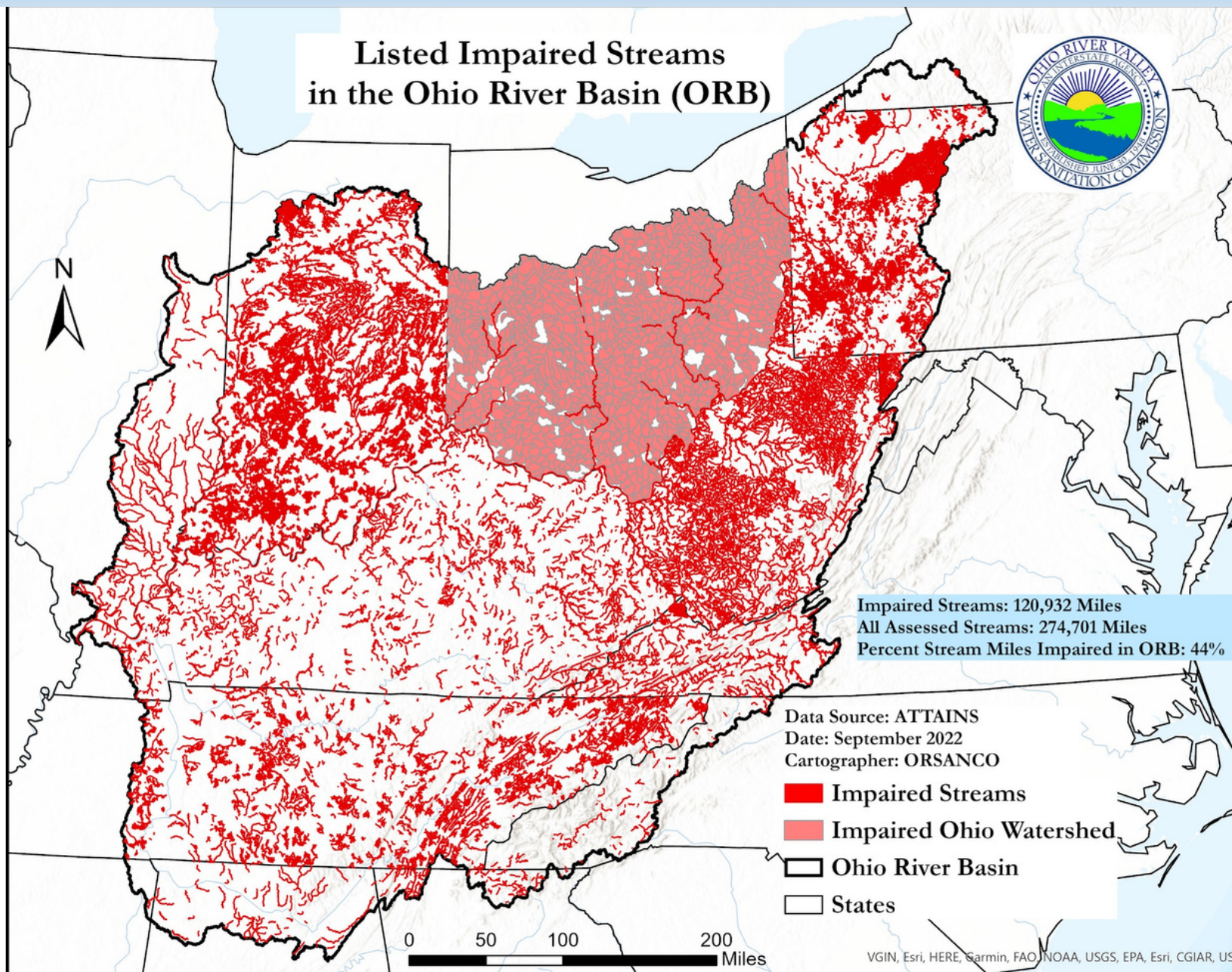
Ecosystem Services Value—\$50B/year

We want to recognize that tremendous progress has been made in water quality throughout the Basin, and we want to thank the governmental agencies, NGOs, and all those who have worked towards these efforts.

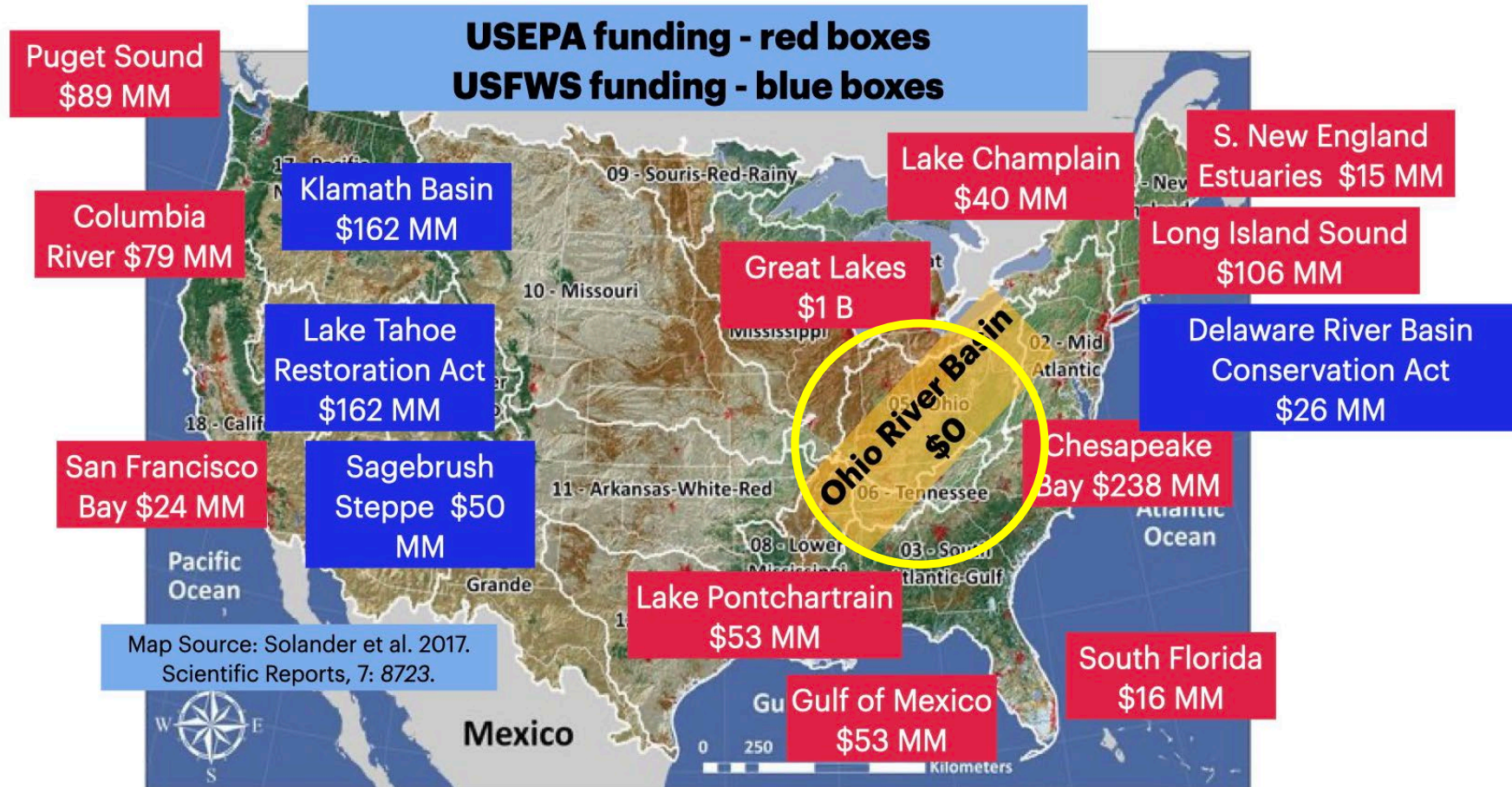
However...



Challenges and Threats



Solutions: Large-scale, designated federal investments



Geographic Ecological Restoration Funding
(Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act)

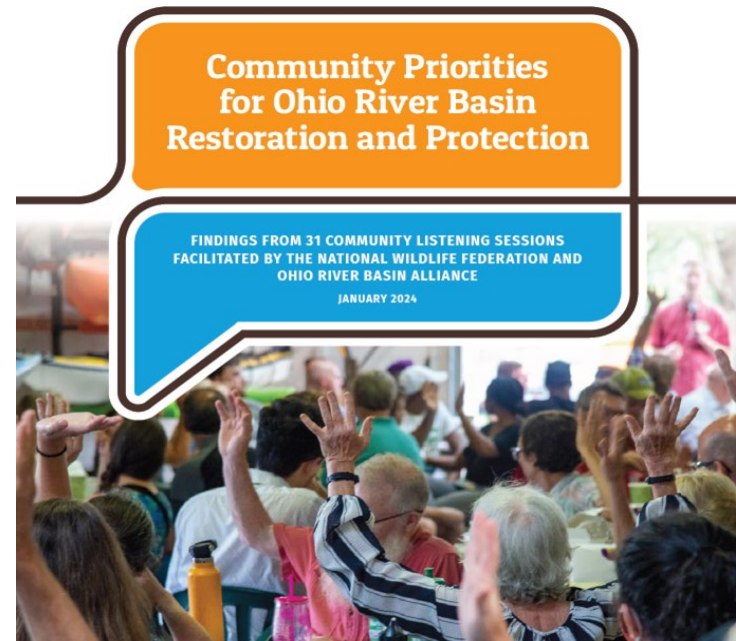
Case Statement: Need for federal investments

- Three Legs:

1. Technical Committee
2. Tribal Component
3. Community Input

- Three Areas of Focus:

1. Ecological Restoration
2. Economic Development
3. Public Health



Concern over these threats are shared across all political affiliations.

Share of Each Party's Voters Concerned about Environmental Threats

Percentage Who Call the Threat "Very Serious" or "Somewhat Serious"

	Republicans	Democrats	Independents
Sewage contamination	81%	84%	81%
Toxic pollution like PCBs and mercury	80%	84%	77%
Loss of wetlands and habitat	75%	81%	78%
Flooding	76%	81%	76%
Agricultural runoff	72%	80%	70%
Non-native species like invasive carp	68%	74%	66%

"Do you consider each of the following to be a very serious problem, somewhat serious problem, not much of a problem, or not a problem at all in local rivers and streams?"

66 SECTION 3: FROM PLANNING TO ACTION

- 66 3.1 Investing in Solutions Commensurate with Regional Need
- 68 3.2 Coordinating Efforts and Resources at a Basinwide Scale
- 69 3.3 Supporting Tribal Conservation and Clean Water Priorities
- 69 3.4 Engaging Communities in Solutions
- 70 3.5 Preventing Additional Harm and Burden
- 71 3.6 Supporting Residents and Homeowners
- 72 3.7 Building Workforce Capacity and Spurring Economic Development
- 74 3.8 Prioritizing Data, Research, and Monitoring

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- 91 A. Contributors to Ohio River Basin Restoration Plan

Recommendations

Congressional Support (Ohio River Basin Congressional Caucus)

Caucus Co-Chairs



Rep. Morgan McGarvey

D-KY-03

[Website](#)



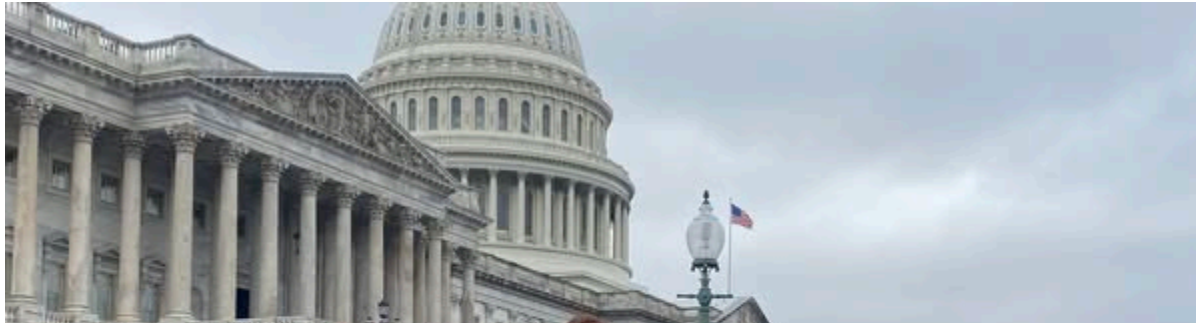
Rep. Erin Houchin

R-IN-09

[Website](#)

Ohio River Restoration Program Act

(H.R. 10432 <https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/10432>)



Learning that there is “a plan to commit government resources to improve the condition of local waters and the Ohio River,” the Basin’s voters support it *overwhelmingly*, with 74% in support and only 7% opposed – *a ten-to-one margin*.

- This support is strongly bipartisan, with 74% of Republicans, 84% of Democrats, and 69% of Independent voters across the Basin supporting the concept of a plan.
- Support for the plan is remarkably consistent no matter where voters live, never dropping below 73% in any state within the Basin.

December 17, 2024

Next Steps

- June—Rollout of the Report ✓
 - Press Conference
 - 60-Day Public Comment Period
 - Release of the R&P Report
 - Three Virtual Webinars
 - 10 Public Engagement Sessions
- July—Grow the ORB Caucus Chairs ✓
- Late August/early September
 - Reintroduction of the Legislation:
“Ohio River Restoration Program Act”
- September 9th
 - 3rd annual **ORB Hill Day** in DC
- October 16-18th
 - **ORB Summit** in Louisville, KY



“ORB Hill Day”
in DC

on Sept 09



2025 Ohio River Basin Day on the Hill & Ohio River Briefing



Sept. 9, 2025
8:30-10:00 AM

Rayburn House Office Building
Gold Room (2168)
Capitol Hill, Washington, D.C.



EESI
Environmental and
Energy Study Institute



OHIO RIVER BASIN
ALLIANCE

**CONGRESSIONAL BREAKFAST RECEPTION WITH SPEAKERS ADDRESSING
IMPORTANT CHALLENGES AND PRIORITIES WITHIN THE OHIO RIVER BASIN**

Open to all who care about protecting natural resources, safeguarding public health, and enhancing the quality of life for those in our region.

Speakers Include:



Lauren Anderson
Envirome Institute



Craig Butler
ORBA



Dan Bresette
EESI



Glen Delaney
Earth Economics



**Lisa Hollingsworth-
Segedy**
American Rivers



Chris Lorentz
ORBA



Rep. Morgan McGarvey
Ohio River Basin Caucus,
with Rep. Erin Houchin

OHIO RIVER BASIN CONFLUENCE

Clean water, river recreation, and thriving communities

Louisville, KY | Kentucky International Convention Center

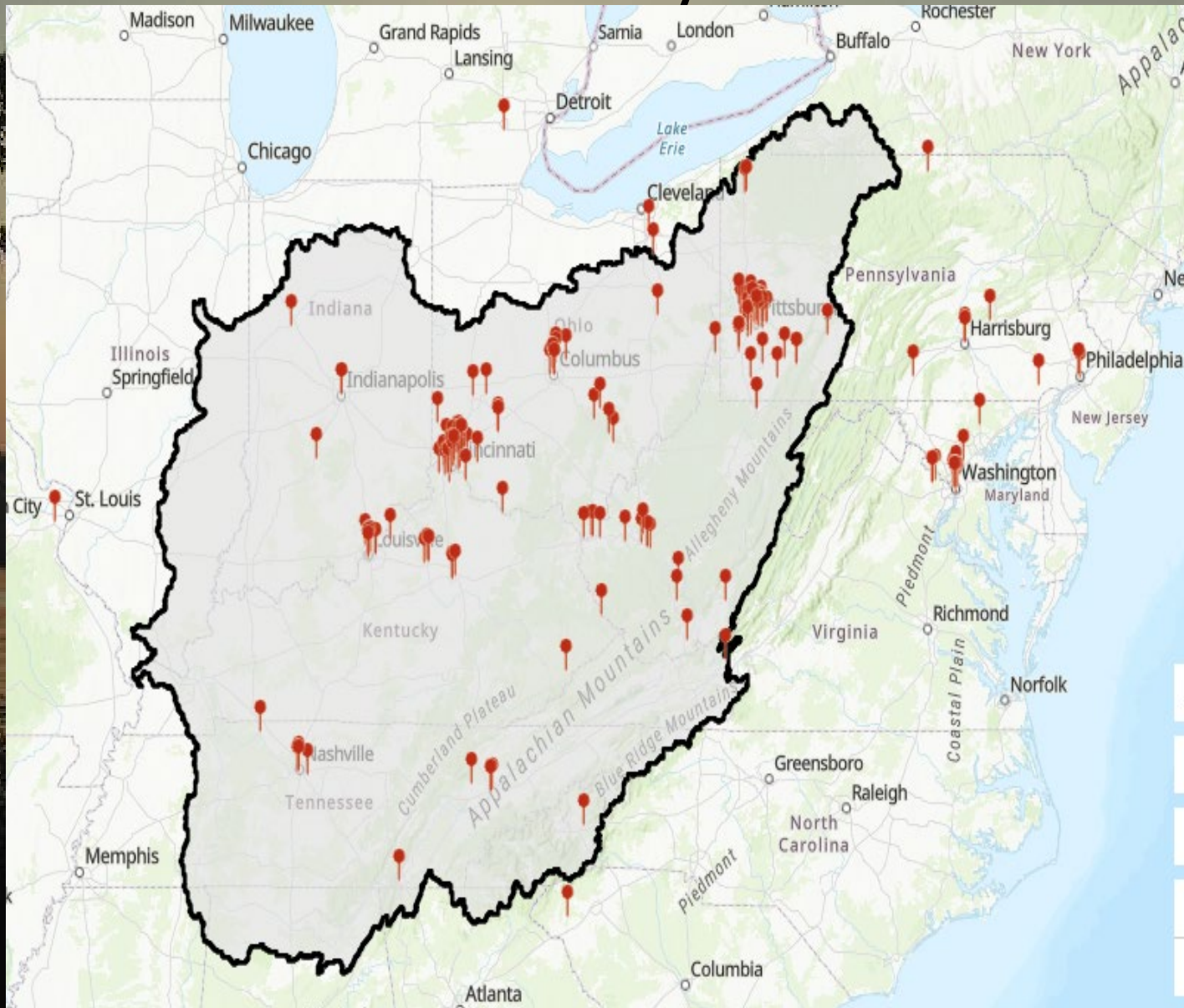
ORB
Conference
Oct. 16-18
Louisville, KY



A special joint summit hosted by:



Thank you



<https://www.ohioriverbasinalliance.org/>