

Ashtabula River Area of Concern Habitat Restoration

- Ohio EPA, RB Jergens Construction, Norfolk Southern
- 1,750' fish shelf
- \$1.5M GLRI awarded October 2010
- Construction Sept 2011 through June 2012



Top 3 Accomplishments/Impacts

- Project will result in removal of 3 BUIs
- Site has highest expectation for success w/in the AOC for habitat restoration, located on longest stretch of riverbank that is not sheet-piled and will be protected via environment covenant with Norfolk Southern
- Project is scheduled to be completed on time and under budget



Regional Value (transferrable/applicable)

- Successful fish habitat restoration adjacent to a federal navigation channel
 - Similar but smaller design was successful in Black River AOC. Design can be easily adopted by other habitat restoration projects along Lake Erie
 - Creates fish spawning sites, refuge from predation & critical habitat for migrating Lake Erie fish species
- OEPA will conduct follow-up assessments to demonstrate project effectiveness and document that biological targets have been achieved

Ecosystem and Management Improvements

- Will result in improved habitat and fish population
 - Preliminary data at smaller shelf constructed at this site under NRD/GLLA proves design success in Ashtabula River already
- OEPA will conduct follow-up sampling to demonstrate project effectiveness and document biological targets have been achieved



Public Benefits from Project

- Locals already seeing improved fishing in adjacent project area
- Project located in the heart of town and visible from main road
- River identity has shifted from toxic hotspot to a destination and the City is hoping to capitalize on associated economic opportunities



Economic Impact

- RAP Advisory Council plans to locate funding for a study to quantify economic benefits of restoration of AOC
- Difficult to quantify direct benefits for this single project since it is one of many over the past few decades
- Short term local economy benefits from work crew (lodging, etc.)



New Research Needs and Mgt Questions

- As the body of successful habitat restoration projects grows, there is a need to summarize the various methods/techniques/designs and evaluate effectiveness
- How can we enhance the current methods/techniques/designs and modify projects to accommodate the local conditions (e.g., riverine vs lacustrine, non-dredged vs navigation channels, endangered or target species, invasive species control, etc.)

Benefits of Synthesis Effort

- Sharing and opportunities to partner on future projects

