

2013 Nonpoint Source Monitoring Conference & Workshops Middle Cuyahoga River Restoration

For those that study environmental history, the Cuyahoga River has often been cited as one of the pivotal locations ushering in the birth of this country's modern environmental movement. On a typical day, June 22, 1969, floating debris and oil on the river was set aflame. Not the first time, certainly not the only river so grossly polluted but at the right place and right time to be held up as an example of humankind's impact on our environment. The modern Clean Water Act which followed in 1972 contained a section which understood that point source control alone may not solve all water quality problems, very visionary and ecologically deep to say the least.

Fast forward to 2000, Ohio EPA's first approved TMDL report recommends dam removal/modification as a restoration tool for the Middle Cuyahoga River. In 2003 the U.S. EPA approves a TMDL report for the Lower Cuyahoga River which also recommends dam removal as part of its implementation plan. This field trip will visit dam removal projects in both TMDL areas as well as a community-driven Ohio EPA funded stream restoration (also the site of a dam removal). We will also meet up with one of our many partners at the university level who will explain and demonstrate sediment monitoring on the river.



- The Cuyahoga Falls Dam removals will restore water and also result in an added benefit of kayaking recreational opportunities, American Whitewater kayakers will demonstrate how this section of restored river is used for their sport.
- Participants will have lunch at Water Works Park in Cuyahoga Falls along the Cuyahoga River. Following lunch Dr. John Peck of the University of Akron, Department of Geology will talk with the group about his work monitoring geomorphic changes and sediment movement following dam removals and demonstrate some of the techniques he uses to do this.
- We will visit a dam removal and restoration conducted on Kelsey Creek, a Cuyahoga River tributary. The stream restoration project is designed to address nonpoint source pollutant loading and meet some of the community's storm water permit requirements. The design-build consultant will guide us through the project site.
- The Munroe Falls dam was removed as part of the Middle Cuyahoga River TMDL implementation plan, the first approved TMDL in Ohio. Removal activities occurred following alteration of the initial design for partial removal. Challenges were numerous at this site and included both citizen and community concerns.

