

FOCUS WATERSHEDS

Eleven watersheds have been chosen as Focus Watersheds. These have selected as Ohio's highest quality watersheds based on physical characteristics, biological diversity and integrity, and recreational opportunities as assessed by the *ODNR Candidate Streams For Protection and Restoration* (Appendix 1). The Division of Wildlife will emphasize its Streams & Watersheds Program activities in these watersheds.

Watershed	Prioritization Score*	Ohio Drainage (mi ²)
Little Miami River	14	1755
Grand River	11	705
Scioto River	11	6510
Paint Creek**	11	
Big Darby Creek**	13	
Little Darby**	10	
Muskingum River	11	8038
Kokosing River**	9	
Walhonding River**	9	
Great Miami River	10	3948
Stillwater River**	6	
Cuyahoga River	8	425
Ohio Brush Creek	8	435
Little Beaver Creek	7	510
Maumee River	6	4862
Sandusky River	6	1420
Chagrin River	4	264
	Total Area:	28872
	Ohio (land area):	40953
	Proportion of Ohio covered by Focus Watersheds:	0.705

CHAGRIN RIVER BASIN

The Chagrin River originates in Geauga County at Chardon and flows southwest to Chagrin Falls where its drainage area is 60.6 square miles. Just west of Chagrin Falls, Aurora Branch with 58.2 square miles of drainage area joins the river from the south. From the confluence with Aurora Branch, the Chagrin flows northward in a preglacial valley to Willoughby and its mouth in Lake Erie at Fairport Harbor. East Branch with drainage area of 51.1 square miles joins the river at Willoughby. The total drainage basin is 264 square miles.

CUYAHOGA RIVER BASIN

The Cuyahoga River originates in Geauga County in the extreme northern part of the Akron-Canton Interlobate Plateau. From its headwaters area, the river flows in a relatively long, narrow basin toward Akron. Downstream of Cuyahoga Falls, the river

turns abruptly northward and flows in a wide, deep preglacial valley to Cleveland and its mouth in Lake Erie. The peculiar shape of the basin with its long eastern arm is the result of drainage changes brought about by glaciation. The map in figure 9 shows the outline of the basin and flow paths of the main watercourses. In the upper part of the eastern basin near Burton, the East Branch, West Branch, and Bridge Creek converge to give the Cuyahoga River a drainage area of about 150 square miles. Downstream at Kent, Congress Lake Outlet adds about 79 square miles of drainage area. At Akron, the Little Cuyahoga joins the Cuyahoga River contributing 62 square miles of drainage area. North of Akron, a series of smaller tributaries drain into the Cuyahoga from both sides of the basin, the largest of these being, Mud Brook, Yellow Creek, Furnace Run, Brandywine Creek, and Chippewa Creek. Near Bedford, Tinkers Creek joins the Cuyahoga contributing 96 square miles of drainage area.

GRAND RIVER BASIN

Draining 705 square miles, the Grand River gathers in morainal hills around the southern end of the Grand River Finger Lake Plain. The river meanders northward picking up drainage from relatively small tributaries to the west include Swine Creek, Phelps Creek, and Hoskins Creek with drainage areas of 30.9, 29.2, and 26.9 square miles, respectively. Larger tributaries join the Grand River from the east including Rock Creek with drainage area of 70.7 square miles and Mill Creek with drainage area of 103 square miles. At the north end of the Grand River Finger Lake Plain, the river turns west and meanders toward Painesville in a relatively deep, flat bottom valley in the Lake Escarpment. Paine Creek and Big Creek with drainage areas of 28.9 and 50.1 square miles flow into the river from the south along the Lake Escarpment. At Painesville, the river cuts north across the narrow Erie Lake Plain to its mouth in the lake.

GREAT MIAMI RIVER BASIN

The Miami River drains 5,385 square miles, of which 1,437 square miles are in Indiana, mainly in the Whitewater River Basin. The highest point in Ohio (1,550 feet above mean sea level) is in the Miami River drainage near Bellefontaine, and the lowest point in the state (about 430 feet above mean sea level, low water level in the Ohio River at the Indiana line) is just below the mouth of the Miami River.

LITTLE BEAVER CREEK BASIN

Between the Mahoning River and the Muskingum River in southeastern Ohio is an area of about 2,500 square miles drained by several small tributaries of the Ohio River. The largest stream is Little Beaver Creek, with an area of 510 square miles.

LITTLE MIAMI RIVER BASIN

The Little Miami River Basin drains an area of 1,755 square miles. The source of the main stream is a few miles southeast of Springfield, and the mouth is just east of Cincinnati. The length of the stream is slightly less than 100 miles. East Fork, its principal tributary, originates near Hillsboro and joins the main stream about 12 miles above the mouth. East Fork drains 501 square miles of the total area comprising the Little Miami Basin.

MAUMEE RIVER BASIN

The Maumee River drains 6,608 square miles including 4,862 in Ohio, 1,283 in Indiana, and 463 in Michigan. The Maumee forms at the confluence of the St. Joseph River and the St. Marys River and flows about 150 stream miles to its mouth in Maumee Bay. The map in figure 6 shows the outline of the basin and flow paths of the main watercourses. The St. Joseph River and the St. Marys River are both ice front streams that flow along the outer edge of the Fort Wayne Moraine. These rivers discharged to the west before retreat of the glacial ice allowed flow along the present day Maumee. Each river is about 100 miles long. Drainage area of the St. Joseph River at Fort Wayne is 1,085 square miles while that of the St. Marys is 839 square miles.

MUSKINGUM RIVER BASIN

The Muskingum River is the largest stream in the state and drains 8,038 square miles, or about one-fifth of Ohio. Within the basin, the physiographic, geologic, and soil conditions vary greatly. The Muskingum River forms at the junction of the Walhonding and Tuscarawas rivers near Coshocton, and flows 109 miles to the south and east to enter the Ohio River at Marietta. The northern and western edges of the basin are glaciated.

OHIO BRUSH CREEK BASIN

There are 1,336 square miles contributing to the Ohio River drainage between the Scioto and Little Miami rivers; Ohio Brush Creek drains 435 square miles of this area.

SANDUSKY RIVER BASIN

Draining 1420 square miles, the Sandusky River forms at the confluence of Paramour Creek and Allen Run and extends about 115 stream miles to its mouth in Sandusky Bay. Paramour Creek gathers in morainal hills near Crestline. The Sandusky River is joined by Broken Sword Creek southwest of Nevada. The Broken Sword has drainage area of 95 square miles. Not far downstream, the Little Sandusky contributes 38 square miles of drainage area. Tymochtee Creek drains 302 square miles in the western part of the upper basin and joins the Sandusky about midway between Upper Sandusky and Tiffin. Sycamore Creek, Honey Creek, and Rock Creek flow into the Sandusky from the east contributing 64, 179, and 35 square miles, respectively. Most of the western half of the lower basin is drained by Wolf Creek with a drainage area of 158 square miles. Muskellunge Creek drains 47 square miles of the lower western basin joining the Sandusky north of Fremont. Green Creek drains 81 square miles of the lower eastern part of the basin and joins the Sandusky at its mouth in Sandusky Bay.

SCIOTO RIVER BASIN

The Scioto River drains 6,510 square miles and has the third largest drainage basin in the state. It is about 240 miles in length. The topography of the basin is extremely varied, from flat swamplands near the source to the rugged terrain of the unglaciated plateau near the mouth. The map in figure 14 shows the outline of the basin and flow paths of the main watercourses.