

Frequently-asked Questions

<p>I own private property. How will this affect me?</p>	<p>It won't affect your property or what you can do with it. The Scenic River law doesn't affect private property. You can do anything <i>after</i> designation that you could have done <i>before</i>. You can farm however you like, start a business, cut down all of your trees – the law says nothing about this.</p>	<p>The Scenic Rivers law would not have been passed in 1968, nor would it have survived for 45 years, had it significantly restricted use of private property. Citizens would not have tolerated it. Landowners along the 14 designated rivers can attest to the benign nature of the Scenic River law.</p>
<p>I have land on a tributary to the river. Will designation limit what I can do there?</p>	<p>No. Private landowners can do all the same things they could do anywhere else. Designation does not add any restrictions.</p>	<p>Tributaries are not even mentioned in the law. Only the 1000-foot corridor matters, and only for public entities.</p>
<p>My property is in the 1000-foot corridor mentioned in the Scenic River law. Does that mean that the public can come onto my land?</p>	<p>No, the public can't come onto your land without your permission – same as before the river was designated. The 1000-foot corridor is meaningless for private land. It only has meaning regarding publicly-funded projects, such as bridge construction or wastewater treatment plant expansion.</p>	<p>If publicly-funded projects are proposed to occur within the 1000-foot corridor, a Citizens Advisory Council composed of people like you gets to review the plans and tell the Director of ODNR what you think of them. Citizens will have more local control.</p>
<p>Who gets to be on the Citizens Advisory Council?</p>	<p>Elected officials (it's especially valuable to have the county engineer on the committee), landowners, business owners, concerned citizens, representatives of conservation groups and sportsman's groups – anyone who is interested in the welfare of the river can apply.</p>	<p>The scenic river manager selects a diverse group of ten stake-holders so that the Director of ODNR gets well-considered advice about public projects in the corridor. All meetings are open to the public. Resolutions from the Advisory Council go directly to the Director of ODNR, who reports to the Governor.</p>
<p>So what's the advantage of a designation?</p>	<p>It comes with the attention of two employees who will do some of the work of a watershed coordinator. It adds points to Clean Ohio grant applications. Bank collapse, erosion control, logjam problems, and failing dams have been addressed by Scenic Rivers staff, and money has been allocated for remedies.</p>	<p>You can expect more frequent river cleanups involving scouts and other volunteers. A water quality monitoring program will be started, involving children in STEM education. In some cases, staff have obtained grant money for watershed action plans. It draws attention to the river in a positive way. More attention translates into more people taking care of it.</p>

Economic Benefits

The Mad River is regarded around the state as one of Ohio's 'select' rivers. When Ohio started its Scenic Rivers Program in 1968, and became the first state in the nation to have such a program, an inventory of the best rivers was authorized and **the Mad River made this list**. Only 6.5% of perennial stream miles in the state did so.

Of the 1892 stream miles on the 'select' list, slightly over 800 have been brought into the Scenic Rivers Program over the last forty years by being designated Wild, Scenic, or Recreational. There are fourteen rivers in the system at present. **The Mad would be only the fifteenth river designated since the program started nearly half a century ago.**

The standards are highest for Wild designation, and lowest for Recreational. If the Mad River achieves a Recreational designation, it is the hope of the citizens who worked for this recognition that it will be a stepping stone to eventual Scenic designation – **a truly enviable distinction.**

Calling attention to a river's excellence has direct economic benefits. The Little Miami was the first of the fourteen rivers to be designated, and the work started just as it has with the Mad River, with a **group of concerned citizens who wanted to improve their lives by improving their surroundings.** Today the Little Miami is a powerful income generator for its surroundings.

- a) The Little Miami Scenic Trail attracts 300,000 users per year according to surveys done by the regional planning commission. They spend \$20 each, of which about \$7 is for equipment and \$13 is for food, lodging, and travel. This amounts to **\$6 million** per year.
- b) The canoe and kayak liveries put out at least 100,000 boaters at a minimum of \$20 per person for another **\$2 million** per year.
- c) Fishing in Ohio is estimated at \$15,000 per fishable river mile per year as a state average. The Little Miami has at least 80 fishable miles of its 105-mile length. For convenience, we estimate **\$1 million** per year for fishing.
- d) Thus $6+2+1 =$ **\$9 million per year** directly attributable to the 'specialness' of the Little Miami corridor.

Divide \$9 million by the Little Miami's 94 miles of fishable, navigable water and you get **\$95 thousand per river mile per year**. The Mad River, by comparison, is about two-thirds as long.

Note that the jobs which have come to the Little Miami valley – the liveries, restaurants, bed-and-breakfasts, increased employment at convenience stores and gas stations - are 1) largely locally-owned, and 2) do not require \$100,000 in up-front training (i.e., a college degree) to fill. **Local people can start and staff these businesses.** They have the local knowledge, the connections, and the property that's required.

Tourism income is the best kind, and Clark County is not getting its share. Tourists bring money into an economy and then go home. They do not require the local government to educate their children, extend sewer lines to their homes, or plow their snow in the winter. Tax revenue from of this kind of business is the best available. Tourism is the number one industry in Warren County.