



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Harry Stone, Ohio River Basin Alliance, HStone@ORSANCO.org, (513) 563-8266

New Ohio River Plan to Benefit Economy, Environment, Communities in 15-State Region

Regional strategy sets stage for new federal investment in region.

Cincinnati (October 21, 2020)—The Ohio River Basin Alliance released a sweeping strategy today to help the 15-state region and its more than 25 million residents tackle environmental threats and economic needs, including inadequate river infrastructure, pollution to the river and its tributaries, and increased flooding that is only expected to get worse due to climate change. Read the plan at: <http://bit.ly/ORBA-plan>

“The regional plan provides a roadmap for needed investments that will benefit millions of people in the region by boosting our economy, protecting our drinking water, restoring our environment, protecting our public health, supporting our outdoor recreation, and improving our quality of life,” said Harry Stone, chairperson of the Ohio River Basin Alliance. “We have a historic opportunity to stand up for communities large and small in the region—and we are going to do it. We look forward to working with stakeholders in the region, as well as local officials, governors, and members of Congress to implement these common-sense solutions, before these challenges get more difficult and costly. We have solutions, and it’s time to use them.”

The plan, which covers portions of the states of Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia, highlights six regional priorities:

- Restoring the river, its tributaries and ecosystems to protect the health of people, fish, and wildlife;
- Addressing flooding to protect vulnerable communities and infrastructure;
- Ensuring abundant clean water for people, fish and wildlife, and businesses;
- Increasing nature-based recreation and tourism;
- Growing water-borne commerce and ensuring efficient waterborne commerce through adequate lock and dam infrastructure; and,
- Supporting robust research and education to inform the needs and opportunities of the region.

The goal is for the regional strategy to be implemented by collaborating with local communities, states, and federal government and other diverse partners that leads to robust new federal investment in the region, akin to what other regional initiatives have received in the Chesapeake Bay, Florida Everglades,

[5735 Kellogg Ave, Cincinnati OH 45230](#)

Great Lakes, Gulf Coast, and Puget Sound. The next phase is to craft implementation plans for the six goals.

“We look forward to working with local partners to put forward solutions that benefit our environment, economy, and communities—especially those communities that have historically borne the brunt of pollution and environmental harm, such as people of color, low-income and rural communities, and Tribal Nations,” said Stone. “We have an obligation and responsibility to help all of the people who call the region home, and we believe that the regional plan can lift all boats.”

The “Plan for the Ohio River Basin 2020 - 2025 Planning Assistance to States Study” was funded and performed under an agreement between Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Louisville District, with financial support from the Commonwealth of Kentucky. The plan received input from a diverse set of stakeholders, including state and federal agencies, colleges and universities, businesses, industry associations, cities, and non-governmental organizations.

The Ohio River basin covers 204,000 square miles encompassing parts of 15 states. It is home to over 25 million people. The Ohio River supplies drinking water to more than 5 million people.

Ohio River Basin Alliance, a collaboration of Ohio River Basin stakeholders and stakeholder organizations, was formed in 2009 to fill the need for an organization to speak for the Basin holistically by capturing the highest priorities of the numerous organizations of the Basin and advocating for the ecological health and economic well-being of this world class basin through sound laws, policies, and projects, and the funds to support them. ORBA is a collaboration that includes more than 250 representatives from over 130 states, local and federal agencies, industry, academia, and nonprofit organizations in the Ohio River Basin. ORBA’s purpose is to foster broad collaboration to advance education and science; promote the conservation of natural resources in the Ohio River Basin; and achieve sustainable economic growth, ecological integrity and public safety across and within political jurisdictions within the Ohio River Basin. Learn more at: <http://ohioriverbasinalliance.com/>