

# 1 Life at the Water's Edge

Introduction to Streamside Management

one in a series of six fact sheets on stream management

You are receiving this first in a series of fact sheets because you live on or near a stream. Streams in Northeast Ohio

eventually drain to Lake Erie, the source of our drinking water. The health and

functions of Lake Erie and your watershed are dependent on the health of its small headwater streams and tributaries.



Joseph C. Hammond

## *This series of fact sheets provides an opportunity to:*

- ✓ Increase your land value
- ✓ Reduce problems, like erosion, along your stream
- ✓ Improve wildlife habitat on your property
- ✓ Protect and improve the quality of your watershed and Lake Erie
- ✓ Make a difference in your community



## *How does maintaining or improving my stream increase property values?*

Studies have shown that:

- ◆ The appraisal value of houses with natural streams is higher than those with channelized (armored, straightened) streams.
- ◆ The closer a property is to a natural area, the higher its value.
- ◆ 60% of suburban residents enjoy wildlife viewing and are willing to pay a higher price for properties that are attractive to wildlife.

## *What is Stream Stewardship?*

Stream stewardship is the idea that each and every one of us is responsible for the sensible use and care of streams that flow through our properties.

## *Who's Responsible for What?*

Every stream has two components:

- ◆ the water flowing in it
- ◆ the land beneath & around it

Private individuals own the land that forms the stream channel on their property. However, because it is considered a "public good",

the water in the stream is owned by the State of Ohio, or all of us! This means that property owners can use the water, but not in ways that infringe on the rights of others.

What many property owners may not realize is that "using" water properly also depends on what they do with their land. If, for example, you decide to armor the stream bank, culvert the stream in a pipe, remove natural bed materials, or fill in a ravine, your land alterations can negatively affect:

- ◆ flooding & erosion rates downstream;
- ◆ the value of the property you've tried to protect and improve;
- ◆ how the stream water flows;
- ◆ what the water contains; and,
- ◆ whether the stream's inhabitants are healthy, or can even exist.

**You are responsible for any changes downstream resulting from actions on your land.**



Backyard

Habitat

Improvement

Ideas

## Control Invasive Non-native Species!



Glossy Buckthorn

ODNR Invasive non-native plant species threaten Ohio's native ecosystems by crowding out

native plant species, altering the food web and displacing the wildlife that relies on native plants for food, shelter, and breeding sites. Of the more than 700 non-native plants in Ohio, fewer than 100 are known to be a problem in natural areas. But, those that are invasive cause extensive economic damage and do immeasurable harm to our natural resources. Invasive non-native plants typically grow fast, produce



Purple Loosestrife

ODNR a lot of fruit, and have an efficient method of dispersing their seeds. Consider phasing out invasive non-native species in your backyard and

along your stream, and replace with native plants. To find out more about controlling invasive non-native plants in your backyard, contact your local Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) or the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) – Division of Natural Areas and Preserves at (614) 265-6561.



Honeysuckle

ODNR

To find out more about general stream management or stewardship go to [www.cuyahogawcd.org](http://www.cuyahogawcd.org), click on *What We Do* and then click on *Watershed Management*.

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