November 16th, 2017

Dear Ohio Members,

Currently, three major initiatives are underway in Ohio to improve water quality and boating opportunities on the Cuyahoga River and Lake Erie. The ACA strongly supports each initiative and encourages members to engage with local grassroots efforts to further each cause.

1. **Removal of Brecksville and Gorge Dams on the Cuyahoga River.**
   Friends of the Crooked River and other private groups are working hard toward dam removal. Brecksville Dam may come down as early as next summer. The removal of Brecksville Dam and Gorge Dam will improve water quality, exhume quality sections of class III to V whitewater, and create an unobstructed flow from Rockwell Dam to Lake Eerie. The removal of these dams will bring the Cuyahoga River back to life, and create incredible paddling opportunity. Removal is costly, but the economic and environmental impact assessments provide clear analysis and strong reasoning for removal.

2. **Cuyahoga River Water Trail**
   The National Park Service is currently heading an initiative to create 80 miles of water trail from Burton, Ohio to Lake Eerie. The associated water trail guide will include put-in and take-out locations, mileage between points, parking, available facilities, and points of interest.

3. **Nutrient Load Reduction Plans for Lake Eerie**
   The Ohio State Environmental Protection Agency released a draft nutrient load reduction plan for the Lake Erie basin in September. Lake Erie suffers from blue-green algal bloom contamination as a result of high nutrient loads in the basin. Algal blooms cause temporary lake closures inhibiting paddling access. The draft plan does not adequately target reductions from agribusiness, the main source of nutrient runoff. The ACA submitted a letter to the Ohio State EPA supporting a nutrient reduction plan that fairly targets prime polluters.

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Each of these initiatives furthers water quality and paddling opportunities in the state of Ohio. Click here to see the U.S. Action Plan for Lake Erie. For additional information, and to find out how you can lend your support, please contact:

1. ACA Public Policy Chief, Brett Mayer, bmayer@americancanoe.org, or
2. Ryan Pepper, ACA Ohio State Director, ohstatedirector@americancanoe.net

In addition, please be on the lookout for future communications offering opportunity to write state and congressional representatives on key issues.

This is an exciting time for Ohio paddlers. We recently celebrated the completion of the Lake Erie Islands Water Trail network, 5 trails and 60 miles of paddling opportunities. We look forward to seeing more clean, unobstructed flows in the near future.

Sincerely,
Brett Mayer
Public Policy Chief
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