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Ohio River Valley Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area launches website

CINCINNATI, OHIO (October 8, 2020) – The Ohio River Valley Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (ORV CISMA) is getting a new digital presence. Funding from a Duke Energy Foundation grant has enabled the launch of a website, <https://orvcisma.org>.

The ORV CISMA is a coalition of nonprofits, agencies and businesses working to control and remove invasive species in a 22-county area in the Ohio River Valley. Ohio River Foundation, which originated the project in 2016, is its coordinator.

Its premise is that because invasive plants are expanding across our landscapes faster than people can stop them, a coordinated approach offers the best chance of managing their spread. Non-native, invasive plants compete with and often crowd out native ones, leading to decreased biodiversity, poorer habitats for wildlife (including the pollinators that help our food supply) and lower water quality, among other issues. Examples of invasive plants in the Ohio River Valley include Amur honeysuckle, Callery pear, Autumn olive, lesser celandine and wintercreeper.

“The CISMA’s goal is to reduce the invasive plant populations and seed bank in Greater Cincinnati, thus slowing the spread of these harmful plants and helping native species thrive,” said ORF Executive Director Rich Cogen. “With the resulting increased biodiversity, ecosystems become more resilient to a changing climate.

“By sharing information and resources, the organizations in the CISMA can more effectively work toward that goal,” Cogen added. “Having a dedicated website offers us a new way to involve the public in this important work.”

Current projects aimed at removing invasives -- including Ohio River Foundation and Cincinnati Parks’ efforts at Alms Park and ongoing habitat restoration work at both Cincinnati Nature

Center and Great Parks of Hamilton County -- and volunteer opportunities to help with these projects are listed on [the new ORV CISMA website](#). In addition, the website includes resources for reporting invasive plant sightings and to help property owners who wish to remove invasives and plant natives.

Member organizations are Boone, Campbell and Kenton County Conservation Districts; Boone National Forest; Natorp's Nursery; Great Parks of Hamilton County; Cincinnati Parks; Clermont County Park District; Ohio Department of Agriculture; Ohio Invasive Plant Council; Little Miami Conservancy; Oxbow Inc.; Kentucky Nature Preserves Commission; and Cincinnati Nature Center.

Of the 22 counties covered by the CISMA, nine are in Ohio (Adams, Brown, Butler, Clermont, Hamilton, Highland, Montgomery, Scioto and Warren); seven in Kentucky (Boone, Bracken, Campbell, Gallatin, Grant, Kenton and Pendleton); and six in Indiana (Franklin, Dearborn, Ohio, Ripley, Jefferson and Switzerland).

For more information, visit the ORV CISMA website at <https://orvcisma.org/>.

About Ohio River Foundation

Ohio River Foundation (ORF) is dedicated to protecting and improving the water quality and ecology of the Ohio River and all waters in its 11-state watershed. ORF works towards these goals through environmental education, conservation and advocacy activities that serve to inspire environmental stewardship for the benefit and enjoyment of current and future citizens.

In 2020, ORF celebrates its 20th anniversary of Ohio River watershed work. During its history, the nonprofit has reached 50,000 students with its freshwater education programs; restored and reconnected more than 200 miles of rivers; removed four dams; planted 6,000 trees; and removed more than 300,000 invasive plants.

For more information, visit www.ohioriverfdn.org.