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## Ohio River Foundation selected for statewide fundraising campaign

Contributed By: [Rich Cogen](#) | Ohio River Foundation



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1% for the Planet has announced the launch of SEED Ohio, a new and exciting way for people to easily and quickly give to the environment with tangible local impact. The new program allows everyone to fund environmental causes in an engaging way. Blue Ash based Ohio River Foundation has been selected as a partner and beneficiary of this new initiative.

SEED (Solutions Elevating Environmental Donations) launched as a regional pilot program and is currently seeking supporters who are passionate about protecting the planet. The program benefits a vetted group of Ohio-based nonprofits that will be supported through one donation. SEED Ohio beneficiaries include:

- ? Western Reserve Land Conservancy
- ? Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association
- ? Ohio River Foundation
- ? Cuyahoga River Restoration
- ? Clean Fuels Ohio
- ? Building Value

Current environmental funding is lagging, both in the U.S. and Ohio. Only 3% of philanthropy in the U.S. goes to environmental causes — a percentage similar to that of Ohio.

SEED Ohio's environmental giving platform is personal, immediate and trackable impact. One simple donation to SEED Ohio will create real environmental impact across the region through the work of established nonprofits. Donors can directly affect six critical issue areas: water, land, food, wildlife, pollution and climate change. For example, a \$20 donation will provide a habitat for three fish, capture nine gallons of stormwater runoff, reduce 300 lbs. of CO2 emissions, divert 3.8 lbs. of waste from local landfills and enable the certification of 1.90k lbs. of organic produce.

"We believe that Ohio's natural wonders are worth protecting and preserving for future generations," says Kate Williams, 1% for the Planet's CEO. "The state's robust environmental assets enrich our personal and professional lives in countless ways."

1% for the Planet is a global organization that connects dollars and doers to accelerate smart environmental giving. We recognize that the current level of environmental giving — only 3% of total philanthropy — is not enough to solve the most pressing issues facing our planet. Started in 2002 by Yvon Chouinard, founder of Patagonia, and Craig Mathews, founder of Blue Ribbon Flies, our members have given more than \$150 million to environmental nonprofits to date. Today, 1% for the Planet is a network of more than 1,200 member businesses, a new and expanding core of more than 120 individual members and thousands of nonprofit partners in more than 40 countries.

Ohio River Foundation (ORF) is a leading regional conservation organization, based in Cincinnati, protecting and improving water quality in Ohio (and Greater Cincinnati). ORF works towards these goals through environmental education and conservation activities that serve to inspire environmental stewardship for the benefit and enjoyment of current and future generations.

Ohio River Foundation programs focus on providing thousands of students each year STEM enrichment field trips, restoring habitat, and educating and training the next generation of environmental stewards.

The award-winning River Explorer education program has educated more than 35,000 students and now reaches more than 4,500 students per year in Cincinnati and Columbus. River Explorer provides hands-on STEM learning and enrichment, improves academic performance, and instills stewardship ethics. Students are in rivers and creeks investigating and performing field research using their hands and a variety of nets to catch aquatic creatures. It's wonderful to hear a child's joy at catching their first fish! They also conduct water quality tests to determine water chemistry values. The River Explorer field trip is routinely rated the best field trip by students and teachers.

New for 2017, will be the Mussels in the Classroom program. In connection with a partnership that ORF has with state and federal agencies, students will have an in-classroom hands-on experience with freshwater mussels. Classes will have an aquarium full of freshwater mussels to monitor, feed, and observe. This program furthers ORF and its partners' efforts to involve students in freshwater mussel repatriation of the region's waters.

The habitat restoration program has several features, including: removing dams, reducing populations of invasive species, assisting communities with projects, and leading youth work crews. The dam removals are restoring and reconnecting rivers, and removing sources of dangerous algal blooms and risks to paddlers. Since 2014, ORF has removed two dams and several river crossings resulting in reconnecting more than 100 miles of rivers. Another dam is due to come out in fall 2017!

The Youth Conservation Team (YCT) program engages high school and college students in work-study where they learn about ecosystem science and complete habitat restoration projects such as tree plantings, invasive plant removals, and erosion diversion installations. YCT crews and ORF staff have installed more than 8,000 native trees and plants, and removed more than 100,000 invasive plants.

Changemakers can "plant the seed" today to grow solutions for tomorrow by joining the movement — what will you leave behind? For more information about SEED Ohio, visit: [www.seedohio.org](http://www.seedohio.org). More information about ORF can be found at [www.ohioriverfdn.org](http://www.ohioriverfdn.org).

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