

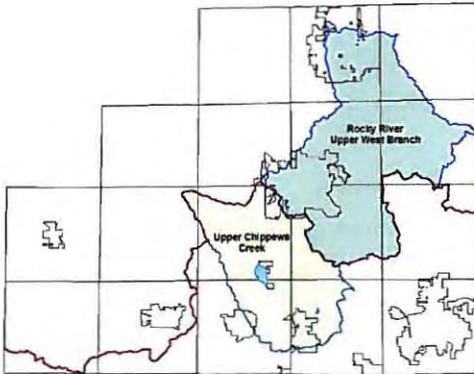


Upper Chippewa Creek Watershed

Balanced Growth Initiative



Project Background



The Upper Chippewa Creek Watershed Balanced Growth Plan will complement the Plan recently endorsed for the Rocky River Upper West Branch watershed. These two adjacent watersheds, located in the heart of Medina County, are separated by the sub-continental divide with the Rocky draining into Lake Erie and the Chippewa draining to the Ohio via the Tuscarawas and Muskingum Rivers. While the two watersheds share similar features and concerns, each has its own unique challenges. With many of the same stakeholders, the experience gained in developing the Rocky River Plan should provide a solid foundation for constructing the Upper Chippewa Plan.

Partnership Overview

The Upper Chippewa Creek Watershed Planning Partnership is comprised representatives from:

The Conservation Community

- Medina County Park District*
- Medina County Soil and Water Conservation District*
- Western Reserve Land Conservancy*
- Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District

The Development Community

- Medina County Homebuilders Association*
- Medina County Department of Planning Services*
- Medina County Economic Development Corporation*
- Medina County Planning Commission
- Medina County Port Authority

The Agricultural Community

- Medina County Farm Bureau*

Agencies Responsible for Infrastructure

- Medina County Emergency Management Agency*
- Medina County Highway Engineer*
- Medina County Sanitary Engineer*
- Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency*

Local Government

- Medina County Commissioners*
- The City of Medina**
- The Village of Chippewa Lake
- The Village of Gloria Glens
- The Village of Seville
- The Village of Westfield Center
- Guilford Township
- Lafayette Township**
- Montville Township**
- Westfield Township

*Members experienced in Balanced Growth processes, outcomes and roles through their participation the Rocky River Upper West Branch Watershed Balanced Growth Initiative Pilot Project. It is expected that these members will drive this process.

**It should be noted that portions of Lafayette and Montville Townships and the City of Medina also lie in the Rocky River Upper West Branch Watershed. All three of these communities have given resolutions of support for the State endorsed RRUWB Balanced Growth Plan.





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figure 1

Watershed Description

The Upper Chippewa watershed lies within the boundaries of Medina County and is adjacent to the subcontinental divide (fig 1). It comprises the headwaters of Chippewa Creek (fig 2) and is composed of two 14-digit HUC subwatersheds, 05040001 020 010 and 020 (fig 3). This area drains approximately 28,000 acres or 44 square miles.

Ten jurisdictions have a footprint within the watershed (fig 4). They include portions of one municipality, four villages, and four townships as well as the county. The combined populations of the portions of these communities within the watershed is estimated at about 12,000.



figure 2

Major Geographic Elements

At the heart of the watershed lies Chippewa Lake. At 344 acres, it represents the largest natural inland lake in Ohio. The lake is fed primarily by the uppermost portion of Chippewa Creek known as *The Inlet* to the north and *McCabe Creek* to the northeast and drains to the south via Chippewa “Ditch” (Creek). Since the late 1800’s, the lake has served as a recreational magnet to the region. Today, 10% of the watershed’s land is dedicated parkland and recreational use.

Soils listed as “prime farmland” by the USDA-NRCS cover over 75% of the watershed. Because of the gentle topography of the watershed, many of these prime soils need to be drained to be farmable, hence tiled fields are extensive, particularly in the Chippewa Valley. The Chippewa itself throughout its length in the watershed has undergone channel modification (i.e. ditching).

With water from Lake Erie unavailable to most of the watershed, communities and residents rely on ground water. Coursing below the watershed is an important aquifer recharge area.

The watershed is also part of *Chippewa District Flood Control Project*. Two dams, one on Hubbard Creek and the other on an unnamed tributary of Chippewa Creek, along with the channel of the Chippewa, function as flood control measures.

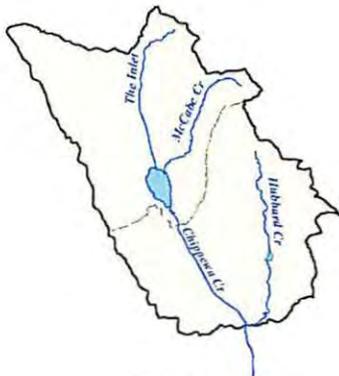


figure 3

Major Threats Natural Resources

Results listed in the Ohio EPA Division of Surface Water’s *Tuscarawas River Watershed Total Maximum Daily Load Project 2008 Draft Report* evaluated the causes and sources of water quality problems and threats in the Upper Chippewa Creek study area. The main causes of concern identified were habitat and flow alteration, and siltation caused by agricultural activities, upstream impoundment, and suburbanization; and pathogens from HSTS discharge.

Development pressures are highly variable within the drainage area of the Upper Chippewa Creek study area. They range from intense pressure in and around the City of Medina and the area of the I-71/I-76 interchange including the Village of Seville, to minimal pressure in the rural portions of the townships.



figure 4