



Before you do anything up here, you should check on how the water fluctuates... Some of the areas we saw along the river - one month ago were well under water.

There are several corps websites that tell you what river levels to expect, but sometimes the water level can change 15 feet fairly quickly.
~ Elizabeth Jones



Recreation and preservation can't stand alone – it's easy to get angry at development that doesn't support conservation, but the question is, how can they support each other for the good of all three?

~Mary Pretz-Lawson

How do we deal with the issue of private ownership...It's an American condition. A proposed fifty foot setback...may not the address the discomfort of private owners who have great houses, privacy, their own docks.

~ Karl Thomas

I have never been on the river.... it was nice, but there were too many industrial plants and things along the edges that took away from the beauty of the scenery.

~ Isis



The state of Oregon owns the seashore. In England –even if it's your own farm you have to keep a trail open for walkers-if you have a trail you have to have a stile over the fence.

~ Linda Stafford



The shipyards where the skids are... it's historic but maybe also an incredible nature/culture opportunity.
~ Karl Thomas



I'm in a state of shock... it is so beautiful and I can't get to it.

~Linda Binstock



Why not have natural activities for kids, bird sanctuaries and the like?
~ Estelle Goncar

The boyhood rule was keep your mouth shut when in the water.

~ Albert Ejzak

If you wanted to do something to create access points, where would you go to get help? How would you get groups to cooperate?

~ Mike Goncar

Rivers are primarily owned and planned by men. Are access and safety issues different for women?

~ Tim Collins



I always thought the creeks were cleaner than the rivers.
~ Rachel Puda



On Neville Island all the industrial sites... are there any for sale? Should we be looking at them for potential access to the water?

...although it might upset people, that land has always been industrial.
~ Janet Thorne

Concept Map 1: Natural Constraints

Safety

The water level in Ohio Pool 2 varies due to sporadic releases of water from the Emsworth Lock and Dam. This results in faster waterspeed, widespread erosion, and increased debris along the riverbanks and streambanks of Pool 2. These effects are safety hazards for non-motorized boaters.

Access

The topography of the area can be a constraint. The steep banks along Neville Island's northern shore make accessing the river difficult.

Water Quality

Several tributaries, including Sewickley Creek, are culverted in places, put in pipes and buried underground. In urban watersheds, culverts may be contaminated by sewers, creating a public health hazard. Culverting is a particular form of water management that neglects the benefits of open air streams—most notably improved water quality, runoff management, recreational and educational opportunities, and wildlife habitat.

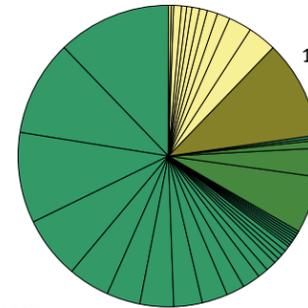
In a study of Aquatic Macroinvertebrate Communities conducted by the Army Corps of Engineers and 3r2n, it was determined that all the streams of pool 2 were impaired to various degrees. The highest condition scores (with a score greater than 80% meaning non-impaired, 60-79% slightly impaired, 40-59% moderately impaired, and less than 39% severely impaired) were Toms Run (77.5), Sewickley Creek (57.8), Thorn Run (56.0), Blackburn Run (54.9), Narrows Run (54.6), Little Sewickley Creek (52.3), Flaugherty Run (48.3), Kilbuck Run (42.9), and Moon Run (40.8). Edgeworth Run, Montour Run, Lowries Run, and McCabe's Run can be classified as severely impaired streams. However, the diversity of aquatic life found in these streams nonetheless exceeds what is typically found in urban waterways.

Invasive Species

Invasive plant species threaten the integrity of bio-diverse ecosystems. They are defined as species that are non-native to the local ecosystem and whose introduction causes or is likely to cause harm to economic conditions, environmental conditions, or human health. Their prominence throughout the region threatens the habitat of native plant and animal communities, especially those along streams and riverbanks.

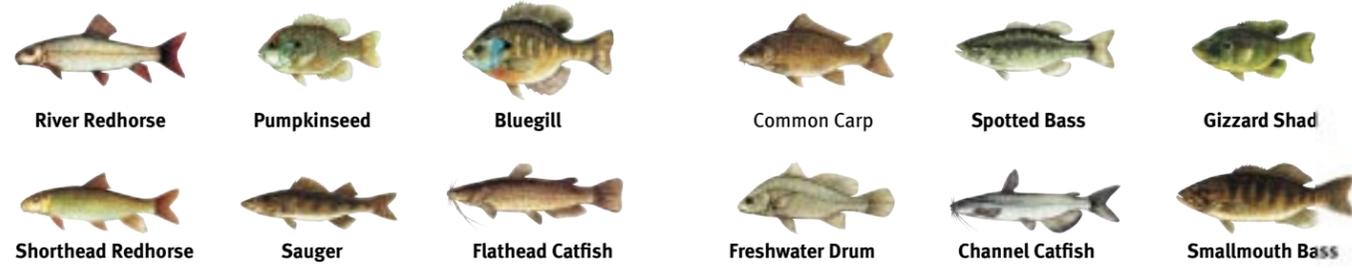
Botany study - The Ohio River Pool 2, 2003
Relative abundance of woody species and Japanese knotweed

- Native Woody Species
- Native and Introduced Woody Species
- Japanese Knotweed
- Introduced Woody Species

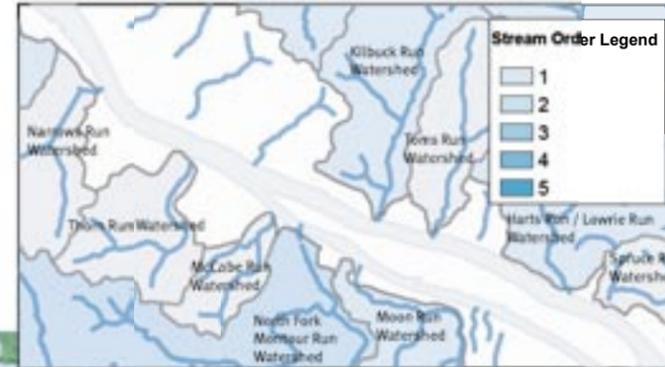


11% Japanese Knotweed

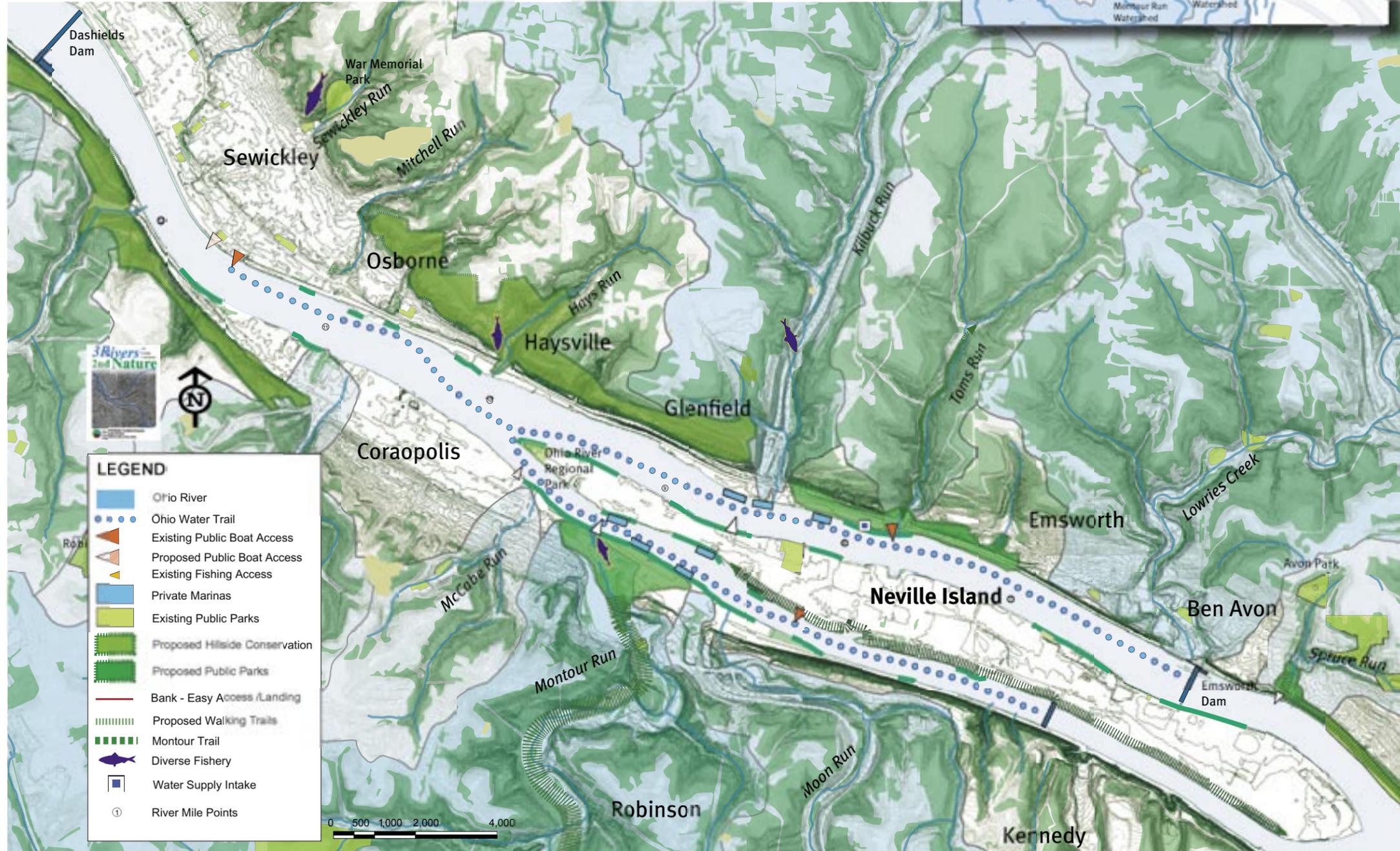




Fish Species Composition of the Ohio River (The Point to Emsworth Dam) Images Courtesy of the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission



Concept Map 2: Natural Opportunities



Green Spaces

There are several stretches of natural green hillsides in the Emsworth pool that provide great views from both the rivers and the riverbank. In urban areas, such a feature is an invaluable resource for encouraging wide variety of river use ranging from water recreation to scenic dining. While not all citizens will use the rivers recreationally, everyone can at least appreciate a riverside view.

Green spaces also provide wildlife habitat and encourage the development of many plant and animal varieties. They also have important hydrological functions; from slowing down and filtering rainwater as it traverses the landscape to preventing erosion and maintaining soil stability.

Water Quality

The river's water quality has been found to be generally satisfactory. Fecal Coliform Tests conducted on the river during dry weather scored just within 200 CFU/100ml benchmark. Four of the tributary streams tested along with the river also fell within the benchmark: Toms Run, Moon Run, Montour Run, and Narrows Run.

Biological life in the Ohio's tributaries also reflects the overall ecological integrity of the river. According to the 3r2n fish study, Three Rivers Second Nature: Fishes of the Small Tributaries to the Ohio River in Allegheny County, the tributaries with the highest fish community on the Index of Biotic Integrity in Ohio Pool 2 are Sewickley Creek, Montour Run, Moon Run, and Lowrie Run. According to the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, there are twenty-five fish species found in the Emsworth Pool, including the Smallmouth Buffalo, which is considered threatened in Pennsylvania.

Good Access

There are many excellent opportunities for access along the Ohio River's edge. Just beyond view, looking from the mouth of Montour Run, are remnants of a lowland flood forest. The tributary empties into the Ohio River with a sandy beach, a favorite fishing spot for locals. This beach could provide good camping, fishing, small craft landing, and other recreational opportunities.

Concept Map 4: Built Constraints

Industrial Presence

Industry still maintains a significant presence in this pool. This creates safety, pollution, and aesthetic constraints. Some think these concerns prohibit Pool 2 from being used for recreational purposes.

The Emsworth Lock and Dam averages about 550 commercial lockages every month, plus another 350-400 lockages of pleasure craft during the busy summer season. It also handles about 17 million tons of freight per year. Industrial traffic could create concerns for non-motorized boater safety. There are several marked Fleet Areas (designated layover areas for barges to dock until needed) throughout Pool 2. Abandoned barges along the shores of the pool now litter these zones.

The Emsworth Lock and Dam, initially built in 1922, is in poor condition and steadily deteriorating. This creates a potentially significant danger for Pool 2 users. Further considerations concerning the dam are required in the immediate future.

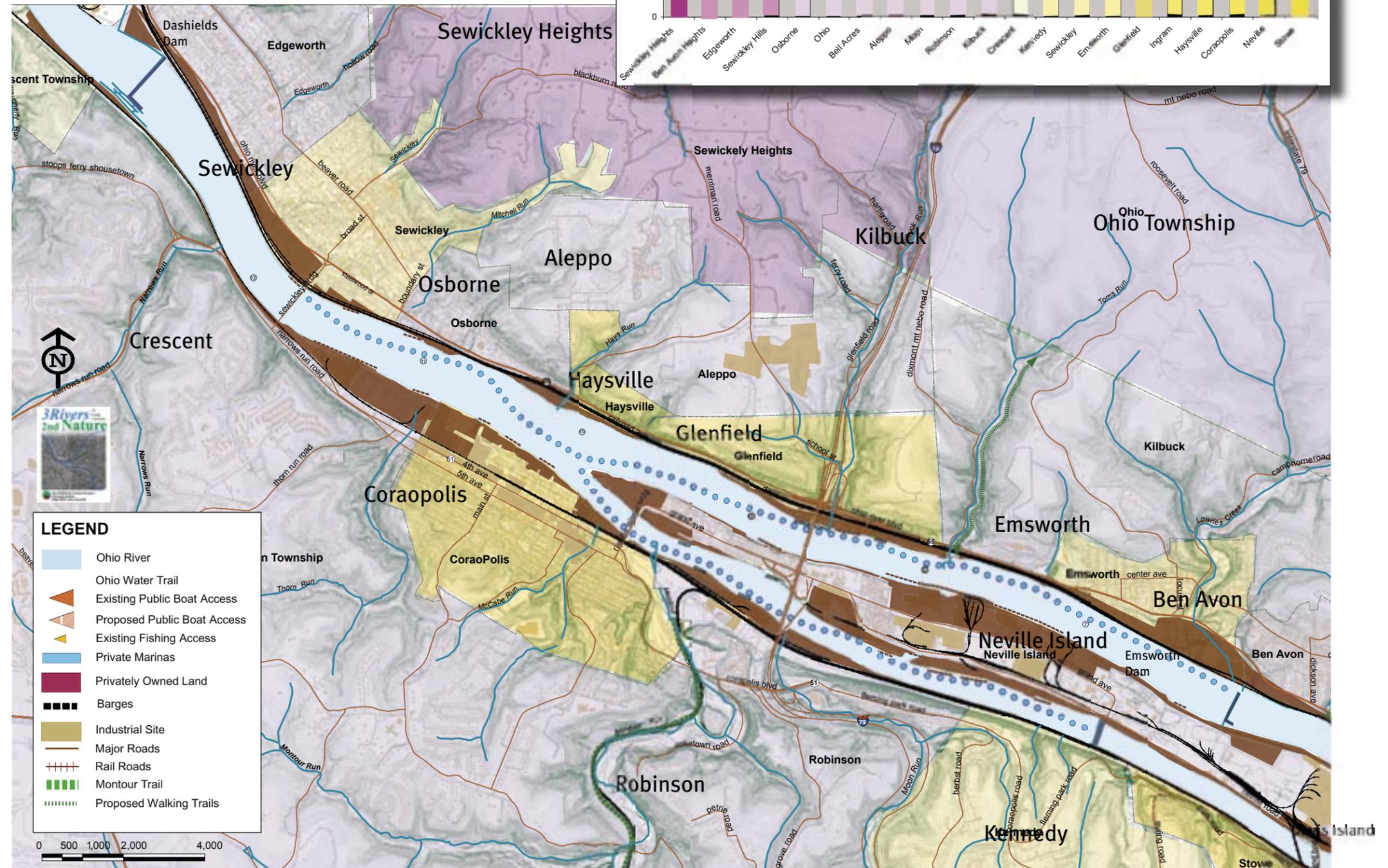
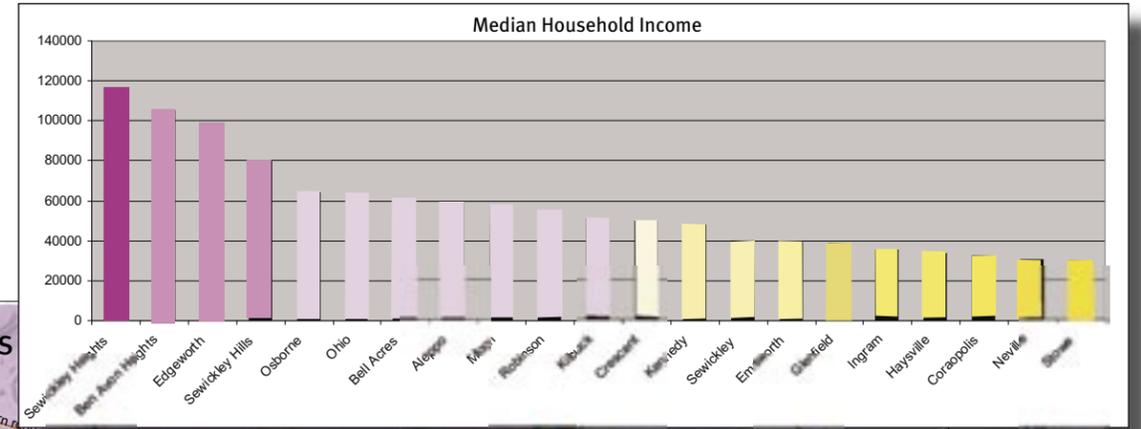
There is no lock allowing motorized traffic through the back channel of Neville Island, effectively creating a dead end. There are also frequent controlled back channel surges when the gates are open to let water out of the Pittsburgh pool. Non-motorized water craft can have a difficult time maneuvering in the channel because of the increased water speed.

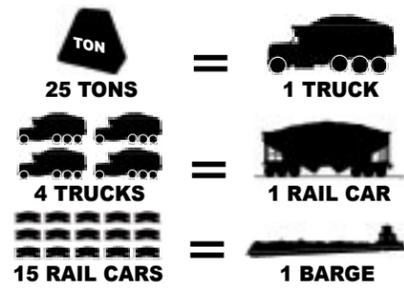
Pollution

Combined Sewer Overflows (CSO) are outlets that release a combination of wastewater and stormwater during wet weather. When it rains, the surge of storm water runoff quickly exceeds the processing capacity of the sewage treatment plant, causing overflows of untreated sewage into our rivers.

Access

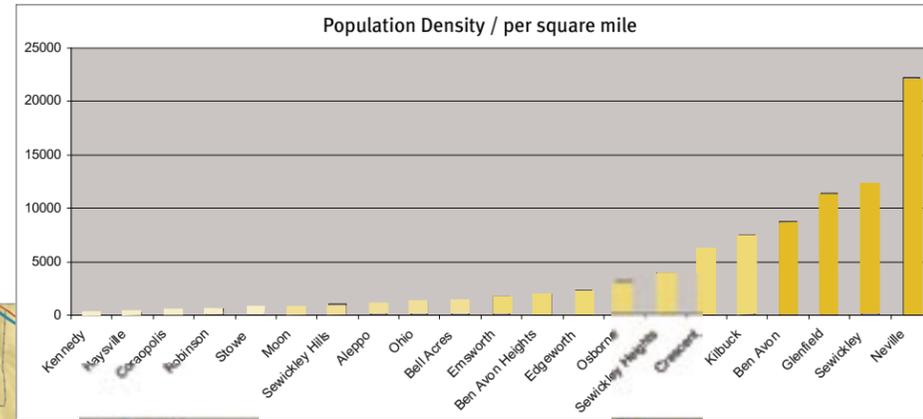
Currently, there are no places to rent or park a boat. There is limited access across private property, railroads, and roadways. The railroads run parallel to the rivers on both riverbanks, creating barriers for access.



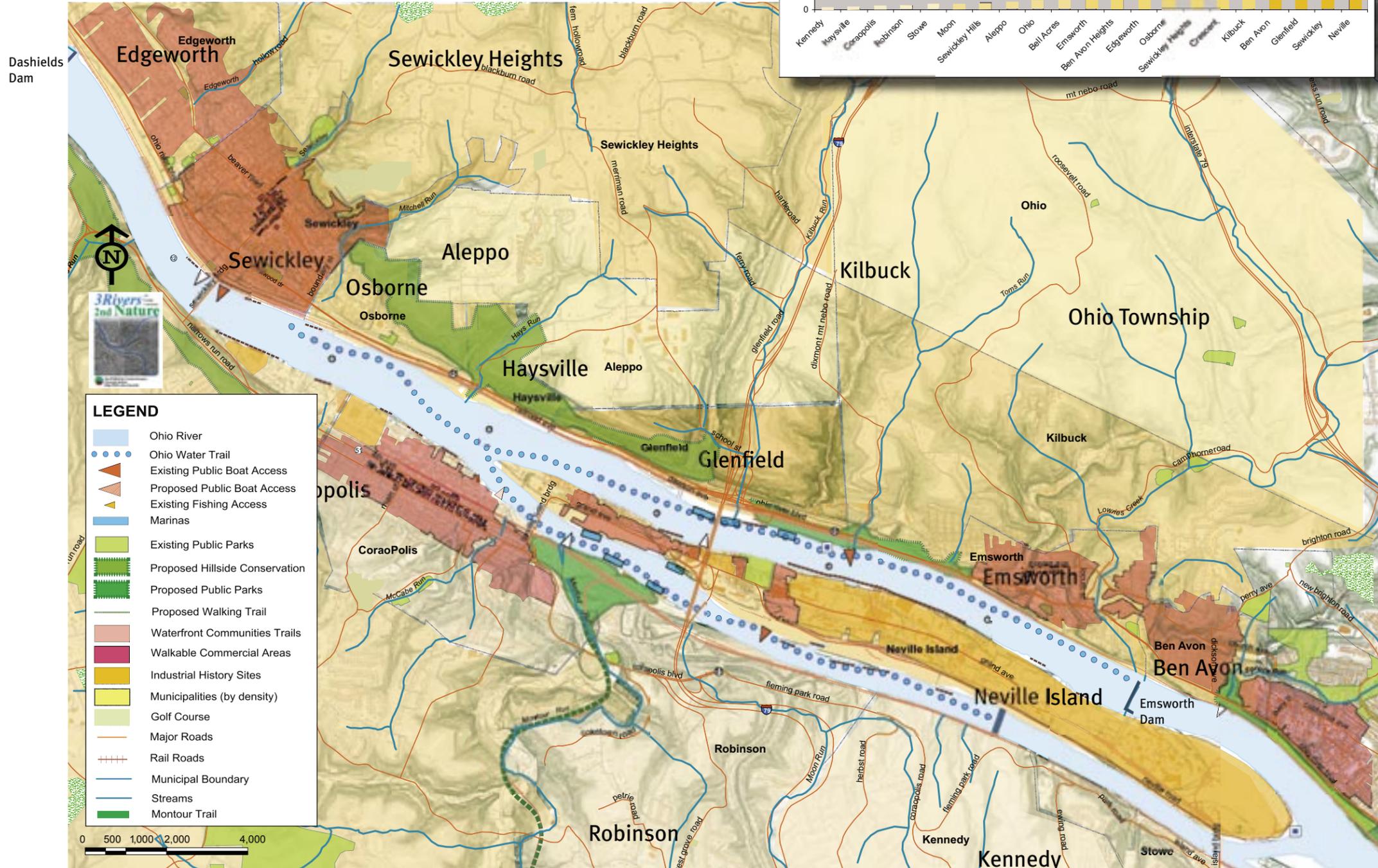


The Efficiency of River Transportation

The work of approximately 60 tri-axel trucks operating on land can be accomplished by one river barge. While recreational functions are in dire need, the efficiency of the river as a means for industrial transportation cannot be ignored.



Concept Map 5: Built Opportunites



LEGEND

- Ohio River
- Ohio Water Trail
- Existing Public Boat Access
- Proposed Public Boat Access
- Existing Fishing Access
- Marinas
- Existing Public Parks
- Proposed Hillside Conservation
- Proposed Public Parks
- Proposed Walking Trail
- Waterfront Communities Trails
- Walkable Commercial Areas
- Industrial History Sites
- Municipalities (by density)
- Golf Course
- Major Roads
- Rail Roads
- Municipal Boundary
- Streams
- Montour Trail

Trails

The Montour Trail is a multi-use non-motorized recreational rail-trail that will ultimately extend 47 miles from Coraopolis to Clairton. Other Trail proposals include: extending the Montour Trail to the River's Edge for space for a new trail on the CSX line, possibly the Sewickley Trail.

Commercial Centers

The Sewickley commercial district is very near to the river. This provides an excellent opportunity for river travel connecting users to dining and shopping options within Sewickley.

History

Neville Island, originally named Montour Island, was formerly noted as a premier location for growing crops. Asparagus was grown so successfully on the island that it became a staple favorite in premier restaurants as far away as Philadelphia and New York City. Beginning in the late 19th century, the island began to attract industry due to its advantageous proximity to river and rail transportation systems. During the height of industrialization, Neville Island hosted over 30 manufacturing facilities. Currently, most of these sites lay dormant as brownfields with a host of environmental concerns restricting their reuse.

The Dravo Shipyard Boat Slips is most notably known as a manufacturing location of the World War II PT Fleet, a small patrol vessel commonly known as the "Mosquito." Abandoned since the 1970's, the boat slips have fallen into disrepair and appear to be overgrown with new growth sycamore trees. The area left unchanged provides an interesting slice of industrial history as well as a focal point where nature appears to reclaim lost territory of the Ohio River banks.

The Davis Dam, completed in 1882, was the first attempt to permanently control the flow of water along The Ohio River. Since then, the entire length of the Ohio River (981 miles) has been canalized, from Pittsburgh to the confluence of the Mississippi. This was primarily an effort to promote industrial activity on river byways.

The Sewickley Train station is nearby. The train station is an icon of the local industrial history and could possibly serve as a tourist destination. Its been rumored that both Ella Fitzgerald and Duke Ellington have performed in the train station.