

Ohio River Basin Congressional Caucus

Third Briefing

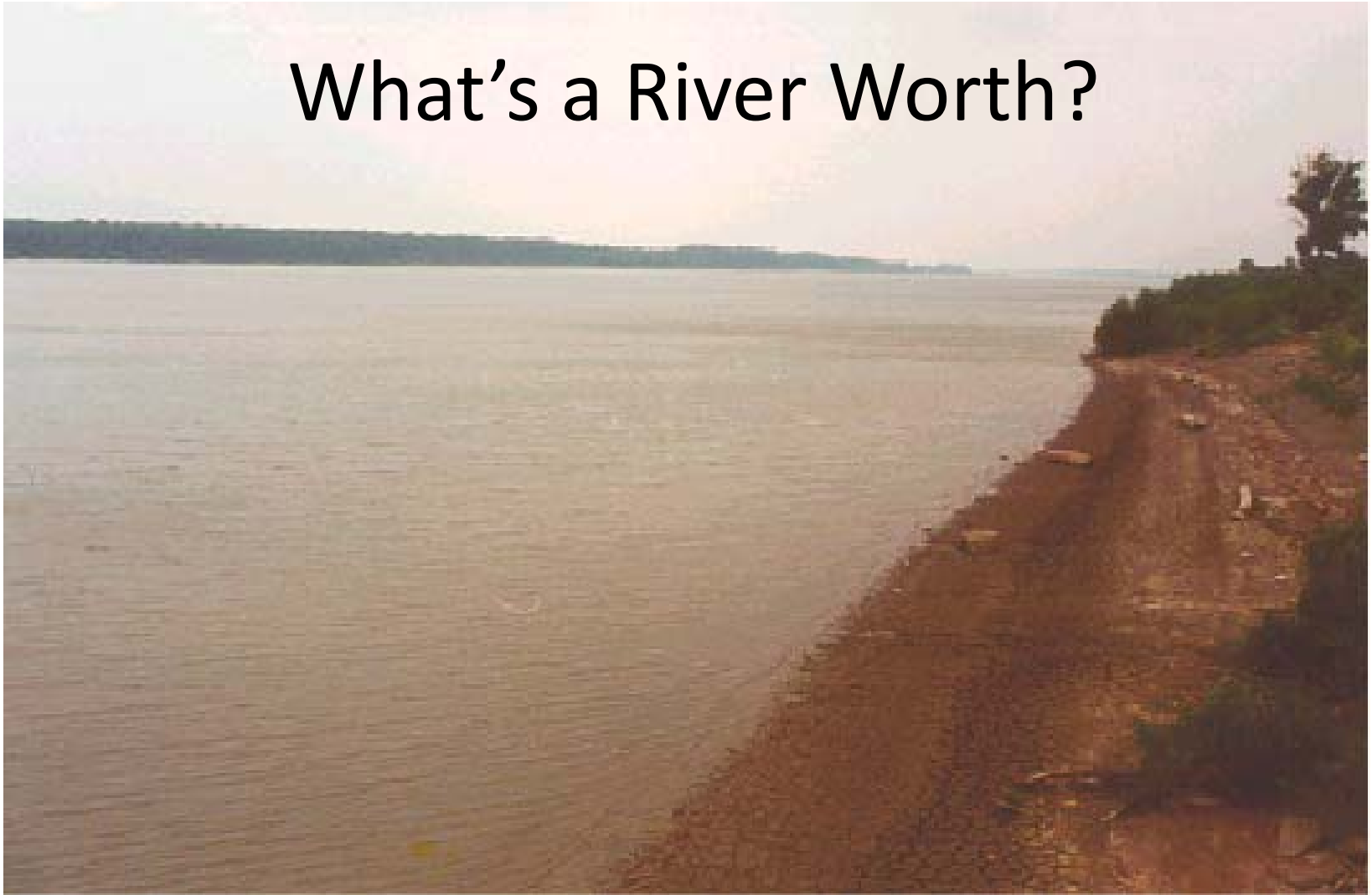
April 6, 2011

Economic Development And Environmental Protection on the Ohio River


***We Can* Have Both**

So.....

What's a River Worth?



Paducah, KY



ORSANCO and Two Partner* Organizations Joined Resources in 1994 To Answer this Question

- ORSANCO
- National Park Service (Rivers and Trails Conservation Program)
- Ohio River Basin Commission

A Modest but VERY Effective Study Effort

- \$15,000
- Study Conducted by Professor Richard Smith and Students (Miami Univ., Oxford, OH)
- A Compilation of Readily Available Data
- Want to “scope” value (to foster the realization/understanding to support the notion of taking care of an asset that provides us HUGE benefits)



Report Investigation Areas

- Economy
- Recreation/Tourism
- Environment
- Historical and Cultural Assets

Page 1 – “In short, the Ohio River supports a diverse economic base that, in turn, supports much of the populations of the Corridor and significantly influences the nation’s economic health.”

Economy (Highlight Findings)

- Primary Economy
 - 600 business employ 35,000 (companies that *directly* depend on the Ohio River - e.g. barges, marinas)
 - Trimble County, KY – 75% of work force employed by a power generating facility
 - Barges are the “heart.” In 1993 235 million tons transported on the Ohio versus 30 million on the Great Lakes
 - Nearly 200 marinas employ 1,500 (\$3 million payroll)

Economy (cont')

- Secondary Economy – Businesses not directly dependent but are made more profitable (this type of activity involves bulk products shipped by barge)
 - In the 72 bordering counties 4,000 companies deal with bulk commodities (150,000 employees).
 - Other estimates (which include tributaries) link as many as 368,000 jobs with water -borne commerce

Recreation/Tourism (Highlights)

- 56 million people live within 4 hours
- In the “Corridor” (i.e. the 72 shoreline counties) 10,000 businesses and 150,000 full or part-time employees cater to out of town customers or offer services. **7-8% are involved in the tourism/recreation industry.**
- Riverboat Casinos – Much development since 1994. Metropolis, IL Casino is county’s largest employer and in 1994 generated \$13,000/day in revenue for the city.
- Special Events – Nearly 1,000 festivals held annually in the corridor; revenue estimates...\$100 million



Rec./Tourism (Cont')

- In the Corridor – 41 state parks and 2 national forests, 8,000 campsites, 1,000 miles of “scenic/historic highway (as designated by state governments or travel organizations)



Environment (Highlights)

- “The economic well-being of much of the Corridor depends on the river’s environmental health.”
- Diverse habitats – support a variety of wildlife and several endangered species (over 120 species of fish and 70 species of mussels)
- Special natural areas: Ohio River Islands (WV/OH), Falls of the Ohio (KY/ IN), Green Bottom (WV)



Historical/Cultural (Highlights)

- “...corridor has played a central role in the settlement, patterns, history and cultural development of the United States.”
- Corridor has 150 designated historic districts and 1,885 buildings/sites on the National Register of Historic Places.
- 32 Corridor sites designated as National Historic Landmarks



This is “What its Worth!

- Some worth can be calculated and some incalculable
- We need to steward this truly amazing asset!

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