

Water Trails Meeting
1/12/06
Wells Public Library, Albany

Attendance: Ben McCament (ILGARD), Mike Schooley (Landowner), Kathy Sanford (Landowner), Stella Gibson (Gallia SWCD), Molly Gurien (Ohio U, paddler), Rich Cates (ODNR), Rich Games (Sojourners), Brett Laverty (Vinton SWCD), Wendy Shields (Vinton SWCD), Kim White (Landowner), Fred Bush (Sojourners), Suzanne Fisher (Ohio Outback CCC), Jeff Fite (Ohio Outback CCC), Gary W. Kellough (Ohio Outback CCC), Amber Heft (Ohio University), Matt Miller (Monday Creek Vista).

1. Molly Gurien – mentioned that the Ohio Division of Wildlife is seeking support for acquiring the former Mead/Westvaco experimental forest in Vinton County. Letters of support should be sent to Senator Mike Dewine and State Senator John Kerry.
2. The vision and mission statement was tabled until the next meeting in February
3. A discussion was held to choose a name for the water trails group. After a straw poll, the majority of the group settled on the **Raccoon Creek Water Trail Association**.
4. Richard Cates from ODNR DOW was the guest speaker at the meeting.
 - State Ohio is developing and strengthen a state-wide water trails program
 - Recreational boating is apart of the DOW mission due to a growing interest in paddling opportunities
 - Water trail groups can receive assistance from the National Water Trails Association
 - The DOW point of contact for water trails is Kim Baker and Dean Palmer
 - The DOW can help inventory streams and create water trail maps
 - The DOW cooperative boating facility grant - provides \$4 million annually to develop public access across the state. Primarily granted to state and Federal municipalities. Private landowners are typically not considered unless a 25 year easement can be negotiated.
 - DOW boating education grant – will grant up to \$35,000 with 75/25 match to develop maps, trail signage, floats, and river festivals.
 - DOW uniform waterways grant – used to develop trail marking and signage along water trails.
 - DOW will sponsor a grant writing workshop in September 2006
 - Next meeting is Thursday February 9