

Ohio Conservation Wins and Losses*

According to the budget for the current two-year period (2010-2011)

Wins:

- Ohio EPA's oversight and protection of safe drinking water, clean air, and surface and ground water was safeguarded by a modest increase in state fees for municipal garbage disposal.
- A small increase in registration fees on canoe and kayak owners for maintenance of Ohio's Scenic and Wild Rivers programs was approved.
- A proposal for gas and oil drilling in state parks, nature preserves, historic sites and Lake Erie was dropped.
- A proposal to add scrap tires, trash, and coal methane gas as renewable energy sources was dropped.
- Proposals regarding construction and demolition debris (CDD) landfills that would have threatened ground water were dropped.

Losses:

- Funding for Ohio's 134 state nature preserves was eliminated.
- Funding to map Ohio's underground resources to locate underground water resources was eliminated. This is needed to develop underground storage for long-term capture and storage of CO₂ emissions from coal plants.
- The governor's proposal to increase fees on the coal industry by \$1.2 million to help fund mining regulation was rejected. (Ohio's coal reported \$655 billion in production in 2007.)

Possible problem:

The current budget was based on bringing in \$1 billion in revenue from slot machines at Ohio race tracks. It may be eliminated by a recent Ohio Supreme Court ruling.

**From an article in The Ohio Environmental Council's "Green Watch" quarterly publication; written by Jack Shaner, the council's senior director of legislative and public affairs.*