

A grayscale photograph of a person wearing a life vest and white gloves, holding a brown trout. The person is positioned on the left side of the frame, and the fish is held horizontally across the center. The background shows a body of water with ripples. The text "ODNR Brown Trout Summit" is overlaid in large, bold, black letters across the middle of the image.

# **ODNR Brown Trout Summit**

**November 5, 2011**

# ODNR Brown Trout Summit 2011

## History

- Brown trout were first brought to Ohio in the mid 1900's.
- Conditions in Ohio are not favorable for wide-spread distribution of brown trout.
  - Brown trout in Ohio are dependent upon groundwater. Due to its geology, the quality of Ohio's ground water (as it pertains to supporting brown trout) is poor.
  - A good portion of the topography in the state is flat (less gradient for stream flow).
  - Much of the land in the state is also used for agriculture (lack of cover).

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## The Strategic Plan for the Original Brown Trout Program

- Study was conducted during the 1980's-90's.
- Objectives:
  - **Identify** potential streams to stock.
  - **Prioritize** those streams.
- Goal:
  - 25 Age 1-year-and-up trout / km of stream.

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## **The Strategic Plan for the Original Brown Trout Program**

### **Criteria:**

- Water temperature needs to be below 23 degrees Celsius.**
- Adequate habitat.**
- Adequate access.**
- Stocking cannot adversely impact an existing significant fishery.**

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## **The Strategic Plan for the Original Brown Trout Program**

### Results of Initial Study:

- 39 streams initially evaluated.
- Only 2 streams selected:
  - Clear Creek
  - Clear Fork / Mohican
  - Note: Mad River was already being stocked; this study was for new/additional streams.

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## Current Brown Trout Program

- 25,000 brown trout stocked annually.
  - The Mad River gets about 12,000 of those.
- Plan: to stock about 500 fish / fishable mile.
- Early in the program, the rivers were overstocked with excess fish produced.
  - Mad has received anywhere from **15,000-80,000** excess fish in some years.

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## **Shortcomings of Current Program:**

- Is more fish actually better? Not known.
- Data collected to date has been intermittent.
- No information on growth rates.
- Fish movement unknown.
- Little creel information gathered.

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## New Project

- A new 4-Year Study.
- Will monitor the survival, growth and movement of stocked brown trout.
  - Determine fish densities.
  - Identify portions of streams with greatest survival potential.
  - Growth – how old are fish at 12 inches?
  - Movement - where do stocked fish end up?



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## New Project

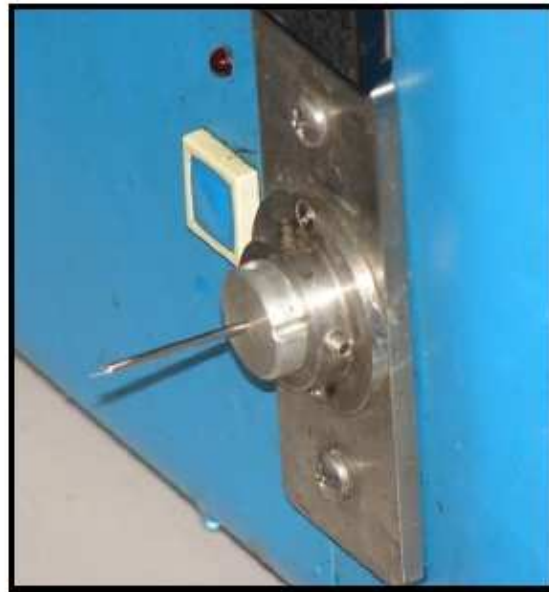
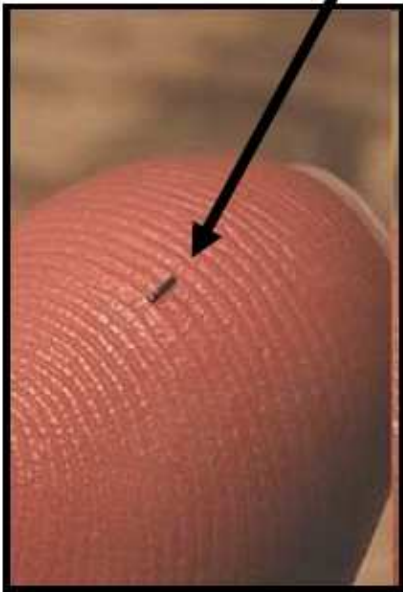
### Methods Used in the Study:

- Wire tags are being implanted into stocked fish (beginning this year).
- 4 groups of fish, to designate 4 sections of each waterway.
- Each group is tagged in a different area of the body.
  - Will help determine fish movement.
  - Tags will also be used to differentiate year classes.
- **No overstocking during the study period.**

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## New Project

- Coded wire tags



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## New Project

2 major assessment periods each year:

- Early Spring
  - To determine survival / movement of fish stocked the previous October.
- Late Summer
  - Major assessment, for overall survival / movement / size / fish density.
  - For the Mad, 20 assessment points, each 3/10 of a mile long (6 river miles).

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## New Project

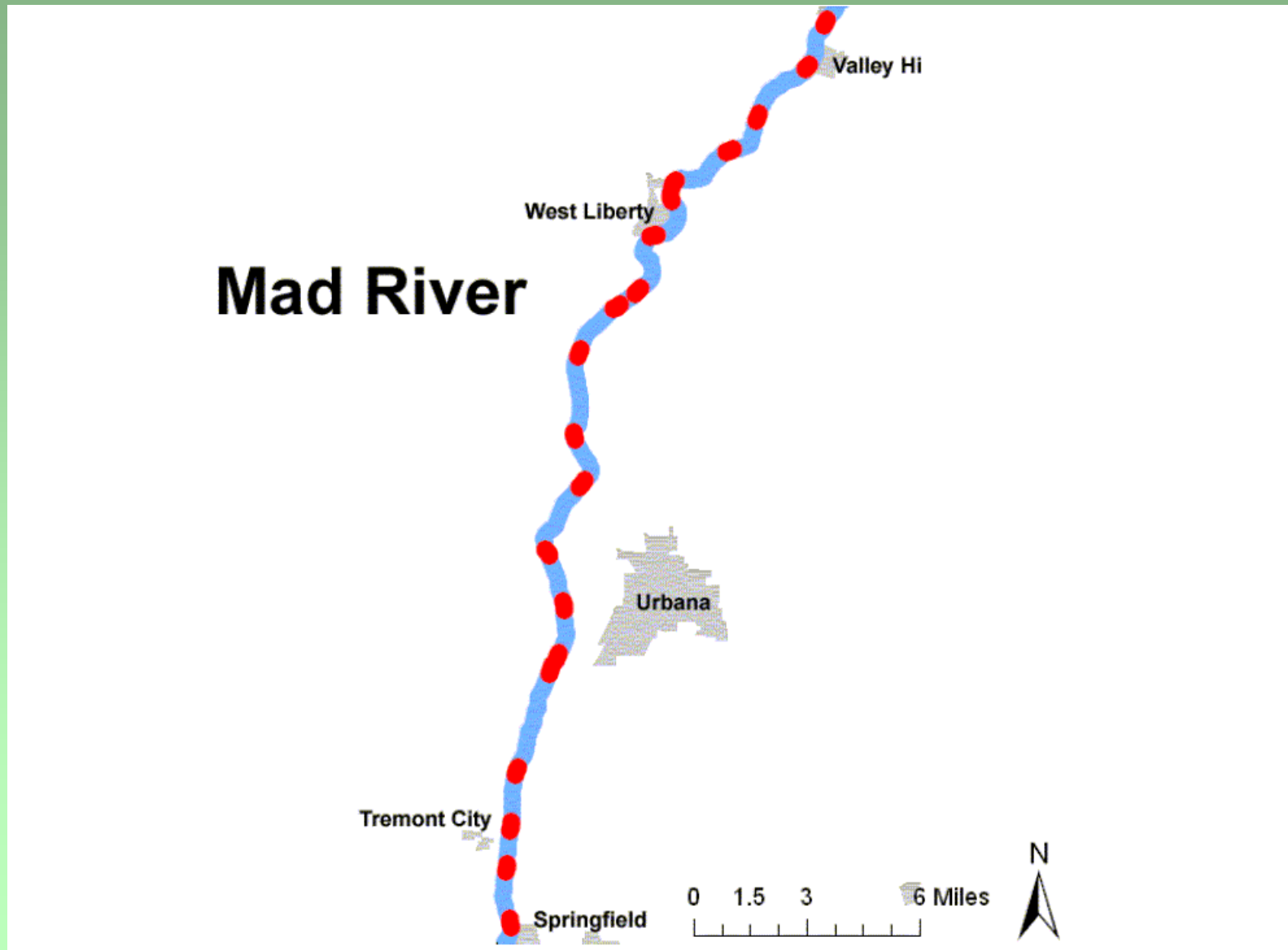


Image courtesy of the ODNR.

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## New Project

### Timeline:

- Data gathering standardized on the brown trout streams in 2010.
- 2011 – 2013
  - Fall – tagged fish stocked.
  - Early Spring – chart movement of fish stocked the previous fall.
  - Late Summer – Intensive monitoring (Survival Study)
- Final report - 2015

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## Additional Mad River Information

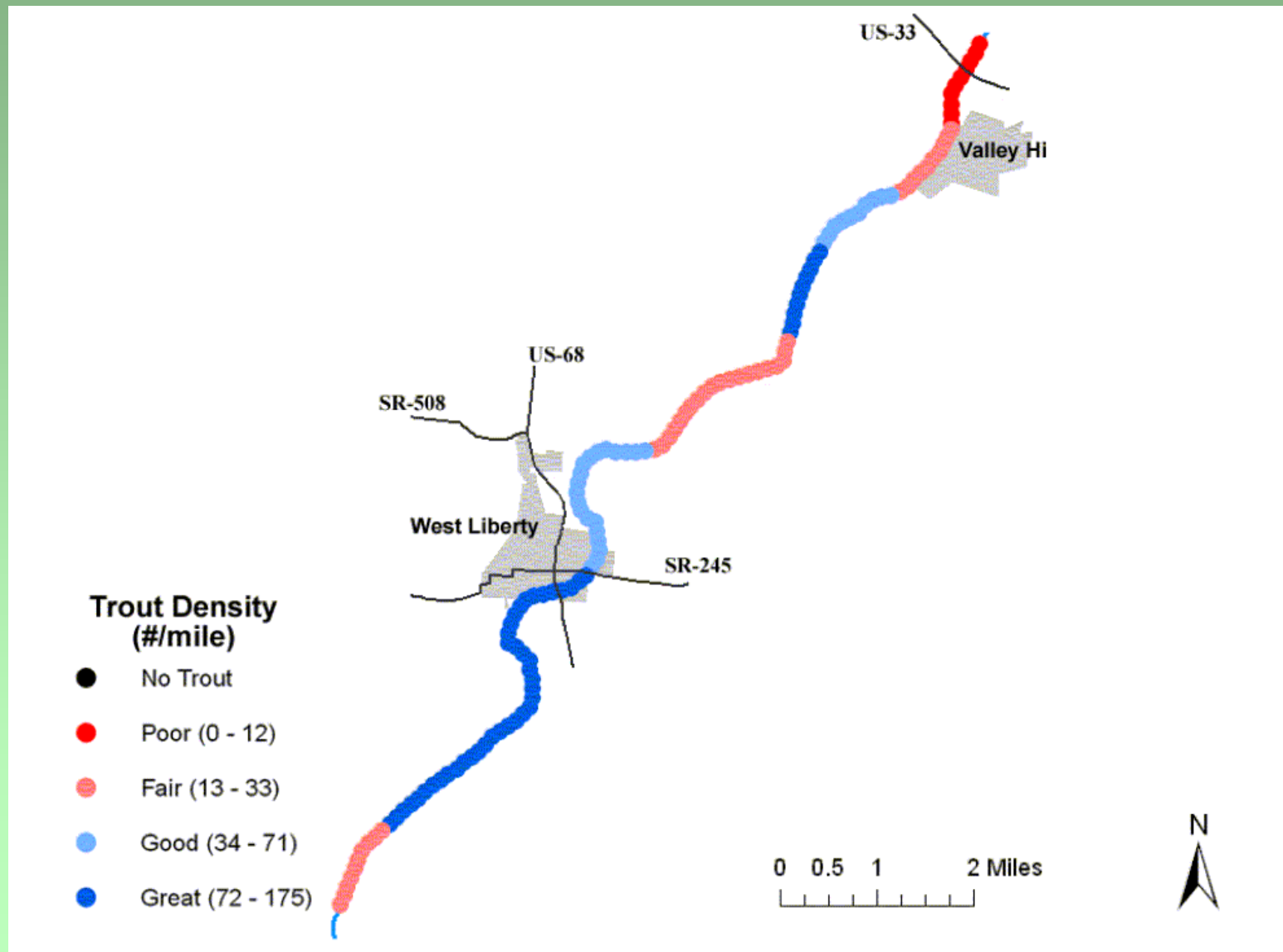


Image courtesy of the ODNR.

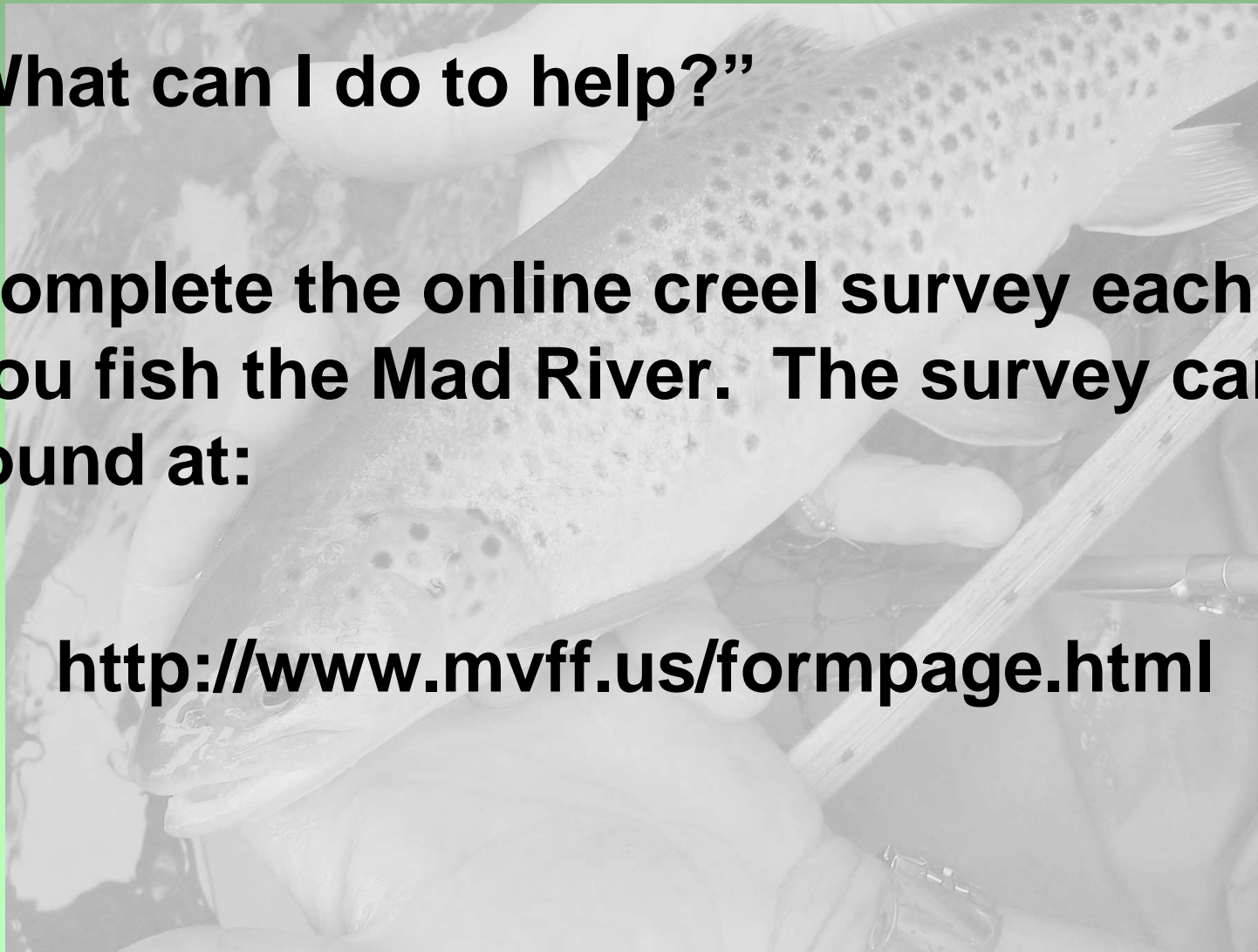
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## **Additional Mad River Information**

**Q. “What can I do to help?”**

**A. Complete the online creel survey each time you fish the Mad River. The survey can be found at:**

**<http://www.mvff.us/formpage.html>**



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**Any Questions?**



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