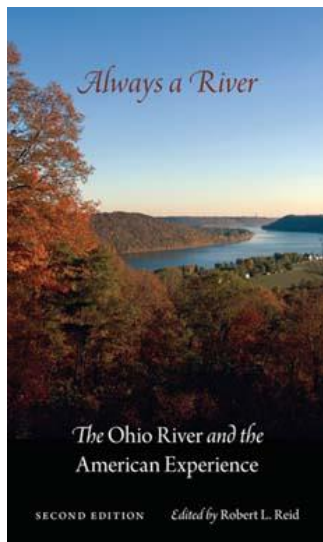


Suggested reading - *Always a River: The Ohio River and the American Experience*

Robert Reid, editor. Indiana University Press, Second Edition, 2010
260 pages (many maps and photos-drawings included)

Book review by Doug McLaren, KWOA President

We all live in a watershed. No matter where we live in the state of Kentucky we are in a watershed, large or small, that affects the integrity of the Ohio River. This is a hard concept to understand but all of Kentucky's waters end up in the Ohio River. Some would find it hard to believe that those waters that originate in the southeastern corner of Kentucky that drain into the Lake Cumberland watershed would be Ohio River bound, but yes, they are. After waters pass through the Wolfe Creek Dam of Lake Cumberland near Jamestown, Kentucky, the Cumberland River travels the length of Tennessee to once again reappear in Kentucky forming the eastern boundary of the area known as Land Between the Lakes before entering the Ohio River.



Reid has taken the insights of seven scholars who have evaluated and studied the Ohio River from various angles and degrees of study. The writers of the book provide a "multidimensional study of the characteristics" that define the Ohio River. There are a host of environmental and ecological issues that formulate how the river was first observed and how it has become one of the major arteries that supply waters influencing the lower Mississippi River.

The Ohio River is nearly 1000 miles long but if stretched out in a straight line directly from its origin at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to its entry point into the Mississippi River at Cairo, Illinois, it is only a 500 mile path. The other 500 miles are found making up all the meanders that are found formulating the path through Pennsylvania and creating the state boundaries of Ohio, West Virginia, Indiana, Illinois and of course, Kentucky.

Kentucky's entire northern state boundary is designed and created by the path and course that the Ohio River has developed over the eons of time. Again, the seven scholars have explained the Ohio River in their own words and beautiful descriptions. Mixing the works of those with backgrounds in English, history, geography, political science, engineering, and economics provides the reader of *Always a River* a very insightful explanation of the extreme importance of the Ohio River and Ohio River Valley. The book begins with the first explorers from Europe and continues the description and value of the river to the present days uses and value.

The Ohio River is greatly affected by those that live and work in Kentucky. As woodland owners in Kentucky, after reading *Always a River* you can better understand the value that we, woodland managers of Kentucky, have on the waters that flow from our woodlands into the tributaries, streams and rivers that eventually flow into the Ohio River on its journey to the Mississippi River and eventually the Gulf of Mexico.