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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Will Central Ohio have Clean and Secure Water in the Future? *MORPC Prepares Central Ohio for Consequences of Climate Change and Growth*

(Columbus – July 16, 2015) The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC), together with the US Geological Survey (USGS), the City of Columbus, Del-Co Water Company, Inc., Brown and Caldwell, and the Ohio Water Development Authority has completed a planning study entitled, “Sustaining Scioto”. This proactive, science-based study was conducted to ensure that Central Ohio has clean and secure water resources for current residents and businesses, and to sustain needs from future growth. It includes adaptive strategies to manage water quality and quantity during extreme drought or flood.

Population in the region is forecasted to continue to grow, resulting in the increased demand for water. The current water-supply systems must be able to adapt to the region’s future demand for water as well as plan for the influence of climate change on water supplies in the Central Ohio region. The study area of the Upper Scioto watershed includes all or parts of the following counties: Delaware, Fairfield, Franklin, Madison, Marion, Morrow, Pickaway, and Union.

“Sustaining Scioto”, a two-phase study, involved:

- A model, developed by the USGS specifically for the Upper Scioto watershed, which projected the impacts of changing weather patterns and regional development on the region’s water resources through the year 2090; and
- An adaptive management plan incorporating results of the model, other findings, and input from a stakeholder advisory group.

The findings include:

- Water-use projections based on current water usage of major water utilities within the study area;
- A water inventory that calculates the current availability of water within the study area along with future estimates;
- An assessment of current water quality and potential future changes to water quality;
- A vulnerability assessment to identify risks to water resources, public health, the economy and other sectors; and
- Proposed adaptation strategies in Central Ohio that will guide efforts to address the highest priority risks.

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"The data and risks identified as part of this important effort point to the need for Central Ohio's water utilities and communities to collaborate in response," says Kerstin Carr, MORPC Director of Planning & Environment. "MORPC will continue to assist its members in finding effective and efficient ways to implement the recommended adaptation strategies."

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The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) is a voluntary association of local governments and regional organizations which envisions and embraces innovative directions in economic prosperity, energy, the environment, housing, land use, and transportation. Our transformative programming, services and innovative public policy are designed to promote and support the vitality and growth in the region.