

WESTERN LAKE ERIE BASIN BULLETIN

November 2010

Healthy Land ~ Healthy Lake



Kaptur Welcomes EPA Projects in Lucas County Under Great Lakes Restoration Initiative

September 8: Congresswoman Kaptur welcomed the announcement by U.S. EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson of three projects in Lucas County under the congressionally-authorized Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.

“Lake Erie is again threatened by pollution and environmental degradation,” said Congresswoman Kaptur, “which threatens our drinking water, the fishery, and a major tourist attraction that brings millions of dollars into our region.”

“We have to invest in a natural resource as vital as the Lake Erie ecosystem.”

The three projects, totaling almost \$1 million, are aimed at improving the quality of the environment in the western Lake Erie basin.

The largest project (\$550,228) is designed to help improve the water quality in Lake Erie.

The University of Toledo will study the feasibility of tile drain caps as a way to reduce contamination of waterways by contaminants from biosolids that are applied to farm fields in northwest Ohio.

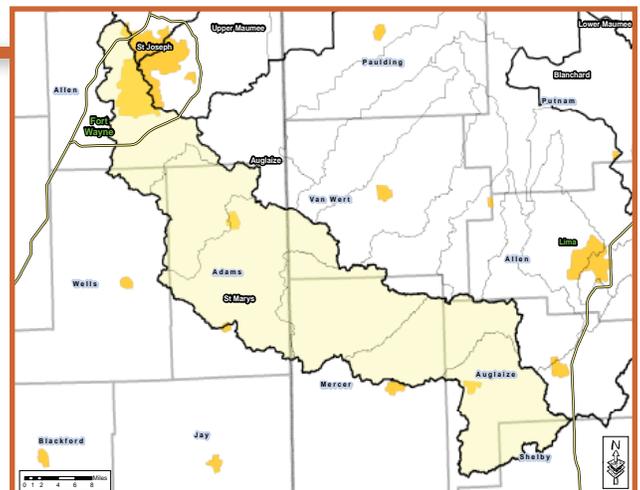
Another project (\$250,000) will enhance plant and wildlife habitat in western Lake Erie through the beneficial use of dredged sediment. The Toledo Harbor Sediment Management Plan will also be completed, resulting in detailed plans to manage all material that is dredged from the Toledo Harbor shipping channels.

A third project, totaling \$168,000, will reforest Maumee Bay State Park in Lucas County and Mary Jane Thurston State Park, which is located on the south bank of the Maumee in both Henry and Wood counties. At least 500 replacement trees are needed to replace damaged trees that have been removed at Maumee Bay State Park.

St. Mary's Watershed Receives Funding From Great Lakes Commission

It was announced Tuesday, September 14th at the St. Mary's Watershed Field Day that the Adams County Soil and Water Conservation District is a recipient of a Great Lakes Commission grant to support implementation of best management practices to reduce soil erosion and sediment runoff in the St. Mary's River Watershed and ultimately the Western Basin of Lake Erie. Grant funding for this watershed implementation project total nearly \$450,000 over the next three years.

Funding for this grant awarded under the Great Lakes Commission's Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Program come from the federally funded GLRI under a cooperative agreement between the Great Lakes Commission and the US Dept. of Agriculture, NRCS.



Mission Statement

The *WLEB Partnership* is a tri-state partnership dedicated to enhancing multi-purpose projects that improve land and water resource management in the basin and promote a healthy, productive watershed.

Partners:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, NRCS
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Geological Survey,
Ohio Water Science Center
Governor of Indiana
Governor of Michigan
Governor of Ohio
Indiana State Technical Committee
Michigan State Technical Committee
Ohio Department of Natural Resources,
Division of SWCD
National Association of
Conservation Districts
Maumee River Basin Partnership of
Local Governments
Ohio State Technical Committee

Western Lake Erie Basin Partners
are equal opportunity
employers and providers.

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Town Hall: Watershed Mentality

On September 2, 2010, Western Lake Erie Basin Partnership and WGTE in Toledo hosted forty invited guests to participate in a viewing of Matt Jones' 2007 documentary "A Watershed Mentality" and live panel discussion. This documentary explores the issues that impact water quality in the Maumee River Basin, the largest watershed in the Great Lakes system. A short introductory video put together by WLEBP and WGTE was shown prior to the panel discussion that highlights issues relevant to 2010. We would like to thank Dr. Jeff Reutter, Ohio Sea Grant; Steve Davis, Ohio NRCS; and Sandy Bihn, Western Lake Erie Waterkeeper for their time and effort in making this video.

A discussion then began with Bill Harris, our moderator, asking our distinguished panel about current issues that we are hearing about in the newspapers and on television. Panelists included Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur, Dr. Pete Richards, Heidelberg College; Dr. Tom Bridgeman, University of Toledo; Ed Hammett, Lake Erie Commission; and Gail Hesse, Ohio EPA. Viewers and audience members were able to participate by calling, emailing, texting, or writing down questions during this live program. Questions that were not answered by the panelists that night are being reviewed by WLEBP members and are being published on WGTE's watershed website. Phone volunteers also offered callers a packet of information that the WLEBP outreach committee put together on what homeowners can do to help and get more involved.

All footage taped for the short video, a link to the panel discussion and a link to view the recently answered questions from viewers have been posted at www.wgte.org/watershed.

***We would like to thank
Maumee Valley Resources Conservation
and Development for
sponsoring the event and
the many WLEBP volunteers
who helped answer
phones during the live
panel discussion.***



WGTE host Bill Harris with panelists Rep. Marcy Kaptur, Dr. Tom Bridgeman, Dr. Pete Richards, Edwin Hammett and Gail Hesse



New Data Services from the U.S. Geological Survey

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) continues to explore new ways of making data accessible to our customers. You may already be aware of USGS Web pages such as the National Water Information System (NWIS): Web Interface (<http://waterdata.usgs.gov>) where you can obtain current and historical water data. While interactive Web pages meet most data user's needs, USGS recently has developed several free data services to help meet selected specialized needs.

WaterAlert is a subscription-based service developed by the USGS to better inform water professionals and the general public about the latest hydrologic conditions. The WaterAlert service can send hourly or daily email or text messages when river flows, groundwater levels, water temperatures, rainfall and/or water quality parameters measured by a USGS real-time data-collection station meet or exceed user-defined thresholds. For more information on WaterAlert, see <http://water.usgs.gov/wateralert/>.



StreamMail is a service that allows you to obtain the most recent observations of gage height and streamflow (where available) from USGS gages via email, cell phone (via email or text messaging), or handheld device, such as a Blackberry. For example, to use StreamMail via email, simply send an email to "streammail@usgs.gov". In the "Subject" line put a USGS station number, such as "03219500". In a few minutes you will get a reply showing the most recent gage height and streamflow. For more information on StreamMail, see <http://water.usgs.gov/wateralert/streammail.html>.

A variety of Web services are available from the USGS for retrieving instantaneous and daily water data as well as water-quality data. Typically, web services do not involve a user interactively working with a Web page to obtain data. Instead, Web services facilitate the automatic transfer of data from one computer to another in consistent formats that primarily are intended to be used by computer applications. The USGS Web services permit retrieval of data using either the Simple Object Access Protocol (SOAP) or Representational State Transfer (REST) protocols. For more information on available USGS water Web services, see <http://waterservices.usgs.gov>.

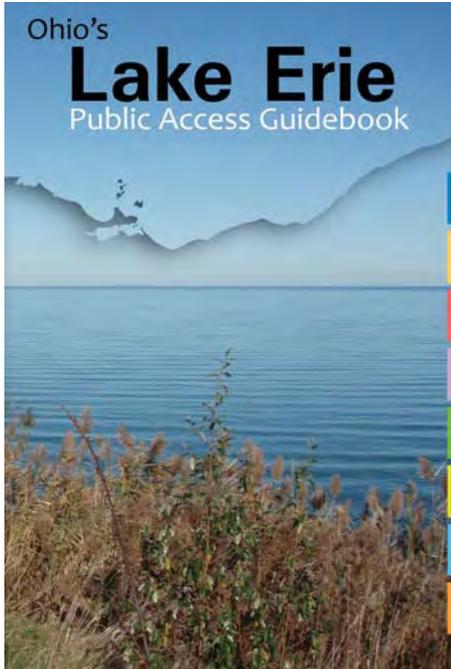
A Web service is also available for the USGS StreamStats application. The StreamStats Web service provides remote computer applications with the ability to initiate a request to execute StreamStats functions over the Internet, with the response delivered back to the remote application. Information such as watershed boundaries, basin characteristics, and streamflow statistics can be obtained. For more information, see <http://streamstatsags.cr.usgs.gov/webservices/wsui.htm>.

For more information, contact:

Greg Koltun (gfkoltun@usgs.gov), USGS Ohio Water Science Center, (614) 430-7700

164 Public Access Sites in the 8 Counties Along Ohio's 312-mile Lake Erie Shore Featured in New ODNR Publication and Website

Now available: A new publication and companion website hope to guide you to Ohio's public beaches, bluffs and bays while stimulating visitor traffic along the state's 312-mile Lake Erie shore.



The Lake Erie Public Access Guidebook was developed by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Office of Coastal Management in partnership with the ODNR Office of External Affairs. The guidebook includes general information about Lake Erie and specific details about the 164 sites within Ohio's eight coastal counties where the public can access the Buckeye State's greatest natural resource.

Collectively, the 164 public access sites account for more than 15,000 acres, and nearly 53 miles of shore, which is approximately 17 percent of Ohio's coast. Sites range from the well known to the rarely heard of and include state, county, city, village and township parks, preserves and reservations; state wildlife areas; public cemeteries; memorials and monuments; lighthouses; dead-end road rights-of-way and scenic vistas.

Information in the Lake Erie Public Access Guidebook was collected by the Office of Coastal Management between 2005 and 2010, and verified via interviews with local officials and park managers. The 326-page printed guidebook is organized geographically west to east, from Toledo (Lucas County) to Conneaut (Ashtabula County). Each site is represented by vibrant pictures, illustrative narratives, colorful maps, latitude/longitude coordinates, amenity keys and "Learn more" information to help you discover the perfect spot to spend your day... or even your week. And it's sized to fit in backpacks, glove boxes and tackle boxes.

The online guidebook can be viewed by selecting "Access" in the top navigation line at ohiodnr.com/coastal. A PDF of each access site can be downloaded and printed from its respective Webpage; PDFs of county chapters and the entire guidebook can also be downloaded and printed. Printed copies of the Lake Erie Public Access Guidebook will be available at locations throughout Ohio's Lake Erie watershed by July (a list of distribution sites will be located online).

The Office of Coastal Management works to achieve a balance between use and preservation of Lake Erie's coastal resources, in collaboration with our partners, by effectively administering the Ohio Coastal Management Program.

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources ensures a balance between wise use and protection of our natural resources for the benefit of all. Visit the ODNR web site at www.ohiodnr.com.

Congresswoman Kaptur Introduces H.R. 6040: Maumee Valley National Heritage Area Act

On July 30, 2010, Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur introduced the Maumee Valley Heritage Corridor Bill. The bill would establish the **Maumee Valley National Heritage Area** in Ohio and Indiana.

The purpose of H.R. Bill 6040 is to raise awareness of the national significance of the Maumee Valley, promote heritage, cultural, and recreational tourism, and to develop relevant educational and cultural programs for visitors, residents and the general public. Also among the list it would recognize and interpret important events representing the role of the many Native Americans, European Americans, African-Americans, Hispanic Americans and other immigrants who populate the Valley.

The Known Facts:

- * By 1770's, one of the largest Native American villages in North America, Kiihkayonki (Kekionga), was located at the headwaters of the Maumee River at Ft. Wayne.
- * This region was the home of Miami, Wyandot, Delaware, Shawnee, Ottawa, and Potawatomi, Kickapoo, and Chippewa Indian tribes.
- * The region has the largest river flowing into the Great Lakes, the Maumee River.
- * In 2000, the Maumee Valley was one of the first three places designated as an Ohio Heritage Area by the Ohio Department of Development.
- * Once covered by the Great Black Swamp, it now contains some of the richest farmland in the world.

For more information regarding the Maumee Valley National Heritage Area Act or the Maumee Valley Heritage Corridor visit: <http://maumeevalleyheritagecorridor.org>

Important Updates to be Noted

If you missed our last meeting (October 12, 2010) we have posted, on our website, the handouts from the meeting. Draft minutes from the meeting will be posted soon. Also posted:

The **WLEB Resource Protection Priorities**: There was quite a bit of discussion on priorities. These priorities came out of the 3-day strategic conference we had at Maumee Bay in spring of 2009.

The **WLEB Strategic Plan Updated Oct. 2010**. Please review the plan, take action, if you have an update please email Steve Davis so the change can be made.

The Western Lake Erie Basin team would like to send out a big "Thank You" to Chris Riddle. Chris has moved on to bigger and better opportunities and accepted a position with Ohio EPA in their Bowling Green office. This position will put him much closer to his home in Bowling Green.

He carried a big load to help make things a success and we certainly will miss his enthusiasm and willingness to roll up his sleeves and do whatever needed to be done.

On behalf of the partnership we wish him all the best. Chris, thanks for all you did!



Helpful Guides & Research Now Available

The Lake Erie Protection Fund has received final reports regarding phosphorus and Algal Blooms which are now online at the Ohio Lake Erie Commission website.

Ohio Harmful Algal Bloom Initiative: Outreach by Dr. Eugene Braig IV, Ohio Sea Grant, The Ohio State University. You will want to get your hands on this four-page, full-color fact sheet to take to your meetings. The fact sheet easily explains the Harmful Algal Blooms in Ohio waters. This report can be found at <http://lakeerie.ohio.gov/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=3BiFRgMRIV8%3d&tabid=61>



Trends in Bioavailable Phosphorus Loading to Lake Erie by Dr. David Baker, National Center for Water Quality Research Lab. This report can be found at <http://lakeerie.ohio.gov/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=OxJaciMDMoQ%3d&tabid=61>

Sediment Contribution to Lake Erie Algal Blooms by Cyndee Gruden, PhD, PE, University of Toledo. This report can be found at <http://lakeerie.ohio.gov/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=iMtvF2BcxJA%3d&tabid=61>
The full report includes a research agenda to focus future efforts in answering the critical questions raised by the Task Force's inquiry into the causes and sources of increases to DRP loading into Lake Erie and the corresponding algal blooms. The full report of the Ohio Lake Erie Phosphorus Task Force can be found at www.epa.ohio.gov/dsw/lakeerie/ptaskforce/index.aspx

Blanchard River Watershed Modeling Project by Laura Weintraub, PE, LimnoTech. This report describes an interagency effort to apply a watershed model, AnnAGNPS, to the Blanchard River Watershed, Ohio. The goal of the modeling effort was to predict direct runoff as well as sediment and nutrient loading from this highly agricultural watershed. The full report can be found at: <http://www.limno.com>

Reach Out Across the Western Basin

Have a project or story you wish to share? The WLEB Bulletin and wleb.org are two great ways to get your word out across the basin. We are always looking for articles, photos, webfeatures, weblinks, and events for our calendar (which is shared with EcoTrack). To get in touch just contact us at: webmaster@wleb.org

Nov. 4 - Lake Erie Protection Fund grant proposals due. Visit: www.lakeerie.ohio.gov

Nov. 5 - Great Lakes Water Conference, University of Toledo College of Law. Visit: <http://law.utoledo.edu/ligl/conferences.htm>

Nov. 16-18 - 18th National NPS Monitoring Workshop for GLRI. Visit: <http://npsmonitoring.tetratch-ffx.com/index.htm>

Nov. 17 & 18 - 37th Annual WMAO Conference, Columbus. Visit: <http://www.wmao.org/meetings.shtml>

Nov. 19 - Coastal Management Assistant Grant applications for FY2012 deadline. Visit: http://ohiodnr.com/LakeErie/Grants_CMAG/tabid/9337/Default.aspx

Dec. 2 - WLEB Outreach Committee meeting will be a conference call at 1:00 p.m. details will be e-mailed to committee members.

Dec. 15 - Ohio Lake Erie Commission quarterly meeting will take place at 10:00 a.m. in Reynoldsburg. Visit: www.lakeerie.ohio.gov

Jan. 27, 2011 - Lake Erie Protection Fund grant proposals due. Visit: www.lakeerie.ohio.gov

March 1 & 2, 2011 - Great Lakes Days in Washington DC. Visit: <http://www.glc.org/greatlakesday>

May 30 - June 3, 2011 - IAGLR, 54th Conference on Great Lakes Research, Duluth, Minnesota
Presentations from the 6th Biennial Conference of the Lake Erie Millennium Network (April 27-29, 2010) are posted. Visit: <http://web2.uwindsor.ca/lemn/LEMN2010.htm>