



October 2009

Resource Protection Priorities of the Western Lake Erie Basin Partnership

In March of 2009, the Western Lake Erie Basin Partners gathered at Maumee Bay State Park with U.S. and Canadian leading scientists and resource managers for a 3 day conference to discuss the resource protection needs of the Western Basin of Lake Erie.

The conference covered topics from dredging to drainage, algae, and erosion. Over a series of six sessions, the 75 participants were presented with the latest research and information regarding the key areas of concern for the health of the Western Basin. The partnership identified 5 major themes important to the protection of the Western Lake Erie Basin and the Lake.

The themes identified are supported by the action items in *WLEB Partnership Strategic Plan*, and are further reinforced in the priorities, goals, and actions in the State of Ohio *2008 Lake Erie Protection and Restoration Plan*, adopted by the Ohio Lake Erie Commission, as well as the *U.S. EPA 2000 Lake Erie Lakewide Management Plan (LaMP)*.



WLEB 2009 Strategic Conference

The themes identified:

- Erosion and Sedimentation
- Nutrient Loading and Algal Blooms
- Flooding and Water Management
- Habitat Protection and Restoration

Erosion and Sedimentation

- Reduction in soil erosion in the watershed, reduced sediment delivery to Lake Erie,

and

- Reduced costs and lessened environmental impacts of dredging due to sediment deposition in Toledo Harbor



Landstat Photo of Sediment Plumes in Lake Erie as result of storms in the watershed in spring of 2009.



Cropland erosion in the WLEB project area.



Dredge operation in Toledo Harbor.



Nutrient Loading and Algal Blooms

- Reduction in nutrient loading to the streams and lakes of the basin, in particular reduced Dissolved Reactive Phosphorous

and

- Finding of solutions to the resurgence of harmful algal blooms in the basin's streams and in Western Basin of Lake Erie.



Landstat photo of Algal Bloom in Western Basin (August of 2003).



*Aerial photo of toxic *Mycrosystis* Bloom in Lake Erie, Sept of 2009 (shows wake of boat traveling through bloom and also sediment plume).*



*Glass of toxic algae(*Mycrosystis*) collected from surface of Lake Erie.*

Flooding and Water Management

- Reduction of flooding problems

and

- Improved water management in the watershed including improved storm water management and improved drainage water management



Flooding of Findlay Ohio in August of 2007.



Agricultural runoff in watershed from storms of March 2009.



Tile drainage outlet in the watershed.



Habitat Protection and Restoration

- Protection and restoration of habitat in the Western Lake Erie Basin and the near shore area, including wetlands, riparian corridors and the stream system of the basin.

and

- Protection from the introduction of invasive species and ongoing damages from past introductions.



Wetland and Lake Erie Buffer team promotional sign.



Filter strip protecting stream from cropland runoff.



Zebra Mussels (Invasives) colonizing native Lake Erie Mussel.