

WESTERN LAKE ERIE BASIN BULLETIN

June 2010

Healthy Land ~ Healthy Lake

Volume 2 Issue 3



\$6.4M Available for Conservation in Lake Erie Watershed

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is making \$6.4 million available to Ohio landowners for conservation practices as part of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI). The funds will be managed by the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and made available within the western Lake Erie watershed.

"NRCS is pleased to have a role in this initiative to protect the Great Lakes. Water in the Lake Erie watershed provides drinking water for 11 million people. Over \$10 billion is spent on recreation and tourism in the Lake Erie region every year. Obviously, the water

quality in this watershed has a major impact on the lives of Ohio residents, from both a health and economic standpoint," said Terry Cosby, NRCS State Conservationist. NRCS will be focusing its efforts on addressing non-point source pollution, farmland preservation, and critical wildlife habitats within Ohio. The \$6.4 million in GLRI funding will be available to Ohio landowners and agricultural producers through existing NRCS conservation programs, including the EQIP, WHIP, FRPP, and EWP-FPE. **A sign-up for GLRI conservation programs will be held between June 1 and July 1, 2010.**

Maps of the areas eligible for GLRI funding are posted on the Ohio NRCS web site at www.oh.nrcs.usda.gov. Information is also available at local NRCS offices.

Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Finalists Announced

U.S. EPA has invited 270 finalists to submit applications for a total of \$161,450,000 in competitive grant funding under the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI). In response to its November 2009 request for grant proposals (RFP), EPA received more than 1,000 proposed projects from state, tribal, and municipal agencies, nongovernmental organizations and other eligible entities aimed at restoring and protecting this national treasure.

GLRI grants will fund projects that address the most important Great Lakes priorities, including reducing toxic contaminants, restoring the Great Lakes Areas of Concern, protecting beaches and beachgoers, keeping out invasive species and reducing polluted land-based runoff.

For more information, visit <http://greatlakesrestoration.us>.



EcoTrack 11 is Back Online

EcoTrack 11 is a great opportunity to get your environmental news stories covered. The EcoTrack 11 website has been re-launched and a shared calendar has been posted on the EcoTrack and WLEB websites. Visit EcoTrack 11 online at <http://wtol.envirocast.net/>.

You can also view the WLEB calendar and submit events to the shared calendar at <http://www.wleb.org/publicoutreach/calendarofevents.html>

Phosphorus Task Force Recommends Ways to Improve Lake

Lake Erie is challenged by increasing levels of dissolved phosphorus and harmful algal blooms. However, if significant actions are taken, the lake again can recover as dramatically as it did in the 1980s, according to the final report of the Ohio Lake Erie Phosphorus Task Force.

The report, released by Ohio EPA on May 6, identifies areas for additional research and analysis related to how nutrients move from land into our stream systems. The report also recommends increasing the use of state of the art agricultural practices and using more care in the application of fertilizers and manure to fields.

For more information, visit

www.epa.ohio.gov/dsw/lakeerie/ptaskforce/index.aspx.



Photo Credit: Ohio EPA

Lake Erie Focus of Photo Contest

To celebrate the diversity of life found within the boundaries of our Great Lake's watershed, amateur photographers are invited to submit entries for the Ohio Lake Erie Commission's 2010 photo contest. Winning images will be displayed as part of a traveling exhibit and in an online photo gallery.

The 2010 "Life on Lake Erie" photo contest is an opportunity for amateur photographers, age 16 and older, to share their talent in capturing the best that the Lake Erie region has to offer. Digital images taken between July 9, 2009 and July 9, 2010 in and around the Lake Erie watershed may be submitted to the Ohio Lake Erie Commission (OLEC) through July 16.

For more information, visit www.lakeerie.ohio.gov/Coastweeks/LifeonLakeEriePhotoContest.aspx

National Wetlands Inventory – Help Verify Data Accuracy

In consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and state governments, Ducks Unlimited is working to update the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) for the states in its Great Lakes/Atlantic Region. The update utilizes recent imagery to revise the original NWI to represent the region's current inventory of wetlands more accurately. The updated NWI will reflect trends of wetland losses while providing a valuable planning tool for the future.

Ducks Unlimited needs help verifying the accuracy of the updated NWI. Volunteers will be asked to visit wetlands, determine their types and photograph them. All necessary materials will be provided. If you're able to assist, please contact Robb Macleod at (734) 623-2000 or rmacleod@ducks.org.

For more information, visit www.ducks.org/Conservation/GLARO/3752/GISNWIUpdate.html

American Rivers Releases LID Manual

American Rivers has released a manual written to provide stormwater managers and site designers with a common understanding of Low Impact Development (LID) goals and objectives, site assessment considerations, and a toolbox of stormwater Best Management Practices (BMP) applicable to the Lower Maumee and Ottawa River watersheds. BMP information includes design guidelines, specifications, details, and maintenance concerns as well as assistance in selecting the BMPs based on the unique characteristics of a particular site. This technical manual and the information provided is targeted toward engineers, planners, landscape architects, and technical staff, as well as policy makers and developers.

For more information, visit www.americanrivers.org/library/reports-publications/low-impact-development-manual-3-4-2010.html

Clean Marinas Help Recycle Shrink Wrap at Ohio Marinas

Thanks to an innovative recycling program sponsored by a southeast Ohio manufacturer and participating marinas in the Lake Erie region, more than one million pounds of plastic marine shrink wrap have been recycled and made into highway guardrail blocks that help make roadways safer and reduce landfill content.

According to partners in the Ohio Clean Marinas Program, more than one million pounds of greenhouse and boat shrink wrap have been collected since 2006 by Mondo Polymer Technologies, Inc. of Reno, Ohio, which has produced 150,000 guardrail blocks now protecting over 200 miles of Ohio roadways. The program's success has led to expanded collection efforts from marinas in New York, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Maryland and Delaware.

Marina operators and greenhouse facility managers interested in participating in collections may contact the Clean Marinas Program at 419-609-4120.

Step-by-step, illustrated instructions on the proper handling of shrink wrap for collection at the participating collection sites is online at www.ohiocleanmarina.osu.edu.

Dredging Begins on Ottawa River Sediment Cleanup Project

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Great Lakes National Program Office and several local partners have begun dredging contaminated sediment from 5 1/2 miles of the Ottawa River in Toledo, Ohio. This follows the cleanup of Sibley Creek that began in December 2009 and was completed this April.

The Great Lakes Legacy Act Ottawa River project calls for the removal of 250,000 cubic yards of sediment (mud) contaminated with heavy metals, PCBs and PAHs (polychlorinated biphenyls and polyaromatic hydrocarbons). About 10,000 cubic yards have been removed from Sibley Creek and another 240,000 cubic yards will be removed from the Ottawa River. The sediment from the river will be hydraulically dredged and transported through a pipeline to the nearby Hoffman Road Landfill. Some "hot spots" in the river containing excessive levels of PCBs exist. Therefore, about 7,000 cubic yards of sediment will be dredged and taken to a specially licensed facility for disposal. The project is expected to be completed this fall or early winter.

For more information, visit <http://greatlakesrestoration.us/?p=695>.

Lake Erie Access & Visitation Survey - We Need Your Help

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources Office of Coastal Management, the Old Woman Creek National Estuarine Research Reserve, Ohio Sea Grant, and the Ohio Lake Erie Commission are seeking assistance with a Lake Erie Ohio Public Access/Visitation Survey. This survey effort will gather data on perception and satisfaction levels with public access to Lake Erie in Ohio as well as visitation habits. The survey is internet-based and created through Survey Monkey. Your assistance, by featuring the survey link provided below in your email newsletters, website links, and/or paper newsletters, will enable informed decision-making at the local and state level related to public access planning and tourism.

The survey will be open from June 1 through August 31, 2010. After the survey is closed we will compile the results and share them with you. To take part, simply place the following text and weblink in your outreach materials. We also ask that you contact Lynnette Berkey or Yetty Alley with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Office of Coastal Management; 419-626-7980 lynnette.berkey@dnr.state.oh.us or yetty.alley@dnr.state.oh.us to let us know you are helping distribute the survey. A copy of the final project report will be sent to all groups that publicize the survey.

Sample Text for your publications & website:

Please share your Lake Erie experience!

Tell us about your trip to Ohio's Lake Erie region by clicking on the link below to take a brief survey. We want to know how you feel about the public access available to Lake Erie so your next visit will be better than ever.

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/VGC3TQ6>

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

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

June 26 - Riverfest - St Joe River - <http://ipfwriverfest.org>

July 24 - Upper Maumee Clean-Up - Ft Wayne to Defiance - contact abby@savemaumee.org

August 7 - Frogtown Fair - www.frogtownfair.org

September - Ohio's Coastweeks - <http://lakeerie.ohio.gov>

September 11 - 14th Maumee Watershed - Clean Your Streams Day - www.partnersforcleanstreams.org

September 18 - Save Maumee's Canoe Clean-Up - www.savemaumee.org

September 25 - 25th Annual International Coastal Clean-Up - www.oceanconservancy.org