

Ted Strickland, Governor
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Grant Projects Support Lake Erie Research, Management, and Recreation

Reports detailing Lake Erie Protection Fund project outcomes are available online

TOLEDO, OH - Reports detailing the results of nine projects supported by the Lake Erie Protection Fund are now available online for public view, according to the Ohio Lake Erie Commission.

The grants funded research projects that educated local government officials and others on best land use practices within a watershed, researched environmental factors that impact mayflies and predator-prey interactions with Yellow Perch, studied the prevalence of Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHS) virus in yellow perch immediately following the first occurrence of the virus in Ohio, gathered new data on near-shore intrusions of hypoxia, and began development of microbial source tracking (MST) tools to indicate contamination in a watershed. Other projects monitored fecal pollution at recreational beaches in an effort to target restoration projects and demonstrated the influence of vitamin concentrations on walleye survival. Also funded was the construction of a dock, ramp and lift to improve access to the Toledo Harbor Lighthouse and the first phase of development of a tool that will help determine the potential for bioremediation of contaminated Lake Erie sediments.

Together, these projects are helping to provide local governments, state agencies and citizens with information that will help them make better decisions, data that will guide management of natural resources and improved access to the recreational and historic opportunities Lake Erie has to offer.

The Lake Erie Protection Fund was established to help finance research and implementation of projects aimed at protecting and preserving Lake Erie and its watershed. The fund is supported by Ohioans who voluntarily purchase Lake Erie license plates featuring the Marblehead Lighthouse as designed by noted Lake Erie artist Ben Richmond. The Lake Erie Commission manages the Lake Erie Protection Fund, investing every dollar directly into grant projects. During the past 16 years, \$8.5 million in funding has been provided to 275 grant projects ranging from agricultural practices in the Maumee watershed to recreational projects in Ashtabula.

The final reports of grant projects dating back more than ten years can be accessed at <http://www.lakeerie.ohio.gov/LakeErieProtectionFund.aspx>.

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The Ohio Lake Erie Commission is comprised of the directors of the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency and the Ohio departments of natural resources, transportation, development, health and agriculture. The commission was created to preserve the lake's natural resources and protect the quality of its waters and ecosystem.

For more information about the Ohio Lake Erie Commission and its programs, visit <http://lakeerie.ohio.gov>.

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EDITORS NOTE: Below are the abstracts of the final reports for projects that received funding. Lake Erie Commission Grants

Grant Title	Organization	Outcome
Implementing Best Local Land Use Practices	Chagrin River Watershed Partners, Inc	Case studies were developed and training was offered to local officials, decision makers, and government staff on best land use practices.
Yellow Perch foraging on hexagenia spp.: Effects of hypoxia and Dreissena	University of Toledo	Researchers examined the impact of low oxygen levels and presence of invasive Dreissena on mayfly species and predator-prey interactions with Yellow Perch.
Molecular Diagnostic Tool for the Potential Bioremediation of Lake Erie Sediments	Bowling Green State University	This project took the first steps towards developing a new tool that will evaluate detoxification mechanisms in contaminated sediments. This new tool would help determine if and what microbial communities could be used to help remediate contaminated sediments.

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The Prevalence of VHS Virus in Yellow Perch	Case Western Reserve University	The VHS Virus has the potential to impact both wild and captive raised fish stocks in Lake Erie and across Ohio. This project provided for early research on the virus in Ohio.
Nearshore Hypoxia as a New Lake Erie Metric	National Center for Water Quality Research	Researchers monitored nearshore intrusions of hypoxia during summer months in the central basin of Lake Erie. The regularity, extent, and location of these intrusions are not yet fully understood.
Use of MST Tools in the Portage River Watershed	US Geological Survey	This project took the first steps towards developing a tool that would help identify the source of contaminants in the Portage River through DNA markers.
Tracking Fecal Pollution at Recreational Beaches	University of Toledo	Researchers studied potential sources of contamination at Huntington Beach in an effort to help target watershed projects that would reduce the number of beach closures.
Toledo Harbor Lighthouse Access Dock & Ramp	Toledo Harbor Lighthouse Preservation Society	Funding was used to cover a portion of the cost to install a floating dock and access ramp for the lighthouse.
Influence of vitamin concentrations in eggs on survival of walleye embryos in Lake Erie	The Ohio State University	Project examined the influence of vitamin concentration in eggs on the survival of offspring.

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