



## Improving Water Quality in Lake Erie

*When the Clean Water Act was passed in 1972, only 20 percent of Ohio's large rivers met standards. Today, that number stands at 90 percent and is a great indication water quality is heading in the right direction in our state. Recently though, these improvements are overshadowed by harmful algal blooms (HABs) and the impact of runoff-related nutrient pollution.*

Understanding better management of runoff was necessary to improve water quality in our state, Ohio EPA created the Point Source and Urban Runoff Nutrient workgroup and was a partner in the Directors' Agricultural Nutrients and Water Quality Working Group. These groups were comprised of experts from Ohio EPA, Ohio Division of Natural Resources (ODNR), Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA), Ohio Department of Health (ODH) and representatives of many stakeholder groups.

The workgroups met with environmental and agricultural groups, businesses, legislators, academia, state officials in Michigan and federal experts. The results of the workgroups include: a statewide nutrient management strategy; nearshore monitoring efforts; watershed management strategies and Senate Bill 150, which is now making its way through the Legislature with the aim of further improving Ohio's water quality.

### Partnerships and Leveraging Resources

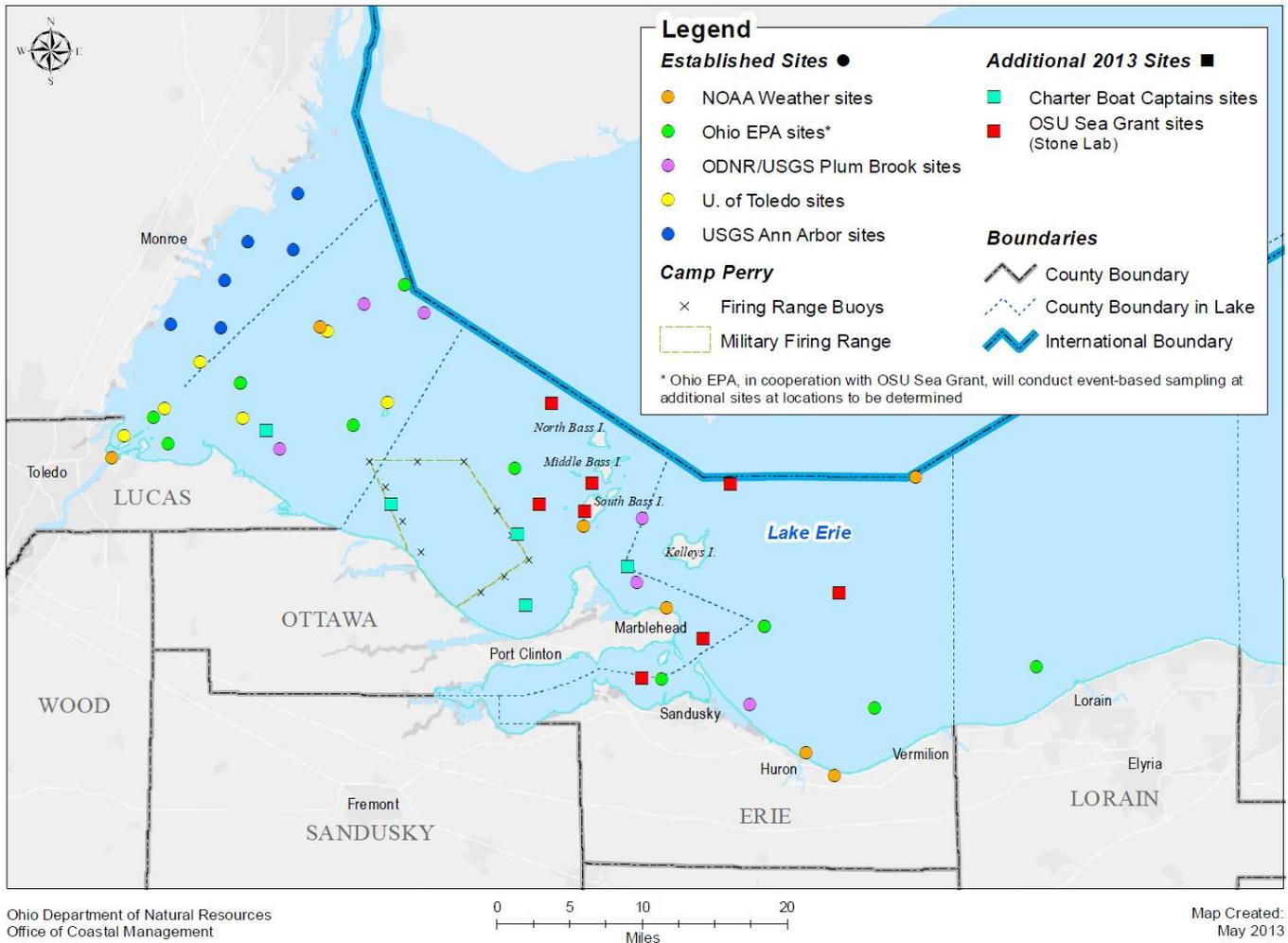
- Reconvened the Ohio Lake Erie Phosphorus Task Force as a Phase II:  
Ohio EPA, in partnership with ODNR, ODA, ODH and the Ohio Lake Erie Commission, reconvened the Ohio Lake Erie Phosphorus Task Force as a Phase II effort. The group is currently developing reduction targets for phosphorus and developing policy and management recommendations based upon new and emerging data and information.
- Creating a monitoring network:  
Ohio EPA leveraged resources at the state's colleges and universities, research institutions and private businesses to create partnerships and monitoring networks to create and assess BMPs. Examples include:
  - Partnering with Heidelberg University, The Ohio State University Extension Services, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), local Soil and Water Conservation districts and the Natural Resources Conservation Service in the Maumee watershed.
  - Partnering with Charter Boat Captains, ODNR, the University of Toledo, Heidelberg University, John Carroll University, Stone Lab and USGS to monitor the Lake Erie nearshore, harbors and bays.
- Collaborated with six state agencies on the 2013 Lake Erie Protection and Restoration Plan:  
Ohio EPA participated in the development of the Lake Erie Protection and Restoration Plan (LEPR) published by the Ohio Lake Erie Commission. The LEPR identifies the State of Ohio's strategic actions to benefit Lake Erie. Many aspects of Lake Erie water quality are addressed throughout the Plan. The 2013 LEPR is currently out for public review and comment.

### Long-term Efforts

Ohio EPA, with its state partners, has developed a comprehensive long-term HAB protocol which includes a monitoring program to assess Ohio's near-shore waters, harbors estuaries and beaches of Ohio waters including Lake Erie. Long-term monitoring is vital for evaluating the lake's response to BMP implementation in the watershed and informing future management decisions. Ohio EPA will continue to work with partners to maximize resources and assure that future monitoring efforts are effectively coordinated and data are shared and fully utilized.

# Improving Water Quality in Lake Erie

## Lake Erie Sampling Locations



### More Information

Ohio EPA Nutrient Pollution Website:

[epa.ohio.gov/dsw/wqs/NutrientReduction.aspx](http://epa.ohio.gov/dsw/wqs/NutrientReduction.aspx)

Nutrient Reduction Fact Sheet:

[epa.ohio.gov/Portals/35/visioning\\_workshop/Ohio%20Nutrient%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf](http://epa.ohio.gov/Portals/35/visioning_workshop/Ohio%20Nutrient%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf)

Draft Nutrient Reduction Strategy:

[epa.ohio.gov/Portals/35/visioning\\_workshop/nutrient\\_reduction\\_strategy\\_framework.pdf](http://epa.ohio.gov/Portals/35/visioning_workshop/nutrient_reduction_strategy_framework.pdf)

### Contacts

Media:

Chris Abbruzzese

(614) 644-2782

[chris.abbruzzese@epa.ohio.gov](mailto:chris.abbruzzese@epa.ohio.gov)

Citizens:

Darla Peelle

(614) 644-2160

[darla.peelle@epa.ohio.gov](mailto:darla.peelle@epa.ohio.gov)