

# Evaluation Findings

## Ohio Coastal Management Program

June 2007 to May 2015

Published January 2016



Office for Coastal Management  
National Ocean Service  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
United States Department of Commerce

# Table of Contents

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Executive Summary.....                                    | 1  |
| Program Review Procedures.....                            | 3  |
| Evaluation Findings .....                                 | 4  |
| Permitting and Enforcement .....                          | 6  |
| Response to 2008 Necessary Action.....                    | 6  |
| Examples of Key Efforts .....                             | 6  |
| Staffing and Critical Partnerships.....                   | 8  |
| Examples of Key Efforts .....                             | 8  |
| Nonpoint-Source Pollution Control Program .....           | 9  |
| Examples of Key Efforts .....                             | 9  |
| Moving to Full Approval of Coastal Nonpoint Program ..... | 10 |
| Evaluation Metrics .....                                  | 12 |
| Conclusion.....   | 16 |
| Appendix A: Response to Written Comments .....            | 17 |

## Executive Summary

The Coastal Zone Management Act requires the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Office for Coastal Management to conduct periodic evaluations of the performance of states and territories with federally approved coastal management programs. This evaluation examined the operation and management of the Ohio Coastal Management Program by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources for the period from June 2007 to May 2015. The evaluation focused on three target areas: Program Enforcement, Staffing and Critical Partnerships, and Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program.

The findings in this evaluation document will be considered by the NOAA Office for Coastal Management in making future financial award decisions concerning the coastal program. The evaluation came to these conclusions:

**Accomplishment:** The Ohio Coastal Management Program's permitting and leasing programs have continued to evolve as new research and scientific information have provided a better understanding of the impacts of proposed development on the natural and cultural resources of the coastal area and better guidance for regulatory decisions.

**Accomplishment:** Expanded partnership efforts with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Ohio Environmental Protection Agency have yielded a more standardized approach to enforcement efforts and to inform property owners of violations.

**Accomplishment:** The Ohio Coastal Management Program has played a key role in the development of environmental monitoring and compliance criteria for offshore wind energy development.

**Accomplishment:** The Ohio Coastal Management Program has developed and nurtured partnerships with state, local, and federal agencies as well as nongovernmental organizations to allow for more effective and efficient resource protection.

**Necessary Action:** The Ohio Coastal Management Program must work with the NOAA Office for Coastal Management to develop and submit a work plan with interim benchmarks and a timeline for meeting the outstanding conditions of its conditionally approved coastal nonpoint source pollution program by July 31, 2016. The documentation indicating how Ohio has met the outstanding conditions must be submitted no later than May 31, 2020.

**Recommendation:**

The Ohio Office of Coastal Management should continue to work with partners such as the Corps of Engineers and the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency to effectively enforce all the elements of the coastal authorities contained in the approved state coastal management program, particularly the coastal regulatory authorities implemented under the Ohio Coastal Management Program.

**Recommendation:** The Ohio Office of Coastal Management should continue to identify opportunities to fill key positions and to work with partners, where appropriate, to ensure that all elements of the program continue to be implemented effectively.

**Recommendation:** The State of Ohio should place a high priority on filling vacancies on the Ohio Coastal Management Program's Coastal Resources Advisory Council, since this advisory body provides essential support to the program.

This evaluation concludes that the Ohio Department of Natural Resources is satisfactorily implementing and enforcing its federally approved coastal program, adhering to the terms of the federal financial assistance awards, and addressing the coastal management needs identified in section 303(2)(A) through (K) of the Coastal Zone Management Act.

## Program Review Procedures

The NOAA Office for Coastal Management evaluated the Ohio Coastal Management Program in fiscal year 2015. The evaluation team consisted of Ralph Cantral, evaluation team lead, and Elizabeth Mountz, site liaison, both from the NOAA Office for Coastal Management; and Ronda Wuycheck, chief, Michigan Coastal Management Program. The support of the Ohio Coastal Management Program staff was crucial in conducting the evaluation, and their support is most gratefully acknowledged.

NOAA sent a notification of the scheduled evaluation to James Zehringer, director, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, on January 5, 2015, and published a notice of “Intent to Evaluate” in the *Federal Register* on April 16, 2015. The Ohio Coastal Management Program posted a notice of the public meeting and opportunity to comment in the Lorain, Ohio, *Morning Journal* on April 19, 2015.

The evaluation process included a review of relevant documents and a survey of stakeholders, which helped identify three target areas for the evaluation: program enforcement, staffing and critical partnerships, and the nonpoint source pollution control program. A site visit was also conducted and the evaluation team held meetings with staff members and group discussions with stakeholders and program staff members about the target areas. In addition, a public meeting was held on Wednesday, May 20, 2015, at 5:30 p.m. at the Ritter Public Library, 5680 Liberty Avenue, Vermilion, Ohio 44089, to provide an opportunity for members of the public to express their opinions about the implementation of the coastal program.

Stakeholders and members of the public were given the opportunity to provide written comments via email or U.S. mail through Wednesday, May 27, 2015. No written comments were received from the public or interested parties. The Office for Coastal Management then developed draft evaluation findings, which were provided to the coastal program for review, and the coastal program’s comments were considered in drafting the final evaluation findings.

Final evaluation findings for all coastal programs highlight the coastal program’s accomplishments in the target areas and include recommendations which are of two types:

**Necessary Actions** address programmatic requirements of the implementing regulations of the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) and of the state coastal program approved by NOAA. These must be carried out by the dates specified. Failure to address necessary actions may result in a future finding of non-adherence and the invoking of interim sanctions, as specified in CZMA §312(c).

**Recommendations** are actions that the office believes would improve the program, but which are not mandatory. The state is expected to have considered the recommendations by the time of the next evaluation or by the dates specified.

## Evaluation Findings

The Ohio Coastal Management Program is a multi-faceted networked program that is a regional and national leader in applying science to resource management. The program takes seriously its charge to promote the balanced use of Lake Erie's natural resources while sustaining a healthy environment. The program has also developed strong relationships with communities across the coastal area, both through the Coastal Management Assistance Grants program and land acquisition funding efforts. The land acquisition program has utilized funds from the Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (from both NOAA appropriations and EPA's Great Lakes Restoration Initiative) to create opportunities with parks authorities throughout the coastal area.

One of the strong attributes of the coastal program is engaging with stakeholders and providing useful information to coastal property owners, residents, and visitors. To engage directly with the public, the coastal program has developed a broad range of informational materials. The GIS-based public access guides and the coastal design manual are just two outstanding examples developed during this review period. The program also has an active citizen advisory group to help identify emerging issues and information needs. As needs for useful information have been identified, the coastal program has been highly successful in responding to the needs by translating the latest research into a usable format for governmental and private-sector coastal decision makers.

Following the 2008 evaluation, the Ohio Office of Coastal Management adopted a strategic plan for 2008–2013. This plan listed five objectives for implementation of an effective regulatory program:

1. Effectively administer the permit, lease, and CZMA consistency programs as defined in the Ohio Coastal Management Program core authorities.
2. Develop and implement a regulatory compliance monitoring and enforcement plan.
3. Create a coastal design manual in coordination with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, other Department of Natural Resources divisions, and state agencies.
4. Enhance coordination of regulatory programs between federal, state, and local partners.
5. Utilize technology to increase efficiencies within regulatory programs.

In 2014, the Ohio Office of Coastal Management refined its goals to reflect progress made, as well as new challenges.

1. Restructure coastal regulatory programs administered by OCM to increase effectiveness and efficiency of regulatory programs.
  - a. Focus on resource protection and management of Lake Erie coastal resources.
  - b. Ensure that decisions are based on solving problems in a pragmatic way.

2. Develop and implement procedures and rules for offshore development in collaboration with the Ohio Power Siting Board (OPSB).<sup>1</sup>
  - a. Implement a parallel track review and evaluation process for Submerged Land authorizations and OPSB Certificate of Operation for offshore wind energy projects.
  - b. Explore the use of a competitive bidding process for offshore grid blocks in order to avoid user and natural resource-related conflicts.
  - c. Coordinate the development of standardized sampling and environmental monitoring requirements for offshore development projects.
3. Expand Office of Coastal Management activities to include enhanced coastal conservation and resilience efforts.
  - a. Implement recommendations for living shorelines that enhance coastal resilience and restore functional nearshore habitats.
  - b. Develop reach-based sand resource management protocols and integrate into regulatory decision-making process.
  - c. Fund additional research documenting the relationships between nearshore ecosystems/habitats, sand resources, and shoreline type/alterations.
4. Promote environmentally sound economic development by facilitating brownfield and waterfront redevelopment in coastal areas through fostering public-private partnerships.
  - a. Expand the master lease concept to other Lake Erie coastal communities.
  - b. Work with local municipalities and townships to identify potential public-private development opportunities.
  - c. Link with existing economic development programs to promote sustainable coastal development, e.g. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) working waterfront initiative.
5. Expand grant-making programs by identifying additional sources of funding for coastal enhancement and land acquisition projects.
  - a. Explore the use of (Ohio) Fund 6970 to leverage and augment existing federal funds for the Coastal Management Assistance Grant Program (CMAG) and other grant-making programs.

The evolution of these strategic goals reflects major steps forward for the Ohio Coastal Management Program. The new goals illustrate both a more focused approach to resource management, and an expansion of the program into new areas of science-based management.

---

<sup>1</sup> This was a priority due to LEEDCo efforts to receive Federal DOE grant funding for their “Icebreaker” offshore wind project. The project was not fully funded by DOE. The Office of Coastal Management continues to monitor the status of the LEEDCo project, but has redirected resources to other priorities at this time.

## Permitting and Enforcement

### ***Response to 2008 Necessary Action***

The Final Evaluation Findings issued April 11, 2008, included the following necessary action:

*“A comprehensive monitoring and enforcement program must be developed that balances the interests of the public, protection of the resources of Lake Erie, and the interests of the upland property owners. The OCMP must submit a plan to OCRM on or before October 20, 2008, for increasing enforcement of, and compliance with, coastal regulations.”*

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources’ Office of Coastal Management submitted the Plan for Development of Compliance Monitoring and Enforcement Capabilities to NOAA on September 12, 2008.

### ***Examples of Key Efforts***

In 2010, the Ohio Coastal Management Program, in partnership with Lake County Soil and Water Conservation, developed “The Landowner’s Guide to Lakeside Living” and distributed it to all property owners in the county, explaining not only the natural processes of the lakeshore, but also the permitting process necessary for development along the shoreline.

In 2011, the coastal program then issued “The Ohio Coastal Design Manual: Guidance for Professionals Designing Structures along Lake Erie.” This manual provides a wealth of information to design professionals and includes elements aimed at inspection and monitoring to identify problems before they become serious and have negative impacts on adjacent properties. By providing clear professional advice, such as that contained in the landowner’s guide and the design manual, the Ohio Coastal Management Program has developed tools that have reduced the number of development violations.

Implementation of OCM’s Resource Assessment/management program was bolstered through two initiatives. In 2010, the coastal program released new coastal erosion area maps. The Coastal Erosion Area maps identified areas with increased risk of erosion. The maps provided an updated delineation of coastal erosion areas used to implement OCM’s Coastal Erosion Area Permitting and Technical Assistance Programs and by property owners as required by state disclosure law during the sale or transfer of a property.

The erosion rates determined through the Coastal Erosion Area mapping were combined with information on the shoreline/bluff composition and height to develop a textural GIS product which illustrates potential impacts of proposed development on adjacent and nearby properties and the littoral system as a whole.

The Lake Erie Shore Erosion Management Plan encouraged the development of documents to provide regionally based erosion mitigation recommendations for property owners. The plan has been completed for a significant portion of Ohio's Lake Erie coast. Work on the remaining portions of the plan has been delayed due to staff vacancies.

In 2012, the coastal program undertook three new initiatives: 1) the expansion of the master lease concept to promote economic development; 2) nearshore habitat protection and enhancement; and 3) sand resource management.

The coastal program has developed partnerships with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency to assist with enforcement. Through these partnerships, the program has expanded its abilities through increased coordination and sharing of information between agencies. In numerous instances, the Corps of Engineers is able to proceed with stop-work orders and other enforcement actions faster than the state, and with a better chance of success for prosecution.

The coastal program worked with the City of Cleveland to develop a 99-year submerged lands lease for the southwest portion of Burke Lakefront Airport to the area immediately west of FirstEnergy Stadium. These areas of previously submerged lands of Lake Erie have been filled for many years and were identified by the city as underdeveloped. The 99-year lease enables the city and its developer to obtain funding from various entities to further the phases of development by demonstrating a fee-simple interest in the real estate, while allowing certainty for regulation and enforcement by state and federal agencies.

Administration of Ohio's Submerged Lands Leasing Program which manages the use and occupation of the territory of Lake Erie was impacted by the 2010 Ohio Supreme Court ruling in *Merrill v. State of Ohio Department of Natural Resources*. In this landmark case, the court ruled that the boundary of the territory of Lake Erie is the natural shoreline which was defined as the line at which the water usually stands when free from disturbing causes. In accordance with this definition, the location of the natural shoreline is determined by an Ohio registered surveyor on a site by site basis. Plans to reform the leasing program to more effectively manage the Public Trust Territory and its associated resources are on hold pending final resolution of the *Merrill* case which was remanded to the trial court for further proceedings on pending claims. .

**Accomplishment:** The Ohio Coastal Management Program permitting and leasing programs have continued to evolve as new research and scientific information have provided a better understanding of the impacts of proposed development on the natural and cultural resources of the coastal area and better guidance for regulatory decisions.

**Accomplishment:** Expanded partnership efforts with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Ohio Environmental Protection Agency have yielded a more standardized approach to enforcement efforts, including the use of shared template letters to inform property owners of violations.

**Accomplishment:** The Ohio Coastal Management Program has played a key role in the development of environmental monitoring and compliance criteria for offshore wind energy development.

**Recommendation:** The Ohio Office of Coastal Management should continue to work with partners such as the Corps of Engineers and the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency to effectively enforce all of the elements of the coastal authorities contained in the approved state coastal management program, particularly the coastal regulatory authorities implemented under the Ohio Coastal Management Program.

### **Staffing and Critical Partnerships**

The Ohio Office of Coastal Management has lost a number of staff positions over the period of this evaluation. In 2011, the office had five sections and 27 employees, and in 2014, had two sections and 17 employees. Although some 10 positions were lost through gradual attrition in an effort to achieve a more efficient program that minimizes administrative expenditures, all programs and services were maintained. Monies saved through these reductions were redirected to programmatic initiatives and increased grant opportunities. Leadership of the coastal program has been recognized for their efficiency and effectiveness in implementing the program.

The 2008, evaluation of the coastal program noted the need to continue to expand the use of the Coastal Resources Advisory Council. The coastal program has developed a good working relationship with the council and uses the group to both identify new issues and serve as a liaison to the coastal community. The one issue of concern at this point is the slow process of appointing or reappointing members through the state's established processes.

Similarly, the previous evaluation noted that the coastal program had partnered with local organizations to carry out preservation and restoration activities. These partnerships continue and are being expanded to achieve program goals.

### ***Examples of Key Efforts***

It has been difficult to keep several coastal program positions filled, including the position of surveyor. Since most lease activities require a property survey, the Office of Coastal Management must review the surveys submitted for accuracy and ensure that the information is compatible with the information contained in the coastal atlas and other GIS-based tools. Since fall of 2014, because of staff shortages in the Sandusky office, the coastal program has had to rely on the services of a surveyor located in Columbus who has additional responsibilities across the state. Although the ensuing work continues to be of a high quality, the coastal responsibilities may be delayed because of other demands on the surveyor's time. Despite this

obstacle, the coastal program has continued to meet the statutory time limits of the regulatory process.

The Ohio Coastal Management Program has continued to develop a strong working relationship with the Old Woman Creek National Estuarine Research Reserve in both training and research. In 2011, the reserve's Coastal Training Program conducted a workshop to train contractors and developers on the provisions of the coastal program's coastal design manual. The coastal program has, in turn, provided advice and technical assistance to the reserve on reducing the impacts of coastal erosion on the reserve.

The coastal program has also developed key partnerships with land acquisition and management agencies across coastal Ohio. Using funds from NOAA's Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program, the Great Lakes Areas of Concern Land Acquisition Program, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the coastal program has assisted with more than nine projects protecting high-priority lands within the Lake Erie Coastal Zone through partnerships with Lake (County) Metroparks, Metroparks of the Toledo Area, Western Reserve Land Conservancy, and other partners. These lands are being restored and managed to protect the natural and scenic values of the coastal zone.

**Accomplishment:** The Ohio Coastal Management Program has developed and nurtured partnerships with state, local, and federal agencies as well as nongovernmental organizations to allow for more effective and efficient resource protection.

**Recommendation:** The Ohio Office of Coastal Management should continue to identify opportunities to fill key positions and to work with partners, where appropriate, to ensure that all elements of the program continue to be implemented effectively.

**Recommendation:** The State of Ohio should place a high priority on filling vacancies on the Ohio Coastal Management Program's Coastal Resources Advisory Council, since this advisory body provides essential support to the program.

## **Nonpoint-Source Pollution Control Program**

Ohio has developed a Coastal Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program that has been conditionally approved by NOAA and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The program has made significant progress in obtaining full approval, yet has not met all of the necessary criteria for full approval.

### ***Examples of Key Efforts***

The Ohio Coastal Management Program has partnered with a number of local watershed groups to support a variety of activities to improve water quality, including volunteer stream

monitoring programs as well as direct physical improvements to streams and culverts in a number of locations.

The coastal program provided financial support to a number of local watershed groups to prepare watershed action plans. These very detailed plans included inventories of structures and on-site disposal systems within the watersheds, in addition to integrating the information into a number of water quality data sets. The coastal program also supported a number of volunteer efforts, and numerous local governments have adopted model watershed ordinances based on direct technical assistance.

During the review period, a coastal nonpoint source coordinator was employed by the Division of Soil and Water Conservation funded by the Ohio Coastal Management Program. The coastal program provided annual funding, office space, and administrative support for the position. Effective November 2014, the responsibility for the Ohio Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program was transferred to the Office of Coastal Management from the Division of Soil and Water Resources.

Between June 2007 and May 2015, 24 marinas were certified as Ohio Clean Marinas, 12 additional marinas pledged to become certified, and more than 800 boaters signed the Ohio Clean Boater Pledge through the Ohio Clean Marinas Program. During that same timeframe, 2.27 million pounds of shrink wrap were recycled through partnerships coordinated by the Ohio Clean Marinas Program, which is supported by the coastal management program in partnership with Ohio Sea Grant. In 2012-2013 the Ohio Clean Marinas Program partnered with Bowling Green State University to collect and analyze sediment samples for copper concentrations at eight Lake Erie marinas, a crucial first step in addressing the source of sediment contamination in the marinas.

### ***Moving to Full Approval of Coastal Nonpoint Program***

In accordance with Section 6217 of the Coastal Zone Act Reauthorization Amendments of 1990 (CZARA), all states with federally approved coastal programs must develop comprehensive coastal nonpoint pollution control programs (coastal nonpoint programs). These programs must be developed and implemented in accordance with guidance by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Under CZARA, if NOAA and EPA find a state has failed to submit an approvable program, the federal agencies must withhold funding for the state coastal management program under Section 306 of the CZMA and Section 319 of the Clean Water Act.

Ensuring that all states fully satisfy their coastal nonpoint program requirements under CZARA and the CZMA to maintain full funding of their coastal management programs is important. The CZMA states that coastal management programs shall “[contain] enforceable policies and mechanisms to implement the applicable requirements of the Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program of the State required by section 1455b of this title” Section 306(d)(3)(16). Since the Section 312 evaluation process is designed to assess how well the state is meeting its

coastal nonpoint program requirements and carrying out the goals and objectives of the CZMA, which include protecting water quality, NOAA uses the evaluation process to assess a state coastal management program's progress in meeting coastal nonpoint program requirements.

The State of Ohio initially submitted program documentation in September 2000. After carefully reviewing Ohio's coastal nonpoint program submission to evaluate the extent to which Ohio's program conforms to the requirements of CZARA, NOAA and EPA approved Ohio's program, with conditions, on June 4, 2002. The conditions outlined actions the state needed to take to fully satisfy all CZARA requirements and receive full approval of its coastal nonpoint program. Since then, NOAA and EPA have worked with Ohio to address its remaining conditions. Although there was a lull in activity for several years, work among federal and state partners to address the remaining conditions has been reinvigorated recently. NOAA and EPA provided Ohio with an updated status table of its remaining conditions in June 2015.

The evaluation team recognizes Ohio's good faith effort to move forward with full approval of its conditionally approved coastal nonpoint program. The Ohio Coastal Management Program is working closely with partners, including the Ohio Nonpoint Source Program operated under Section 319 of the Clean Water Act, NOAA, and EPA, to adequately address the remaining coastal nonpoint program conditions.

**Accomplishment:** The Ohio Office of Coastal Management has placed a high priority on meeting the requirements of the nonpoint program through a number of initiatives, including the hiring of a full-time nonpoint program coordinator.<sup>2</sup>

**Accomplishment:** Action Plans for 13 watersheds within the Lake Erie basin have been completed by local partners and organizations.

**Accomplishment:** The Ohio Clean Marinas Program operated by the Ohio Sea Grant Program in partnership with the Ohio Coastal Management Program continues to be successful, and the program has been expanded statewide to include the Ohio River watershed in partnership with the ODNR Division of Watercraft using state funding.

**Necessary Action:** The Ohio Coastal Management Program must work with the NOAA Office for Coastal Management to develop and submit a work plan with interim benchmarks and a timeline for meeting the outstanding conditions of its conditionally approved coastal nonpoint source pollution program by July 31, 2016. The documentation indicating how Ohio has met the outstanding conditions must be submitted no later than May 31, 2020.

---

<sup>2</sup> As of the time of the site visit in May 2015, the Ohio Office of Coastal Management had filled a full-time Coastal Nonpoint Program Coordinator position.

## Evaluation Metrics

Beginning in 2012, state coastal management programs began tracking their success in addressing three evaluation metrics specific to their programs. The evaluation metrics include a five-year target and provide a quantitative reference for each program about how well it is meeting the goals and objectives it has identified as important to the program.

### Metric 1

**Goal:** Provide information to coastal communities and decision makers regarding Lake Erie, coastal resources, the Ohio Coastal Management Program, and sustainability of the Great Lakes ecosystems.

**Objective:** Increase training and outreach activities as identified with our coastal constituents.

**Strategy:** The Ohio Department of Natural Resources' Office of Coastal Management is the primary administrator of the Ohio Coastal Management Program and has a number of technical staff members who provide various outreach activities independently and in partnership with the Ohio Coastal Training Program, which is primarily administered by the Old Woman Creek National Estuarine Research Reserve. The Office of Coastal Management places a high priority on providing technical assistance through hands-on activities aimed at local decision makers, property owners or managers, and other stakeholders so that they may become more effective stewards of coastal resources, while also realizing financial or other benefits by applying this knowledge. In fiscal years 2010 and 2011, the total number of such events was 22, for an average of 11 events per year. It is our intent to increase the average number of such activities by one event annually for a total of 70 during the five-year Section 312 review period. The activities measured include the number of government coordination events counted in Performance Measure 3 and the numbers of education and training events counted in Performance Measure 4, as required by the April 2011 Coastal Zone Management Act Performance Measurement System—Coastal Management Program Guidance.

**Performance Measure:** Number of coordination, training, or education events provided to other governmental agencies regarding coastal management tools, resources, and issues by the Ohio Coastal Management Program or in partnership with the Ohio Coastal Training Program.

**Target:** Between 2012 and 2017, 70 coordination, training, or education events provided to other governmental agencies regarding coastal management tools, resources, and issues by the Ohio Coastal Management Program or in partnership with the Ohio Coastal Training Program.

**Cumulative Data:** Eighty-nine total events were provided to other government agencies (63 during 7/1/2012-6/30/2013 and 26 during 7/1/2013-6/30/2014). Since the target has been exceeded by 19 events or 27%, this metric has been met and is 100% complete.

**Discussion:** The efforts to increase the number of trainings of other government agencies on the requirements, policies, and procedures of the Ohio Coastal Management Program have been quite effective. Even though the interim goals have been met, it is hoped that the state will continue to maintain and enhance these training opportunities.

## **Metric 2**

**Goal:** Provide information to coastal communities and decision makers regarding Lake Erie, coastal resources, the Ohio Coastal Management Program, and sustainability of the Great Lakes ecosystems.

**Objective:** Provide technical and financial resources for the improvement of Lake Erie water quality.

**Strategy:** The Ohio Coastal Management Program partners with the Ohio Sea Grant College Program in its implementation of the Ohio Clean Marinas Program. An important component of the Ohio Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program, the Ohio Clean Marinas Program provides a number of water quality benefits to Lake Erie by certifying that marina operators follow a variety of best management practices. As of July 1, 2012, there were 39 certified Clean Marinas in Ohio. Through an increased number of certified Clean Marinas in Ohio, it is expected that Lake Erie water quality will continue to improve.

**Performance Measure:** Percentage increase in the total numbers of certified Clean Marinas.

**Target:** Fifty percent increase in the total number of certified Clean Marinas over the five-year period.

**Cumulative Data:** The Ohio Clean Marinas Program has certified forty-four (44) Clean Marinas as of 6/30/2014, or a 12.82% increase. This Metric is 25% complete.

**Discussion:** As noted in this evaluation, the Ohio Office of Coastal Management has continued to work with the Ohio Sea Grant College Program to expand the reach of the Clean Marinas Program. Prospects appear good that the target will be met.

## **Metric 3**

**Goal:** Provide information to coastal communities and decision makers regarding Lake Erie, coastal resources, the Ohio Coastal Management Program, and sustainability of the Great Lakes ecosystems.

**Objective:** Provide technical and financial resources for the improvement of Lake Erie water quality.

**Strategy:** Water quality in the western basin of Lake Erie continues to be negatively impacted by runoff of sediments and nutrients from the watersheds of rivers flowing into the western basin of Lake Erie. The Office of Coastal Management partners with the Ohio Division of Soil and Water Resources to employ a staff member dedicated to working with the agricultural community in Lake Erie’s western basin watersheds to implement voluntary best management practices aimed at reducing nonpoint source pollution. It is anticipated that the adoption of such practices will have direct positive impacts on the water quality of Lake Erie.

**Performance Measure:** Acreage of agricultural land in the Lake Erie watershed where new voluntary best management practices have been implemented for at least one year as a result of technical and financial assistance through the Ohio Coastal Management Program in partnership with the Ohio Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program.

**Target:** Between 2012 and 2017, a new voluntary best management practice has been implemented for at least one year for 25,000 acres of agricultural land in the Lake Erie watershed as a result of technical and financial assistance through the Ohio Coastal Management Program in partnership with the Ohio Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program.

**Cumulative Data:** The table below depicts the county totals of agricultural land acres within the Lake Erie watershed where new voluntary best management practices (BMP) have been implemented for the period from July 1, 2012, to June 30, 2014. Since the target has been exceeded by 10,519 acres or 42%, this metric has been met and is 100% complete.

| County   | Acres<br>BMP1 | Acres<br>BMP2 | Acres<br>BMP3 | Acres<br>BMP4-1<br><br>(Number of<br>Structures with 15<br>acre minimum) | Acres<br>BMP4 -2<br><br>(Number of<br>Structures with 25<br>acre minimum) | Total<br>Acres |
|----------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--|---|----------------|
| Defiance | 3,384         | 1,273         | 112           | 1,680<br>(112 structures)  | 100<br>(4 structures)   | 6,549          |
| Hancock  | 205           | 596           | 0             | 0  | 0   | 801            |
| Henry    | 5,472         | 7,122         | 437           | 1,995<br>(133 structures)  | 900<br>(36 structures)  | 15,926         |
| Putnam   | 1,178         | 1,091         | 0             | 165<br>(11 structures)   | 100<br>(4 structures)   | 2,534          |
| Wood     | 1,568         | 5,368         | 663           | 1,710<br>(114 structures)  | 400<br>(16 structures)  | 9,709          |
|          |               |               |               |  |   |                |

|                    |               |               |              |                                   |                                  |               |
|--------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Total Acres</b> | <b>11,807</b> | <b>15,450</b> | <b>1,212</b> | <b>5,550<br/>(370 structures)</b> | <b>1,500<br/>(60 structures)</b> | <b>35,519</b> |
|--------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|

**Discussion:** The outstanding progress made to adopt agricultural best management practices has far exceeded the target. It is hoped that the state will continue to set new targets and expand these efforts to ensure nonpoint source pollution reductions.

## Conclusion

For the reasons stated herein, I find that the State of Ohio is adhering to the programmatic requirements of the Coastal Zone Management Act and its implementing regulations in the operation of its approved Ohio Coastal Management Program.

These evaluation findings contain one necessary action and three recommendations. The necessary action must be responded to within six months of the date of the final findings. The recommendations must be considered before the next regularly scheduled program evaluation, but they are not mandatory at this time. Program recommendations that must be repeated in subsequent evaluations may be elevated to necessary actions.

This is a programmatic evaluation of the Ohio Coastal Management Program that may have implications regarding the state's financial assistance awards. However, it does not make any judgment about or replace any financial audits.

---

Jeffery L. Payne, Ph.D.  
Acting Director  
NOAA Office for Coastal Management

---

Date

## **Appendix A: Response to Written Comments**

No written comments were received.