

Ohio Candidates for GLRI Funding – FFY 2010 – Maumee AOC

Originally submitted 3/10/2009 by Trinka Mount, Ohio EPA

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Development of Inventory and Restoration Plans for the Eastern portion of the Maumee Area of Concern (Toussaint River, Lake Erie tribs and Lower Maumee tribs)

The proposed project would create inventory and restoration plans for the remaining watersheds of the Maumee AOC. The proposed project would identify and prioritize potential wetland and/or riparian mitigation sites in the Toussaint River (Toussaint and Packer creeks), direct Lake Erie Tributaries (Turtle, Crane, Cedar, Wolf and Otter creeks), and Maumee River Tributary (Duck, Grassy, & Delaware) watersheds. It would be useful to have these new plans generated in the same manner as the Swan Creek and Ottawa River plans. (An additional write-up of this idea is available.)

Modeling and writing the TMDL for the lower Maumee and Lake Erie tributaries

2008 Assessment Units¹:

04100009 090 Maumee River (downstream N. Granger Island to mouth); excluding Maumee River mainstem

04100010 010 Lake Erie tributaries (east of Maumee River to west of Toussaint River)

Located in the Toledo, Ohio area, the watersheds are part of the Maumee Area of Concern. Land use is predominantly comprised of 65% cultivated cropland, 20% developed land, and 8% wetlands. Data to assess the condition of the lower Maumee tributaries (Duck, Grassy, and Delaware Creeks) was collected in 2006; the Lake Erie tribs (Turtle, Crane, Cedar, Wolf, and Otter Creeks) were assessed in 2008. Study plans are available at http://www.epa.ohio.gov/dsw/tmdl/monitoring_LakeErieTributaries.aspx and http://www.epa.ohio.gov/dsw/tmdl/monitoring_LowerMaumeeTrib.aspx

Along the Lake Erie shoreline east of Toledo there are two national wildlife refuges (NWR): the Ottawa NWR and the Cedar Point NWR. The refuges help to preserve the diminishing Lake Erie marshes and provide a resting and feeding place for birds traveling to their nesting or wintering grounds. Bald eagles also nest here. Nearby, the Maumee Bay State Park offers recreation and a nature center to educate about the natural ecosystem of the area.

The project would involve working with data collected by Ohio EPA to create a model (or duration curves) and working with Ohio EPA staff to complete a TMDL. The causes of impairment include nutrients, sediment, bacteria, metals, and habitat. This project could be extended to include development of a stormwater BMP optimization plan and demonstration project (see item #5).

Development of a stormwater BMP optimization plan and demonstration project.

This could be made part of the TMDL for the lower Maumee and Lake Erie tributaries (item #1), or it could be a separate follow-up project for the Swan Creek TMDL, currently being completed. All of these areas are part of the Maumee Area of Concern.

¹ In the 2010 IR, we will switch to the newer HUC10/12 system. These will change to 04100009 09 and 04100010 07.

Swan Creek is located in portions of Fulton and Lucas County. In the (draft) Swan Creek TMDL report, storm water runoff has been identified as a source of impairment in the urban and developing areas of Toledo and Lucas County. Waste load allocations have been established for the regulated Phase 1 and Phase 2 MS4s in the watershed. A pilot project for developing the stormwater BMP Optimization Tool in the Maumee AOC will help promote coordination between the TMDL and existing NPDES programs here in Ohio. A project in the Lake Erie coastal zone would also emphasize the work being done through the LaMP, the Great Lakes Legacy Act and the Lake Erie Commission's work on the Balanced Growth Initiative.

It is proposed to take the (nearly) completed Swan Creek TMDL report and develop a regionalized implementation tool that optimizes storm water best management practices for the City of Toledo and the surrounding MS4 communities in Lucas County. Based on things learned in other pilot projects in Minnesota, Michigan and Indiana, this "tool" could be further developed to address urban brownfields, storm water retrofits, low impact development, and restoration of hydrology to riparian wetlands. The tool could then be spread from this proposed pilot project area to other Lake Erie AOCs and coastal watersheds where TMDLs are already completed.