

LEF Compliments Gov. DeWine on H2OHIO Rollout

Lake Erie Foundation thanks Governor DeWine and his administration for the significant time and effort that went into developing the initial steps of the “H2Ohio” plan. LEF also appreciates the efforts of the Ohio legislature for allocating \$172 million in funds, and the many collaborative partners who helped build the plan.

The Governor unveiled the plan’s details on November 14 along the shores of Lake Erie in Toledo stating “my H2Ohio plan is a dedicated, holistic water quality strategy with long-lasting solutions to address the causes of Ohio’s water problems, not just the symptoms.”

Since the beginning of the DeWine administration, LEF has been a resource to him and his team on issues related to protecting the lake. Many of the H2Ohio plan components are activities that LEF has been advocating for since the organization was first formed, primarily reducing phosphorus runoff and preventing algal blooms through increased implementation of agricultural best practices. The plan provides economic incentives to farmers who develop a nutrient management plan that includes a combination of these best practices.

Other plan goals include creation of wetlands, improving wastewater infrastructure; replacing failing home septic systems; and preventing lead contamination in high-risk daycare centers and schools.

While all of these methods of addressing Lake Erie’s challenges have the potential to provide positive benefit, LEF does have concern that according to details now available, many of the recommended actions are voluntary in nature. And while there are dollars available to offset the cost to those who choose to “do the right thing”, to a certain extent this voluntary approach has been unsuccessful in the past. Furthermore, these financial incentives are being made available even to farms that have already incorporated best management practices into their operations, as opposed to directing the dollars to farms with fields in the greatest need.

Jim Stouffer, President of the LEF Board of Directors, commented, “we compliment Governor DeWine for taking on this challenge and are encouraged by the goals he and his team have set forth. Our hope is that our friends in the agricultural community will fully engage with this plan; this will in turn benefit their operations and our Great Lake Erie”.



236 Walnut
Lakeside, Ohio 43440

Join LEF Today

Become a member of the Lake Erie Foundation and help us restore and protect Lake Erie for generations to come. Your tax-deductible contribution will help Lake Erie Foundation work to ensure that Lake Erie’s waters are safe for drinking, fishing and swimming. Your support makes our efforts for advocating, educating, supporting innovative technology development and legal defense a possibility. For more information regarding membership visit the Lake Erie Foundation website at www.lakeeriefoundation.org or call 419-301-3743.



From the President

2019 was a highly productive year for Lake Erie Foundation (LEF). From outreach events, to advocacy, to spreading our mission and adding to our membership, LEF is making a noticeable impact in preserving and protecting Lake Erie.

LEF Board members have been involved in and in many cases led meetings that promote the collaborative strategy that will help resolve issues affecting Lake Erie. Board members delivered impactful presentations on the need for an Environmental Impact Study for the Icebreaker Wind Turbine project and initiated a drive gathering 6,000 signatures to voice concern regarding the project. Board members had a presence at the annual HOW (Healing our Waters) conference, and at numerous yacht club, service club, and other meetings to promote LEF’s mission.

LEF firmly believes there can be a clean Lake Erie while still allowing for profitable farming.

We continue to communicate with key players discussing the importance of addressing the management of manure on Ohio’s animal farms. LEF has consistently stated that all nutrients whether from commercial fertilizer or manure, should be applied at the agronomic rate, which is the amount of fertilizer needed to grow a crop. We realize this is potentially more difficult and costly for livestock farmers, but we want to utilize funds and resources to determine what it will take to help these animal farms transport or manage their manure. In early August LEF Board members participated in a key meeting with Governor DeWine and other major stakeholders to discuss what practices and initiatives are supported by the agriculture community in reducing nutrient runoff.

LEF promotes the reduction of single use plastics and in 2019 partnered with ABSOLUT@VODKA for their “Skip the Straw” campaign. We thank them for their financial contribution to LEF and for making this commitment to a healthier lake.

In July LEF Board members visited the Blanchard Demonstration Farms between Upper Sandusky and Findley to continue building the relationship with the Ohio Farm Bureau. LEF has promoted the idea of learning from the practices that have shown success at these demonstration farms and expanding those management practices

to a sub-watershed. Farmers in that watershed would then be given assistance to implement those practices. After a year or two, the water downstream would be monitored to determine if the practices were making a difference. If successful, there could be accurate estimates on extending these practices throughout Northwest Ohio and ultimately the entire state.

LEF was a title sponsor for this past September’s “State of Science” meeting in Toledo with over 300 attendees. One of the day’s key sessions was a roundtable with the Ohio Directors of Agriculture, EPA, ODNR, and Lake Erie Commission.

We had a presence at many events throughout 2019 including the Cleveland Boat Show, Catawba Island Boat Show, Lakeside Boat Show, Sandusky Pride event, the Biggest Week in American Birding. Our events committee is developing the plan for 2020 events.

Multiple mailings to several organizations increased our membership and awareness of LEF and more mailings are planned for this year. We also added two new advisors to the LEF Board: Peter Huston, Director of the Put-in-Bay Chamber of Commerce, and Dr. Tim Davis, Professor of Biological Sciences from Bowling Green State University.

My sincerest thanks to all LEF members, donors and volunteers for their contribution to our critical mission. Because of your support, we continue to make a noticeable difference in preserving and protecting Lake Erie.



-Jim Stouffer, Jr.
President, Lake Erie Foundation

PUBLISHED BY:

Lake Erie Foundation
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