



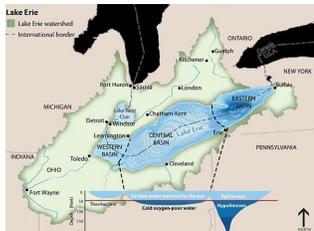
TRACKING PROGRESS TOWARD A HEALTHIER LAKE ERIE

www.blueaccounting.org

PHOSPHORUS AND ITS IMPACT

In 2014 alone, **harmful algal blooms in western Lake Erie cost \$65 million (USD)** in diminished property values, lost tourism revenue and recreational opportunities, and increased water treatment costs. Nutrient runoff has plagued Lake Erie for more than forty-five years. Phosphorus and other nutrients enter Lake Erie through a range of sources, such as wastewater treatment plants and runoff from agricultural fields. In large amounts, phosphorus can fuel harmful algal blooms and contribute to low-oxygen “dead zones” and growth of cladophora, another type of nuisance algae. **Poor water quality on Lake Erie threatens the drinking water supply for 11 million people**, impacts tourism, and alters the lake ecosystem.

A BINATIONAL COMMITMENT



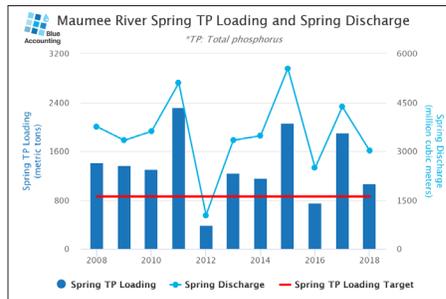
Lake Erie watershed boundary.

In 2016, the federal governments of Canada and the United States—along with the states of Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, and Pennsylvania and province of Ontario—**adopted a goal to reduce phosphorus in the lake’s western and central basins**

by 40 percent. This shared goal provides a foundation for coordinating binational actions to manage nutrients in Lake Erie, including phosphorus. Work continues to set reduction targets for the eastern basin, which also affects the state of New York. **Achieving a 40 percent reduction requires a collaborative effort across five states, one province, two countries, and dozens of public and private stakeholders—and a system to track progress toward this ambitious goal.**

TRACKING PROGRESS AND MEASURING SUCCESS

Through the Blue Accounting process, ErieStat tracks progress toward the shared 40 percent phosphorus reduction goal. In 2017, the ErieStat workgroup established a suite of water quality metrics to measure progress in select Lake Erie tributaries. In 2018, the ErieStat website was launched to provide information on current phosphorus levels in major tributaries and share government strategies for achieving needed reductions. ErieStat continues to track investments in each individual strategy, as well as develop additional metrics to track collective progress on the land and in the lake. This curated data will allow decision-makers to evaluate the impact of current and potential strategies and investments—and ensure a safe and sustainable future for Lake Erie.



Maumee River spring loads of total phosphorus, available on Blue Accounting’s ErieStat.

LEARN MORE

For more information on Blue Accounting’s ErieStat, please contact Nicole Zacharda, Program Manager at the Great Lakes Commission, at nzacharda@glc.org.

If you are interested in learning more about other Blue Accounting projects, please visit www.blueaccounting.org.

WHO’S INVOLVED

State and Provincial

Indiana Dept. of Agriculture | Indiana Dept. of Environmental Quality
| Michigan Dept. of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy | Michigan Dept. of Agriculture and Rural Development | Ohio Environmental Protection Agency | Ohio Department of Agriculture | Ohio Lake Erie Commission | Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks | Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

Federal

US Environmental Protection Agency
US Department of Agriculture
US Geological Survey
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Environment and Climate Change Canada
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

Academic

Heidelberg University
University of Michigan
Michigan State University
Ohio State University



The Great Lakes Commission convenes Blue Accounting for the Great Lakes Basin, in partnership with federal, state, provincial, local and private sector organizations. Blue Accounting was initially co-led with The Nature Conservancy and receives funding support from Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the Fred A. and Barbara M. Erb Family Foundation, the Joyce Foundation, and the Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation.

BLUE ACCOUNTING AND THE GREAT LAKES

A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH FOR A COMPLEX SYSTEM



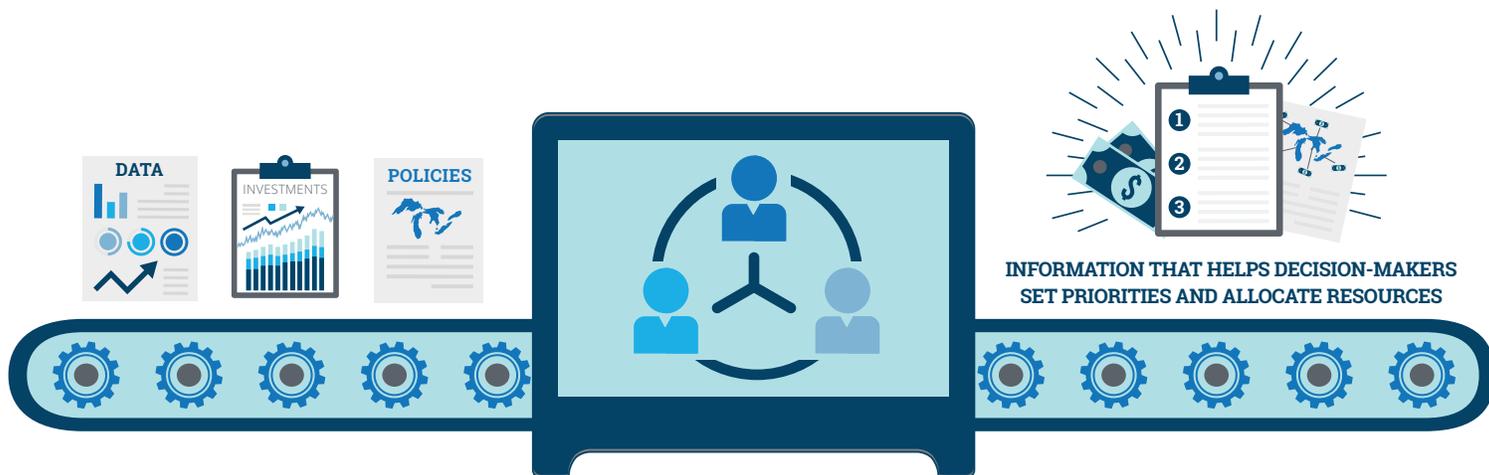
The Great Lakes provide **DRINKING WATER FOR 48 MILLION PEOPLE**, fuel a **\$5 TRILLION REGIONAL ECONOMY**, and create **AN INVALUABLE SENSE OF HOME AND COMMUNITY** for the basin via their scenic beauty and recreation.

The government agencies of **TWO COUNTRIES, EIGHT STATES, TWO PROVINCES, AND 249 COUNTIES**, as well as hundreds of NGOs and private businesses, make decisions that affect the lakes. **WE MUST WORK TOGETHER TO SUCCEED.**



Blue Accounting

Blue Accounting, an initiative supported by an online information platform, provides decision-makers with a big picture view of critical Great Lakes issues.



INFORMATION THAT HELPS DECISION-MAKERS SET PRIORITIES AND ALLOCATE RESOURCES

Initially, Blue Accounting is supporting five complex issues:



AQUATIC
INVASIVE SPECIES



SOURCE
WATER



PHOSPHORUS
CONTROL



COASTAL
WETLANDS



MARITIME
TRANSPORTATION

Working together, we can improve the decisions we make to ensure the Great Lakes will always be the backbone of our region, supplying fresh water and natural beauty and serving as a powerful economic engine.