

ErieStat: Tracking Progress Toward Western Lake Erie Phosphorus Reduction Targets



ErieStat will become an information platform to track progress toward meeting the goal of a 40% reduction in phosphorus loads to the Western Lake Erie Basin. ErieStat will provide valuable services to the states of Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio and the province of Ontario as these governments work to implement policies and programs to achieve this bi-national phosphorus reduction goal.

Phosphorus, while important for healthy plants, in excess amounts is a contributor to significant algal blooms on the Lake that threaten healthy ecosystem function and the communities that benefit from a healthy Lake Erie.

ErieStat is part of the Commission's groundbreaking Blue Accounting program that will bring together the right people to determine how best to track progress against shared, region-wide goals, and deliver the right information to help leaders better set priorities and allocate resources. In the Western Lake Erie Basin, ErieStat will bring together water quality experts to discuss and agree on standardized measurements to track progress toward the 40% reduction goal, while also considering the effects of investments intended to reduce phosphorus loading.

The Commission's effort aligns with the June 2015, Collaborative Agreement between the Governors of Michigan and Ohio and Premier of Ontario, as well as the Commission's own Lake Erie Nutrient Targets report released in September 2015. Both of those efforts gained further support when the governments of Canada and the United States also adopted the 40% reduction goal in February 2016 through Annex 4 of the 2012 Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement between the two nations. The Commission will work closely with Annex 4 in developing ErieStat.

The Blue Accounting program is being developed through a partnership between the Great Lakes Commission and The Nature Conservancy, with cornerstone support from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, and additional support from The Erb Family Foundation, and The Joyce Foundation. Learn more about Blue Accounting at <http://BlueAccounting.org>.