



RESOLUTION
Adopted September 29, 2015

A Joint Action Plan for Lake Erie

Whereas, Lake Erie provides drinking water to more than 11 million Canadian and U.S. residents, supports a \$1.5 billion sport fishing industry and is a vital resource for the five states and Ontario that surround the lake; and

Whereas, the Great Lakes Commission adopted a Lake Erie Water Quality resolution in September 2014 that called for the establishment of a Lake Erie Nutrient Targets (LENT) Working Group to develop and refine new and existing practices, programs and policies to achieve pollutant reduction targets and/or improve water quality in Lake Erie; and

Whereas, the LENT Working Group was established in December 2014 with representatives from Michigan, Ohio, Ontario, New York and Pennsylvania; and

Whereas, the LENT Working Group released an Interim Joint Action Plan in June 2015 and a final Joint Action Plan for Lake Erie in September 2015, which establishes a “collective goal of a healthy Lake Erie system that supports biological, social, economic and cultural values of the region and is free from nuisance and harmful algal blooms and minimizes hypoxia;” and

Whereas, the Joint Action Plan calls for a 40 percent phosphorus reduction target (from 2008 levels) for western and central Lake Erie by 2025, and a proposed interim phosphorus reduction target of 20 percent (from 2008 levels) for western and central Lake Erie by 2020; and

Whereas, the phosphorus reduction targets outlined in the LENT Joint Action Plan align with the Western Lake Erie Basin Collaborative signed by the Ohio and Michigan Governors and the Premier of Ontario, the 2012 Ohio Lake Erie Phosphorus Task Force Report and the proposed phosphorus reductions identified by the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA) Nutrients Annex (4) Subcommittee; and

Whereas, the Joint Action Plan demonstrates a shared commitment among the five jurisdictions bordering Lake Erie to solve the nutrient-related problems facing Lake Erie; and outlines ten joint actions that provide a framework for collective action toward achieving the nutrient reduction targets; and

Whereas, the four Lake Erie states and the province of Ontario have agreed to consider the joint actions as they formulate their individual plans and programs to achieve strategic nutrient reductions based on each jurisdiction’s needs, authorities, capacities and constraints; and

Whereas, the Joint Action Plan for Lake Erie can also inform the development of GLWQA Domestic Action Plans for Lake Erie to be released in 2018; and

Whereas, the Joint Action Plan serves as a model for lake-based, interjurisdictional cooperation and collective action on nutrient reduction strategies for other lake and sub-lake basins—within the Great Lakes region and beyond; and

Whereas, additional efforts to implement actions outlined in the report are underway by the jurisdictions and will be continued, and would be complemented by an information platform to track progress, identify information gaps needed from research, modeling and monitoring to support the adaptive management framework that underlies the plan and which is necessary to ensure that these and other actions are sufficient to achieve the goal of a healthy Lake Erie.

Therefore, be it resolved, that the Great Lakes Commission endorses the Joint Action Plan for Lake Erie and commends the members of the LENT Working Group from Michigan, Ohio, Ontario, New York and Pennsylvania for their collective efforts to address a critical issue facing the region; and

Be it further resolved, that the Great Lakes Commission is called upon to assist with implementation of efforts to reduce pollution problems in Lake Erie by developing, in cooperation with governments, academics and others, a common platform of information on pollution sources, progress to reach pollution reduction targets and information gaps to be filled to support a decisionmaking framework based on adaptive management; and

Be it further resolved, that Great Lakes Commission request the governments of the U.S. and Canada to consider the joint actions in the development of Domestic Action Plans pursuant to the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement and that there be formal consideration of such by the Annex 4 Subcommittee convened pursuant to that Agreement; and

Be it finally resolved, that the Great Lakes Commission recommends that the federal governments provide support to assist with implementing joint actions directed at reducing nutrient loading and associated targeted research including those contained in the Joint Action Plan for Lake Erie.