OHIO COASTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM
POLICY 4 – FLOOD PROTECTION AND MITIGATION

IT IS THE POLICY OF THE STATE OF OHIO TO PROMOTE EFFECTIVE FLOOD PROTECTION BY:

A. REGULATING THE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF DAMS, DIKES AND LEVEES, AND INSPECTING THEIR USE AND OPERATION (O.R.C. 1521.06 et seq.);

B. CONDUCTING DETAILED STUDIES AND INVESTIGATIONS OF ALL FACTORS RELATING TO FLOODS AND FLOOD PROTECTION;

C. ESTABLISHING CONSERVANCY DISTRICTS WHERE LOCALLY DESIRED; AND

D. PROMOTING THE PROTECTION AND RESTORATION OF WETLANDS FOR FLOODWATER STORAGE.

Authorities and Administration

A. The Chief of the Division of Water in ODNR requires construction permits for new dams, dikes and levees and makes periodic inspections of existing dams, dikes and levees pursuant to O.R.C. 1521.06 et seq. While the construction, permitting and inspection authorities include flood protection structures, the law applies to all types of dams, dikes and levees, regardless of purpose.

All dams, dikes and levees constructed in Ohio and not exempted by O.R.C. 1521.062 or the Chief of the Division of Water shall be inspected periodically to assure that continued operation and use of the dam, dike or levee does not constitute a hazard to life, health or property (O.R.C. 1521.062). The chief shall order the owner of the dam, dike or levee to perform repairs or other measures necessary to safeguard life, health or property. Owners of dams, dikes and levees subject to O.R.C. 1521.062 are required to secure approval of plans to repair, improve, alter or remove a dam, dike or levee.

B. ODNR's Division of Water is authorized to conduct detailed studies and investigations of all factors relating to flood and flood protection in the state as funds are appropriated; and to cooperate with the U.S. government and with any political subdivision of the state in planning and constructing flood protection works (O.R.C. 1521.03).

C. Conservancy districts can be established along the shoreline for the purpose of constructing flood protection measures. A conservancy district is a political subdivision formed in accordance with O.R.C. 6101.05 by local landowners to address a common water and/or erosion problem. Once formed, a conservancy district is a political subdivision of the state; however, affected lands remain under private ownership unless actually purchased by the district for project development or maintenance purposes.

D. An important function of wetlands is the temporary storage of floodwater and a resulting reduction in peak flows. Therefore, protection and restoration of wetlands is a desirable nonstructural approach to lessening the dangers and damages of flooding. The State of Ohio is committed to protecting and enhancing existing wetlands, restoring degraded wetlands and developing new ones. The OCMP uses a variety of authorities and mechanisms to accomplish wetland preservation, as discussed in Policy 12.