Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program Plan

For the State of Ohio

Prepared by: Ohio Department of Natural Resources,
Office of Coastal Management

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Table of Contents

I. Introduction

Coastal areas are among the most developed in the Nation. Coastal counties, including those along the Great Lakes, are growing three times faster than counties elsewhere, adding more than 3,600 people a day to their populations. Coastal and marine waters support 28 million jobs and provide a tourism destination for 180 million Americans each year. The value of the ocean and coastal economy to the U.S. is over $115 billion each year (NOAA 2005-2010 Strategic Plan).

For these reasons, and others, the Department of Commerce, Justice, and State Appropriations Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-77), directed the Secretary of Commerce to establish a Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP; "the Program") "for the purpose of protecting important coastal and estuarine areas that have significant conservation, recreation, ecological, historical or aesthetic values, or that are threatened by conversion from their natural or recreational state to other uses," giving priority to lands that have significant ecological value and can be effectively managed and protected.

Ohio's coastline consists of 312 miles of the Lake Erie shore (including the islands) and is associated with 11,649 square miles of the Lake Erie watershed within the state boundaries. Changes in land use over the last 200 years have drastically altered the landscape in Lake Erie's coastal watershed, with over 78% of the land converted from its original state. Population trends for Ohio's Lake Erie watershed and coastal communities indicate continuation of urban growth and land conversion for residential and commercial uses. For instance: recent census data indicate that although Ohio's nine coastal counties (Lucas, Wood, Ottawa, Sandusky, Erie, Lorain, Cuyahoga, Lake, and Ashtabula) make up only 7.6% of Ohio's total land area, more than 23% of Ohio's population lives in those counties (Wood County does not contain Lake Erie shoreline but does contain part of Ohio's Coastal Management Area). Further, nearly 70% of Ohio's Lake Erie watershed residents live in those same nine coastal counties (Lake Erie Quality Index 2004; U.S. Census 2000).

Conversion of the natural forests, wetlands and prairies to farmland and urban areas has helped Ohio to establish a thriving agricultural and industrial based economy. While this conversion has had negative impacts on Lake Erie's ecosystem, there are many significant coastal and estuarine environments remaining that function as critical habitats for a variety of plant and animal species, have important recreational and/or historical value, preserve aesthetic values, and preserve the quality of life for the citizens of Ohio.

Land use alterations continue to result in habitat loss and water quality impacts. It is critical that stewardship efforts be sustained so that improved habitat protection and restoration will increase the chances for survival of species and maintenance of other ecological values (State of the Great Lakes Report, 2003). Baseline environmental assessments have been established for open water habitats in Lake Erie and some of the larger streams in the watershed, but the impacts resulting from rapid land conversion

along the coast will not be realized for several more years (State of the Lake Report, 2004). Therefore, strategic, effective land conservation is a timely issue for Ohio.

The State of Ohio has developed this Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program Plan (CELCP Plan), in cooperation with state and local governments, non-governmental organizations, and interested citizens in order to participate in the Program. The Ohio CELCP Plan provides an assessment of priority land conservation needs and guidance for nominating and selecting coastal and estuarine land conservation projects within the state. The CELCP Plan provides an opportunity to bring state and local governments together with non-governmental organizations and private landowners to achieve a common goal of resource conservation in Ohio.

The CELCP Plan will augment ongoing conservation and natural resource protection efforts of the Ohio Coastal Management Program and the Ohio Lake Erie Commission. The CELCP Plan will also enhance implementation of state and regional scale conservation measures underway in the Ohio coastal area such as: land acquisition priorities for the National Estuarine Research Reserve at Old Woman Creek estuary (administered by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources – Division of Wildlife), the Lake Erie Protection & Restoration Plan, the ODNR – Division of Wildlife's Strategic Plan, Wetland Habitat Tactical Plan and related focus area plans, the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency's Lake Erie Lake-wide Management Plan (LaMP), and the recommendations of the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration.

The Program will also provide a forum for cooperative efforts between governmental entities and the non-governmental organizations that have expertise in land conservation practices and have worked to protect thousands of acres of property along the Ohio Lake Erie coast and in the coastal watershed. These include The Trust for Public Land and The Nature Conservancy at the national and state level, along with many other state level non-governmental organizations.

II. Priorities for Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation

A. Geographic Extent of Ohio's Coastal and Estuarine Areas

For the purposes of the Program, Ohio's "coastal and estuarine areas" are those areas within the state's coastal watershed boundary as described in NOAA's Coastal Zone Boundary Review (October 1992). The coastal watershed boundary is defined by the inland boundary of those 8-digit United States Geological Survey hydrologic cataloguing units that contain portions of watersheds along the coast that drain directly to Lake Erie, and by those cataloguing units that are located adjacent to the coast.

The Ohio CELCP Plan boundary is defined as the Lake Erie watershed within the state of Ohio (Appendix A, Figure 1). Ohio's Lake Erie watershed encompasses 11,649 sq. mi. in 35 of Ohio's 88 counties. Included within this area is the entire Coastal Management

Area as defined in the Ohio Coastal Management Program document, and all or nearly all of the land area within the nine counties (Lucas, Wood, Ottawa, Sandusky, Erie, Lorain, Cuyahoga, Lake, and Ashtabula) that stretch along the Lake Erie coastline and/or contain parts of the Coastal Management Area.

While the Ohio CELCP Plan priorities will focus on and emphasize Lake Erie's coastal shoreline and estuarine lands, this broader boundary will enable the state to solicit and evaluate other projects with potentially significant effects upon the quality of Lake Erie's coastal environment. Existence of unprotected coastal shoreline and estuarine lands of high ecological value is limited in Ohio, and this approach will allow the state to pursue the goals of the Program even if coastal shoreline and estuarine lands are not directly available for acquisition.

B. Types of Lands and Waters or Values to be Protected

Conservation Needs and Values

The Lake Erie coastline is a valued resource for the people of the State of Ohio and neighboring areas of the Midwest. The natural beauty and vitality of the coast is what attracts so many people to the lake, not only to reside there but also to participate in the coastal economy through tourism and recreation opportunities. Based on these values, four general areas of conservation needs were identified: protection of environmental resources, protection and restoration of ecosystem functions, the protection of cultural resources, and promotion of quality of life and the coastal economy.

Protection of Environmental Resources. Items in this category were ranked as the highest conservation needs by participants in Ohio's CELCP Plan development process. Along Ohio's Lake Erie coastline, these resources include coastal wetlands, islands, beaches, swamp forests, riparian corridors, and the rare and endangered species associated with these freshwater and near-shore ecosystems. The Lake Erie coastline also provides resting and feeding habitat for migratory birds and butterflies along nationally and internationally significant flyways. Values that these resources provide to the public include the presence of abundant wildlife for observation, hunting, and fishing; aesthetics such as pleasing views; improvement and maintenance of water quality by providing areas to filter runoff from intense land uses such as urban areas and agriculture; and the availability of recreational experiences such as boating, swimming, hiking, and camping.

Maintaining these values also requires maintaining the quality of the resource. One frequently mentioned conservation need that contributes to the quality of existing resources was the need to develop corridors of protected lands, both upland and along river, stream, and coastal areas. Along with corridors, a need was identified for buffer areas adjacent to existing protected lands. Finally, there is a need for multiple layers of protection to help ensure that lands intended for long term conservation do in fact remain protected. For example, park lands purchased in fee through the CELCP could be additionally protected with conservation easements.

Ecosystem Functions. One of the goals of the Ohio Coastal Management Program is to prevent impairment of coastal resources, including ecosystem functions. Participants in Ohio's CELCP process identified a number of ecosystem functions that are conservation needs, such as providing buffers for critical habitat areas, restoration of floodplain connectivity and function, prevention of siltation, and reduction of the need to dredge waterways. Providing restoration opportunities, establishing filtration buffers, and bringing lands with previously poor management practices back to a restored condition were considered important components of maintaining valuable ecosystem functions. Proper management also contributes to a decrease in the extent of undesirable invasive species, which can cause both ecological and economic damage if left unchecked.

Cultural Resources. In addition to the primary goal of protecting lands with high ecological value, the Program allows for the protection of lands with cultural significance such as aesthetic, historical, and recreational values. Protection of these cultural resources is a conservation need along the Lake Erie shoreline. In particular, the public greatly values opportunities for public access to the coastal and estuarine areas, whether or not the area is of high ecological quality. The Ohio Coastal Management Program recognizes the value of public access as a beneficial use of the coast, as it improves quality of life and builds public support for protection of coastal resources.

The CELC Program Final Guidelines specify that only passive recreation opportunities may be considered within project areas, so that recreation does not conflict with the primary goal of ecological protection. Passive recreation is defined as recreation that does not require the construction of permanent facilities such as ball fields, buildings, docks, marinas, or paved tracks. Examples of suitable recreation opportunities in the Lake Erie watershed include trails, small sand or gravel boat launches without docks, unimproved picnic areas, and access to sand beaches. Hunting and fishing are also generally considered passive recreation in this sense.

Another cultural resource that can be protected along with ecological resources is the maintenance of rural character in agricultural areas. Rural character is often enhanced by the protection of historic structures, woodlot areas, and riparian corridors that might otherwise be converted to other uses due to development pressures. Other archaeological and historic sites often occur near areas of high ecological resource value. For example, American Indian archaeological sites often occur along stream banks. A well-known example of a historical site in Ohio that protects a valued cultural resource is the Marblehead Lighthouse in Marblehead, Ohio. This site is not only a cultural resource, but also provides public access to the shoreline and protection for onsite ecological resources as well.

The aesthetic values to be protected are scenic views and viewsheds of coastal lands. A viewshed is similar in concept to a watershed, except that instead of the area where water flows, it is the area visible from a given point. Generally, views that are considered scenic consist of long views (perhaps a half mile or more on a clear day) with vegetation and water visible at varying distances. Views of vegetation and water over shorter distances

also have some aesthetic value, although the attractiveness of a given scene is much more variable and relatively less at finer scales. Both types of views could also contain scenic cultural resources such as lighthouses. In Ohio, this type of scene would occur along the Lake Erie coastline (including to or from the lake), although another example might be a large river valley such as that of the Cuyahoga River in Cuyahoga County.

Quality of Life and Economy. Another very important conservation need brought up by participants was for the promotion of both the quality of life of people living in Ohio and the coastal economy. This need relates directly back to all of the other identified conservation needs. Lands set aside for protection contribute to quality of life by providing open space for recreation and other natural amenities in or near developed areas, and serving as locations for educational opportunities about Lake Erie ecology and history. Protected lands are particularly important in proximity to population centers, so that communities have access to the resources.

There is a high demand for public access to the Lake Erie shoreline in Ohio. As mentioned in the Introduction to this Plan, over 23% of Ohio's population lives in the coastal counties. In addition, the north central coastal counties of Ottawa, Erie, and Lorain attract between six and eight million visitors during the peak summer season. According to a survey conducted for the State of the Lake: Lake Erie Quality Index (1998), a sample of the regular recreational users of Lake Erie ranked the availability of recreational access to Lake Erie as low. One of the significant impediments to providing adequate access to meet this demand is the fact that approximately 85% of the Lake Erie shoreline is privately owned. Acquisition of additional coastal and estuarine lands through fee simple or conservation easement purchase as provided for in the CELCP would provide additional opportunities for public access to Lake Erie in Ohio.

Protecting ecological and cultural resources also has many beneficial effects on the coastal economy. These lands can provide opportunities for ecotourism (in Ohio, particularly birding along the major flyway) and other tourism activities. Tourism contributes to the coastal economy through the provision of services such as lodging, food, and recreational equipment rentals. The exact economic value of ecosystem services is difficult to quantify, although the replacement costs of services such as erosion prevention, flood prevention and/or mitigation, and water quality protection can be substantial. The coastal economy also benefits from improved quality of life in a general way, as when companies choose to locate in areas that employees prefer due to high quality of life factors. The positive impact of land conservation on the future quality of life and economy in the Lake Erie coastal area cannot be overstated, due to the pressures from development, the expected increases in coastal population, and the continuing shift of the area's economy away from manufacturing activity.

Conversion Threats

These conservation needs are made all the more critical in the face of a number of threats of conversion due to human activities, both direct and indirect. The greatest direct threat to lands with conservation, recreational, ecological, historical and aesthetic value in Ohio

is the conversion of land through residential and commercial development. This conversion is driven by the population pressure along the coast as described in the Introduction to this plan. The need for acquisition as a tool for the protection of resource lands in the face of this threat is urgent for three reasons: first, because the change is usually complete, destroying pre-existing values and functions; second, because of the speed with which the land is being converted, and third, because the change is essentially permanent. This threat tends to be greatest in areas near large existing population centers, which are the populations with the greatest needs for access to coastal lands for recreation.

Other land conversion threats that occur in Ohio's Lake Erie watershed include loss of wetlands through draining and filling practices (both legal and illegal), continued parcelization of large tracts of land into smaller ones (making the assembly of protected areas more difficult), reduction of forested areas, landfilling and dumping activities that often occur in wetlands, road construction, removal of stream buffers, and resource extraction. Ecological and recreational values can also be compromised by activities that take place in or along waterways, such as channelization, installation of flood control structures, culverting, development of storm water conveyance, and shoreline armoring.

Human activities also result in some indirect land conversion threats. A prime example of this that presents a great challenge in Ohio is the proliferation of undesirable invasive species. Many areas of high ecological value, including lands already protected and lands that are not developed but not yet protected, are undergoing rapid conversion from native ecosystems to ecosystems affected or dominated by the undesirable species. Lands under protection can be actively managed to mitigate this threat, but unprotected lands are often severely damaged. Other indirect threats include bacterial contamination of beaches, industrial pollution, lack of use of best management practices in developed and agricultural areas, and soil compaction.

Acquisition Needs

Acquisition of coastal and estuarine lands of high conservation, recreation, ecological, historical, and aesthetic value can mitigate these conversion threats and maintain the ecological, functional, and cultural resources that are so important to the people of Ohio. In many areas, existing protected lands along the coast could be enhanced by the addition of adjacent or nearby lands of similar quality or potential for similar quality, if managed appropriately. For example, Ohio's western coastal marshes that are a remnant of the Black Swamp are protected in a patchy fashion along the shore of the western basin of Lake Erie. Acquisition of additional lands in the vicinity of these protected lands would add to the value of existing protected lands by providing buffers and larger patches of migratory bird habitat. In some areas, there is potential for lands to be acquired that will complement broader scale planning efforts and preserve the value of previously unprotected ecological communities, while also protecting and enhancing recreational opportunities. The Chagrin River watershed, located to the east of the city of Cleveland, provides one such example of extensive local planning for ecological and recreational use in a high population density area. Acquisition of these lands and others like them, as

described in this Plan, will assist the State of Ohio in pursuing the goals of the Program, the goals of the Ohio Coastal Management Program, and supplement a number of other planning efforts both public and private.

C. Project Areas

For the purposes of the Program, "Project Areas" are defined as "discrete areas to be identified within Ohio's CELCP Plan that describe the state's priority areas for conservation based on national and state criteria, representing their values to be protected through the Program and areas threatened by conversion."

Table 1 lists the discrete Project Areas for Ohio, within the previously described geographical extent of the coastal area. Definitions for each Project Area listed in the table follow. The next section, II. D., lists and describes supporting plans incorporated by reference into the Ohio CELCP Plan that include additional details about lands within the Project Areas for which prior acquisition planning efforts have occurred.

Table 1. Geographic Locations of Ohio's CELCP Plan Project Areas
Lands within the designated Coastal Management Area, including:
Lake Erie Islands
Coastal marshes/wetlands (lake level influenced)
Properties fronting on bays, embayments, and estuaries
Shoreline properties (other than on bays, embayments, or estuaries)
Lake-influenced transitional shoreline habitat (upland and/or dry in low lake level conditions, inundated in high water)
Selected lands in the Lake Erie Watershed (outside of the Coastal Management Area)
Lands Associated with Inland Waters and Lake Erie Tributary Watersheds
Wetlands: marsh, swamp forest, bog, fen, wet meadow
Floodplains
Riparian corridors, including Scenic River Riparian Corridors
Lands in the watersheds of small (<60 mi^2) Lake Erie tributaries
Lands with Significant Biological Attributes
Properties that serve as migratory bird flyway habitats (including upland forests and vegetated corridors)
Properties containing rare habitats (e.g. alvars, prairies) and/or rare species (e.g. state and/or federally listed animal and plant species)
Lands with Significant Cultural Attributes
Areas that protect aesthetic values (e.g. views to or from protected lands, including views from Lake Erie)
Historical sites (listed on or suitable for listing on state and/or national registers) and/or archaeological sites
Unique Geographic/Geological Features (e.g. ancient lake shore ridges, other glacial features, karst areas, caves)
Properties Associated with Existing Protected Lands

Designated Coastal Management Area. Ohio's Coastal Management Area (see Figure 1) is discussed in detail and formally designated in the Ohio Coastal Management Program document[1]. This area has the highest degree of connection to the coast and includes islands, remaining extant coastal wetlands, and shoreline properties and habitats. The exclusively coastal lands with the highest ecological value are the lands which are the primary focus of the Program. Therefore, these lands have the highest state priority for protection since they are the most likely to be competitive for federal funding.

Selected Lands in the Lake Erie Watershed. Ohio's Coastal Management Area does not include all areas that have significant ecological, functional, or cultural resources beneficial to Lake Erie's coast. While some of these lands have been mapped by various agencies, sufficient data are not available at this time such that the state can confidently provide a comprehensive map of Project Areas based on these types for the purposes of the Program. Therefore, the following descriptions are provided as a guide to determine whether a property containing these features could be considered a project area for the purposes of Ohio's CELCP Plan. A property under consideration may have multiple types within its boundaries. Properties with a diversity and/or high quality of these types, particularly if they are also associated with plans as discussed in section II. D. will be more competitive for selection at the state level and for funding at the federal level.

Wetlands. This category includes marshes (other than coastal marshes), swamp forests, bogs, fens, and wet meadows. During the initial public input phase of the CELCP Plan development, wetlands consistently rated among the highest priorities for protection among participating stakeholders. Even when not hydrologically connected to Lake Erie, these lands have high potential for biological diversity and provide important supplementary habitat for animals (particularly migrating birds) that also use the coastal area. Therefore, these lands have a high state priority for protection, particularly if exclusively coastal lands are not available. Ohio Wetland Inventory[2] or National Wetland Inventory[3] data may be used to determine the location of coastal marshes and wetlands. Due to the limitations of these existing data, professional wetlands delineations in lands outside of these mapped data will also be considered as project areas.

Floodplains. The 100-year floodplain (as delineated on Federal Emergency Management Agency maps) is important in determining flood prone areas for various regulatory and insurance purposes, and is therefore included in the project area for the Program.

Riparian Corridors. Riparian corridors are lands adjacent to water bodies that remain in a natural vegetated state, providing habitat and cover that facilitates wildlife movement and the maintenance of viable wildlife populations. While land cover data based on remote sensing can detect perennial or woody vegetation along water bodies, it is often difficult to determine whether it is of an appropriate type or quality to serve as a water quality

[1] Available online at http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/coastal/about/default/tabid/9373/Default.aspx.
[2] Ohio Wetland Inventory data are available online at http://www.ohiodnr.com/coastal/ims/default.asp.
[3] National Wetland Inventory data for Ohio are available from USFWS (see http://www.fws.gov/nwi/ for details). Most of the Ohio maps are available only as hard copy drawn onto USGS quadrangles at this time.

buffer or habitat in the riparian corridor. For the purposes of determining which of these lands are suitable for project areas, land cover maps should be used as a starting point and be supplemented with field data that describes the ecological, recreational, or conservation value of the particular location. This category includes Ohio's Scenic River riparian corridors as follows.

Scenic River Riparian Corridors. Ohio pioneered the river preservation movement in 1968 with the passage of the nation's first scenic rivers act. This legislation created a state program to protect Ohio's remaining high quality streams for future generations. The riparian corridors associated with the scenic rivers are dynamic, linear natural systems a few hundred feet wide and many miles long. The interface of terrestrial (land) and aquatic (water) ecosystems produces an abundance of diverse plant and animal communities. In Ohio, scenic rivers contribute to the quality of Lake Erie's coastal and estuarine areas by providing water quality buffers, fish spawning areas, and wildlife habitat corridors that extend inland from the coast.

The State of Ohio has 11 river systems included as components of the State Scenic Rivers Program totaling 20 individual stream segments. Five of these river systems occur within the Lake Erie watershed. River valleys on either side of the river reaches so designated are included as part of the Ohio CELCP Project Areas, provided that these valley lands otherwise meet the goals of the Program. The river valley is defined as the area of direct drainage to the designated river reach, not including tributary drainage.

> Sandusky State Scenic River. Designated reach: Harrison Smith Park in Upper Sandusky to Roger Young Memorial Park in Fremont (~65 miles). Flowing through some of the richest farm land in the midwest, the Sandusky Scenic River has many exposed dolomite and limestone outcroppings which add to its scenic qualities. The southern two-thirds is relatively flat, characterized by broken ridges ranging from 10 to 50 feet in height, representative of end moraines deposited by the glaciers. The northern one-third is flat to gently rolling and characterized by shorelines from ancient lakes formed as the glaciers receded. The Sandusky is the only stream in the state which is home to all six species of redhorse suckers including the state endangered river redhorse.
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> Grand State Wild and Scenic River. Designated sections include: from Harpersfield covered bridge downstream to the Norfolk and Western Railroad trestle south of Painesville (wild, 23 miles) and from the U.S. 322 bridge in Ashtabula County downstream to Harpersfield covered bridge (scenic, 33 miles). The Grand Wild and Scenic River represents one of the finest examples of a natural stream to be found anywhere in Ohio. The upper portion of the Grand River in Ashtabula County is designated scenic. The river is bordered in many areas by extensive swamp forests of elm, ash, maple, pine, pin oak and swamp white oak. The slow flow of this section of the river and the adjoining wetlands provide excellent habitat for a number of wildlife species, especially river otters. The lower section of the Grand River in Lake County is designated wild. Here, the river is characterized by steeply-incised valley walls of Chagrin Shale. A view

of the river in this area is truly spectacular especially following spring and summer showers when waterfalls cascade over the steep shale bluffs.

Upper Cuyahoga State Scenic River. Designated reach: beginning at the Troy-Burton township line in Geauga County and continuing downstream to SR 14 in Portage County (25 miles). The topography of the Upper Cuyahoga watershed was shaped by the Illinoisan and Wisconsinan glaciers. Above Hiram Rapids, the topography is relatively flat, low and swampy. This extensive wetland provides excellent wildlife habitat and an abundant variety of wildflowers and plants. Willow, sycamore, elm, and button bush dominate the shoreline and flood plain. Below Hiram Rapids, the topography along the stream is somewhat hilly to steep in sections. The hillsides are dominated by beech-maple forests which include a variety of ash, oak and hickory.

Maumee State Scenic River. Designated reaches: the scenic section of the Maumee River originates at the Ohio-Indiana state line and extends to the U.S. 24 bridge, west of Defiance; the recreational section extends from the U.S. 24 bridge west of Defiance to the US 20/ S.R. 25 bridge at Perrysburg and Maumee (~96 miles). The scenic section is characterized by a broad meandering floodplain. Valley walls rise sharply in comparison to the surrounding terrain. The river banks support a healthy, forested corridor. In the recreational section the river greatly changes in character. Its floodplain widens and its channel doubles in size; the topographic relief is much less pronounced; and forest cover becomes sparse. The historic and cultural heritage of this section is of major state and national significance. For example, the river valley was the location of numerous battles of the French and Indian War and the War of 1812.

Chagrin State Scenic River. Designated reaches: the Woodiebrook Road bridge downstream to the confluence with the Aurora Branch of the Chagrin River in Bentleyville, the Aurora Branch from S.R. 82 downstream to its confluence with the main stem of the Chagrin, the main stem from its confluence with the Aurora Branch downstream to US Rt. 6, and the East Branch from Heath Road Bridge downstream to its confluence with the main stem (~71 miles). The Chagrin River is located in northeastern Ohio. It is the only scenic river where the majority of its length is located within corporation limits (the Cleveland metropolitan area). The river valley offers a diversity of terrestrial and aquatic plant communities and wildlife. Recent surveys of aquatic and breeding birds have found more than 49 species of fish and 90 bird species living in the Chagrin River watershed.

Conneaut Creek State Wild and Scenic River. Designated reaches: the Wild designation (16.4 river miles) runs from the Ohio-PA line downstream to the Creek Road bridge crossing. The Scenic designation (5.3 river miles) runs from the Creek Road bridge to the Penn Central Railroad bridge crossing. The Conneaut Creek corridor possess outstanding water quality, diverse habitats and intact riparian wooded corridors with minimal evidence of human impacts. It is one of the finest remaining examples of a natural stream in Ohio. The Conneaut

Creek watershed is home to rare hemlock-hardwood forest and hemlock-hardwood swamp communities. Conneaut Creek supports exceptional wildlife populations including 78 fish species, 32 species of amphibians and reptiles and more than 30 state-listed plants.

Small Lake Erie Tributaries. The last type in this category consists of small (watershed area within 14-digit HUC of <60 mi^2) tributaries to Lake Erie. These watersheds are in close proximity to the lake (generally entirely within 10 miles), and the streams are strongly lake level influenced since their flow volume is relatively low. These streams can serve an important ecological function as spawning and refuge areas for lake fish. Both of the two largest remaining naturally functioning estuary systems in Ohio are in this category (Old Woman Creek and Arcola Creek). Because the land areas in these watersheds are relatively small, development of these lands can have large effects on the in-stream conditions. Lands within these watersheds are therefore suitable for project areas provided that the properties otherwise meet the goals of the Program.

Rare Habitats and Species. Rare habitats of these dry upland areas in Ohio may include, but are not limited to, alvars, prairies, and oak savanna sand barrens. Alvar habitats occur on rocky outcrops such as those found on some of the Lake Erie Islands. Prairie communities are typified by tallgrass species with deep roots and other fire-adapted perennial herbaceous vegetation. Prairie remnants occur more commonly in the Midwestern plains states, but their occurrence in Ohio is rare due to wetter conditions that favor the growth of forests and also due to the preferential use of former prairie lands for farming and development. Oak savanna sand barrens consist of plants adapted to the extremely sandy soils, such as black oak (*Quercus velutina*), sand cherry (*Prunus pumila*) and wild lupine (*Lupinus perennis*). An example of this type is the Oak Openings, a globally rare ecosystem in the lower Maumee River watershed. Because these habitats are rare, they are not usually distinguished via remote sensing data at the state scale. However, field data may be used to indicate whether a property contains biological communities consistent with one or more of these rare upland habitats.

For the purposes of Ohio's CELCP Plan, rare species are defined as species listed on the federal and/or state endangered and threatened species list[4]. To assist in protection efforts, data on the distribution of these species are not generally available. However, field data for a property may be used to indicate the presence of a listed species.

Migratory Bird Habitat. This includes upland travel corridors that consist of perennial woody and/or herbaceous vegetation that provide food and cover during the migration of birds (and potentially other wildlife) over a distance. It may also include blocks of forested nesting habitats. Land use/land cover data that indicate perennial vegetation such as grasses and trees can be used to determine areas with these cover types. While the remotely sensed data occasionally indicate general vegetation type (e.g. deciduous vs. evergreen), the overall habitat quality of a corridor/forested upland property should be verified with field data. For example, such data may include evidence of use by migratory

[4] Available online at http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/wildlife/Resources/mgtplans/endangered.htm.

birds, size and age of trees, canopy cover, and species composition of the forest and/or herbaceous cover.

Aesthetic Values. Most locations with aesthetic value on Lake Erie's coast occur within the Coastal Management Area, but some do not. In particular, bluff areas of various heights occur with increasing frequency as one travels eastward across Ohio's Lake Erie shore, providing increased potential for scenic views in Cuyahoga, Lake, and Ashtabula Counties. This could result in scenic views to or from Lake Erie on lands that are outside of the Coastal Management Area which is quite narrow in these counties, at least partly due to this topography. Broader scale viewsheds can be mapped using elevation models to determine how topography allows or limits the view. This mapping is performed as an analysis using a specific view, and therefore would be difficult to generate on a regional scale. However, once a property is identified, its scenic and viewshed characteristics can be determined.

Historical Sites. Historical sites are defined as places listed on or suitable for listing on the Ohio Historic Inventory, Ohio Heritage Area, Ohio Historic Landscape Survey, and/or the National Register of Historic Places[5]. Also included in this category are archaeological sites, particularly sites of pre-settlement native populations, which are frequently located near natural resource areas in Ohio's coastal areas. Not all of the areas with significant historical value are listed or mapped, but supporting documentation and/or photographs may be used to describe the historical value of a property.

Geological Features. In Ohio, these may include, but are not limited to, ancient lake shore ridges, other glacial features, karst areas, and caves. An example of a significant unique glacial feature in Ohio's coastal area suitable for inclusion as a project area would be glacial grooves similar to the ones found on the Lake Erie Islands. Other geological features, including karst (areas with fractured limestone bedrock) and glacial features are mapped in the Ohio Coastal Atlas[6] from ODNR – Division of Geological Survey data sources.

Properties Associated with Existing Protected Lands. One priority of Ohio's CELCP Plan is to facilitate the ongoing efforts to protect ecologically significant areas in proximity to existing protected properties[7], which would create larger contiguous areas of coastal habitat and/or public access points. Some of these lands occur in the Coastal Management Area, however, many occur within the Lake Erie Watershed outside of the Coastal Management Area. These existing protected lands have previously been identified for conservation efforts based on their unique habitats, cultural value (e.g. historic sites), location with regard to threat of conversion, and potential for recreational use and public

[5] The National Register for Ohio is available online via http://ohsweb.ohiohistory.org/ohpo/nr/index.aspx; for information about the Ohio Historic Inventory, contact the Ohio Historical Society (see http://www.ohiohistory.org/resource/histpres/people/staff/contactus.html).
[6] Available on the web at http://www.ohiodnr.com/coastal/pdf/coastalatlas/3geologyweb.pdf.
[7] ODNR maintains two GIS-based listings of protected lands, one of ODNR-owned properties and one of properties under other public or private ownership, that includes lands protected primarily for their ecological or cultural significance. See Chapter 4. Land Cover and Protected Lands, in: the Ohio Coastal Atlas online at http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/coastal/gis/default/tabid/9351/Default.aspx.

access. Some of these existing protected lands have management plans that include land acquisition priorities, and some do not. Remaining unprotected properties directly adjacent to, having hydrological, upland, or riparian corridor connections with, or otherwise identified in a management plan as having significance for the existing protected land, are considered to be included within the Ohio CELCP Project Areas, provided that these properties otherwise meet the goals of the Program.

D. Existing Plans Incorporated into Ohio's CELCP Plan

Prior to the development of the CELCP Plan, Ohio did not have a written land conservation plan that specifically included all potential coastal and estuarine resources. However, a number of useful planning efforts have been conducted at statewide, watershed, or intra-state regional scales that have identified priority areas for acquisition either for geographic areas within the state, or for specific types of lands across the state including the coastal area. These efforts do not provide comprehensive coverage of the Lake Erie watershed, but do provide supporting documentation for some of the lands identified as Project Areas in section II. C. above. As such, the plans listed in Table 3 are incorporated by reference into Ohio's CELCP Plan.

A number of other land conservation plans exist at local scales within the Lake Erie watershed. For example, Cuyahoga County has developed a Cuyahoga County Greenspace Plan that includes mapping of existing and potential trail networks, parks, and protected natural areas. The information in such plans may be valuable in determining the location and evaluation of suitable projects that may overlap with areas identified as Project Areas under the Ohio CELCP Plan. Although these local scale plans have not been included in Ohio's CELCP Plan, use of these local plans as supporting documentation for potential projects is encouraged as part of the state project selection and evaluation process.

Table 3. Existing plans with lands included in Ohio's CELCP Plan Project Areas
Old Woman Creek NERR/NOAA and State Nature Preserve Management Plan for 2000-2005 (and update for 2006-2010)
Ohio Wetland Restoration and Mitigation Strategy Blueprint (1999)
State Endorsed Watershed Action Plans
ODNR – Division of Wildlife Wetland Habitat Tactical Plan and Wetland Focus Area Plans (Lake Erie Marshes and Grand River Lowlands)
Mentor Marsh Special Area Management Plan (2004)
Balanced Growth Initiative Plans
Remedial Action Plans
Conservation Blueprint for the Great Lakes

Old Woman Creek NERR/NOAA and State Nature Preserve Management Plan for 2000-2005 (and update for 2006-2010). One of the priorities of the Ohio CELCP Plan is to augment the land conservation efforts described in the ODNR – Division of Wildlife/Old

Woman Creek National Estuarine Research Reserve Management Plan (this plan is currently being updated for 2006-2010). The Old Woman Creek estuary is an example of a lake-influenced coastal marsh, one of the types of lands or habitat with the highest priority for protection in Ohio. This management plan specifies core and buffer areas within the NERR boundaries as well as habitat within the Old Woman Creek watershed that is critical to water quality protection of the stream, estuary, and near shore Lake Erie, and includes specific acquisition priorities for the Reserve. Part of the Reserve and a large area of the watershed are located outside of Ohio's Coastal Management Area. The Old Woman Creek watershed is shown in Appendix A, Figure 2.

Ohio Wetland Restoration and Mitigation Strategy Blueprint (1999). This project resulted in a plan which identified priority areas throughout Ohio, including the Lake Erie area, for the development of wetland mitigation and restoration projects and identified high quality wetland areas statewide. Although mitigation projects are not eligible for CELCP funds, existing high quality wetlands or restoration areas not already in public ownership would be suitable project areas as described in section II.C.2. This was a joint venture between the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, and was funded by the USEPA. See the Blueprint for specific locations[8].

State Endorsed Watershed Action Plans. Watershed Action Plans in Ohio focus on water quality issues within local watersheds. These plans are developed by local watershed planning groups, and upon completion, the plan is endorsed in writing by the chiefs of the Ohio EPA Division of Surface Water and the ODNR Division of Soil & Water. A state-endorsed watershed action plan is one that meets all criteria of Ohio's 1997 Guide to Developing Local Watershed Action Plans in Ohio (including the Appendix 8 Update, 2002) and the most recent U.S. EPA Section 319 Planning Guidance. A component of these plans is a strategy for improving water quality in the watershed, and part of that strategy may include recommending lands for acquisition. Typically these lands have buffer or riparian corridor functions that serve to filter runoff or maintain habitat quality in the stream corridors. Because maintenance and improvement of water quality in the coastal area was identified as a conservation need, and because the development of these plans is rigorous and subject to state review and endorsement, lands recommended for acquisition under these plans are appropriate to include as Project Areas under Ohio's CELCP Plan. Watersheds covered by Watershed Action Plans in various stages of development are shown in Appendix A, Figure 2.

ODNR – Division of Wildlife Wetland Habitat Tactical Plan and Wetland Focus Area Plans. ODNR's Division of Wildlife has developed a Wetlands Habitat Tactical Plan with the goal of increasing the total wetland acreage in the state of Ohio. To support this initiative, Focus Area Plans have been developed that in part, identify priorities for acquisition of exceptional existing wetlands. Two of these Focus Areas are within the Lake Erie watershed: the Lake Erie Marshes Focus Area Plan and the Grand River Lowlands Focus Area Plan. The Lake Erie Marshes Focus Area consists of the remaining

[8] Available online at http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/Home/wetlands_main/wetlands/strategy/tabid/5635/Default.aspx.

(primarily coastal) wetlands from within the Great Black Swamp that formerly extended to the southwest from Sandusky, Ohio to the state line and as far north as Detroit, Michigan. The Grand River Lowlands Focus Area is a riparian forested wetland complex along the bottomlands of the Grand River on the east side of the state of Ohio in Ashtabula and Trumbull Counties. These two Focus Areas are shown in Appendix A, Figure 2.

Mentor Marsh Special Area Management Plan. A Special Area Management Plan is a comprehensive plan providing for natural resource protection and reasonable coastal-dependent economic growth. Such plans contain detailed comprehensive statements of policies, standards and criteria to guide public and private uses of lands and waters as well as outlines of mechanisms for timely implementation in specific geographic areas within the coastal zone (Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, 15 USCA § 1453(17)). The Mentor Marsh SAMP promotes wise management and usage of land and waters that have direct and significant impacts on the Mentor Marsh and Lake Erie coastal areas. The Mentor Marsh SAMP is shown in Appendix A, Figure 2.

Balanced Growth Initiative. In 2000, the Ohio Lake Erie Commission (comprised of the Directors of the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency and the Ohio Departments of Development, Natural Resources, Health, Transportation, and Agriculture) released its Lake Erie Protection and Restoration Plan, which provides a comprehensive set of recommendations for the State of Ohio and its partners to improve the quality of Lake Erie. One of the report's primary recommendations called for the formation of a Balanced Growth Blue Ribbon Task Force. This Task Force set up the basic structure of the Balanced Growth Initiative, which provided a framework for the establishment of local Watershed Planning Partnerships comprised of local governments, planning agencies, nonprofit organizations, and other parties. These Watershed Planning Partnerships would designate Priority Conservation Areas and Priority Development Areas within their jurisdictions.

Under the Balanced Growth Initiative, Priority Conservation Areas are locally-designated areas targeted for protection and restoration that would include important ecological, recreational, heritage, agricultural, and public access areas. Because the purpose of establishing these areas is consistent with the goals of the Program, areas designated as Priority Conservation Areas under the Balanced Growth Initiative (except for areas established solely to protect agricultural lands) are also included as Project Areas under Ohio's CELCP Plan. The three pilot areas that are currently in this planning process are the Chagrin River watershed, Rocky River watershed, and Swan Creek watershed (a subwatershed of the Maumee River watershed). These watersheds are shown in Appendix A, Figure 2.

Remedial Action Plans. Ohio has four Areas of Concern identified by the International Joint Commission: Ashtabula River, Cuyahoga River, Black River, and Maumee River. Each of these AOCs has an associated Remedial Action Plan that addresses goals and action items for recovery of the AOC. Although the Remedial Action Plans focus on contaminated sediment remediation at the mouths of the rivers, the plans also address

general watershed restoration goals for upstream areas in each of these watersheds. Specific areas identified in the Remedial Action Plans and associated documents as acquisition priorities are included in Ohio's CELCP Plan Project Areas, provided that conditions on these lands are consistent with the provisions of the NOAA CELC Program Final Guidelines.

Conservation Blueprint for the Great Lakes. The Nature Conservancy, a national and international non-governmental organization that protects ecologically valuable lands, underwent "Ecoregional Planning" to develop "portfolio" and "priority" sites within Ohio's portion of the Great Lakes Ecoregion (see Appendix A, Figure 3). These sites include a variety of wetlands as well as upland types of lands or habitats described in section II.C.2, such as forests and prairies. This Ecoregional Planning involved extensive stakeholder meetings, data collection, and ground truthing. Most of the participants were federal, state, and local agency personnel, university faculty, organizational experts, and knowledgeable area residents. The "portfolio" and "priority" sites identified in this plan for Ohio's coastal area overlap to a large degree with areas identified in other plans, but are also specifically included as Project Areas in Ohio's CELCP Plan to underscore the national and international significance of these areas in Ohio.

E. Management Effectiveness

In addition to the program goals of protecting lands of conservation, recreation, ecological, historic, and aesthetic value, the national criteria listed in the NOAA CELC Program Final Guidelines explicitly include management effectiveness as an important factor in determining lands most suitable for protection. The national criteria give priority to "lands which can be effectively managed and protected and that have significant ecological value; directly advance the goals, objectives, or implementation of the state's coastal management plan or program, NERR management plans approved under the CZMA, national objectives of the CZMA, or a regional or state watershed protection plan involving coastal states with approved coastal management plans; and is consistent with the state's approved coastal management program."

Although it is not a requirement for a Project Area in the State of Ohio to be covered under a land conservation or management plan developed by a public agency, private owner, or private land conservancy in order to be considered for funding, proposed projects that fit within such a land conservation plan, strategy, or initiative will be preferred. Identification of dedicated funding and staff, and the existence of a management plan or strategy for the project developed by, or in conjunction with, the public entity that will hold title under the Program, will help ensure that the long-term stewardship of the proposed project will be consistent with the Program guidelines.

III. State Process for Implementing the CELCP

A. Identification of State Lead Agency

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Office of Coastal Management (ODNR – OCM) has been designated as the lead agency responsible for implementing the Ohio CELCP Plan. This agency is responsible for implementing the Ohio Coastal Management Program, approved pursuant to the federal Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) of 1972, as amended.

B. Agencies Eligible to Hold Title to Property

NOAA may make financial assistance awards to designated recipients in eligible coastal states. In Ohio, this consists of the ODNR – OCM, as the designated CELCP lead agency. The designated recipient may in turn allocate grants or make sub-awards to other state agencies, local governments as defined at 15 CFR 24.3, or entities eligible for assistance under section 306A(e) of the CZMA (16 USCA § 1455a(e)) to carry out approved projects.

Local governments are defined by 15 CFR 24.3 as a county, municipality, city, town, township, local public authority (including any public and Indian housing agency under the U.S. Housing Act of 1937), school district, special district, intrastate district, council of governments (whether or not incorporated as a nonprofit corporation under State law), any other regional or interstate government entity, or any agency or instrumentality of a local government.

Section 306A (e) of the CZMA (16 USCA § 1455a(e)) includes area-wide agencies designated under section 204 of the Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act of 1966 (42 USCA § 3334), regional agencies, or interstate agencies.

Examples of specific agencies in Ohio eligible to hold title to property acquired through the Program under the NOAA guidelines include (but are not limited to):

- Ohio Department of Natural Resources and other state agencies with authority to own and manage land for conservation purposes
- Local Governments (as described above)
- State Colleges and Universities
- Park Districts (ORC Chapter 1545 and ORC Chapter 511)
- Regional Councils of Park Districts
- Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (TMACOG)
- Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA)

C. State Nomination Process

The Ohio CELCP Plan includes the following elements of a project nomination and selection process:

Solicitation of Projects. Upon notification from NOAA of the availability of CELCP funding to implement this Program in any given year, Ohio's lead agency (ODNR – OCM) will notify and solicit project applications from qualified entities. Projects within the specific Project Areas designated in Section II will be given priority for Program funding.

Eligible applicants should submit proposals to Ohio's lead agency (ODNR – OCM). As specified in the NOAA CELC Program Final Guidelines, projects including several separate and distinct phases may be submitted in phases, but any succeeding phases must compete against other proposals in the year submitted.

State Review and Prioritization.

1. Proposal acceptance - Completed applications will undergo initial review by ODNR – OCM staff to determine whether a proposal is complete and eligible under the criteria identified in Section II of the CELC Program Final Guidelines. If the application is incomplete, ODNR – OCM may provide an opportunity for applicants to submit any information that is missing.

2. Proposal review and ranking - Proposals accepted for consideration will be reviewed by a committee designated by ODNR – OCM. The committee shall be drawn from a pool of potential reviewers and consist of five members as follows:

- One representative from ODNR – OCM
- One other representative from ODNR
- Three representatives from organizations other than ODNR (see below)

The three other members of the review committee shall be appointed from among the following categories or organizations, units of government, or agencies.

1. A county, municipal corporation, township, conservancy district, regional or joint district or unit of local government, or regional or joint political subdivision that is located within the Lake Erie watershed;

2. A conservation organization, an environmental advocacy organization, an organization with a primary interest in watershed protection and restoration, or the United States natural resources conservation service;

3. A city park system or metropolitan park system or a board of park commissioners from a county that is located within the Lake Erie watershed, a statewide parks and recreation organization, or the United States national park service.

For the ranking process, the committee will utilize a detailed scoring system for ranking proposals. This system will include specific, weighted criteria to be considered during the proposal review. These criteria will be based in part on Ohio's conservation needs as described in Section II-B, as well as the national criteria listed in the NOAA CELC Program Final Guidelines. The state criteria will include the following components:

- Will the project protect ecological, recreational, aesthetic, and/or historic values consistent with those outlined in the national criteria and in Ohio's CELCP Plan? What is the coastal significance of the project? Is the project area in imminent threat of being converted from its current natural condition or recreational use?
- What is the overall management effectiveness of the project? Does the project fit within an existing conservation framework? Is there a dedicated source of funding and staff? Is the project area covered under an existing management plan that is consistent with the NOAA CELC Program Final Guidelines?
- Given a project that achieves Program goals and has suitable management effectiveness, to what extent does the project contribute to the coastal and state economy, and quality of life?

Ohio's specific state criteria for evaluating and selecting projects for submittal to the federal funding selection process will be published separately from the CELCP Plan.

Once the top three projects are selected and ranked in order of state priority by the committee, the selections are reviewed for approval by the Chief of ODNR – OCM. On approval, the application is then submitted to NOAA at the federal level for the three selected projects for the coming federal fiscal year budget cycle.

IV. Coordination and Public Involvement

In the early stages of formulating this CELCP Plan, the state's lead agency (ODNR – OCM) developed a project charter outlining the agency's strategy for developing Ohio's CELCP Plan. This charter included several components for incorporating input from other interested ODNR divisions, as well as interagency and public involvement at both the initial and draft plan stages. The charter included a plan for interagency coordination and stakeholder input as part of the development of the CELCP Plan. A Program web page was developed on the ODNR – OCM website to assist in providing information to interested stakeholders and members of the public (http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/coastal/regs/celcp.htm).

A. Interagency Coordination

1. ODNR Interdivisional Coordination

Each Division of ODNR with an interest in the plan development process identified a representative to participate in the initial planning process. The groups represented included:

- Office of Coastal Management
- Division of Natural Areas and Preserves
- Division of Forestry
- Division of Wildlife
- Division of Wildlife/staff from Old Woman Creek NERR
- Division of Water
- Division of Parks and Recreation
- Division of Geological Survey
- Division of Soil & Water Conservation
- Legislative Liaison

A meeting of ODNR participating agency representatives was held in September 2004. The project charter and process outline for developing Ohio's CELCP Plan was discussed. An initial discussion about priority land conservation needs in the Ohio Lake Erie watershed was conducted, and ways to provide guidance for the nomination and selection process were also considered. Initial ideas about land conservation needs were used as a starting point for discussions held in later stakeholder/public meetings (discussed in next section). A number of members of this group, including representatives from the Divisions of Soil & Water Conservation, Wildlife, Geological Survey, and Forestry, and staff from Wildlife/Old Woman Creek NERR, attended at least one of the stakeholder meetings.

A second meeting of this group of ODNR representatives occurred on September 8, 2005 to review the draft plan prior to its release to NOAA and the public for initial review. Comments that were received at this meeting or in writing were reviewed and incorporated into the draft document.

2. Multi-state Coordination

Ohio has initiated preliminary discussions with Pennsylvania and Michigan, our two coastal border states, regarding the possibility of multi-state coordination of CELCP projects. Pennsylvania's coastal border lands with Ohio are already in public ownership, so it tentatively appears that opportunities for joint projects will be limited. The border between Michigan and Ohio straddles remnant areas of the Great Black Swamp, a formerly very large wetland complex that still serves as a significant wildlife habitat and migratory bird corridor. This area may provide project possibilities beneficial to both Ohio and Michigan. ODNR – OCM intends to continue to explore opportunities for joint projects with both of our coastal border states in the future.

B. Public Involvement

In July, 2005, a series of four stakeholder/public meetings were conducted at various locations across the Lake Erie Watershed (see Table 4). These meetings were held to inform the stakeholders and the public about the CELCP, explain the proposed CELCP Plan process and outline, and obtain public input prior to the initial draft of the CELCP Plan for Ohio. Meeting agendas and presentations were essentially the same at all four meetings. Known stakeholders such as local government officials and non-governmental organizations were contacted by mail and invited to attend a meeting of their choice. This mailing included a fact sheet about the Program. A press release was also issued on June 30, 2005 to inform other stakeholders and members of the general public of the dates and locations of the meetings, along with Program information.

Table 4: Dates and Locations of Stakeholder/Public Meetings.

Date	***Location***
Tuesday, July 12, 2005	Wood County Extension in Bowling Green
Thursday, July 14, 2005	Lorain County Visitors Bureau in Amherst
Thursday, July 21, 2005	Mentor Beach Park Pavilion in Mentor
Tuesday, July 26, 2005	Ottawa County Court House in Port Clinton

A diverse group of organizations and interested persons attended the stakeholder/public meetings, including representatives from state and federal agencies, elected officials, counties, regional planning agencies, local governments, non-governmental organizations, and interested private citizens (Table 5).

Table 5: List of organizations or persons represented at July, 2005 CELCP Plan stakeholder/public meetings.	
ODNR – Office of Coastal Management	TMACOG
ODNR – Forestry	City of Avon Lake
ODNR – Geological Survey	Bay Township (Ottawa County)
ODNR – Division of Soil and Water Cons.	City of Conneaut
ODNR – Wildlife	City of Eastlake
ODNR – Wildlife/Old Woman Creek NERR	Village of Fairport Harbor
Ohio EPA	Huron Township (Erie County)
Coastal Resources Advisory Committee	City of Lakewood
The Ohio State University / Sea Grant	City of Lorain
State House Representative Robert Latta	City of Mentor
Office of Senator George V. Voinovich	North Perry Village
Office of Congressman Dennis Kucinich	City of Port Clinton
USDA – Farm Services Agency	Village of Put-in-Bay
US Fish & Wildlife Service	City of Vermilion
Ashtabula County – Planning Commission	Audubon Ohio
Erie County	Black Swamp Conservancy – Lake Erie Islands Chapter
Lorain County – Community Development	Buckeye Trail Association
Lake County – Stormwater Management Dept.	Chagrin River Land Conservancy
Ottawa County Commissioners	Firelands Land Conservancy
Ottawa County – Regional Planning	Grand River Partners, Inc.
Cuyahoga County – Soil & Water Cons. Dist.	Kelleys Island Audubon Club
Erie County Soil & Water Cons. Dist.	Mentor Marsh Board
Lake County – Soil & Water Cons. Dist.	The Nature Conservancy
Ottawa/Sandusky Soil & Water Cons. Dist.	Ohio Lakefront Group
Cleveland Metroparks	Portage River Basin Committee
Lake Metroparks	Sandusky River Watershed Coalition
Private Citizens	The Trust for Public Land

The draft of Ohio's CELCP Plan was released on November 1, 2005, with a formal public comment period scheduled for November 1, 2005 – December 16, 2005. Additional stakeholder/public meetings were held on November 15 and 18, 2005 to provide opportunities for interested parties to comment on the draft Ohio CELCP Plan. The November 15, 2005 meeting was held at the Ottawa County Visitor's Bureau in Port Clinton, and the November 18, 2005 meeting was held at the Cleveland Metroparks CanalWay Center in Cuyahoga Heights. In addition to the meetings, written comments were also accepted during the formal public comment period. Organizations or persons who provided written comments or attended the public meetings are listed in Table 6.

Table 6: List of organizations or persons providing comments on draft plan and/or represented at November, 2005 CELCP Plan stakeholder/public meetings.	
ODNR – Office of Coastal Management	City of Mentor
ODNR – Wildlife	City of Port Clinton
ODNR – Wildlife/Old Woman Creek NERR	Cairo Sportsman's Club
Cuyahoga County – Soil & Water Cons. Dist.	Ohio Coastal Resource Management Project
Eastlake Port Authority	Friends of Arcola Creek, Inc.
Erie Metroparks	West Creek Preservation Committee
The Snyder Group	The Trust for Public Land
Fairport Marine Museum	The Nature Conservancy

V. Certification of Consistency and Plan Approval

The Ohio Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program Plan was prepared by the lead state agency, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Office of Coastal Management, which is responsible for administering the federal consistency provision of the Coastal Zone Management Act. The Office of Coastal Management has determined that Ohio's CELCP Plan is consistent with the enforceable policies of the Ohio Coastal Management Program.

The Ohio CELCP Plan is hereby approved by the ODNR Office of Coastal Management.

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John Watkins, Chief Date

VI. References/Literature Cited

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Appendix A: Figures 1-3