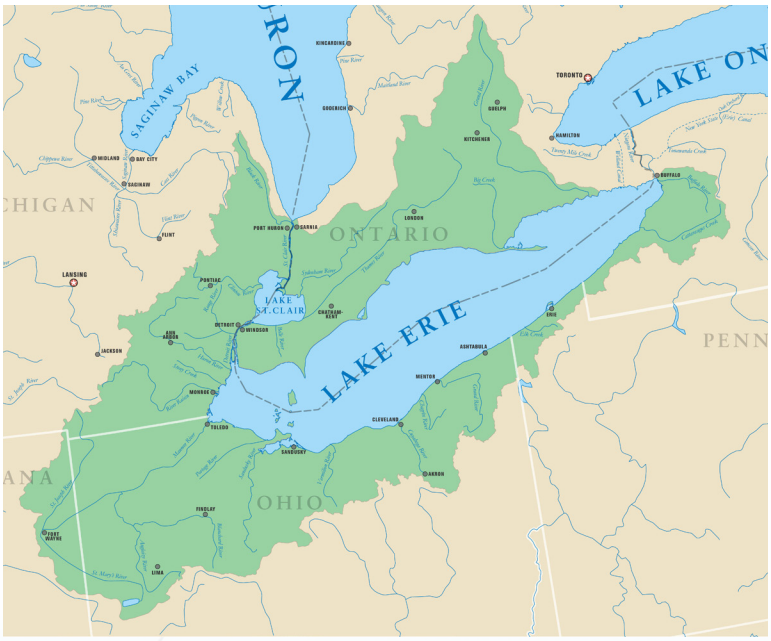
Great Lakes Coastal Wetland Framework : Lake Erie Pilot Project

Protecting, enhancing, and restoring coastal wetlands for fish, wildlife, and people now and in the future.

Critical Conservation: Great Lakes coastal wetlands are critically important habitats with ecological, economic, and cultural significance. Due to extensive loss and degradation of coastal wetland habitat throughout the Great Lakes, there is considerable interest and investment from both the U.S. and Canada to restore, enhance, and protect coastal wetlands in the Great Lakes.

Purpose: The Great Lakes Coastal Wetland Framework (Framework) aims to guide and accelerate coastal wetland conservation actions through a binational lake-wide systems approach that builds upon established plans, research, and partnerships. The Framework is championed by the Great Lakes Coastal Assembly, a binational, voluntary partnership that identified Lake Erie and the Lake Huron-Erie Corridor as the pilot geography.

Efforts to benchmark coastal wetland extent and condition, set desired targets, and design a prioritization tool for Lake Erie will set a precedent for the Great Lakes basin. Representatives from 30+ U.S. and Canadian-based agencies, universities, and NGOs are currently working together to create a vision for the future of Great Lakes coastal wetlands. Their goal is to complete the Lake Erie Pilot Project by 2026.



The Lake Erie Pilot Project will demonstrate how to establish meaningful binational coastal wetland targets on a lake-wide scale.

Objectives:

1. **Gather Data.** Establish current extent and
1. Gather Data. Establish current extent and condition of Great Lakes coastal wetlands classified by type.

2. **Identify Desired Outcomes.** Determine desired extent and condition by setting targets for ecological and human well-being indicators relevant to coastal wetlands.

3. **Planning for the Future.** Identify where to focus coastal wetland conservation efforts to achieve healthy Great Lakes ecosystems and coastal communities.

Working Together to Achieve Healthy Coasts for All

Key partners with strong connections to Lake Erie are helping guide implementation of the Framework:

Canada Water Agency | Great Lakes Coastal Wetland Monitoring Program | Great Lakes Fishery Commission | Michigan Dept. of Environment Great Lakes, and Energy | National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration | Nature Conservancy of Canada | Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources | Old Woman Creek National Estuarine Research Reserve | Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry | Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks | Pennsylvania Dept. of Environmental Protection | The Nature Conservancy | U.S. Environmental Protection Agency | U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service | U.S. Geological Survey | Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources

Steering Team: The Steering Team includes representatives from U.S. and Canadian-based Great Lakes and partnerships with special interest in Lake Erie. They meet regularly to discuss how the three Coastal Wetland Objectives are being integrated, provide feedback on the Lake Erie Pilot approach, and to get updates from the project team on technical progress and engagement efforts.

Technical Team: The Technical Team is made up of subject matter experts. They convene as needed to make progress on the objectives.

Impacts:

- Move from current coastal wetland conditions to desired outcomes.
- Prioritize where to work and what actions to take in order to achieve goals that center ecological and human well-being needs.
- Cultivate a network of informed and aligned partners dedicated to the conservation of coastal wetlands.
- Inform implementation of the Framework in other Great Lakes by sharing data and lessons learned.

If you are actively working on Great Lakes coastal wetland conservation, we'd like to hear from you!

For more information, please contact:

Liz Berg, USFWS,
elizabeth_berg@fws.gov

Brandon Krumwiede, NOAA,
brandon.krumwiede@noaa.gov

Visit greatlakescoastalassembly.org to learn more.

Great Lakes RESTORATION