

Federal Co-leads:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Federal Partnership Description:

The Western Lake Erie Basin is one of ten newly selected locations for the nation's Urban Waters Federal Partnership. This partnership seeks to reconnect urban communities, particularly those that are overburdened or economically distressed, with their waterways by improving coordination among federal agencies and collaborating with community-led revitalization efforts to improve our Nation's water systems and promote their economic, environmental and social benefits. Federal partner agencies are working with stakeholders from the Western Lake Erie Basin Partnership and the Maumee River Area of Concern, interested municipalities, state agencies, and local non-governmental organizations.

Progress to Date:

Capitalizing on the existing conservation network and inviting new partners from other sectors, the Urban Waters Federal Partnership (UWFP) has held its first partnership meeting with a great turnout. The UWFP met on November 19th 2013 at the Maumee Branch Library and had over 50 participants in attendance. Many active local, state, and federal partners are already working in the basin within the existing WLEB Partnership, the Maumee River AOC, etc. and brought priorities as well as issues of concern to the table. Partners spent the morning sharing information about existing programs and identifying continued needs in the watershed.

Attendees included: City of Toledo Division of Environmental Services, Deputy Mayor of the City of Toledo, OSU Extension, Point Place Business Association, NOAA, Sandpiper Boat Line, Toledo Metroparks, Lucas County Commissioners staff, Tri-state Watershed Alliance, Allen County IN SWCD, Visions of Cullen Park, Save Maumee, Maumee AOC, Partners for Clean Streams, Ohio EPA, Ohio Lake Erie Commission, Lake Erie Waterkeeper, Lucas SWCD, USDA Farm Services, Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments, American Rivers, Toledo Design Center, Oak Openings Regional Conservancy, US Coast Guard, Hull & Associates, Mannik & Smith Group, Toledo Lucas County Sustainability Commission, and the Toledo Lucas County Planning Commission.

Topics covered included harmful algal blooms, climate impacts, water quality, land use impacts, open lake sediment dumping, recreational use of the lake, and education and outreach needs. Our next step is to reconvene to continue to look at the major issues in the urban watershed and to set priorities.

Timeline:

The Urban Waters next meeting date is **Thursday February 20th at 1PM** at the Sanger Branch Library 3030 Central Avenue, Toledo, Ohio. Our goal is to continue to gather our highest priorities and start selecting areas to begin work.

