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GOVERNOR • STATE OF OHIO

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**OHIO, MICHIGAN AND ONTARIO PARTNER
TO STRENGTHEN LAKE ERIE WATER QUALITY**

COLUMBUS – Building upon historic changes undertaken earlier this year to improve Lake Erie water quality, Ohio has reached an agreement with Michigan and the Canadian province of Ontario to achieve a 40 percent reduction in the amount of phosphorus entering Lake Erie’s western basin by 2025. When too much phosphorus enters the water through sources such as fertilizers, animal manure or sewage treatment plants, water becomes polluted leading to algal blooms and public health warnings.

Lt. Governor Mary Taylor is representing Ohio and will sign the agreement Saturday at a meeting of the Council of Great Lakes Governors in Quebec City. As part of the agreement, each state will develop a plan on how they will achieve their phosphorus reduction goal, with the interim target of a 20 percent reduction by 2020.

“Lake Erie is one of our state’s crown jewels for its recreation, wildlife and economic benefits and as a key source of water for millions of Ohioans,” Taylor said. “While we have made tremendous progress in protecting Lake Erie over the past four years, there is more work to do and by working in unison with our Great Lakes neighbors we can make even more progress to improve the water quality in our Great Lakes.”

Earlier this spring, Ohio Gov. John Kasich signed legislation to aggressively tackle water quality issues to protect the Lake Erie watershed, by:

- Eliminating Open Lake Disposal of Dredge Materials by 2020: Reducing the sediment dumped in Lake Erie will help reduce chemical and nutrient loading, which likely contributes to harmful algal blooms and will improve water quality and protect fish and wildlife habitats. Ohio will require that all dredge material be diverted from open-lake disposal by 2020, unless it’s for a beneficial use such as beach nourishment.
- Banning Manure or Fertilizer Application on Frozen/Snow Covered Ground in Western Basin: Ohio will prohibit manure or fertilizer from being applied to frozen, snow-covered

or rain soaked ground in the Western Lake Erie Basin unless proper farming practices such as injection, tillage or cover crops are also used.

- Limiting Phosphorus Discharges: Ohio EPA will evaluate and modify new and existing wastewater discharge permits for major public wastewater treatment plants to expand monitoring and continue to limit phosphorus discharges in state waters.
- Adding Requirements for Spreading Manure: The Ohio Department of Agriculture will now require anyone applying livestock manure from a Concentrated Animal Feeding Facility to obtain a Certified Livestock Manager certificate or an agricultural fertilizer applicator certificate.

These reforms build upon significant progress made over the past four years in protecting the lake, including:

- Ohio has invested more than \$1 billion since July 2011 in the Lake Erie watershed to improve drinking water and wastewater facilities, monitor water quality, plant cover crops, recycle dredge material, install controlled drainage systems on fields and fix faulty septic systems.
- Restricting water amounts that can be diverted out of the Lake Erie watershed;
- Beginning to phase out open-lake dumping of Maumee River dredge material and continuing to prohibit open-lake dumping of Cuyahoga River dredge material;
- Banning oil and gas exploration in Lake Erie; and
- Helping combat invasive species via mutual aid agreements with nine other Great Lakes states and Canadian provinces.

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