

# The Maumee River Basin Partnership of Local Governments

Regional concerns and collaboration  
among local communities

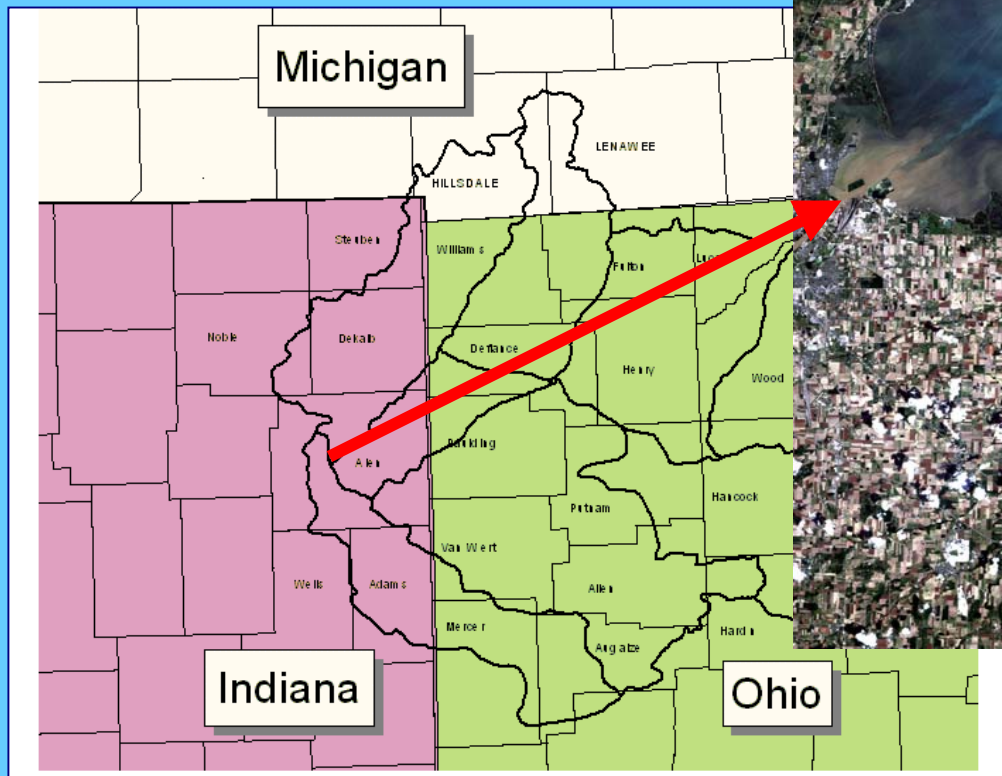
*Mayors' Summit on Water Quality in the Maumee River Basin*

*Fort Wayne, Indiana. June 25, 2003*

# *Municipalities...*

- Support improving and protecting water resources
- Consider the economic value of water quality
- Employ some of the most knowledgeable water quality professionals
- Are on the front lines of local water resource protection
- Shoulder a disproportionate financial burden costly permits to help protect water quality
- Must balance many local needs and priorities with limited financial resources.

**Municipalities** are home to the vast majority of the 1.7 million people living in the Maumee River Basin, the largest tributary to Lake Erie.



# *Municipalities...*

**Are the most logical, cost-efficient, and directly affected entities to help develop appropriate water quality policies and to be directly involved in setting regulatory demands**

# What is the MRBPLG?

**Established by the City of Fort Wayne in 2001**

**Made up primarily of local governments**

**Executive/core committee is made up of municipal officials from**

- Fort Wayne**
- Toledo**
- Defiance**
- Lima**
- Perrysburg**
- New Haven**
- Oregon**

**Representatives meet roughly every 6-8 weeks in Defiance to:**

- Share local information and concerns**
- Collaborate and integrate projects if possible**
- Learn more about what is happening in the region**

# KEY POINT #1...

Unlike virtually every other watershed-based partnership, the organization and priorities of the MRBPLG have been 100% developed and funded locally... To date, no federal or state grants (or their associated requirements) have been used for this organization.

While the MRBPLG desires to attract such funding to the region, the organization itself is bound only by local priorities.

## KEY POINT #2...

The MRBPLG is not a project-based organization as much as it is a regional, collaborative network with a focus on better management and appropriate policy development.

Project-focused organizations, such as smaller watershed groups and local governments, are represented among MRBPLG Partners.

# **MRBPLG Purpose**

## **INTENT**

Initiate a long-term, collective effort toward improved water quality, protection of water quality, increased efficiency in regional water resource management, and cost savings associated with such regionally integrated efforts.

## **MISSION**

To function as a regional network of local governments and other partners within the Maumee River Basin that evaluates policies and supports and promotes issues, programs, and activities that will benefit water quality within the tri-state region.

# **Concerns and Priorities:**

**Water Quality**

**Regional, collective management**

**TMDLS/Trading/Regional approach**

**Local Costs and Funding needs**

# Focusing on 6 Key Areas

- Land Use and Urban Sprawl
- Point Source vs. Nonpoint Source  
Runoff
- Stream Designation
- Agricultural Runoff
- Current Regulatory Issues
- Securing funding in the region

# Five Working Groups

- Regulatory Effects and Tracking
- Local Government-Agricultural Liaison
- Research and Local Data Consolidation
- Public Awareness and Education
- Technology Clearinghouse and Technical Review

# **Regional Links and Relationships**

**Established through participation among the following pre-existing organizations**

- 20 + Cities and Towns**
- 6 Soil & Water Cons. Districts**
- County Surveyors**
- County Health Departments**
- TMACOG and Maumee RAP**
- Maumee River Basin Commission**
- Lake Erie Center/U. of Toledo**
- St. Joseph Watershed Initiative**
- Ottawa River Coalition**
- Tiffin River Watershed Project**
- Duck and Otter Creek groups**
- Black Swamp Conservancy**
- Consultants from Ohio and Indiana**
- Maumee Valley Heritage Corridor**
- Ohio State University Extension Office**
- Ohio EPA**
- Ohio DNR**
- Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur's Office**
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers**
- USDA Natural Resources Cons. Service**
- United States Geological Service**
- Private Citizens/Farmers**

# Other Progress

## Regional Information and education

- **First annual conference in Lima in fall of 2002**
- **24 Professional presentations**
- **Municipal updates on engineering and legal issues**
- **Web site**
- **Regional Bibliographic Resource Database**
- **Initiation of Regional Water Quality Integration Study**
- **Newsletter**
- **Human and technical support for TMACOG's/Clear Water's *Fate of a River Revisited* Documentary**

# What Next?

- **Regular MRBPLG Partners scheduled to meet Aug. 21, 03**
- **Beginning to focus on options for formalizing organization**
- **Improve web site to include municipal peer reviews on engineering technology, legal issues, funding, etc.**
- **Continue with regional water quality integration study**
- **Work to establish regional water quality data collection protocol**
- **Develop a united front to attract needed funds to the region**
- **Continue with short term goals and long term mission**
- **Look to local elected officials for priorities, direction, and support**

# **Water Quality Issues in the Maumee River Basin**

**Brief overview  
on “what is the problem?”**

***Gino Silvestri, City of Defiance***

***Mayors’ Summit on Water Quality in the Maumee River Basin***

***Fort Wayne, Indiana. June, 2003***

# **Pollutants of Concern in the Maumee Basin**

- Sediment
- Bacteria
- Nutrients
- Chemical contamination

# Sediment

- Major problem in the Maumee River and Western Lake Erie
- Increases turbidity
- Deposition of sediment in Lake Erie impacts shipping and creates need for costly dredging
- Smothers wildlife, spawning areas, macroinvertebrates, and shellfish beds
- Sources:
  - Agricultural runoff
  - Construction runoff
  - Poorly vegetated areas

# E. coli Bacteria

- Focus of much State regulation as an indicator of pathogens present in swimming areas.
- Results in beach closings
- Can cause illness to swimmers
- Can affect reductions in dissolved oxygen levels
- Common Sources:
  - Failing septic systems
  - Combined sewer overflows
  - Sanitary sewer overflows/bypasses
  - Domestic livestock
  - Wildlife (geese, deer, etc.)

# Nutrients/Organics

- Often associated with chemical fertilizers and animal wastes
- Common examples – phosphorous and nitrogen
- Feeds vegetation, resulting in increased weeds and algae in lakes and streams
- Can cause or increase the rate of eutrophication
- Common Sources:
  - Agricultural runoff – fertilizers and livestock
  - Golf courses
  - Failing septic systems
  - Combined and sanitary sewer overflows

# Industrial Chemical Contamination

- Has improved dramatically since 1972
- Examples include mercury, PCBs, lead
- Can range from minor to extremely toxic
- May be dangerous to humans
- May result in fish kills or other immediate effects on wildlife
- Can “bioaccumulate” in wildlife
- Common Sources:
  - Historical/pre-existing contamination in streambed
  - Industrial discharges
  - Contaminated sites/leaking landfills