

Lake Erie Commission

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- Continued implementation of the Balanced Growth Program will be a major focus in the upcoming biennium
- Director and Secretary Webmaster to become full-time positions

OVERVIEW

Duties and Responsibilities

The Lake Erie Commission (LEC) is responsible for coordinating state policies and programs that are related to Lake Erie and its surrounding areas. The Lake Erie Commission's role is to preserve and protect Lake Erie's natural resources, protect the ecological quality of its watershed, and promote economic development of Ohio's North Coast. The Commission comprises the directors of the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency and the departments of Agriculture, Development, Health, Natural Resources, and Transportation.

Commission staff work from the Lake Erie Office in Toledo with the responsibilities of (1) awarding research and implementation grants through the Lake Erie Protection Fund, (2) providing public education programs, (3) representing the state of Ohio on many regional and international Great Lakes management organizations, and (4) implementing the Lake Erie Balanced Growth Program as called for in the Lake Erie Protection and Restoration Plan.

Agency in Brief

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Number of Employees	Total Appropriations - All Funds		GRF Appropriations		Appropriation Bill(s)
	2008	2009	2008	2009	
4	\$837,000	\$838,000	\$0	\$0	Am. Sub. H.B. 119

* Employee count obtained from the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) payroll reports as of June 2007.

Funding Overview

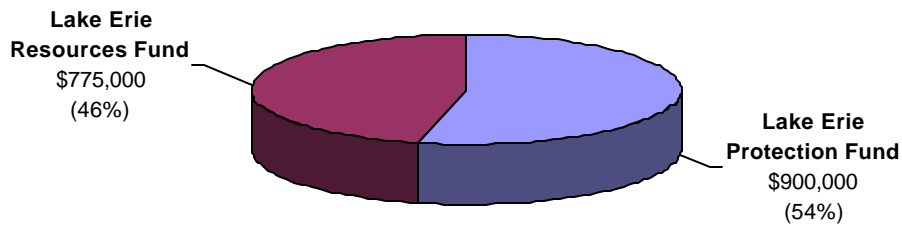
Over the biennium the Commission will continue to maintain two accounts, both in the State Special Revenue (SSR) Fund Group: the Lake Erie Protection Fund (Fund 4C0) and the Lake Erie Resources Fund (Fund 5D8).

The Lake Erie Protection Fund (Fund 4C0) receives individual donations from the Lake Erie license plate program (the Marblehead Lighthouse plate) and is used solely to award Lake Erie research grants and contracts through a competitive proposal process for projects in the areas of water quality, invasive species, coastal health, areas of concern, toxic pollutants, pollution sources, habitat, biology, coastal recreation, boating, fishing, beaches, tourism, and shipping. Grants are awarded to private organizations, nonprofit organizations, academic groups, and state/local government agencies. Grants are applicable for up to three years, and a 10% match is required.

The Lake Erie Resources Fund (Fund 5D8) receives Ohio’s share of the earnings from the Great Lakes Protection Fund (Fund 4C0). States contiguous to the Great Lakes deposit money into Fund 4C0 for projects and programs related to the Great Lakes. One-third of the annual earnings are transferred to the states. Ohio’s share of the earnings is transferred to Fund 5D8 and is used to support the operations of the Commission and its Office. The Commission and the Lake Erie Office receive no General Revenue Fund (GRF) funding.

Below is a pie chart displaying the allocation of enacted funding between the two funds over the biennium.

LEC Budget for FYs 2008-2009, by Fund



ANALYSIS OF THE BUDGET

Single Program Series

Lake Erie Resources and Protection

Purpose: The mission of the Ohio Lake Erie Commission is to preserve Lake Erie's natural resources, protect the ecological quality of its watershed, and promote economic development in the Great Lake region through policy direction and awarding of moneys for environmental projects concerning Lake Erie and its watershed.

The following table shows the line items that are used to fund the single program series in the Lake Erie Commission, as well as the enacted funding levels.

Fund	ALI	Title	FY 2008	FY 2009
State Special Revenue Fund				
4C0	780-601	Lake Erie Protection Fund	\$450,000	\$450,000
5D8	780-602	Lake Erie Resources Fund	\$387,000	\$388,000
Total Funding: Lake Erie Commission			\$837,000	\$838,000

Lake Erie Resources Protection

Funding Source: The Lake Erie Protection Fund (Fund 4C0), consisting of revenue generated from the sale of Lake Erie license plates and other donations, gifts, and bequests; and the Lake Erie Resources Fund (Fund 5D8), consisting of Ohio's share of the earnings from the Great Lakes Protection Fund (an interstate trust fund), contributions from Commission member agencies, and grants received for specific work performed by LEC staff

Implication of the Budget: The budget includes funding levels of \$837,000 in FY 2008 and \$838,000 in FY 2009. Funding at this level will allow the Lake Erie Commission to continue implementing various strategic initiatives including updates to the Lake Erie Quality Index and the Lake Erie Protection and Restoration Plan; provide better integration of the Ohio Lake Erie Action List; continue its public outreach/education efforts; maintain its Lake Erie Protection Fund grants program; and continue implementation of the Balanced Growth Program.

The appropriations will also allow the Commission to cover cost-of-living and mandated state pay increases. Further, the Director and Secretary/Webmaster will move from part-time positions to full-time positions over the biennium. As in past biennia, incoming revenues to the Commission's funds will be contingent on sales of Lake Erie specialty license plates deposited in the Lake Erie Protection Fund (Fund 4C0), and interstate trust fund earnings deposited in the Lake Erie Resources Fund (Fund 5D8).

FY 2008 - 2009 Final Appropriation Amounts

All Fund Groups

<i>Line Item Detail by Agency</i>			<i>FY 2005:</i>	<i>FY 2006:</i>	<i>Adj. Appropriations:</i>	<i>FY 2008 Appropriations:</i>	<i>% Change 2007 to 2008:</i>	<i>FY 2009 Appropriations:</i>	<i>% Change 2008 to 2009:</i>
Report For: Main Operating Appropriations Bill			Version: Enacted						
LEC Lake Erie Commission									
4C0	780-601	Lake Erie Protection Fund	\$ 600,704	\$ 576,263	\$ 300,000	\$ 450,000	50.00%	\$ 450,000	0.00%
5D8	780-602	Lake Erie Resources Fund	\$ 349,894	\$ 266,362	\$ 358,549	\$ 387,000	7.94%	\$ 388,000	0.26%
State Special Revenue Fund Group Total			\$ 950,598	\$ 842,626	\$ 658,549	\$ 837,000	27.10%	\$ 838,000	0.12%
Lake Erie Commission Total			\$ 950,598	\$ 842,626	\$ 658,549	\$ 837,000	27.10%	\$ 838,000	0.12%