New York’s Great Lakes Watershed Program

Achieving Restoration, Conservation, Resiliency and Sustainable Development Goals in NY’s Great Lakes Basin

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NYSDEC Great Lakes Program Mission

“To protect, restore, conserve and enhance the chemical, physical and biological integrity of the waters and associated natural resources within the Great Lakes basin for sustainable use and enjoyment by the people of New York”.

New York State Great Lakes Basin

Lake Ontario

Lake Erie

[Map of New York State and the Great Lakes basin]

[Logo: NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY Department of Environmental Conservation]
Complex threats to the Great Lakes Ecosystem demand a holistic approach to address:

- Harmful Algal Blooms
- Coastal Erosion
- Ag & Nutrient Loading
- Coal Tar
- Microplastics
- Pharmaceuticals
- Invasive Species
Ecosystem-based Management approach required under Ocean and Great Lakes Ecosystem Conservation Act of 2006

"When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it attached to the rest of the world."

- John Muir

Place-based focus
Protection of ecosystem structure, function and key processes
Interconnectedness within and among systems
Integration of ecological, social, economic and institutional perspectives
Sustainable human use of the ecosystem
Stakeholder involvement
Collaboration
Scientific foundation for decision-making
Adaptive Management
Watersheds are the basic building blocks of EBM for scientific, management and governance reasons.
NY’s Great Lakes Action Agenda (GLAA) is an Integrated Action Plan

Existing Plans

New York State Initiatives

Funding

Ecosystem-based Management
What does the GLAA do

- Promotes Ecosystem Based Management and decision-making
- Accomplishes interagency priority projects through regional coordination
- Fosters collaboration among a diverse group of partners
- Leverages capacity and financial resources
- Establishes and tracks milestones to measure progress over time
#1: Clean up Pollution Sources and Restore Beneficial Uses

1. Virtually Eliminate Discharges of Persistent Toxic Substances
2. Control Sediment, Nutrient and Pathogen Loadings
3. Accelerate the Delisting of New York’s Areas of Concern
#2: Conserve Natural Resources

4. Combat Invasive Species
5. Conserve and Restore Native Fish and Wildlife Biodiversity and Habitats
6. Conserve Great Lakes Water Supplies
#3: Promote Resilient Communities & Sustainable Development

7. Enhance Community Resiliency and Ecosystem Integrity
8. Promote Smart Growth, Redevelopment and Adaptive Reuse
9. Enhance Recreation and Tourism Opportunities
10. Plan for Energy Development
Cross-Cutting Priorities

- Promote Partnerships and Coordinated Action
- Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation
- Enhance Coordinated Science, Monitoring and Information Management
- Support Environmental Education and Outreach Initiatives
Coordinated Action Among Partners

- **Policy & Communications**
  - Great Lakes Basin Advisory Council

- **Scientific & Technical**
  - Great Lakes Research Consortium

- **Environment**
  - Healing Our Waters Coalition, NY Chapter
  - NY Assoc of Conservation Districts
  - Watershed Protection Alliances
  - AOC/ LaMP Committees

- **Economic & Local Gov’t**
  - Municipal & County Gov’t
  - Regional Planning Councils
  - Regional Economic Development Councils

- **Indian Nations**
  - Seneca Nation of Indians
  - Tonawanda Seneca Nation
  - Tuscarora Nation
  - Cayuga Nation
  - Onondaga Nation
  - Oneida Nation
  - St. Regis Mohawk Tribe

- **Supporting Partners**
  - State Agencies
  - Federal / Binning Orgs
  - General Public

- **Great Lakes Action Team**

- **West Basin Workgroups**
  - Lake Erie
  - South West Lake Ontario

- **East Basin Workgroups**
  - South East Lake Ontario
  - North East Lake Ontario

*Additional partners and collaborators to be identified*
Role of the Workgroups

**Members:** regional state agency staff, NGOs, universities, and other organizations involved in project implementation

**Responsibilities:**
- Develop work plans for each sub-basin
- Organize ad-hoc teams to implement high priority projects
- Track and report progress of GLAA implementation (i.e. Goalkeepers)
- **Get it done!**

**Benefits:**
- Apply local knowledge
- Learn from others’ success
- Optimize resources
- Achieve sustainable outcomes

Next Northeast and Southeast sub basin work group meetings will be May 8th and 9th- see handout
GLAA EBM Projects 2017-2018

- EBM demonstration area projects
- GLAA Small Grants Program
- Great Lakes Culvert Assessment Pilot Project
- Lake Erie Beach Closure Mitigation
- Black River Initiative – 9E plan implementation
- St. Lawrence Watershed Management/ 9E plan
- Oneida Lake Watershed 9 element plan
- Great Lakes Ecosystem Education Exchange
- Riparian Restoration Opportunity Assessment
- Community Risk and Resiliency Act/Resilient NY
- Nature Based Shorelines
NYS Riparian Opportunity Assessment – Where do we need to plant trees?

http://nynhp.org/treesfortribsgny

- DEC urban and community forestry funding available - due July 11th
Resilient NY –
Adapt to and mitigate climate change

• Builds on community risk and resiliency act
• Additional Emergency Stream Intervention trainings will be held
• Climate Resilient Farming
• Climate Smart Communities grants available - due July 27th
• Renewable energy to mitigate risks

NYS Climate change clearinghouse: [https://www.nyclimatescience.org/](https://www.nyclimatescience.org/)
Nature Based Shorelines funding - DEC WQIP

- 2016 and 2017 - Funded projects at Sacketts Harbor, Sodus Point, and Irondequoit Bay
- 2018 funding available for Lake Erie, Lake Ontario, St. Lawrence and Finger Lakes shorelines
- Demonstrate the use of vegetation and natural materials to enhance shoreline habitat while maintaining protection.
- Due with CFA - DEC Water Quality Improvement Projects - July 27th
How can we be stewards of the Great Lakes and other NYS watersheds?

- Practice and promote a “leave no trace” ethic
- Prevent polluted runoff from getting into waterways
- Plant native trees and shrubs, remove invasive species
- Conserve water and energy
- Educate yourselves and others
- Work together to address the root cause of issues
- Leverage funding to implement projects
Questions?

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