



TRI-STATE **Western** **Lake Erie** Basin

Phosphorus Reduction Initiative

Wetland Reserve Easements

Financial and Technical Assistance to Restore, Protect and Enhance Wetlands

The USDA has targeted \$562,400 for wetland reserve easements in the Western Lake Erie Watershed in Michigan. This funding is available through the Tri-State WLEB Conservation Partnership, funded through the USDA Regional Conservation Partnership Program. Through the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program, landowners receive assistance to restore wetlands that were converted to agricultural land.

Why Restore Wetlands?

Wetlands provide a number of conservation benefits by storing water following rain and spring snow melt. By keeping the water in place, wetlands recharge ground water instead of the water being discharged through field tiles and drains. Wetlands help reduce the magnitude and frequency of flooding events. Sediment and chemicals in water held in wetlands have time to be filtered out before the water enters lakes and streams. Wetlands also provide excellent wildlife habitat, particularly for amphibians and waterfowl but also many other plants and animals.

How does the Program Work?

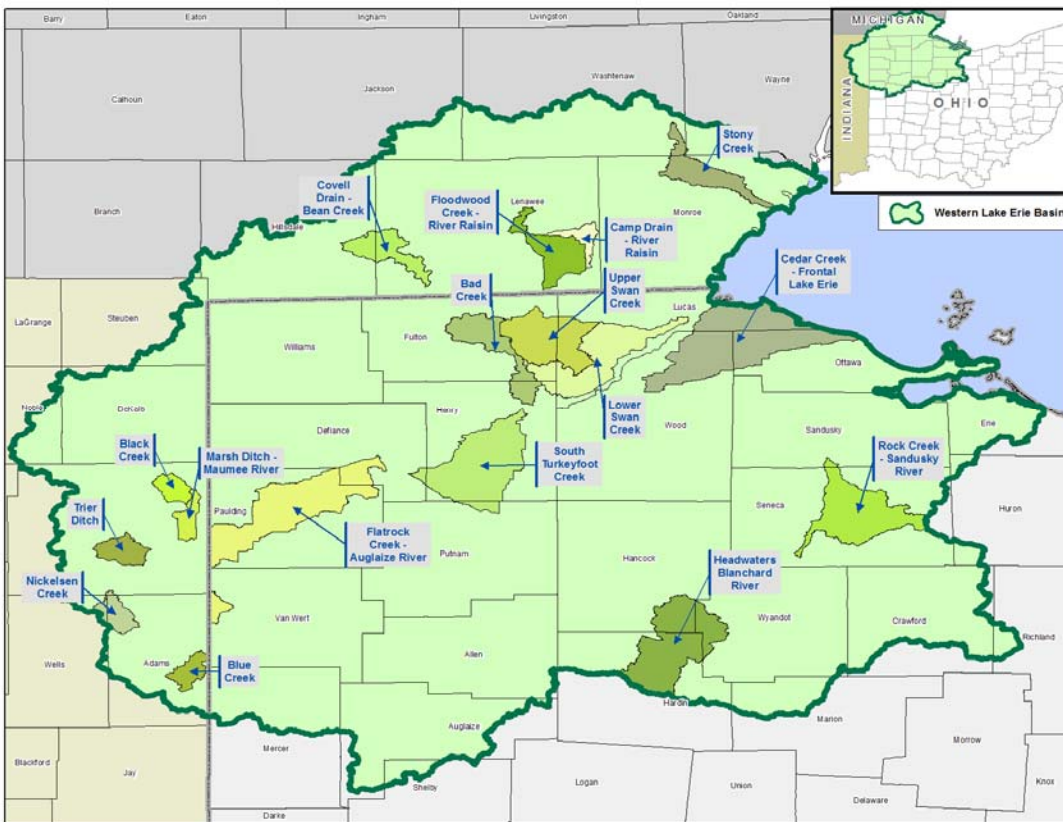
Land eligible for wetland reserve easements include farmed or prior-converted wetlands that can be successfully and cost-effectively restored. Landowners who enroll in the program receive an easement payment from NRCS and a portion of the restoration costs. Enrollment options include:

- **Permanent Easements** are conservation easements in perpetuity. NRCS pays 100 percent of the easement value for the purchase of the easement, and up to 100 percent of the restoration costs.
- **30-Year Easements** expire after 30 years. Under 30-year easements, NRCS pays 50 to 75 percent of the easement value for the purchase of the easement, and between 50 to 75 percent of the restoration costs.
- **30-year Contracts** are only available to enroll acreage owned by Indian tribes. Program payment rates are commensurate with 30-year easements.

NRCS will prioritize applications based on the easement's potential for protecting and enhancing habitat for migratory birds and other wildlife.

What Happens after the Restoration?

After the restoration is completed the landowner must maintain the wetland over the life of the contract. The land can be transferred to a new owner however the terms of the easement do not change. The landowner remains the owner of the property and has control over access to the land. The land can be used for recreational activities such as hunting, fishing, hiking, etc.



Program Objectives

The Tri-State Western Lake Erie Basin Phosphorus Reduction Initiative will help to reduce sediment and nutrient loading into the western basin of Lake Erie, with an emphasis on reducing total and dissolved reactive phosphorus to reduce the threat of HABs. The specific resource concerns include water quality, water quantity, soil health, and fish and wildlife habitat.

Learn More Today!

Lenawee Conservation District &
NRCS Adrian Field Office
1100 Sutton Road
Adrian, MI 49221
Phone: (517)265-5887

Hillsdale Conservation District &
Jonesville Field Office
588 Olds Street, Bldg. 2
Jonesville, MI 49250
Phone: (517)849-9890

Washtenaw Conservation District &
NRCS Ann Arbor Field Office
7203 Jackson Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48103
CD Phone: (734)761-6721
NRCS Phone: (734)205-0537

Monroe Conservation District &
NRCS Monroe Field Office
1137 S. Telegraph Road
Monroe, MI 48161
CD Phone: (734)241-7755
NRCS Phone: (734)241-8540

Jackson Conservation District &
Jackson Field Office
211 W. Ganson Street
Jackson, MI 49201
CD Phone (517)395-2082
Phone: (517)789-7716

Visit www.wleb.org for the latest news on this project

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.