



**Environmental
Protection
Agency**

Ohio 2024 Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Report



Maumee River at Waterville

Division of Surface Water
Modeling, Assessment, and TMDL Section
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Table of Contents

Section A: An Overview of Water Quality in Ohio

A1: Introduction	A-2
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Section B: Ohio's Water Resources

B1: Facts and Figures	B-2
-----------------------------	-----

Section C: Managing Water Quality

C1: Program Summary – Surface Water	C-3
C2: Program Summary – Environmental and Financial Assistance	C-20
C3: Program Summary – Drinking and Ground Waters	C-21
C4: Program Summary – Environmental Services	C-23
C5: Cooperation among State Agencies and Departments	C-24
C6: Funding Sources for Pollution Controls	C-24
C7: New 303(d) Vision Implementation in Ohio	C-29

Section D: Framework for Reporting and Evaluation

D1: Framework for Reporting and Evaluation	D-2
D2: Assessment Units	D-3
D3: Evaluation of the Ohio River	D-8
D4: Evaluation of Lake Erie	D-9
D5: Ohio's Water Quality Standards and Use Designations.....	D-10
D6: Sources of Existing and Readily Available Data	D-12
D7: Public Involvement in Compiling Ohio's Section 303(d) List of Impaired Waters.....	D-15

Section E: Evaluating Beneficial Use: Human Health (Fish Consumption)

E1: Background	E-2
E2: Rationale and Evaluation Method	E-2
E3: Results	E-7
E4: Supplemental Information	E-28

Section F: Evaluating Beneficial Use: Recreation

F1: Background (Bacteria)	F-4
F2: Evaluation Method (Bacteria).....	F-5
F3: Results (Bacteria)	F-12
F4: Recreation Assessment for Algae in Lake Erie.....	F-26

Section G: Evaluating Beneficial Use: Aquatic Life

G1: Background and Rationale	G-2
G2: Evaluation Method.....	G-4
G3: Results	G-8

Section H: Evaluating Beneficial Use: Public Drinking Water Supply

H1: Background	H-2
H2: Evaluation Method	H-2
H3: Results.....	H-7
H4: Supplemental Information.....	H-8

Section I: Considerations for Future Lists

I1: Wetlands	I-2
I2: Mercury Reduction at Ohio EPA.....	I-12

I3: Inland Lakes and Reservoirs.....	I-14
I4: Future Lake Erie Monitoring and Assessment.....	I-17

Section J: Addressing Waters Not Meeting Water Quality Goals

J1. Ohio’s 303(d) Listing Framework	J-3
J2. Prioritizing the Impaired Waters: the 303(d) List.....	J-4
J3. Addressing Nutrients in Lake Erie.....	J-17
J4. Summary of Results	J-22
J5. Changes for the 2020 303(d) List.....	J-23
J6. Schedule for TMDL Work.....	J-26

Section K: Category 4B Demonstrations

K1. Category 4B Demonstrations Contained in Approved Ohio TMDLs to Date	K-2
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----

Section L: An Overview of Ground Water Quality in Ohio

L1. Introduction	L-2
L2. Ohio’s Ground Water Protection Programs	L-3
L3. Ohio’s Major Aquifers.....	L-5
L4. Major Sources of Ground Water Contamination.....	L-6
L5. Summary of Ground Water Quality by Aquifer.....	L-13
L6. Conclusions and Future Directions for Ground Water Protection.....	L-36

Section M: References

List of Tables and Figures

Tables

Table A-1 – Summary of Human Health Fish Tissue Results	A-5
Table A-2 – Summary of Recreation (Bacteria) Use Results.....	A-6
Table A-3 – Summary of Public Water Supply Use Results	A-7
Table B-1– Ohio's water resource statistics.	B-2
Table B-2 – List of Ohio’s principal streams and large rivers.	B-5
Table C-1 – OWDA loans administered during calendar years 2020 - 2021.....	C-26
Table D-1 – Ohio water quality standards in the 2024 IR.	D-11
Table D-2 – Data types used in the 2024 IR.	D-13
Table D-3 – Description of data used in the 2024 IR from sources other than Ohio EPA.	D-14
Table E-1 – Comparison between fish concentration values and FCA program values.	E-4
Table E-2 – Example data for calculating a weighted average fish tissue value.	E-5
Table E-3 – A summary of changes in attainment status from 2022 to 2024 IR.	E-7
Table E-4 – Waters not supporting the human health use because levels of contaminants in fish tissue exceed the threshold level upon which the WQS criterion is based. These waters are category 5.	E-8
Table E-5 – Waters fully supporting the human health use because fish tissue levels of contaminants are below the threshold level upon which the WQS criterion is based. These waters are category 1.	E-16
Table E-6 – Waters fully supporting the human health use because fish tissue levels of PCBs or mercury are below the threshold level upon which the WQS criterion is based, and which were categorized as impaired in the 2022 IR. These waters have become category 1.	E-21
Table E-7 – Waters with contaminants other than PCBs and mercury that affect fish tissue (included on the 303(d) list). These waters are category 5.	E-22
Table E-8 – Waters with current fish tissue data where inadequate samples exist to determine impairment status. These waters are category 3.	E-22
Table E-9 – Large rivers and their impairment status.	E-23
Table E-10 – Inland lakes and their impairment status.	E-25
Table E-11 – Lake Erie assessment units and their impairment status.	E-27
Table E-12– Ohio River assessment units and their impairment status.	E-27
Table F-1 – Summary of the RU assessment methods.	F-5
Table F-2 – Determining assessment status of Lake Erie shoreline AUs.	F-8
Table F-3 – Determining assessment status of WAUs, LRAUs and ORAUs.....	F-11
Table F-4 – Seasonal geometric mean E. coli levels and advisory postings at public Lake Erie shoreline beaches in the western basin (Sandusky Bay and west).	F-14
Table F-5 – Seasonal geometric mean E. coli levels and advisory postings at public Lake Erie shoreline beaches in the central basin (east of Cedar Point).	F-15
Table F-6 – The number of days per season (and the percentage for all years) when Ohio Lake Erie public beaches exceeded the BAV relative to the total number of days in the sampling period, 2018 – 2022, for the central basin shoreline AU.	F-17
Table F-7 – The number of days per season (and the percentage for all years) when Ohio Lake Erie public beaches exceeded the BAV relative to the total number of days in the sampling period, 2018 – 2022, for the western basin shoreline AU.	F-17
Table F-8 – The number of days per season (and the percentage for all years) when Ohio Lake Erie public beaches exceeded the BAV relative to the total number of days in the sampling period, 2018 – 2022, for the islands shoreline AU.	F-18
Table F-9 – The number of days per season (and the percentage for all years) when Ohio Lake Erie public beaches exceeded the BAV relative to the total number of days in the sampling period, 2018 – 2022, for the Sandusky basin shoreline AU.	F-18

Table F-10 – Aggregated exceedance frequencies at 65 Lake Erie public beaches from 2018-2022 (pooled by Lake Erie shoreline AU to report use support).....	F-20
Table F-11 – Annual Ohio EPA E. coli sampling effort and RU assessment (using Ohio EPA data) in Ohio’s surface waters, 2011-2019 recreation seasons.	F-20
Table F-12 – Recreational use assessment summary of Ohio’s streams and rivers for the 2024 assessment cycle.	F-21
Table F-13 – Overall differences in the assessment of RU attainment, 2010-2022.	F-22
Table F-14 – Summary assessment status of the RU for bacteria in Ohio’s ORAUs.	F-22
Table F-15 – Frequency of BAV Exceedance at public beaches located at 50 Ohio inland lakes (2018-2022).	F-23
Table F-16 – Sandusky Bay (S1) Sampling Locations.....	F-32
Table F-17 – The number of 10-day frames exceeding 30% of the assessment unit area with >20k cyanobacterial cell density.....	F-36
Table F-18 – The number of 10-day time frames exceeding the 30 percent coverage threshold.	F-39
Table F-19 – The number of 10-day time frames exceeding the annual threshold for Sandusky Shoreline Assessment unit for each year beginning in 2018.....	F-40
Table F-20 – The number of 10-day time frames at or exceeding 30 percent coverage threshold.	F-40
Table F-21 – The number of 10-day time frames at or exceeding 15 percent coverage threshold.	F-41

Table G-1 – Breakdown by watershed size category of sites in full, partial and non-attainment in monitored WAUs based on data collected primarily from 2011-2020.	G-13
Table G-2 – Sampling results attainment status for each of the shoreline LEAUs.....	G-15
Table G-3 – Attainment status for each of the Ohio River assessment units (ORAU).....	G-21

Table H-1 – PDWS attainment determination.	H-5
Table H-2 – Waters designated as impaired for (not supporting) the PDWS beneficial use.....	H-12
Table H-3 – Summary of PDWS assessment results for the nitrate, pesticide and algae indicators.....	H-18

Table I-1 – List of high-quality wetland areas.....	I-5
Table I-2 – List of significant wetland areas.	I-10
Table I-3 – Causative and response nutrient targets for Ohio inland lakes by lake type and ecoregion.....	I-16

Table J-1 – Category definitions for the 2024 Integrated Report and 303(d) list.....	J-4
Table J-2 – Summary of results for human health, recreation and public drinking water supply beneficial uses	J-22
Table J-3 – Summary of results for aquatic life beneficial use	J-23
Table J-4 – Parameters delisted and delisting reason.....	J-23
Table J-5 – Ohio TMDLs approved by U.S. EPA at the 11-digit hydrologic unit scale.	J-29
Table J-6 –Ohio TMDLs approved by U.S. EPA at the 12-digit hydrologic unit scale.	J-34
Table J-7 – Ohio TMDL approved by U.S. EPA for Lake Erie assessment units.....	J-36
Table J-8 – Short-term schedule for TMDL development – High priority public drinking water supply use TMDLs in watershed assessment units.....	J-36
Table J-9 – Short-term schedule for TMDL development – High priority aquatic life use TMDLs in watershed assessment units	J-36
Table J-10 – Short-term schedule for TMDL development – High priority recreation use TMDLs in large river and watershed assessment units.....	J-39

Table K- 1 – Summary of bypass information for Indian Lake WWTP (station 602) for the period 8/1/2006 to 5/26/2011.	K-15
Table K- 2 – Summary of limit violations for Indian Lake WWTP (station 001) for the period January 2005 to May 2011. Violations for total chlorine residual are omitted.	K-15

Table L-1 – Summary of Ohio ground water protection programs.....	L-4
Table L-2 – Ground water contamination summary.	L-6
Table L-3 – Major sources of potential ground water contamination.	L-12
Table L-4 – Counts of public water systems where 2007-2017 decadal mean values of compliance data occur in the Watch List and Impaired Category.....	L-15
Table L-5 – Counts of wells where 2012-2022 decadal mean values of AGWQMP data occur in the Watch List and Impaired Category (maximum values used for nitrate).....	L-25

Figures

Figure A-1 – Ohio EPA’s Biological Sampling Locations 1978 - 2018	A-2
Figure A-2 – Overall summary of Ohio’s combined assessment units. Output from ATTAINS.	A-4
Figure A-3 – Top five causes of impairment in LRAUs.....	A-9
Figure A-4 – Top five causes of impairment in WAUs.....	A-9
Figure B-1– Map of Ohio's principal streams and large rivers.	B-3
Figure B-2– Ohio Scenic River System.	B-4
Figure C-1 – Ohio Lake Erie AOCs and major Lake Erie tributaries.....	C-9
Figure D-1 – Ohio's large rivers (rivers with drainages greater than 500 mi ²) and their watersheds.	D-5
Figure D-2 – Ohio's 12-digit WAUs (gray lines) and 8-digit hydrologic units (heavy black lines).....	D-6
Figure D-3 – Ohio’s Lake Erie assessment units – western basin, islands, Sandusky basin, and central basin shorelines and open water areas.....	D-7
Figure D-4 – Ohio’s Ohio River assessment units.....	D-8
Figure E-1 – Illustration of the relationship among the WQS values, the values that trigger issuance of FCAs and the resulting decision regarding water body impairment associated with an FCA.	E-3
Figure E-2 – Flow chart for the categorization of fish tissue data for the IR.....	E-7
Figure F-1 – Lake Erie public beaches sampled under Ohio’s bathing beach monitoring program.	F-7
Figure F-2 – Erie and Sandusky County public beaches sampled under Ohio’s bathing beach monitoring program.....	F-7
Figure F-3 – Cuyahoga and Lorain County public beaches sampled under Ohio’s bathing beach monitoring program.....	F-8
Figure F-4 – Example of bacteria sampling locations from the upper Walhonding River study area (2010).	F-10
Figure F-5 – Frequency of advisory postings at Ohio's Lake Erie public beaches.	F-19
Figure F-6 – Ohio’s Lake Erie assessment units – western basin, islands, Sandusky basin, and central basin shorelines and open water areas.	F-27
Figure F-7 – Bloom severity observed since 2002. Adapted from figure by Dr. Rick Stumpf, NOAA National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science	F-30
Figure F-8– Sampling locations in the Sandusky Bay; map adapted from Salk, 2018.	F-32
Figure F-9 –A comparison of chlorophyll-a concentration data collected by a 1-meter Van Dorn sampler and a 0-2 meter integrated sample from two Sandusky Bay sites (bay mouth and the center of east/outer bay) by the Ohio State University Stone Laboratory. The dotted blue line is the regression line between the two methods and the thin black dashed line is the 1-to-1 line.	F-33
Figure F-10 – Sandusky Open Waters HAB cell densities shown for greater than 20,000 cells per mL by percent of the assessment unit’s surface area. Each bar shows a 10-day time frame during the July - October bloom season; this results in 12 10-day frames per year.	

Frames that show 0% coverage indicates no bloom present the majority of the time. In some instances, cloud cover or other interferences with the satellite images occurred.	F-34
Figure F-11 — Top three 10-day frames with greater than 20,000 cell cyanobacteria count per mL by year for the S2 and W2 assessment units. A black outlined circle for each unit shows the average of each year.	F-35
Figure F-12 — The percent of assessment unit area covered by the third greatest 10-day frame with greater than 20,000 cell cyanobacteria count per mL by year for the S2 and W2 assessment units.	F-35
Figure F-13 — Central Basin Open Waters HAB cell densities shown for greater than 20,000 cells per mL by percent of the assessment unit’s surface area. Each bar shows a 10-day time frame during the July - October bloom season; this results in 12 10-day frames per year. The green line at 15% area shows the exceedance level set by this proposed method. Frames that show 0% coverage indicates no bloom present the majority of the time. In a few instances, cloud cover or other interferences with the satellite images occurred.....	F-38
Figure G-1 — Flowchart for determining if WAU score can be derived based on available sampling locations.	G-6
Figure G-2 — Status and trend of aquatic life use for large river (>500 mi ² drainage area) sites in Ohio based on the last 12 IR cycles. Note increase in number of rivers in 2024.	G-10
Figure G-3 — Top five causes of impairment in LRAUs.	G-11
Figure G-4 — Summary of attainment status of LRAUs by aquatic life use.....	G-11
Figure G-5 — Top five causes of impairment in WAUs.	G-14
Figure G-6 — Summary of attainment status of WAUs by aquatic life use.	G-14
Figure G-7 — IBI scores compared to habitat-scaled targets showing all sampling passes available for each site along the Lake Erie shoreline from Toledo to Conneaut, 2011-2018,2.....	G-16
Figure G-8 — Average MIwb scores compared to habitat-scaled targets showing all sampling passes available for each site along the Lake Erie shoreline from Toledo to Conneaut, 2011-2018,2.	G-17
Figure G-9 — Fish assemblage hierarchical cluster group of each electro-fishing sampling event in Lake Erie lacustuaries and shoreline from 1981-1995 (pre-Round Goby invasion).	G-19
Figure G-10 — Fish assemblage hierarchical cluster group of each electro-fishing sampling event in Lake Erie lacustuaries and shoreline from 1996-2018 (post-round goby invasion).	G-20
Figure G-11 — Ohio River fish (○) and macro (□) assemblage index scores by pool, 2016-2020, pool did not meet the minimum site requirement for a macro assessment (*).	G-22
Figure H-1 — Ohio WAUs, LRAUs and LEAUs that contain at least one active surface water drinking water intake.	H-3
Figure H-2 — AUs with nitrate indicator results.	H-9
Figure H-3 — AUs with pesticide indicator results.....	H-10
Figure H-4 — AUs with algal toxin indicator results.....	H-11
Figure I-1 — Western Lake Erie Basin tributary nutrient load monitoring sites by sampling agency.	I-19
Figure I-2 — Sandusky Bay and Central Lake Erie Basin tributary nutrient load monitoring sites by sampling agency.	I-20
Figure I-3 — Schematic of the Lake Erie Aquatic Life Use and assessment framework	I-22
Figure J-1 — Map of Lake Erie Assessment Units.....	J-7
Figure J-2 — Map of Ohio’s High Priority TMDL projects at Step Four: Preliminary Modeling Results ..	J-10
Figure J-3 — Watershed upstream from Tappan Lake and attainment status of sites from 2012 Stillwater River survey.	J-13
Figure J-4 — Watershed upstream from Harsha Lake and the attainment status of sites from the 2012 East Fork Little Miami River survey.	J-15
Figure J-5 — Watershed contributing to Beaver Creek Reservoir and the attainment status of sites sampled	

in 2009.	J-16
Figure J-6 – Project Areas for Basin Monitoring	J-28
Figure K-1 – Flow duration curve for data collected at USGS automatic gauge 03261500 (Great Miami River at Sidney OH) for the period October 1985 through June 2011. Flows during 2011 that occurred between February 16 and May 31 are highlighted in red. All values reported as average daily flow in cubic feet per second (cfs).....	K-9
Figure K-2 – Mean loading (in kg/day) of total phosphorus, ammonia, and nitrite+nitrate by year for summer season (June to September) observations for Station 001 (final outfall) of Indian Lake WWTP. The overall seven- year summer season mean loading is also shown.	K-10
Figure K-3 – Mean loading (in kg/day) of total phosphorus, ammonia, and nitrite+nitrate by year for annual (January to December) observations for Station 001 (final outfall) of Indian Lake WWTP. The overall seven-year annual mean loading is also shown.	K-10
Figure K-4 – Mean concentration (in mg/L) of CBOD 5-day and TSS by year for summer season (June to September) observations for Station 601 (influent) of Indian Lake WWTP. The overall seven-year summer season mean concentration is also shown.....	K-12
Figure K-5 – Mean concentration (in mg/L) of CBOD 5-day and TSS by year for annual (January to December) observations for Station 601 (influent) of Indian Lake WWTP. The overall seven-year annual mean concentration is also shown.	K-12
Figure K-6 – Time series of TSS from January 2005 to May 2011 for station 601 for Indian Lake WWTP. A 60-day running average was also computed and overlaid (solid red line) on the individual observations.	K-13
Figure K-7 – Time series of CBOD5 from January 2005 to May 2011 for station 601 for Indian Lake WWTP. A 60- day running average was also computed and overlaid (solid red line) on the individual observations.	K-13
Figure K-8 – Time series of daily total suspended solid loads (kg/day) for Indian Lake WWTP for station 001 for the period January 2005 to May 2011.	K-14
Figure L-1 – Aquifer Types in Ohio modified from ODNR Glacial and Bedrock Aquifer Maps (ODNR, 2000; water.ohiodnr.gov/maps/statewide-aquifer-maps).....	L-5

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

AmphIBI	amphibian index of biotic integrity
AMP	Atrazine monitoring program
AOC	Area of Concern (as identified under the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement)
ARRA	American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009
ATTAINS	Assessment, Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Tracking and Implementation System
AU	assessment unit
BAV	beach action value
BEACH	Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health (Act)
BMP	best management practice
BNR	biological nutrient removal
BUI	Beneficial Use Impairment (as described in the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement)
CABB	Center for Applied Bioassessment and Biocriteria
CAFO	Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations
CDBG	Community Development Block Grant
CDC	Center for Disease Control
cfu	colony forming unit
Corps	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
CREP	Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program
CRP	Conservation Reserve Program
CSO	combined sewer overflow
CSP	Conservation Stewardship Program
CWH	coldwater habitat
CWA	Clean Water Act
DDAGW	Division of Drinking and Ground Waters
DDT	dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane
DEFA	Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance
DES	Division of Environmental Services
DLG	digital line graph
DRG	digital raster graphic
DSW	Division of Surface Water
EAG	External Advisory Group
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EQIP	Environmental Quality Incentives Program
EWH	exceptional warmwater habitat
FCA	fish consumption advisory
FFY	federal fiscal year
FSA	Farm Service Agency
FWPCA	Federal Water Pollution Control Act
GIS	Geographic Information System
GLLA	Great Lakes Legacy Act
GLRC	Great Lakes Regional Collaboration
GLRI	Great Lakes Restoration Initiative
GLSM	Grand Lake St. Marys
GLWQA	Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement
GRP	Grassland Reserve Program
GRTS	Generalized Random Tessellation Stratified (survey design)
HAB	harmful algal bloom
HSD	honest significant difference
HUC	hydrologic unit code
IBI	index of biotic integrity
ICI	invertebrate community index
IDP	indirect discharge permit

IR	Integrated Report
kg	kilogram
L	liter
LA	load allocation
LAMP	lakewide action and management plan
LCI	Lake Condition Index
LDI	Landscape Development Intensity
LEAU	Lake Erie assessment unit
LEC	(Ohio) Lake Erie Commission
LENT	Lake Erie nutrient targets
LEPF	(Ohio) Lake Erie Protection Fund
LH	lake habitat
LHD	local health district
LRAU	large river assessment unit
LRW	limited resource water
LTCP	long-term control plan
MBI	Midwest Biodiversity Institute
MF	membrane filter
mg	milligram
mi ²	square miles
mL	milliliter
Mlwb	modified index of well-being
MOR	monthly operating data
MPN	most probable number
MRBI	Mississippi River Basin Initiative
MS4	municipal separate storm sewer systems
MWH	modified warmwater habitat
NARS	National Aquatic Resource Survey
NCCA	National Coastal Condition Assessment
NCWQR	National Center for Water Quality Research
NEORS	Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District
ng	nanogram
NHD	National Hydrography Dataset
NLCD	National Land Cover Dataset
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NOI	notice of intent
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NPS	nonpoint source
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NSMP	Nonpoint Source Management Plan
NSSP	National Shellfish Sanitation Program
NWI	National Wetland Inventory
NWQI	National Water Quality Initiative
OAC	Ohio Administrative Code
ODH	Ohio Department of Health
ODNR	Ohio Department of Natural Resources
OMZA	outside mixing zone average
ORC	Ohio Revised Code
ORSANCO	Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission
OSIP	Ohio Statewide Imagery Program
OTMP	Ohio Tributary Monitoring Program
OWDA	Ohio Water Development Authority
OWRC	Ohio Water Resources Council
PAHs	polyaromatic hydrocarbons

PHA	public health advisory
ppb	parts per billion
PCB	polychlorinated biphenyls
PCR	primary contact recreation
PDWS	public drinking water supply
POTW	publicly owned treatment works
PS	point source
PTI	permit to install
PTO	permit to operate
PWS	public water supply
QA	quality assurance
QC	quality control
QDC	qualified data collector
QSC	Quicksilver Caucus
RAP	Remedial Action Plan
RAS	return activated sludge
RF3	Reach File Version 3
RM	river mile
SDWA	Safe Drinking Water Act
SDWIS	Safe Drinking Water Information System
SFY	state fiscal year (July 1 to June 30)
SIU	significant industrial user
sq mi	square miles
SSM	single-sample maximum
STORET	STOrage and RETrieval (a U.S. EPA water quality database)
STV	statistical threshold value
SWIF	Surface Water Improvement Fund
SWIMS	Surface Water Information Management System
TDS	total dissolve solids
TMDL	total maximum daily load
TNTC	too numerous to count
TOC	total organic carbon
µg	microgram
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
U.S. EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
USC	United States Code
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey
UV	ultraviolet
VIBI	vegetation index of biotic integrity
VIBI-FQ	VIBI – floristic quality
WAS	waste activated sludge
WAUs	watershed assessment unit
WBLE	western basin of Lake Erie
WEG	(Ohio EPA's) wetland ecology group
WHIP	Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program
WHO	World Health Organization
WLA	wasteload allocation
WPCLF	Water Pollution Control Loan Fund
WQ	water quality
WQC	Water Quality Certification (Section 401)
WQM	Water Quality Management (plan)
WQPSD	Water Quality Permit Support Document
WQS	water quality standards
WRP	Wetlands Reserve Program

WRRSP	Water Resource Restoration Sponsor Program
WSRLA	Water Supply Revolving Loan Account
WWH	warmwater habitat
WWTP	wastewater treatment plant

Executive Summary

The *Ohio Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Report* (IR) summarizes water quality conditions in the State of Ohio. This report satisfies Ohio's water quality reporting requirements under Sections 303(d), 305(b) and 314 of the federal Clean Water Act. This report was last updated in 2022. Analysis and listing changes are based on data collected through 2021 for aquatic life uses, 2022 for human health (fish tissue) use, and 2023 for drinking water supply and recreation uses.

Using methods devised to determine the suitability of waters for four specific uses—aquatic life (fish and aquatic insects), recreation (such as boating and swimming), human health (related to fish tissue contamination) and public drinking water supplies—available data were compared with water quality goals. The results indicate which waters are meeting goals and which are not. Waters not meeting the goals for one or more of the four types of uses are referred to as *impaired*. The waters found to be impaired are prioritized and scheduled for further study and restoration.

This report describes the methods used to judge impairment of each type of use and have evolved in each reporting cycle as the Agency gains access to more data and develops better ways to interpret them. Results are reported for 1,538 watershed units, 45 large river units (in Ohio's 30 rivers that drain more than 500 square miles), seven Lake Erie units, and 10 Ohio River units.

U.S. EPA's Assessment, Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Tracking and Implementation System (ATTAINS) database was used for report preparation and submittal. The final data will be available to the public through U.S. EPA's How's My Waterway app (epa.gov/waterdata/how-my-waterway).

Highlights of Beneficial Use Sections

For the human health use (fish tissue), polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) contamination in fish is the cause of most of the human health impairments in Ohio. Mercury is the second leading cause.

The recreation (bacteria) use analysis focuses on the number of bacteria in the water. For Lake Erie public beaches, the frequency of swimming advisories varies widely, ranging from near zero to nearly a third or more of the recreation season. Generally, beaches located near population centers have the most problems. Results are also reported for streams and inland lakes.

The recreation use has also been assessed for algae impacts in Lake Erie. The western basin shoreline, the islands shoreline and the western basin open water assessment units are all listed as impaired by algae. All assessment units (open water and shoreline) associated with Sandusky (including Sandusky Bay) and central basins are now in attainment for recreation use for algae parameter.

The top reasons for aquatic life impairment continue to be habitat modification, nutrient enrichment, hydromodification, sedimentation/siltation and organic enrichment for large rivers and watersheds. Additionally, aquatic life use assessments for six of 10 Ohio River units were included in this report (all fully supporting).

The chemicals of concern causing impairment of the public drinking water supply use include nitrate, atrazine, and cyanotoxins (due to certain algae). The primary source of atrazine is nonpoint source runoff from agricultural land use. Additional sources of nitrate and nutrients include home and commercial fertilizer application, failing septic systems, unsewered areas and wastewater treatment

plant discharges. Of the 121 public drinking water supply assessment units, 35 are in full attainment, 38 have insufficient information, and 48 are listed as impaired (40 impaired by algae).

Major Changes since the 2022 Integrated Report

Large river assessment units (LRAUs) have been modified to align with the large river census survey conducted in 2020-2021. There are now 45 LRAUs (7 new and one modified) that are segments of the 30 rivers draining more than 500 square miles. A new 303(d) Vision Implementation in Ohio (Section C7) incorporates guidance from U.S. EPA on goals and program focus areas over the next decade. Similarly, new priority projects are detailed in Section J that align with the new Vision goals.