

Sandusky Bay Strategic Restoration Plan

Sandusky, Ohio



top and above: Initial conditions

Sandusky Bay encompasses 64 square miles of open water along the southern shore of Lake Erie and receives runoff from nearly one million acres of land. A major commercial and recreational hub for northern Ohio, this unique bay ecosystem holds some of the most significant coastal wetlands in the Lake Erie basin. Over the years, these wetlands and nearshore aquatic habitat have been altered by high Lake Erie water levels, infrastructure

A Strategic Implementation Plan prioritizes coastal wetland restoration projects for implementation to maximize water quality enhancement, nutrient and sediment reductions, and fish and wildlife habitat improvements.

construction, nutrient loadings, shoreline hardening, and changes in land use practices. In addition, the nutrient loadings are stimulating harmful algal blooms. The Bay has been deemed a priority management area by the Great Lakes Fishery Commission and the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement.

With grant funding from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, the City of Sandusky, launched the Sandusky Bay Strategic Restoration Initiative (SBSRI), an implementation plan for a portfolio of projects designed to enhance the quality of life for the entire region, maximize nutrient and sediment reduction, enhance coastal and fish habitat, and ensure that economic benefits that are derived from a clean Sandusky Bay continue into the future.

Working closely with the City, Biohabitats is leading the 18-month planning effort, which will ultimately yield a portfolio of restoration projects through the use of Landscape Conservation Collaborative (LCC) and Design (LCD) principles. Collaborating with a broad range of stakeholders that includes federal, state, and local agencies within three counties; scientists from local academic institutions; NGOs; practitioners; and private sector partners, Biohabitats is assessing and analyzing proposed sites, setting goals, and prioritizing restoration projects to create a strategic restoration implementation plan.

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