

Governor Ted Strickland
Governor's Office
Riffe Center, 30th Floor
77 South High Street
Columbus, OH 43215-6108

Date

Dear Governor Strickland,

It is time for the State of Ohio to take effective action to stop the destruction of Grand Lake St. Marys as a recreational resource for the State and the area. The Lake is by far the largest lake inside the State. I am sure that you are aware that Ohio EPA issued a news release on May 21, 2009 advising the public that the waters of the lake may contain a high level of an algal toxin which can cause minor to severe health issues for humans and animals.

The Lake is hypereutrophic and its watershed has been determined to be one of the most degraded in the State. The Lake's sickening condition is a result of excessive nutrients draining into the Lake. A U. S. Corps of Engineer study indicates 85% of the nutrients are from the agricultural activities that predominate the land use in the watershed. The excessive phosphorus levels in the Lake have resulted in the algae normally found in the Lake being displaced by a blue green algae called Planktothrix . The Planktothrix produce a microcystin toxin that potentially can cause skin rashes, sore throat, runny eyes and nose or allergic reactions, and gastro-intestinal distress. The toxin can also be toxic to the liver and kidneys if ingested in significant quantities.

The limited actions taken to date to stem the flow of phosphorus into the Lake have been ineffective, at best. Drastic action is required. If the State cannot stop the excessive nutrients flowing into the Grand Lake St. Marys which has a small watershed, there is little hope it will be able to protect Lake Erie. Lake Erie now is showing the initial effects of excessive nutrient contamination.

I am requesting that you immediately take the following actions to stem the flow of phosphorus into the Lake:

- 1) Declare the watershed of the Lake to be a phosphorus "free" zone. The application of phosphorus in any form would only be allowed to meet the nutrient needs of crops, lawns, or other plants within 12 months of the application. Soil tests demonstrating the need for the phosphorus would be required prior to the application of phosphorus.
- 2) Establish an online statewide database where the results of the soil tests would be recorded.
- 3) Prohibit the application of manure or fertilizer in the watershed between November 1 and April 1.
- 4) Prohibit the expansion of any confined animal feeding facilities (CAFF) of any size or the establishment of any new CAFF's larger than 10 equivalent animal units in the Lake's watershed.

I do not want excuses for inaction. I am asking what effective actions you, as the Governor Ohio, are going to take to stop the degradation of Grand Lake St. Marys, which is resulting in reduced recreational opportunities, property values, and environmentally acceptable employment opportunities.

Respectfully yours,

Sign here

Print your name and full address above