

APPENDIX C
UPPER WEST BRANCH ROCKY RIVER
BALANCED GROWTH INITIATIVE
RESOLUTION OF JURISDICTIONAL SUPPORT

We, as duly elected public officials and current office holders for the jurisdiction forthwith, do, on this day, support the Balanced Growth Initiative for the Upper West Branch of the Rocky River Watershed as prepared by the Watershed Planning Partnership members.

We understand there was initial local majority support in 2005 to proceed with the Balanced Growth Initiative.

We understand the plan includes Priority Conservation Areas (PCA's), Priority Development Areas (PDA's), as well as Priority Agricultural Areas (PAA's).

We understand the information contained within these designated areas was presented to us in a public setting within our normal business meetings or work sessions.

We understand that the implementation of the Balanced Growth Initiative is voluntary in our jurisdiction and is provided with the intent that our future comprehensive planning process would take this information into consideration.

We understand that upon resolution by 75% of the jurisdictions, 75% of the population represented, and 75% of the land area in the watershed, the Balanced Growth criteria will be forwarded to the Ohio Lake Erie Commission in Toledo for their review and endorsement by the State of Ohio.

We understand that upon endorsement by the Ohio Lake Erie Commission our jurisdiction would become eligible for state incentive programs in the future within our PDA's, PCA's and PAA's.

We understand the state incentive programs are still in the development stages by the Ohio Lake Erie Commission and will be announced in 2008.

We also understand that Hinckley Township, which also drains partially to the Upper West Branch of the Rocky River and was not originally included with the 12 jurisdictions, is now being offered the opportunity to become part of the Balanced Growth Initiative.

NOW, THEREFOR BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MONTVILLE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES THAT:

Section 1. The Watershed Balanced Growth Plan for the Upper West Branch Rocky River identifies Priority Development Areas and Priority Conservation Areas is hereby adopted.

Section 2. The Upper West Branch Rocky River is directed to seek endorsement of the Balanced Growth Watershed plan by the Ohio Lake Erie Commission in order to permit the local government in the watershed to seek the benefits and incentives provided by this endorsement.

Section 3. The Priority Development Areas and Priority Conservation Areas identified in the Balanced Growth Watershed Plan are to be used by State of Ohio Agencies to guide state activities and programs and they will serve as the basis for special incentives programs to be directed to the Upper West Branch Rocky River watershed.

Section 4. The Watershed Balanced Growth Plan will be supported by actions of BOARD OF TRUSTEES to direct local resources, planning actions and best local land use practices to encourage protection of Priority Conservation Areas and development of Priority Development Areas.

This resolution is therefore adopted:

Montville Township - Medina County, Ohio
Jurisdiction City or Township

12-11-07
Date

Names and Titles
Brandon Trustee
Ronald Bischof Trustee
Jeff [unclear] Trustee

Lake Erie Balanced Growth Program

Balanced Growth is a strategy to protect and restore Lake Erie and its watersheds to assure long-term economic competitiveness, ecological health, and quality of life. The recommendations focus on reducing urban sprawl, protecting natural resources and encouraging redevelopment in urban areas.

In April of 2004, the Ohio Lake Erie Commission adopted task force recommendations for a voluntary, incentive-based program to achieve balanced growth in the Ohio Lake Erie Watershed. The recommendations include a lead role for local governments with state government providing strong support and encouragement. The Lake Erie Balanced Growth Program recommendations include:

- A regional focus on land use and development planning in the Lake Erie basin.
- The creation of local Watershed Planning Partnerships to designate Priority Conservation Areas and Priority Development Areas.
- The alignment of state policies, incentives, funding, and other resources to support watershed balanced growth planning and implementation.
- The implementation of recommended model regulations to help promote best local land use practices that minimize impacts on water quality and provide for well planned development efficiently served by infrastructure.

Implementing the Recommendations

Funding for implementation of the program exceeds \$1.2 million and has been underway for over two years. Specific activities include:

- Four pilot watersheds are currently developing Watershed Balanced Growth Plans which are a regional framework for coordinated, local decision making about how growth and conservation should be promoted by local and state policies and investments.
- A State Balanced Growth Incentives Strategy identifies programs and policies that state agencies can use to assist and encourage local governments in implementing the Watershed Balanced Growth Plans.
- The Commission sponsors an awareness and training program on Best Local Land Use Practices highlighting the model regulations and local guidance.

These recommendations will help move Ohio in a new direction in its thinking about growth and development. They will raise the stewardship of Lake Erie to a higher level; promote new forms of regional cooperation; and help everyone in the state envision how restoration of natural resources will be an essential part of Ohio's future progress.



For more information, please visit www.epa.state.oh.us/oleo or call (419) 245-2514.

12-2006

Lake Erie Balanced Growth Program Priority Conservation Areas (PCA)

What is it?

A *Priority Conservation Area* is a locally designated area targeted for protection and restoration.

Who would designate a PCA?

- PCAs would be designated by local Watershed Planning Partnerships in consultation with local and state governments.
- PCAs would be designated as part of a Watershed Balanced Growth Plan.

What is the purpose of designating PCAs?

- Protect the ecological health of the watershed and tributaries.
- Provide a process by which areas containing environmental, natural, historic or archaeological resources of critical watershed concern may be identified and protected from substantial deterioration or loss.
- Provide procedures by which areas of critical watershed concern may be designated.
- Protect and enhance public health, safety, and welfare.
- Guide state programs, policies, and investments that influence the location of conservation and/or development.

What types of areas could be designated as a PCA?

- The determination of what areas are designated as PCAs is decided upon by the Watershed Planning Partnerships.
- Examples of types of areas include; parks, forests, wildlife refuges, wilderness areas, scenic areas, aquatic preserves, areas of critical habitat for endangered or threatened species, rivers, frequently flooded areas, lakes, estuaries, aquifer recharge areas, geologically hazardous areas, prime farmland, coastal and riparian lands, recreation areas, and other environmentally sensitive areas in the watershed.

What factors could determine the designation of a PCA?

- Whether the ecological value of the area is of substantial watershed or basinwide significance.
- Whether the ecological functions provided by the area are of substantial watershed or basinwide significance.
- Whether the area is susceptible to significant natural hazards that would affect existing or planned development within it.
- Whether the area contains designated critical habitat or any threatened or endangered plant or animal species.
- Whether the area contains a unique, ecologically sensitive, or valuable ecosystem whose loss or decline would negatively affect watershed, state, or national biodiversity.
- Whether the area offers significant recreational, historical, or quality of life benefits.
- Whether the area offers opportunities for ecological restoration in urban areas.



This information provided by the Ohio Lake Erie Commission
One Maritime Plaza, 4th Fl., Toledo, OH 43604
www.epa.state.oh.us/oleo

04/05

Criteria Used to Create Draft PAAs, PCAs & PDAs

Priority Agricultural Areas (PAAs)

Why PAAs?

Agriculture is an important land use factor to consider when developing a watershed balanced growth plan. The Upper West Branch of the Rocky River Watershed Planning Partnership (WPP) opted to create a separate priority category for agriculture rather than trying to fit it into the category of PCA or PDA for the following reasons:

- Agricultural land use could be classified as a factor for either conservation or development based on practices applied.
- Representatives from Farm Bureau indicated that farmers want to keep their options open for how their land will be used.
- It is hoped that farms located in areas designated as PAAs will receive extra consideration for state agricultural programs.
- There is a desire to preserve the watersheds rural heritage.

Suitability factor applied- Farmland enrolled as AG (Agricultural) Districts.

Further defining factors:

- Agricultural Districts
Farms in agricultural districts indicate a willingness to maintain the land in agriculture.
- Operating farms.
Active farm operations as opposed to once farmed land or land being held for development speculation would have a greater potential for long-term stability of use.
- Landowner cooperation.
The cooperation of the owner of a farm is very important to maintain the land in agriculture.
- Locally significant farms.
Locally significant farms may not have all of the characteristics of prime farmland but its importance to the local community's economy or local character that the local community may wish to help maintain the agricultural use.
- Presence of local utilities (May be a negative factor.)
Farmland that is within easy access to public utilities such as central sewer and water may be committed to development due to the higher value of the land and the community's need to recoup the capital investment in the infrastructure.

Rational: Originally, all soils classified as “prime farmland soils” by the NRCS, USDA, were being considered to designate PAAs. With 74% of the watershed covered by these soils, this factor was not limiting enough. The next step was to look at where operating farms were located within the watershed. Eventually the operating farms were narrowed down to ones that are enrolled in the Agricultural District program. It was felt that these farms were somewhat of an agricultural equivalent to enterprise zones. It should also be noted that layer will tend to be fluid due to farmers opting into or out of the program as desires change.

Priority Conservation Areas (PCAs)

Suitability factors applied-

Factor 1- Floodplains

Areas that meet one of the following conditions:

- Within a 100-year floodplain designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency
- Classified as flood prone soils by the Natural Resources Conservation Service

Further defining factor:

The delineation of floodplains should be done by hydrologic analysis and verified by the Medina County Highway Engineer’s office.

Factor 2- Riparian Corridors

Areas that meet one of the following conditions:

- Within 120’ of the edge of a stream that drains 20-300 sq mi
- Within 75’ of the edge of a stream that drains 0.5-20 sq mi
- Within 25’ of the edge of a stream that drains under 0.5 sq mi

Further defining factor:

- Riparian Setback Areas should be delimited along all streams with a defined bed and bank. The width of the setback area should be determined as a function of the size of the upstream watershed.

Factor 3- Forests

- Areas covered by 20 or more acres of contiguous forest

Further defining factors:

- The degree of value and protection efforts can be a function of the size and shape of woodlands.
Larger wooded areas typically provide a greater diversity of wildlife habitat and narrow wooded areas between larger woodlands can provide corridors to allow for wildlife movement.

- Woodlands associated with a stream or wetland.
Wooded strips adjacent to a stream can greatly benefit the water body. The forest can stabilize the stream bank controlling erosion, help keep nutrients and pesticides from reaching the water, provide shade to stabilize water temperature and provide for a more varied wildlife habitat. Forested stream buffers therefore offer a high degree of protection for a stream. Forested wetlands can also provide a high quality of wildlife habitat and are often considered high value wetlands.
- Quality and age of the stand.
Stands of mature forests can provide habitat for certain wildlife species, especially cavity nesting birds.
- Woodland Function
The infiltrative capacity of forested areas is key to ground water recharge.

Factor 4- Steep Slopes

Areas located on slopes with a steepness of 12% or greater

Factor 5- Parklands

Parcels held by the Medina County Park District

(Note: city and township parks are categorized from features of the "land use" layer i.e. urban recreational grasslands, forests)

Factor 6- Conservation Easements

Parcels held in conservation easements by the:

- Western Reserve Land Conservancy – Medina/Summit Chapter
- Cleveland Museum of Natural History

Factor 7- Wetlands

Areas identified on the *National Wetlands Inventory* that intersect with *hydric soils*.

It should also be noted that wetland areas not identified on this layer are likely lie within areas already covered by the above suitability factors.

Further defining factor:

Three criteria are used to identify wetlands: the presence of hydrophytic vegetation, hydric soils, and water at or near the surface during part of the growing season. When a delineation study is done on a particular site and accepted by the US Army Corps of Engineers and/or the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, wetlands can be classified into Category 1 (low quality), Category 2 (moderate to high quality) and Category 3 (high quality). Varying width buffer areas may be established around the wetlands according to these categories.

Priority Development Areas (PDAs)

Suitability factors applied for residential development-

The entire Pilot Project Area, where not in conflict with PCA and PDA (commercial/industrial) areas, currently developed areas, or jurisdictional desires, has high potential for residential development

Further defining factor:

Density of development will depend on the availability of public sewer and water, local zoning and market forces.

Suitability factors applied for commercial/industrial development-

Factor 1- Sewer Service (in conjunction with factor 2 below)

Areas with current sewer service or projected to have sewer service within the next 20 years

Further defining factor:

- Construction costs

Although a sizeable portion of the pilot study area is projected to have future sewer service, actual expansion in some areas may be limited by construction expenses (i.e. digging through bedrock or the need to install pumping stations).

Factor 2- Proximity to Major Highways

Areas that currently have or are projected to have sewer service *and* which are located:

- within 1000' of State routes
- within 1000' of US routes

Further defining factor:

- Highway access

Interstate highways were excluded because they are limited access and interchanges would be covered under the criteria listed in above in factor 2.

Factor 3- Enterprise Zones and Community Reinvestment Areas (in conjunction with factor 4 below)

Factor 4- Commercial or Industrial Zoning

Absent from map- fiber-optic ring, rail lines with siding access

These factors, although important, are absent from the list because they are located within the PDA areas created by the factors listed above.

PCA/PDA Overlap Areas

Apparent conflict areas exist where PCAs and PDAs intersect. It was felt, however, that since these areas could represent opportunities for incentives for either conservation or development, they should be shown in a unique color.

Note- the map layers for the above suitability factors were created using the best available data. Minor revisions will be made as more timely information becomes available.