

1506.23 Lake Erie protection fund - purposes.

(A) There is hereby created in the state treasury the Lake Erie protection fund, which shall consist of moneys deposited into the fund from the issuance of Lake Erie license plates under section 4503.52 of the Revised Code and donations, gifts, bequests, and other moneys received for the purposes of this section. Not later than the first day of June each year, the Ohio Lake Erie commission created in section 1506.21 of the Revised Code shall designate one of its members to administer the fund and, with the approval of the commission, to expend moneys from the fund for any of the following purposes:

(1) Accelerating the pace of research into the economic, environmental, and human health effects of contamination of Lake Erie and its tributaries;

(2) Funding cooperative research and data collection regarding Lake Erie water quality and toxic contamination;

(3) Developing improved methods of measuring water quality and establishing a firm scientific base for implementing a basinwide system of water quality management for Lake Erie and its tributaries;

(4) Supporting research to improve the scientific knowledge on which protection policies are based and devising new and innovative clean-up techniques for toxic contaminants;

(5) Supplementing, in a stable and predictable manner, state commitments to policies and programs pertaining to Lake Erie water quality and resource protection;

(6) Encouraging cooperation with and among leaders from state legislatures, state agencies, political subdivisions, business and industry, labor, institutions of higher education, environmental organizations, and conservation groups within the Lake Erie basin;

(7) Awarding of grants to any agency of the United States, any state agency, as "agency" is defined in division (A)(2) of section 111.15 of the Revised Code, any political subdivision, any educational institution, or any nonprofit organization for the development and implementation of projects and programs that are designed to protect Lake Erie by reducing toxic contamination of or improving water quality in Lake Erie;

(8) Expenses authorized by the Ohio Lake Erie commission necessary to implement this chapter.

(B) Moneys in the Lake Erie protection fund are not intended to replace other moneys expended by any agency of the United States, any state agency, as "agency" is so defined, any political subdivision, any educational institution, or any nonprofit organization for projects and programs that are designed to protect Lake Erie by reducing toxic contamination of or improving water quality in Lake Erie.

(C) Each March, the Ohio Lake Erie commission shall publish a Lake Erie protection agenda that describes proposed uses of the Lake Erie protection fund for the following state fiscal year. The agenda shall be the subject of at least one public meeting of the commission held in the Lake Erie basin. The commission shall submit the agenda to the governor, the president of the senate, and the speaker of the house of representatives.

(D) Not later than September 1, 1991, and annually thereafter, the Lake Erie commission shall prepare a report of the activities that were undertaken by the commission under this section during the immediately preceding fiscal year, including, without limitation, revenues and expenses for the preceding fiscal year. The commission shall submit the report to the governor, the president of the senate, and the speaker of the house of representatives.

Effective Date: 06-30-1997