

Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Conservation Authorities Support Efforts to Clean Up Lake Erie

NEWMARKET (February 23, 2018) Conservation Authorities are pleased to use their watershed management programs and services to support Federal and Provincial efforts to reduce phosphorus in Lake Erie by 40 percent.

Phosphorus is a primary cause of harmful algal blooms that can have a wide range of impacts on the environment, human health and the economy. The final Lake Erie Action Plan recently released by the Government of Canada and the Province of Ontario identifies Conservation Authorities as key partners and outlines a number of activities they will be doing to contribute to the effort to improve conditions for the Great Lake.

“The nine Conservation Authorities that work in the Lake Erie watershed have years of experience in tracking conditions and working with many other agencies and landowners to target efforts for improvements,” said Dick Hibma, Chair of Conservation Ontario, the organization that represents all of Ontario’s 36 Conservation Authorities.

“With continuing partnerships and additional investments, the Lake Erie Action plan provides us with a window of opportunity to ramp up that work,” Hibma said.

For more than 40 years, Conservation Authorities in the Lake Erie watershed have provided technical assistance and financial incentives to improve and protect water quality. They have supported a number of activities and best management practices as well as led the development of source water protection plans for Lake Erie.

Lake Erie Conservation Authorities regularly monitor and report on conditions, target actions through watershed planning and coordinate the delivery of programs in partnership with many different partners including governments, other agencies and landowners. Data collected by these Conservation Authorities contributes significantly to the science of Lake Erie and its watershed.

The Conservation Authorities measure outcomes through water quality sampling and report on the outcomes of actions related to surface and groundwater quality, forest conditions and overall watershed health through watershed report cards, annual reports and other strategic efforts.

Conservation Authorities lead many local water quality and restoration initiatives with municipalities, landowners, agriculture and other partners and look forward to leveraging

expertise and potential resources to undertake priority actions.

Conservation Authority monitoring programs and evaluation of best management practices contribute towards the adaptive management approach to the plan which aligns with an integrated watershed management approach.

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