

The Euclid Creek Watershed is part of a much larger system: the Great Lakes. There are a variety of efforts at the local, state, national, and international level that are concerned with the health of this region. This watershed plan complements these regional projects and goals.

Great Lakes/Lake Erie

Euclid Creek is part of the Lake Erie and Great Lakes ecosystems which comprise the largest freshwater system in the world. The Lake Erie basin, which encompasses portions of the United States and Canada, is the most populated and land-developed area of all of the Great Lakes. The basin, which is 30,140 square miles in size, is home to over 11 million people. Lake Erie is considered the most biologically productive of the Great Lakes in terms of diversity and abundance of fisheries and other species within its waters.

Figure 4.0 Coastal Management Area



Coastal Management Area of Euclid Creek.

Ohio Coastal Management Program

The lower portion of the watershed is within the designated Coastal Management Area as established by the federally approved Ohio Coastal Management Program. **See Figure 4.0.**

The Ohio Coastal Management Program sets forth the guidelines for wise use of Ohio's valuable coastal resources to ensure their continued benefit for this and future generations.

The goal of the Ohio Coastal Management Program is threefold:

- To preserve, protect, develop, restore and enhance Lake Erie's valuable resources,
- To manage coastal activities that affect the resources, and
- To foster the resources' sustainable use for the benefit of all Ohio citizens.

Networking between local, state, and federal entities is an important aspect of Ohio's Coastal Management Program which establishes policies concerning the protection of air, water, wildlife, rare and endangered species, wetlands, and natural areas. Ohio's Coastal Management Program also provides for the management of coastal erosion areas and the public trust property of Lake Erie. The Program has an advisory council and provides for grants to local communities, nonprofit organizations, and educational institutions for projects that enhance the coast.

The Coastal Program outlines standards for coastal development, redevelopment, and historic and cultural restoration. This is done with the goal of increasing the public's access to the coastal area for recreational purposes. In 2000, ODNR's Strategic Plan for Coastal Management identified Habitat Protection and Sustainable Development as its two highest priorities. **Appendix E** has an overview of the Coastal Management Program.

Ohio Lake Erie Commission Watershed Balanced Growth Plans

This is a voluntary, incentive-based program for balanced growth in the Ohio Lake Erie basin. The planning framework includes:

- A focus on land use and development planning in the major river tributary watersheds of Lake Erie basin.
- The creation of Watershed Planning Partnerships composed of local governments, planning agencies, nonprofit organizations, and other parties in each watershed.
- The locally determined designation of Priority Conservation Areas and Priority Development Areas in each watershed.
- The development of suggested model regulations to help promote best local land use practices that minimize impacts on water quality.
- The alignment of state policies, incentives, and other resources to support watershed planning and implementation.

The framework also incorporates the "10 Guiding Principles" of the Lake Erie Protection and Restoration Plan. More information on the Balanced Growth Initiative is available in **Appendix F**.

International Joint Commission Designated Area of Concern⁷

On April 15, 1972, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau and President Richard Nixon met to sign the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. This Agreement committed Canada and the United States to control pollution in the Great Lakes. In 1978, a new Agreement was signed and the two countries pledged "to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the waters of the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem." In 1987, the Protocol was signed, emphasizing the importance of human and aquatic ecosystem health. The Protocol introduced provisions to develop and implement Remedial Action Plans (RAPs) and Lakewide Management Plans (LaMPs). RAPs focused on the 43 geographic Areas of Concern, take an ecosystem approach, and draw upon broad local community involvement. LaMPs are designed to improve the environmental quality of the open waters of each of the Great Lakes, with a particular focus on Critical Pollutants. Under the terms of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, the two federal Governments are expected to implement programs and report on their progress in restoring, preserving, and protecting the Great Lakes. The International Joint Commission (IJC) has been charged with reviewing and evaluating these programs and progress.

Of the 43 AOCs, 26 are located entirely within the United States, 12 are located wholly within Canada, and five are shared by both countries. Euclid Creek has been designated as part of the Cuyahoga Area of Concern (AOC). RAPs are being developed for each of these AOCs to address impairments to any one of 14 beneficial uses (e.g., restrictions on fish and wildlife consumption, dredging activities, and drinking water consumption) associated with these areas.

⁷USEPA (<http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/glwqa/>)

Cuyahoga County Greenspace Plan

Over the past 50 years, economic development in Cuyahoga County has expanded outward from the urban core. In 1948, approximately 26 percent of the land in the county was developed. In comparison, 90 percent of the land was developed in 2002. Surprisingly, the population during both time periods was nearly the same—1.4 million. The trends indicate Cuyahoga County will soon be the first “built-out” county in the State.

Greenspace has much to offer: supporting native species, maintaining natural ecological processes, sustaining air and water resources, and increasing overall health and quality of life for communities. Quality natural resources within the county are becoming increasingly rare, which makes preserving remaining natural areas and rehabilitating low quality areas a priority. The ultimate goal is to integrate natural resource protection into the County’s pattern of development as both a core infrastructure system and as a community amenity.

The Cuyahoga County Greenspace Plan proposes a broad strategy for making natural areas a more integral part of daily life. Natural features such as the lake shoreline, river corridors, and hillsides are the backbone for the plan. Basic elements of the plan include the creation of a system of natural corridors, a countrywide trail system, the preservation of scenic views, and the protection and restoration of critical natural areas. The involvement of the public through education and private property stewardship is also a key element. **See Figures 4.1 and 4.1.1.**

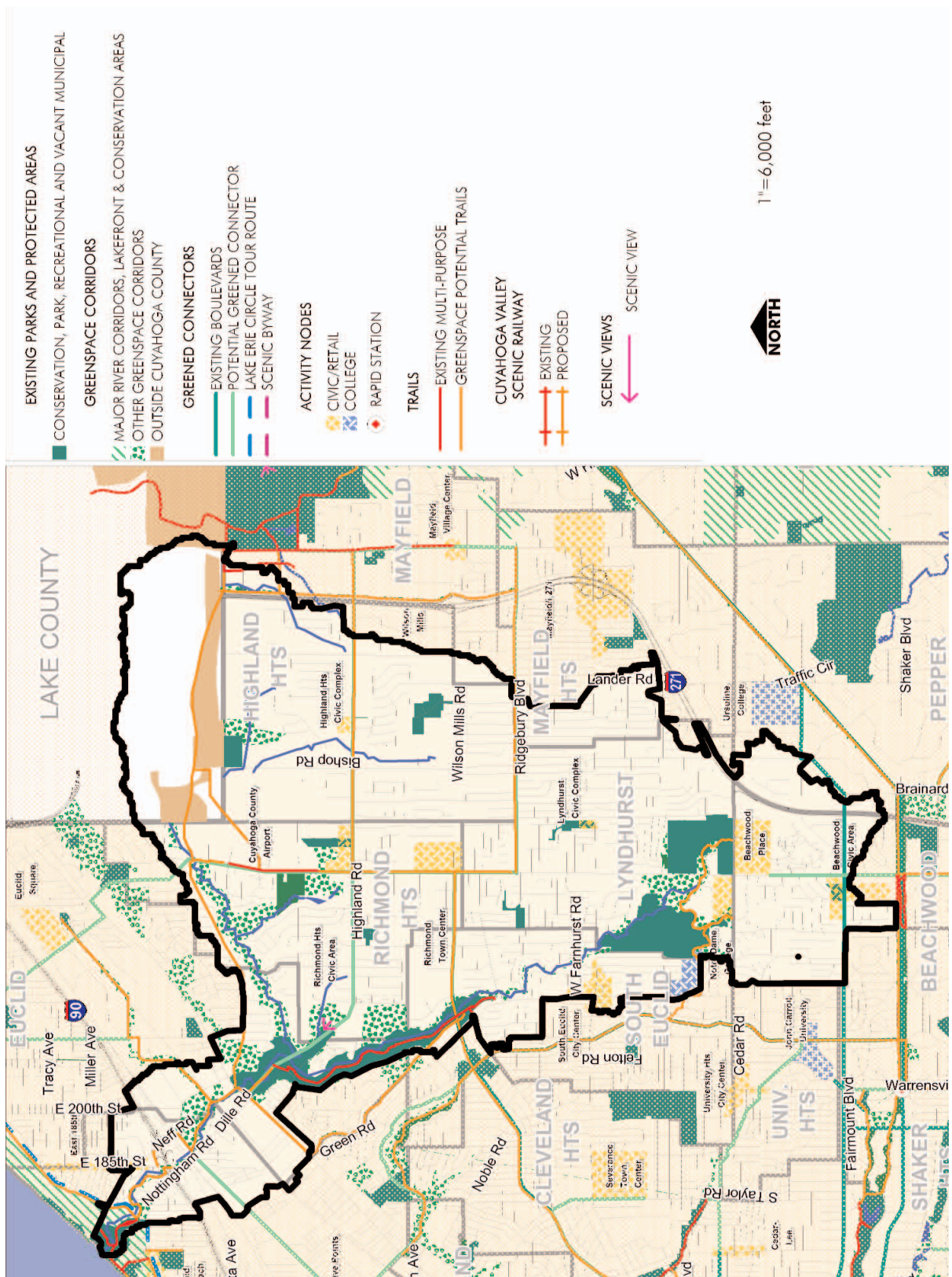
Other key concepts in the Greenspace Plan serve as the foundation for many recommendations in the Euclid Creek Watershed Planning Guide. Some of these concepts include restoration, better access, and sensitive development strategies of natural areas, improved connections between natural areas and other community centers, and development orientation toward natural areas.

Figure 4.1 Cuyahoga County Greenprint Trail Concept



Euclid Creek Watershed in relation to the County Greenprint Trail Plan.

Figure 4.1.1 Cuyahoga County Greenspace Plan



Euclid Creek section of the Cuyahoga County Greenspace Plan.