



Reconnect with your environment

Learn about environmental issues, their effect on your community and actions for your involvement.



DAVE SKELLIE/Contributed photo

All of this trash picked up by these Penn State Behrend volunteers during the 2012 ICC did not originate along the Lake Erie coast.

You can volunteer now for 2013 Coastal Cleanup

By ANNA McCARTNEY
Contributing writer

LEARN MORE

The trash picked up by volunteers along the Erie shoreline each year during the International Coastal Cleanup probably didn't start there. Much of it was carried from the upper watershed by stormwater.

Each year on the third Saturday in September, ICC volunteers pick up and document this human-related debris. It's a one-day collection event and snapshot of the global problem — and it's not a pretty picture. Trash is compromising Lake Erie and other waterways and the ocean by contributing to the deterioration of these life-supporting ecosystems.

What will you be doing on Sept. 21?

Save that date so you can join volunteers locally who are helping to protect our vital water resources from one of the greatest global pollution problems.

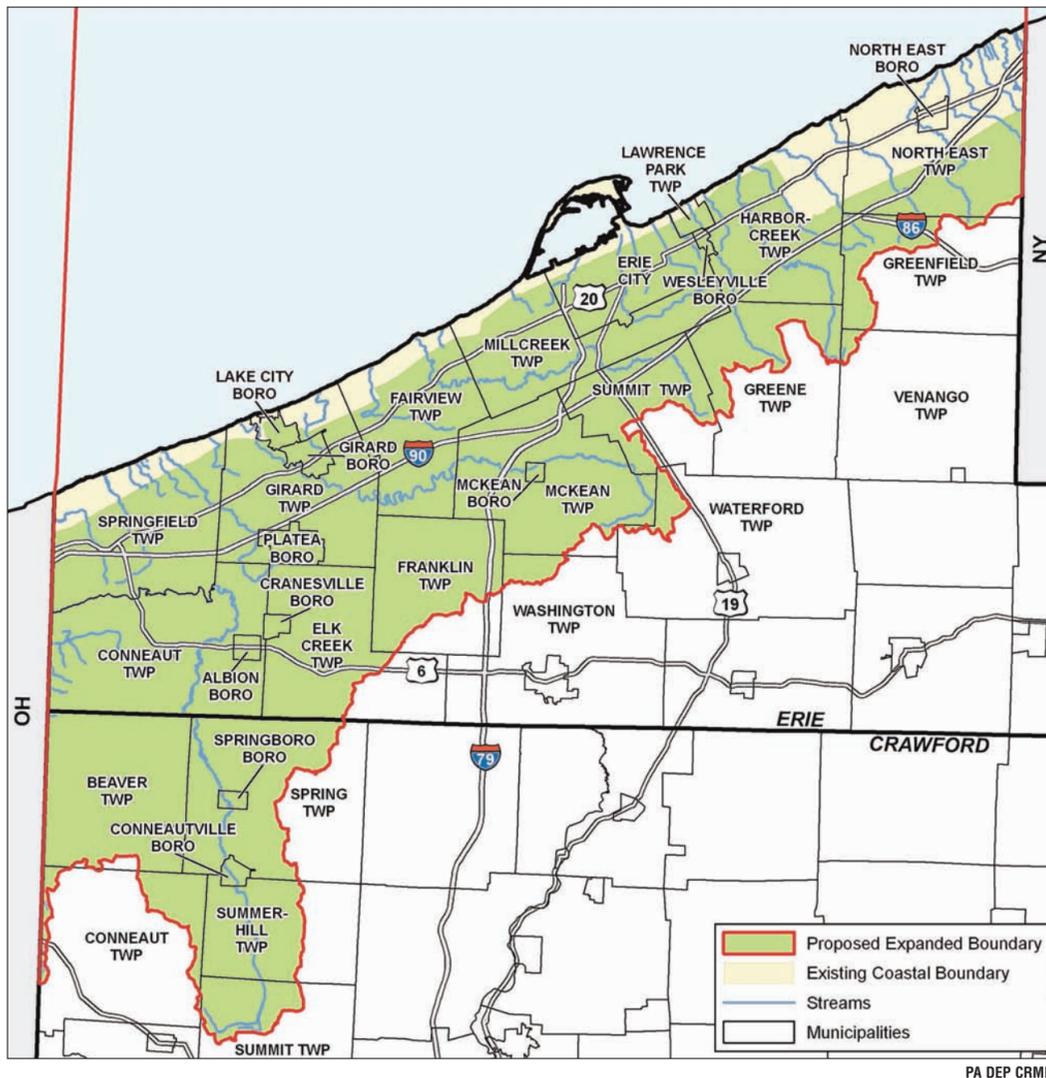
During the 2012 event, more than 3,300 volunteers of all ages removed 6,222 pounds of trash at 15 sites around northern Erie County. Waste Management and the state Department of Environmental Protection Coastal

Today is the last NIE Tuesday page for this school year. Join us again in September when the Erie Times-News NIE program and Pennsylvania Sea Grant will again provide you with more opportunities to learn about issues that impact our environment and how you can make a difference. We will continue to share the best-proven tools and practices backed by current scientific studies that can help protect and restore the Pennsylvania-Lake Erie watershed.

Resources Management Program sponsor the Erie event. The cleanup has attracted more than 11,000 volunteers over the past 10 years.

Paint a better picture by not littering and by participating in the next yearly event on Sept. 21 from 9 a.m. to noon. For more information and to register, visit www.goerie.com/coastalcleanup.

ANNA McCARTNEY, a communications and education specialist for Pennsylvania Sea Grant, can be reached by e-mail at acm40@psu.edu.



PA DEP CRMP

All the land in the watershed (green and yellow area) drains to Lake Erie. The current Lake Erie Coastal Zone (yellow area) does not address the fact that water quality and quantity problems are caused by land activities and conditions that impact all the water flowing into the lake. Expanding the boundary (red line) would create new opportunities for grant-funded projects to address these problems.

Border order

Should boundary expand for coastal zone program?



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The children on the Green Team at the Neighborhood Art House removed grass and weeds, loosened the soil and planted flowers at the back garden bed at East 10th and Parade streets. The neighbor next door let's them use her water for watering.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Gospel Hill Garden Club and Lawrence Park Garden Club volunteers teach the young residents at Gannondale the art of gardening and how to conduct a spring cleanup at the Lawrence Park Township Building.

By ANNA McCARTNEY
Contributing writer

Should the Pennsylvania Coastal Resources Management Program's Lake Erie coastal zone boundary include all Pennsylvania water that flows into Lake Erie?

You can learn about a proposal to increase the current boundary to a larger watershed-based area and make comments at upcoming public meetings (see breakout). Why should you care?

Lake Erie is vital to our region environmentally and economically because it provides water for drinking, recreation, fishing, manufacturing and irrigation. It is also critically important for wildlife, including millions of migratory birds. Protecting it should be a priority.

Many problems that affect water quality and quantity begin in the upper reaches of the watershed. Stormwater runoff does not recognize artificial boundaries as it picks up pollutants on agricultural and developed land and carries them downstream. Runoff contributes to poor water quality, beach closings, erosion, flooding, habitat degradation and loss of biodiversity. Shouldn't the boundary be expanded to include all the land surfaces that drain water into storm drains and tributaries that empty into Lake Erie?

In 1972, Congress established the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) to preserve, protect, develop, enhance and restore the nation's coastal resources. States like Pennsylvania with federally approved coastal programs must identify a coastal zone that meets general standards in the CZMA. Coastal boundaries can extend as far inland as necessary to include



ANNA McCARTNEY/Contributed photo

Increasing the coastal zone boundary can address problems caused when nutrients, sediment and other pollutants are carried into storm drains and streams in the watershed and eventually Lake Erie, where they contribute to algae blooms and sedimentation.

lands where activities can have a direct and significant impact on coastal waters, beaches and adjacent shore lands.

While involvement is not mandatory, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration provides federal CZMA funding to participating ocean and Great Lakes states to manage their coastal resources and balance economic development with resource protection and conservation.

For years, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection has been asked to consider boundary expansion so CZMA grant funds could be used throughout the Lake Erie watershed to build a better future for tourism, fishing and recreation and to reduce nonpoint source pollution. In 2011, the local Lake Erie Advisory Committee passed a motion to study and consider an expanded watershed boundary

that recognizes the hydrological connection between the entire drainage area and the health of Lake Erie.

Expanding the boundary will increase funding opportunities to address problems throughout the watershed. Since receiving CZMA grants requires matching funds, new changes to the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission's Steelhead Stamp Program (Act 40 of 2009), which allows moneys to be used to conduct headwater stream habitat restorations, could be used as match for projects upstream. Other match sources include DEP, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Department of Community and Economic Development and in certain cases, local/county funding.

Since 1980, the Pennsylvania Coastal Resources Management Program has provided more than \$50 million for projects in

HAVE YOUR SAY

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection has scheduled three public meetings on whether the Lake Erie coastal zone boundary should be expanded to include all Pennsylvania water that flows into Lake Erie.

The meetings are June 18 at 9 a.m. at the Springboro Community Center, June 18 at 6:30 p.m. at the Girard Township building and June 19 at 3 p.m. at the Blasco Library in Erie.

two established coastal areas — Lake Erie and the tidal Delaware River estuary. The grant funds have been restricted to the smaller boundary area along the coastline. Past funded projects include: land acquisition and minor construction projects like fishing access areas, shoreline parks and park improvements, and public education efforts like this weekly News in Education page. Eligible organizations include municipalities, townships, boroughs, cities and counties and nonprofits with projects located in a Pennsylvania's coastal zone.

Local grass-roots planning and control within the federal and state-created framework, in addition to public participation and match funding, have made this program successful. Attend the upcoming public meetings for additional information and to share your ideas, or visit <http://www.dep.state.pa.us/river/about/boundexp.htm>.

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Check out these websites to learn more:

www.dep.state.pa.us/river/czmp.htm
<http://coastalmanagement.noaa.gov/>
www.eriecountypartnership.org/index.php?page=czm
www.paseagrant.org

A summer break for the Tuesday NIE environment page does not mean you should stop reading the newspaper.

Over the summer read your local newspaper and other news sources to keep track of environmental issues, especially those that impact Lake Erie and the other Great Lakes. Be ready to share what you learn and your ideas for solutions to any problems when we return in September.

Have a great summer!

