



July 19, 2018

New phosphorus technologies to clean up Lake Erie
Federal funding invested in innovative Thames River initiative

Chatham, Ontario – Today, the Thames River Phosphorus Reduction Collaborative (PRC) received \$600,000 from the federal Great Lakes Protection Initiative to develop and test technologies that intercept and remove phosphorus from agricultural runoff. Phosphorus entering the system contributes to the growth of harmful algal blooms in the Thames River and Lake Erie.

“Mayors and farm groups have joined forces to find solutions to algal bloom problems in the Lake Erie basin.” said Randy Hope, Mayor of Chatham-Kent and the project’s co-chair, “We’re thrilled that Minister McKenna has provided the kind of funding that will allow us to move forward with practical, hands-on projects to help farmers and municipalities reduce the amount of phosphorus that’s getting into our creeks, rivers and lakes”.

Beginning this fall, and over the next four years, the PRC will be using the funding to install phosphorus removal technologies and monitor their effectiveness:

- at the edge of agricultural fields, and
- in municipal drains that collect agricultural runoff.

The PRC will promote the project, the technologies and the phosphorus removal results with farmers, municipalities, Indigenous communities, conservation groups, and drainage professionals in the Thames River Basin, throughout Ontario, and ultimately to other Great Lakes states.

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This project was undertaken with the financial support of:
Ce projet a été réalisé avec l'appui financier de :



Environment and
Climate Change Canada

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Changement climatique Canada

“We are working hard to find and make reliable, affordable technologies available to help farmers in their ongoing efforts to maintain and improve water quality,” said Mark Reusser, co-chair of the PRC and Vice-President of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture.

Phosphorus from agricultural lands, among other sources, can trigger the growth of toxic algal blooms in downstream water bodies. The western basin of Lake Erie has regularly experienced massive algal growth that has impacted drinking water sources in recent years.

The PRC is a voluntary initiative cited in the Canadian Domestic Action Plan aimed at contributing to the commitment made in 2016 between Canada and the U.S. to a 40 per cent reduction in the total phosphorus entering Lake Erie.

The PRC represents agricultural organizations, municipalities, conservation authorities, First Nations and environmental non-governmental organizations. Details of the collaborative, its work and a full listing of steering committee members is at www.thamesriverprc.com

The PRC is administered by the [Ontario Federation of Agriculture](#) and the [Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative](#).

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