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**More funding for new phosphorus technologies to clean up Lake Erie
*Federal-provincial program boosts innovative Thames River initiative***

Chatham, Ontario – The Thames River Phosphorus Reduction Collaborative (PRC) received nearly \$200,000 from the Canadian Agricultural Partnership 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.

“As a group representing mayors and farm groups, we are determined to help resolve the algal bloom problem for our communities,” said Randy Hope, Mayor of Chatham-Kent and the project’s co-chair, “We’re thankful that the Canadian Agricultural Partnership program is providing us with the resources we need to get on with the job of devising and testing practical, affordable options for reducing the amount of phosphorus that makes its way into Lake Erie.”

Beginning this fall, and over the next three years, the Thames River 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.

“We are pleased to be able to support on-farm environmental action and scientific research related to the management of phosphorus in the Lake Erie basin,” said Lawrence MacAulay, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food. “Science and research are important drivers of clean growth in the agricultural sector and projects like these are a win-win-win for farmers, the environment, and the economy.”

The funding will be added to \$600,000 in financing announced earlier this year from the Great Lakes Protection Initiative under Environment and Climate Change Canada. Altogether, a total of nine demonstration sites will be developed in the Thames River watershed.

“Our government is pleased to support this great project. It’s an innovative and collaborative approach to help farmers, municipalities and other governments explore technologies and improve understanding on how best to tackle the local issues contributing to algae blooms in Lake Erie and its watershed,” said Ernie Hardeman, Ontario’s Minister of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs.

The collaborative 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 is a strong collaboration project, involving a large cross-section of local community participants. This collaborative approach will help facilitate the transfer of project outcomes, including the actions required to improve surface water quality in the Lake Erie basin, which is a focus for environmental stewardship projects funded through the Canadian Agricultural Partnership,” said Kelly Duffy, Agricultural Adaptation Council Chair.

“This latest funding will allow us to do more tests under different conditions so we can develop modern technologies that work for farmers in their ongoing efforts to protect water quality in our lakes, rivers and streams,” said Mark Reusser, co-chair of the project and Vice-President of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture.

The Thames River PRC is a voluntary initiative cited in the Canada Ontario Lake Erie 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 group represents agricultural organizations, municipalities, conservation authorities, First Nations, 4R Nutrient Stewardship, the Drainage sector, and environmental non-governmental organizations. Details of the collaborative, its work and a full listing of steering committee members are at www.thamesriverprc.com

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

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