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Whole lake to get alum

By Nancy Allen

GRAND LAKE - The entire Grand Lake will be treated with aluminum sulfate beginning April 1 to help combat blue-green algae blooms this summer.

The state this morning announced it has come up with the \$5 million needed for the treatment.

Roughly \$1.6 million in Ohio EPA Water Pollution Control Loan funds were left over from last year when the state spent \$3.4 million to treat just the center of the lake with alum. The additional funds for this year's whole lake treatment will come from the Ohio Water Development Authority's Distressed Watershed Loan Program.

"We are hoping this whole lake treatment will play a major role in having an advisory-free lake this year, one of our 2012 goals," Lake Restoration Commission manager Milt Miller said.

Alum deactivates phosphorous, algae's main food source. Most of the phosphorous that runs off into the 13,500-acre lake comes from agriculture land, the largest land use in the 58,000-acre watershed.

Ohio Department of Natural Resources Director Jim Zehringer of Fort Recovery said the state is committed to improving water quality in Ohio's largest inland lake.

"A healthy and thriving lake will not only benefit the residents of Mercer and Auglaize counties, but this improvement will benefit all Ohioans," Zehringer said in a prepared news release.

The release also says ODNR's Division of Parks and Recreation will provide additional funding for investigations at other inland lakes in Ohio that have experienced harmful algae blooms the last few years.

Miller lauded the state for coming through with the funds.

"The state in fact has done everything they have committed to do," Miller said. "Gov. Kasich had people on our doorstep before he had his cabinet announced, and they have been wonderful partners ever since."

Story continued here:

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