

Conservation planning: Thinking ahead so everyone will be able to experience the incredible richness of nature

In 2005, LEAP members began to explore how to develop a regional plan for conservation and restoration of biodiversity. In addition to accepting responsibility for various planning roles, they agreed that the regional biodiversity plan should:

- Provide a regional vision and strategy for conservation and restoration (i.e., the plan should go beyond conservation of what's left of the region's biodiversity to also include a vision for restoration).
- Utilize a science-based planning methodology to identify and prioritize conservation and restoration objectives.
- Focus on the preservation of overall ecosystem function and resilience but also include individual species of concern.
- Set specific, quantifiable conservation goals and provide a mechanism for monitoring progress.
- Provide a blueprint for conservation action to be carried out by different organizations based on their individual objectives and capacities.
- Integrate relevant aspects of the region's other plans for land use and development, while still retaining its conservation focus.
- Provide a public communication tool about the region's natural heritage.
- Influence decision makers about the threats to biodiversity; inform them of protection and restoration opportunities; and help stop the loss of biodiversity.

LEAP members are now developing this plan to guide their future work. Success will require ongoing consensus building, collaboration, and support from everyone in the Lake Erie Allegheny region.

Lost from the region

- ☞ Bear berry
- ☞ Lynx
- ☞ Mitchell's marsh satyr butterfly
- ☞ Passenger pigeon
- ☞ Piping plover
- ☞ Swallow-tailed kite
- ☞ Timber wolf



Making a comeback

- ☞ Bald eagle
- ☞ Black bear
- ☞ Bobcat
- ☞ Mink
- ☞ Peregrine falcon
- ☞ River otters (improving water quality in the region's rivers has made it possible to reintroduce the river otter.)
- ☞ Snowshoe hare
- ☞ Turkey