*Developing a vision for coastal conservation in western Lake Erie*.

What did we do?

Science and Conservation staff – working with local, state, federal, NGO and university partners and building on the Lake Erie Biodiversity Conservation Strategy (LEBCS) – have compiled and assessed spatial datasets representing ecological targets, human well-being values and costs associated with implementing conservation practices to produce a map illustrating where focused conservation investments can optimize benefits to people and nature. Science staff played a key role in identifying ecological targets and human well-being values, acquiring and creating data sets, and applying the conservation planning software Marxan to generate this optimized, spatial conservation vision. These staff also developed an online, interactive map that enables users to find specific information about important areas of interest to them, and to download data. (insert better version of this map, or some other relevant map):
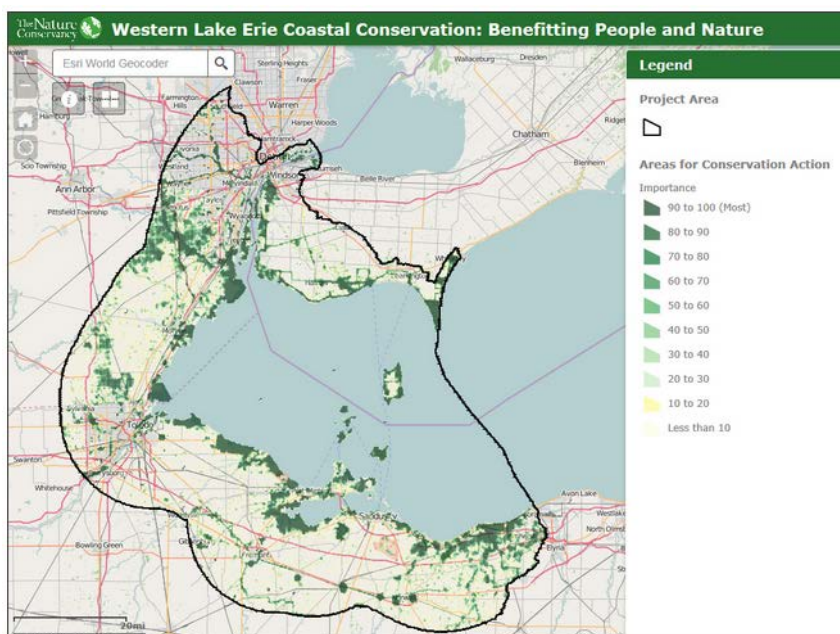
Why does this matter?

Conservation practitioners in western Lake Erie – one of the most heavily altered and stressed regions in the Great Lakes – face tremendous challenges in identifying how to most cost-effectively invest limited dollars for conservation and restoration.

How will the results be applied?

This map and online tool enable public and private conservation and restoration partners to quickly evaluate opportunities as they arise and proactively plan future investments. Conservancy staff in Ohio have used the results to validate and achieve funding for restoration projects, and in Michigan to identify ideal areas for wetland mitigation projects. Further,

building on this work, science staff are developing a [coastal resilience decision support tool](#) – the first application of coastalresilience.org in the Great Lakes – to assist local planners and decision makers in identifying opportunities to enhance resilience to storms and flooding along the coast. The coastal resilience tool will incorporate the results of the conservation vision analysis.