



Ohio Revised Code

Section 1506.31 Administrative rules establishing Lake Erie submerged lands preserves.

Effective: September 29, 2015

Legislation: House Bill 141 - 131st General Assembly

(A) In order to provide special protection for abandoned property and features and formations in Lake Erie having historical, archaeological, recreational, ecological, geological, environmental, educational, scenic, or scientific value, the director of natural resources, with the approval of the director of the Ohio history connection, may adopt rules in accordance with Chapter 119. of the Revised Code establishing Lake Erie submerged lands preserves. A preserve may be established for any area of submerged lands that contains a single watercraft or aircraft of historical value, two or more watercraft or aircraft constituting abandoned property, or other features of archaeological, historical, recreational, ecological, environmental, educational, scenic, scientific, or geological value other than sand, gravel, stone, and other minerals and substances authorized to be taken and removed in accordance with section 1505.07 of the Revised Code.

Any rule adopted under this division shall describe the area included in the preserve so designated and the abandoned property or features of archaeological, historical, recreational, ecological, geological, environmental, educational, scenic, or scientific value found in the preserve. Each preserve shall encompass the designated area and within that area shall extend upward to and include the surface of the water. Any number of preserves may be designated; however, an individual preserve shall not exceed three hundred square miles in area and the total area of all submerged lands designated as preserves shall not exceed ten per cent of the total submerged lands of Lake Erie.

(B) When establishing a preserve under division (A) of this section, the directors of natural resources and the Ohio history connection shall consider all of the following factors:

(1) Whether creating the preserve is necessary to protect either abandoned property or significant underwater features possessing historical, archaeological, recreational, geological, ecological, environmental, educational, scenic, or scientific value;

(2) The extent of local public and private support for creation of the preserve;



(3) If the purpose of the preserve is to be recreational, the extent to which preserve support facilities such as roads, marinas, charter services, hotels, medical hyperbaric facilities, and rescue agencies have been developed in or are planned for the coastal area that is nearest the proposed preserve;

(4) Whether creating the preserve will conflict with existing or potential removals of sand, gravel, stone, or other minerals or substances authorized to be taken and removed in accordance with section 1505.07 of the Revised Code.

(C) The director of natural resources, with the approval of the director of the Ohio history connection, may establish policies and may adopt rules in accordance with Chapter 119. of the Revised Code governing access to and the use of any preserve established under division (A) of this section. The director of natural resources shall limit or prohibit access to abandoned property in a preserve only if one of the following conditions is met:

(1) The site of the abandoned property is biologically or ecologically sensitive or is hazardous to human safety.

(2) Any abandoned property of significant historical value in the preserve is extremely fragile and in danger of collapsing.

(3) Any abandoned property of historical value in the preserve is suffering extensive deterioration or attrition due to prior unregulated access.

(4) The director of natural resources has agreed to limit access during the term of a permit issued under section 1506.32 of the Revised Code at the request of the holder of the permit who is recovering, altering, salvaging, or destroying abandoned property in the preserve in accordance with the permit.