

Western Lake Erie HAB Early Season Projection

Projection 07 - 2023-06-15

Summary:

The Western Lake Erie HAB Early Season Projection provides an estimate of potential cyanobacterial harmful algal bloom (HAB) severity. The projected severity depends on input of total bioavailable phosphorus (TBP) from the Maume River during the loading season (March 1-July 31), and uses a combination of measurements and forecasts of Maume River discharge from the National Weather Service - Ohio River Forecast Center (through July) and phosphorus loads measured by the Heidelberg University National Center for Water Quality Research.

With observations through June 14th, we see no change in the forecast from previous weeks and continue to predict a small to moderate bloom with a severity between 2.5-5.5. A smaller bloom (severity: 2.5-3.5), is expected if precipitation remains at or below average for the rest of the loading season (June-July). The range in forecasted severity reflects the uncertainty in forecasting precipitation, particularly for July. We will issue a comprehensive seasonal forecast on June 29th. Any bloom that does develop will change throughout the summer and move with the wind and currents; we will provide information on the presence and location of the bloom throughout the summer.

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Predicted Bloom Severity

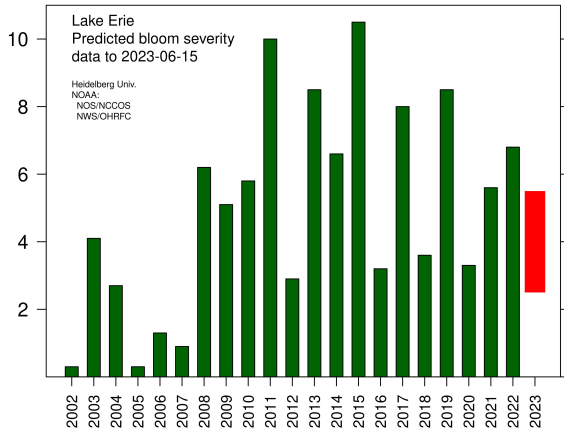


Fig. 1. Predicted bloom severity as compared to previous years. The wide red bar is the likely range of severity based on the limits of the forecast uncertainty. There is uncertainty in the bloom severity due to the river forecast and estimated TBP loads in July.

Total Bioavailable Phosphorus

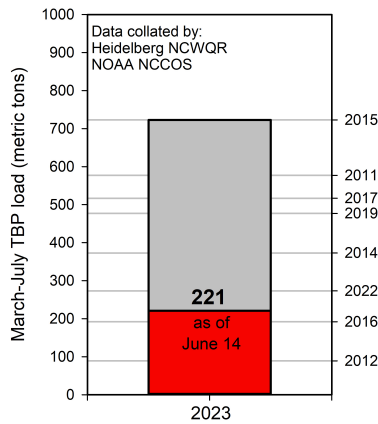


Fig. 3. Total bioavailable phosphorus (TBP) load accumulated from the Maume River near Waterville, OH to date. The right axis denotes the TBP load from selected previous years.

Cumulative Total Bioavailable Phosphorus

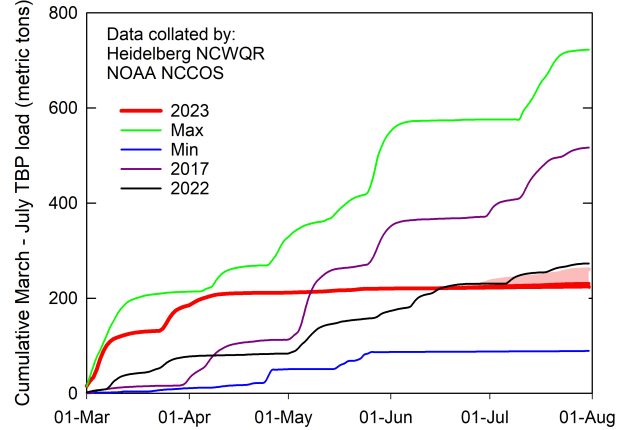


Fig. 2. Cumulative TBP loads for the Maume River (Waterville, OH). Each line denotes a different year or the min/max cumulative load since 2002. 2023 is in red: the solid line is the measured load to June 14th; the red area shows the likely range for the remainder of the loading season; and the light red shows the possible range.

Satellite Image - True Color

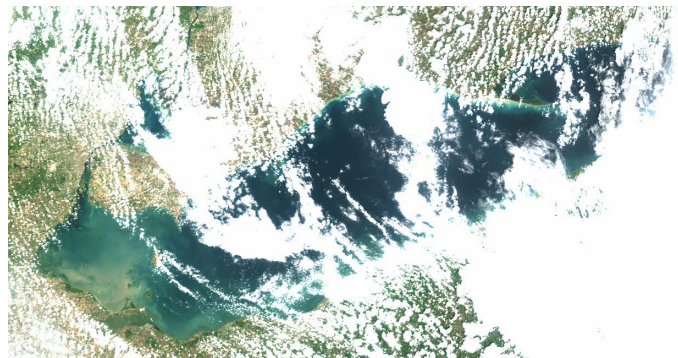


Fig. 4. True color image for 14 June 2023 derived from the Copernicus Sentinel-3a satellite. Discolored, tan colored water in the western Lake Erie basin is caused by sediment resuspension. Discolored, green colored water in Sandusky Bay shows the early summer cyanobacteria bloom in the Bay.

For more information visit: coastalscience.noaa.gov/science-areas/habs/hab-forecasts/lake-erie/ or ncwqr.gov/

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