

## #OhioFindItHere



Paddle the timeline of Lake Erie's boating history, which can be traced back as early as the 1800s. The lake is a popular boating destination, having a variety of vessels from rare sights of the historical U.S. Brig Niagara to massive freighters.

Lake Erie is the most biodiverse of all the Great Lakes as well as claiming the title of warmest and most shallow. Walleye, steelhead and perch can be found swimming off the shores of Cleveland. By air, you might catch a glimpse of osprey, double-crested cormorant and even the great blue heron.

The coastline of Lake Erie is seen as unforgiving as near vertical cliffs seem to rise out of the lake in many spots. The Lake Erie Water Trail, encompassing nearly twenty-five miles of shoreline, displays incredible examples of Cleveland Shale as old as 400 million years.

The West Pierhead Light House guards the entrance of the Cuyahoga River. This area is also the gateway for freighters hauling cargo to and from the Port of Cleveland. Give these vessels a wide berth as some of these skyscraper sized vessels can be around 700 feet long.

The Lake Erie Water Trail provides opportunities to explore the shoreline throughout Cuyahoga County. Enjoy paddling along dramatic cliffs, peaceful beaches and the many landmarks of downtown Cleveland. We hope you use this guide, which was made possible through a partnership between many organizations, to stay safe and have fun. Let us know about your adventures by sharing on social media with #OhioFindItHere.



- Governor Mike DeWine and First Lady Fran DeWine.

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## Are You Lake Erie Ready?

Paddling on Lake Erie can make you feel like you're on the ocean. Weather, wind and wave conditions can change quickly causing a pleasant paddle to become a dangerous situation with little notice. Know your ability. You can improve your paddling skills with local agencies or join one of the many paddling programs offered year-round by visiting [clevelandmetroparks.com/or](http://clevelandmetroparks.com/or).

Follow the 120° rule where combined air and water temperatures nearing or below 120° indicate you should consider wearing a wet or dry suit. Dress to get wet. Carry extra layers in a dry bag. Cold Kills! The human body loses heat 25X faster when immersed in cold water.



Carry rescue equipment such as a bilge pump and paddle float that will assist with re-entering the boat.



- CLEAN equipment of any plants and mud.
- DRAIN cockpits and hatches of water before leaving the area.
- DRY equipment before launching into another body of water.

✓Clean ✓Drain ✓Dry

## Don't Launch Without...



### The Safety Essentials



#### ✓ Radio

A VHF Radio allows you to communicate with the Coast Guard and listen to commercial boat traffic on **channel 16**.



#### ✓ Phone & App

Carry a cell phone in a waterproof case. Use apps like MarineTraffic to track freighters and large vessels. Save important emergency numbers in your phone.



#### ✓ Life Jacket

Don't be a statistic, always wear your life jacket. Over 75% of paddlesport fatalities were not wearing a life jacket!



#### ✓ Follow the Law

Keep signaling devices such as a whistle, distress flag, flares and a white light readily accessible. Register your kayak. Stand up paddleboards are exempt from registration.



#### ✓ Leash

Wear a leash on your stand up paddleboard.

## Paddle Smart



### Avoid Weather and Water Extremes

Even for paddlers who wear life jackets, extreme weather and water conditions are a source of trouble. High winds and storms over open water can turn flat waters into a wild and unfriendly place, especially in constricted areas like the mouths of river channels. If you encounter these conditions, get off the water!

#### Check the forecast

- ALWAYS check the nearshore marine forecast and lake condition warnings with NOAA.
- Monitor water quality using USGS NowCast Status and NEORS: beaches and water quality.

#### Don't wait for bad weather

- Scan for dark clouds on the horizon, especially from the west, or changes in wind direction.



- Understand how wind affects wave height, lake levels, rip currents, and your ability to paddle. As you travel away from shelter/shore, make sure you have the necessary skills and energy to travel back using landmarks to gauge your distance from shore.

- Steep, rocky cliffines dominate the water trail between access points. Always have an exit strategy and respect private property.

- Tell a friend where and when you're leaving and what time you expect to be back.

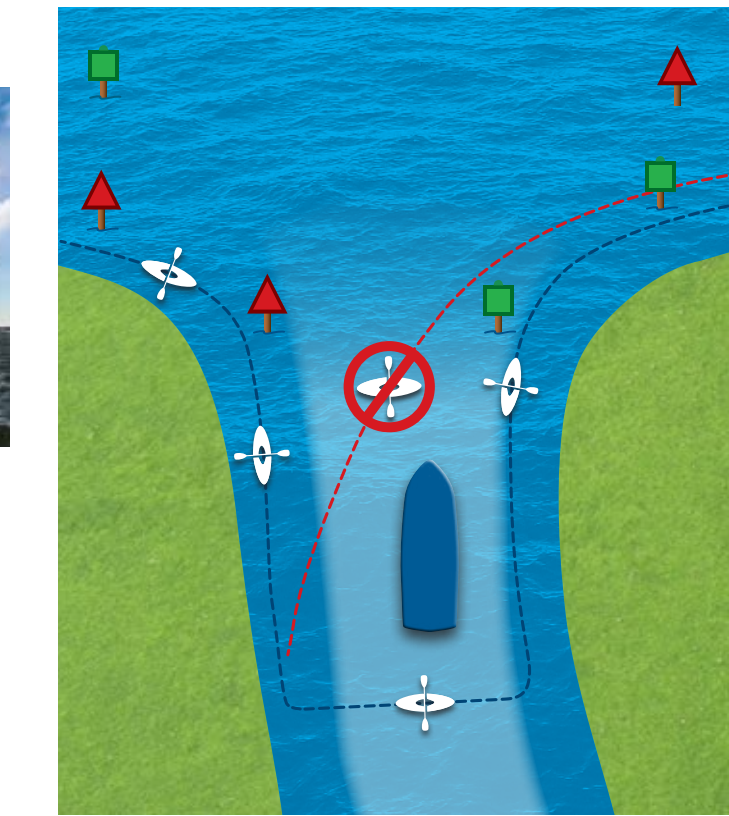
## See and Be Seen



It is imperative to know the **Rules of the Road** (navigation rules all boaters must follow) and how paddlers should interact with oncoming traffic.

#### Practice defensive paddling...

- Be vigilant; always looking out for other boaters.
- Never pass in front of powerboats; always pass behind moving through high traffic areas quickly. Do not impede a large ship's passage; commercial traffic always has the right of way.
- Travel close to shore where powerboats cannot travel. In a narrow channel, such as the Cuyahoga River, keep as near to the right side of the channel as is safe and practical.
- Make yourself visible with bright, reflective clothing, life jacket and paddle. Carry a white light at night.



## Know Your Boat



Know what type of water conditions your boat is designed to handle. Longer touring or sea kayaks are better designed for the waters of Lake Erie.

### Know your boat will float when flipped!

If your boat does not have barrier walls (known as bulkheads) that create dry air spaces, you should equip your kayak with float bags to add extra buoyancy.



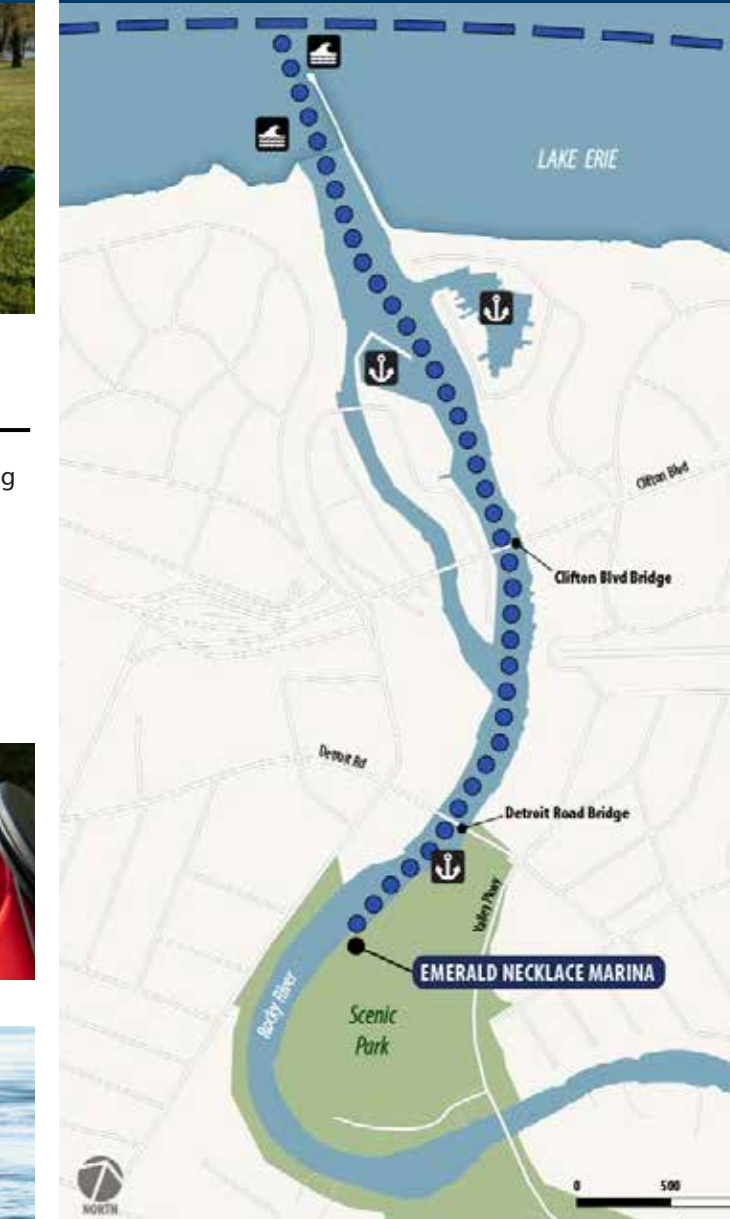
#### Know how to get back into your boat after a capsize.



#### Practice rescues in controlled conditions.



## Rocky River



## Cuyahoga River



## Euclid Creek - Wildwood



### How Big Is a Freighter?

(700 feet +/-)

This is the Terminal Tower on its side.



This brochure was a cooperative effort between Cleveland Metroparks, the Lake Erie Water Trail - Cuyahoga County partners and ODNR Division of Parks and Watercraft.



**HUNTINGTON BEACH**  
 Cleveland Metroparks 41.4902, -81.9311

Beachside boat drop-off in the lower parking lot. Vehicles must be parked in the main parking lot. This section is unprotected paddling running along rocky cliffline, traveling east to Perkins Beach. Please respect private property and swim areas.

← 5mi to Lorain County Veteran's Memorial Park      1.5mi to Columbia Park →

**COLUMBIA PARK - REST AREA**  
 City of Bay Village 41.4863, -81.9014

Paddlers may rest on the small beach only. Beach landing space fluctuates with lake water levels.

← 1.5mi to Huntington Beach      2mi to Bradstreet's Landing →

**BRADSTREET'S LANDING**  
 City of Rocky River 41.4828, -81.8681

The pier can provide a sheltered launch with easterly or westerly winds, launch is a sandy beach with a short carry distance.

← 2mi to Columbia Park      2.2mi to Emerald Necklace Marina  
 6mi to Perkins Beach →

**PERKINS BEACH**  
 Cleveland Metroparks 41.4891, -81.7534

Great beach rest area. The long staircase makes put-ins and take-outs difficult.

↘ 5.2mi to Emerald Necklace Marina      0.7mi to Edgewater Beach  
 ← 6mi to Bradstreet's Landing      6mi to Perkins Beach →

**EDGEWATER BEACH**  
 Cleveland Metroparks 41.4902, -81.9311

Paddling access follows along the rock jetty inside the buoys at the far side of the beach. Please stay clear of swim area. Boat drop-off is accessible in the temporary pull-off zone.

← 0.7mi to Perkins Beach      1.25mi to Wendy Park →

**WENDY PARK**  
 Cleveland Metroparks 41.4994, -81.7161

Wendy Park is protected by the breakwall and wind/wave conditions are muted. Motorboat traffic is concentrated here and can be very busy on weekends. Great downtown views; be mindful of freighter traffic.

← 1.5mi to Edgewater Beach      1.25mi to North Coast Harbor  
 1.5mi to Merwin's Wharf ↓

**E.55TH MARINA - REST AREA**  
 Cleveland Metroparks 41.5333, -81.6499

Hug the harbor wall to stay clear of the concentrated power boat traffic entering the marina. Paddling west will offer shelter behind the breakwall.

← 2.75mi to North Coast Harbor      0.75mi to Gordon Park →

**GORDON PARK BOAT RAMP**  
 Cleveland Metroparks 41.5409, -81.6348

Paddlers access the lake using E. 72 boat launch ramp. To avoid boaters, paddle along the shoreline as close as conditions permit.

← 0.75mi to E.55th Marina      5mi to Wildwood Park →

**WILDWOOD PARK**  
 Cleveland Metroparks 41.5861, -81.5649

Paddlers put-in at the marina. Paddlers can also paddle the calm waters of Euclid Creek. Respect individuals fishing and exercise caution when in proximity to marina traffic. Paddlers may rest on the non-swim area near Euclid Beach Pier.

← 5mi to Gordon Park      3mi to Sims Park →

**SIMS PARK**  
 City of Euclid 41.6164, -81.5238

Direct access is located in the circular parking lot to the east of Henn Mansion following a ramp to the pier and beach. The carry distance is approximately 500 feet.

← 3mi to Wildwood Park      3.5mi to Lake County Lakeshore Lodge Park →

**E.9TH/NORTH COAST HARBOR - REST AREA**  
 City of Cleveland 41.5101, -81.6972

The harbor provides a sheltered rest area between the no-access zones of the Port Authority and Burke Lakefront Airport (future access pending).

← 1.25mi to Wendy Park      3.5mi to Gordon Park →

**EMERALD NECKLACE MARINA**  
 Cleveland Metroparks 41.4800, -81.8327

This section features the calm waters of the Rocky River. The mouth of the river can be very turbulent. Proceed with caution if entering and move through quickly as boat traffic is extremely bottlenecked here. This location features an accessible kayak launch when conditions permit. Confirm ADA access with 216-226-3030, Emerald Necklace Marina.

← 2.2mi to Bradstreet's Landing      5.2mi to Perkins Beach →

**MERWIN'S WHARF**  
 Cleveland Metroparks 41.4896, -81.7032

CAUTION: Large freighters and heavy boat traffic. See reverse side for safety information.

↖ 1.5mi to Wendy Park      2.75mi to North Coast Harbor ↗

**EMERGENCY NUMBER**  
**CALL 911**  
**PADDLE AT YOUR OWN RISK**

For More Info Visit  
[ClevelandMetroparks.com/paddlesafety](http://ClevelandMetroparks.com/paddlesafety)

Paddle Access	Waves - Choppy Water	Lake Erie Water Trail
Parking	Marina/Yacht Club/Boat Docks	Lake Erie Water Trail - Access Route
Trailer Capable Parking	Swim Areas	Cuyahoga River Water Trail
Picnic Area	Freighter Traffic See Reverse Side for Information	No Public Access
Restroom	Federal Breakwall	Heavy Powerboat Traffic Areas
Food		
Drinking Water		

\*The water trail is lined with rocky cliffs and private property. Always have an exit strategy

0 0.5 1 2mi

