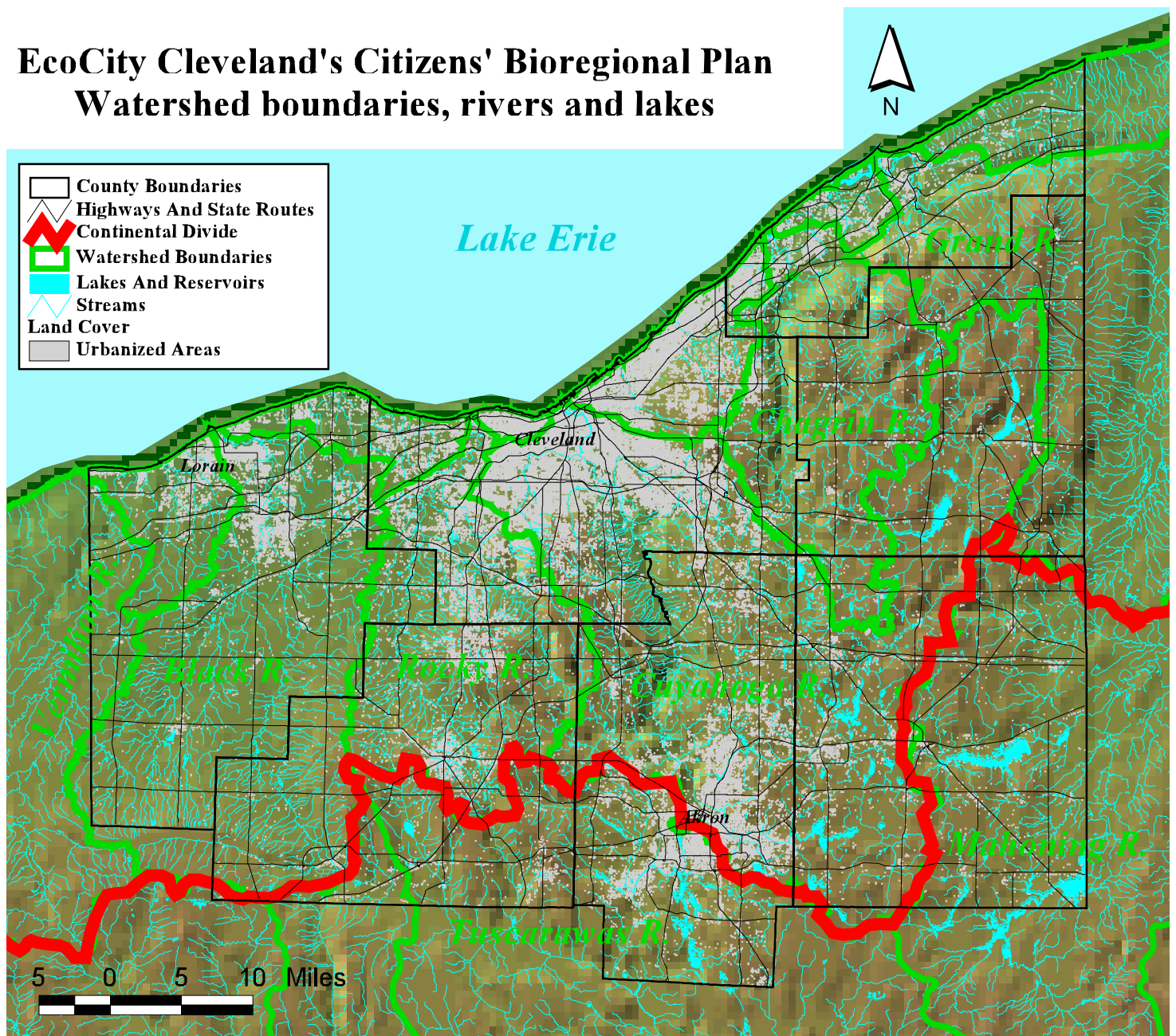


EcoCity Cleveland's Citizens' Bioregional Plan

Watershed boundaries, rivers and lakes



Watershed boundaries, rivers and lakes

More important in many ways than the imaginary political boundaries we impose on our region are the watersheds that unite our communities and our landscape. A watershed is an area of land from which surface water drains into a common outlet, such as a river, lake or wetland. Its boundaries are determined by the highest elevations that divide the flow of water over the land, sending it to different rivers and streams.

Depending on its size and location, a watershed can include rivers, creeks and streams, ditches, ponds, lakes, and wetlands. It can be as big as the international basin around the Great Lakes or as small as a meadow surrounding a creek.

Here in the Greater Cleveland region there are five major watersheds made up of the areas drained by the Black, Rocky,

Cuyahoga, Chagrin and Grand Rivers. The Mahoning and Tuscarawas Rivers and smaller creeks (such as Euclid Creek and Doan Brook) also drain portions of our region. These rivers and their watersheds vary widely in character from the heavily urban and industrial lower Cuyahoga to the Chagrin River with its exceptional aquatic habitats and the state-designated "wild and scenic" Grand River (one of only two designated wild rivers in Ohio).

Pay attention to the thick red line in the map above. It indicates the continental divide that snakes through our region. Raindrops falling to the ground in Akron and all along the divide begin a northward journey to Lake Erie (and eventually the North Atlantic Ocean via the St. Lawrence River) or a southward trip to the Ohio River and eventually the Gulf of Mexico.

Sources:

1. Highways/state routes: Ohio Department Of Transportation (ODOT)
2. Watershed boundaries:
 - a. Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA)
 - b. U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)
3. Open water bodies: Cleveland Metroparks, from Ohio Wetlands Inventory (OWI), Ohio Department Of Natural Resources (ODNR)
4. Streams: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)
5. Land cover: 1994 Landsat TM
6. Shaded relief: Ray Steiner, Johns Hopkins University, Applied Physics Laboratory, 1994