



ERIE Program assesses restoration options for the Earsing Sills Oxbow Wetland (West Seneca, NY)



Ecosystem Restoration

A broad range of activities to assist the recovery of aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems that have been impaired, damaged or destroyed.

The ERIE Program:

An interdisciplinary doctoral program at UB that advances ecosystem restoration science and engineering. ERIE addresses critical knowledge gaps by training researchers in ecological restoration science, engineering, policy, ethics, and cultural considerations, through focus on issues facing the Great Lakes and western New York.

The ERIE collaborative partnership spans eight graduate programs at UB:

- American Studies
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Environmental Engineering
- Evolution, Ecology and Behavior
- Geography
- Geology
- Philosophy

(January 2010) The *Ecosystem Restoration through Interdisciplinary Exchange* (ERIE)

Program at UB recently completed its inaugural “Ecosystem Restoration Practicum” course in which trainees collaborated across disciplines in a culminating project in ecosystem restoration. In Fall of 2009, six Ph.D. trainees from five separate disciplines at UB (American Studies, Biology, Environmental Engineering, Geography, and Philosophy) were brought together as a team to study restoration alternatives for the Earsing Sills Oxbow Wetland (West Seneca, NY), a regionally-rare riparian environment of legacy value to the heavily industrialized Buffalo River watershed. Through the course of the one-semester project, and in collaboration with the external sponsor Buffalo-Niagara Riverkeeper, ERIE trainees conducted extensive biological and engineering assessment fieldwork at the site to address potential enhancement of existing habitats, modification of hydrological functions, management of invasive species, and explore community involvement issues at the



site. The project group gave technical presentations to site stakeholders and advisory groups; produced a series of informational posters for future public meetings; and developed a comprehensive sub-watershed restoration and stewardship plan that contributes to the preservation of a rare yet important ecotype in western New York.