

# Monitoring for Harmful Algal Blooms: The Promise and Pitfalls of the Great Lakes Observing System

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The Great lakes Observing system is a network of Buoys, ships, and shore-based systems that provide near real time information on the state of our Great lakes. In recent years, the Great Lakes have experienced an increased incidence of harmful algal blooms – benthic algae and cyanobacteria blooms that produce potentially produce toxins that negatively impact the water quality of Lake’s Erie and Ontario. The Great Lakes Observing system has considerable promise for both detecting and forecasting these blooms, however there are a number of practical and biochemical considerations that must be resolved before this network can replace traditional sample-based monitoring. Recent efforts to deploy ship based systems to detect cyanobacterial blooms; as well as future possibilities for RIT scientists to become involved in GLOS will be discussed.

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