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**OHIO LAKE ERIE AWARDS PRESENTED TO ASHTABULA RIVER RESTORATION GROUP AND TO
A LEADER OF OHIO'S BOATING COMMUNITY**

Norm Schultz and Ashtabula River RAP/Partnership recognized for service

COLUMBUS, OH – The 2007 Ohio Lake Erie Awards were presented today to Norm Schultz, president emeritus of the Lake Erie Marine Trades Association, and to the Ashtabula River RAP/Partnership, which has worked for 19 years to clean up the mouth of that important Lake Erie tributary.

Sean Logan, chairman of the Ohio Lake Erie Commission and director of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) made the presentation, which is given annually to an individual and organization that has demonstrated exceptional stewardship of Lake Erie.

It is an honor to help recognize Norm Schultz and the Ashtabula River RAP/Partnership for their long-standing commitment to the stewardship of Ohio's waters," said ODNR Director Sean Logan. "They recognize and embody the extent to which our economic health and the health of our natural resources are connected. They have been great friends to Lake Erie and have supported us as we work to create a state where business, families and nature can prosper."

Schultz served as the president of the Lake Erie Marine Trades Association for 33 years and remains a leading advocate for Ohio boaters, especially Lake Erie boaters. He is founder of the North American In-Water Boat Show at Cedar Point, which has been the largest in-water boat show on the Great Lakes for 32 years.

The Boating Association of Ohio, which Schultz formed in 1980, combines the interests of boat manufacturers, dealers and owners into one political voice. It has helped enact more than a dozen pieces of legislation, including doubling the amount of financial resources for the ODNR Division of Watercraft for boating safety, education, law enforcement and public access. The association helped reduce the taxes on boat purchases and improve titling procedures.

Schultz has served on the Waterways Safety Council for 22 years. The council oversees boating programs for the ODNR Division of Watercraft. He was also named "Boater of the Year" by the Greater Cleveland Boating Association and the Lake Erie Safe Boating Council, and received the Irv Rosenthal Award – the highest honor of the Marine Retailers Association of America. The U.S. Coast Guard has honored Schultz with its Meritorious Services Award – the organization's highest civilian award.

The Ashtabula River RAP/Partnership has worked since 1988 to restore the lower 2 miles of the Ashtabula River by removing contaminated sediments. Identified as a Great Lakes Area of Concern in

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1985, this portion of the river has been contaminated for many years by industrial activity.

Following 12 years of effort, the partnership succeeded in obtaining a \$25 million award under the Great Lakes Legacy Act – matched by another \$25 million in state and local funds – to remove 500,000 cubic yards of sediment containing various chemicals and pollutants from the river bottom and dispose of them in an upland landfill. The partnership has persisted in keeping this project “high profile,” enlisting the aid of state, local and federal entities, as well as concerned citizens. Dredging is now slated for completion by the end of this year.

The dredging project is the largest single step to removing the Ashtabula River from the International Joint Commission’s list of 43 Areas of Concern. The Areas of Concern were designated in the 1987 annex to the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreements for harbors and tributaries that require special attention to restore the beneficial uses of the area and the ability to support aquatic life.

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