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**OHIO LAKE ERIE COMMISSION AWARDS MORE THAN \$80,000 IN GRANTS TO
FIVE ORGANIZATIONS FOR RESEARCH AND RECREATION**

TOLEDO, OH – The Ohio Lake Erie Commission has awarded a total of \$82,554 to five projects that will enhance recreational opportunities and increase knowledge of the lake's ecosystem.

Case Western Reserve University will receive \$14,992 for a two-year study of sediment oxygen demand and its effect on lake water quality. The results will be incorporated into the ECOFORE modeling framework, a five-year multi-disciplinary project that began in 2006.

The Ashtabula Lighthouse Society will receive \$15,000 to install a floating dock at the lighthouse in order to allow greater public access and increased visitation. Future plans are to restore the lighthouse as a complement to nearby Geneva State Park Lodge & Conference Center, as well as other area parks and beaches.

The U.S. Geological Survey will receive \$15,000 to add Edgewater Beach to the Ohio Nowcast, which measures water turbidity and bacteria levels at beaches. The project will install a probe on an existing nearshore buoy at Edgewater. The probe will transmit data to a remote station and eliminate the need for beach sampling. The project will also install a photosynthetically active radiation (PAR) measuring device at Huntington Beach. PAR has been shown to reduce bacterial concentrations in the environment.

The U.S. Geological Survey will receive \$12,880 to study turbidity and its relationship to *E. coli* concentrations in the Cuyahoga River within Cuyahoga Valley National Park. Recreational value of the river is often impaired by elevated bacteria counts. This study will create a predictive model for more effective management of the park's water, while reducing the public's risk of exposure to bacteria.

Cinecraft Production, Inc. of Cleveland will receive \$24,682 to produce a "Best Land Use Practices" DVD as recommended by the Balanced Growth Blue Ribbon Task

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Force. The DVD will be distributed to attendees at technical workshops held to instruct local planners, developers and public officials about the Balanced Growth Project.

The commission was created to preserve Lake Erie's natural resources, enhance its water quality and promote economic development in the region. The director of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources serves as the commission's chairman. Additional members include the directors of the departments of transportation, development, health, agriculture and the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency.

The commission oversees the Ohio Lake Erie Protection Fund, which is the source of grant funding. This fund is supported by Ohioans each time they purchase a Lake Erie license plate displaying the Marblehead Lighthouse as designed by Ohio artist Ben Richmond.

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