

NEWS RELEASE

NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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2009 Coastweeks Will Honor Ohio's Valuable Coastal Resources

Toledo, Ohio -- Ohio is preparing for its annual celebration of Lake Erie's diverse coastal region and the cultural and economic resources that contribute to the quality of life and vitality of the region.

The 2009 Coastweeks observance will focus on the preservation and protection of Lake Erie and its watershed through a variety of cleanup events along the shoreline and throughout its watershed. Ohio's program focuses on the theme, "I Can Help Lake Erie." It encourages people to recognize and advocate resource protection while balancing economic, cultural and environmental interests.

"Lake Erie has influenced the growth of Ohio through productive agricultural lands, industries, international harbors and as a recreational destination," said Ed Hammett. "Taking part in a Coastweeks cleanup is a great way for those who benefit from the lake to give back."

This year, Ohioans will demonstrate their commitment to clean, safe beaches and waterways on September 19, International Coastal Cleanup Day. The Ohio Lake Erie Commission coordinates the state's observance, which allows thousands of Ohioans to find solutions for litter that pollutes beaches, streams and tributaries.

Environmental organizations, schools, scout groups, clubs, community groups and individuals throughout Ohio's Lake Erie watershed are encouraged to get involved in this year's Coastweeks by organizing an event.

Visit the [OLEC Web site](#) or call (419) 245-2514 to learn more about the 2009 Coastweeks, or to obtain an event planning brochure to organize a cleanup. The OLEC will provide the tools needed to promote an organization's Coastweeks events.

The Ohio Lake Erie Commission was established for the purpose of preserving Lake Erie's natural resources, protecting the quality of its waters and ecosystem, and promoting 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 state departments of Transportation, Health, Development, Agriculture and the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency.

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