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OHIO LAKE ERIE COMMISSION HONORS LAKE ERIE ADVOCATES

TOLEDO, OH - The Ohio Lake Erie Commission has announced the winners of the 2009 Ohio Lake Erie Awards, which annually recognizes an individual and an organization that have made outstanding contributions to enhance Ohio's Great Lake.

Fred Snyder, from Fremont, Ohio, whose career and life have been dedicated to the betterment of Lake Erie through educational programs, research and teaching, received this year's Lake Erie Award. Snyder, who recently retired from the Ohio Sea Grant Program where he served as an Extension Specialist with OSU/Ohio Sea Grant College Program, was the first Ohio Sea Grant Extension Agent for the state. He has served as District Sea Grant Extension Specialist for western Lake Erie since 1978 and has been the program co-coordinator since 1998. Snyder grew up in the fishing tackle/bail business in West Liberty, Ohio. He conducted the first Ohio Charter Captain's Conference in 1981 and has helped it grow to become the largest in the nation. Snyder's marine advisory efforts have focused on the fishing industry development, exotic species in the Great Lakes, water quality improvement, tourism and coastal business development.

Ducks Unlimited received the 2009 Lake Erie Award for its wetland conservation efforts in Ohio, which have protected more than 6,500 acres in the Lake Erie Watershed since 1985. DU has restored more than 21,000 acres of wetlands statewide and has consistently provided leadership, science-based solutions, partnership-building and funding to implement on-the-ground wetland conservation throughout Ohio and the Lake Erie Watershed. DU Director for Public Policy Gildo Tori and Manager of Conservation Programs Roy Kroll accepted the award on the organization's behalf.

Winners were announced at the Commission's annual meeting on September 28 at the University of Toledo's Lake Erie Center.

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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