

May 19, 2008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ASBPA Announces 2008 Winners of Best Restored Beaches

FORT MYERS, FL – The American Shore and Beach Preservation Association (ASBPA) today announced winners of its 2008 Best Restored Beach Award.

This year's winners are: the beaches of North Boca Raton, Fla.; Ocean Isle Beach, N.C.; Olympic Sculpture Park, Seattle, Wash.; South Walton & Destin Beaches, Fla.; Kuhio Beach, Waikiki, Hawaii; and Venice Beach, Fla.

"ASBPA created the Best Restored Beach award as a way of highlighting the value of restored beaches," said Harry Simmons, mayor of Caswell Beach, N.C., and ASBPA president. "As Americans flock to our nation's coastline during the upcoming beach season, most don't even realize they may be enjoying a restored beach."

For the last 40 years, beach restoration has been the preferred method of shore protection in coastal communities on the east, west and Gulf coasts. Beach restoration is the process of placing beach-quality sand on eroding beaches to reverse or offset the effects of erosion.

The three main reasons for restoration are storm protection (a wide sandy beach helps separate storm waves from upland structures and infrastructure), habitat restoration (numerous species rely on wide, healthy beaches as a place to live, feed and nest) and recreation (America's beaches have twice as many visitors annually as all of America's national parks combined). Studies have shown that for each dollar spent on beach restoration projects; \$4 to \$5 accrues back to taxpayers in benefits.

Coastal communities have restored more than 370 beaches in the United States, including such iconic coastlines as Miami Beach, Coney Island and Southern California's Venice Beach.

Coastal communities nominated their restoration projects for consideration, and an independent panel of coastal managers and scientists selected the winners. Judging was based on three criteria: the economic and ecological benefits the beach brings to its community; the short- and long-term success of the restoration project; and the challenges each community overcame during the course of the project.

One of this year's winners – South Walton & Destin Beaches – overcame significant obstacles to restore their beaches after a series of storms, beginning when Hurricane Opal in 1995, caused devastating erosion of the area's beaches and dunes. After seven years of project planning, the communities worked

together to restore the beaches in 2007 while paying special attention to area wildlife, including the Gulf sturgeon, a threatened species of fish, whose critical habitat lies within the project area.

Among the comments by judges concerning the other honored beaches:

Kuhio Beach, Waikiki, HI: Waikiki is Honolulu's ocean recreation playground, a small but thriving tourist town that contains Hawaii's busiest beach. Waikiki brings in over 46 percent (\$3.6 billion) of the state's economic contribution from tourism. This project had the benefit of encouraging the state of Hawaii to plan a larger restoration nearby, as well as emphasizing the merits of beach restoration to numerous Waikiki resorts.

North Boca Raton, FL: This project is characterized by its longevity, environmental sensitivity and foresight. In the 1970s, the city acquired three large beachfront properties to convert into public parks. In today's dollars, the parks are worth over \$330 million, making these parks the city's most valuable asset. North Boca is a model beach project because most residents and visitors do not realize that it is a restored beach.

Ocean Isle Beach, NC: Thanks to high-quality sand from the inlet, the project outperformed expectations by extending the planned three-year renourishment interval to five years. Sand captured in the inlet borrow area is used for periodic renourishment; this provides a renewable sand source for the project while maintaining a navigable inlet channel.

Olympic Sculpture Park, Seattle, WA: Seattle's downtown waterfront, which hasn't had any beaches for more than a century, has been given a gift in seeing firsthand the value of a beach in the midst of its busiest, most densely populated neighborhood. Millions of residents and visitors are being inspired to re-think the importance of beaches along their own downtown waterfronts.

Venice Beach, FL: Severe erosion had exposed public and private property to storm damage, reduced turtle nesting habitat, and weakened the tourism potential of Venice Beach in the early 1990's. The restored beach performed so favorably that in 2005, when renourishment was scheduled, only 33 percent of the sand had eroded. The restored beach offers recreational amenities such as myriad beach uses, snorkeling at the artificial reef sites, and searching for prehistoric sharks' teeth, for which Venice is famous.

"This year's award-winning restoration projects displayed solid science principles as well as excellent environmental concerns," Simmons concluded.

Past award winners include: Panama City Beach, Fla., in 2002; San Diego Beach in 2003; Ocean City, Md., in 2004; the beaches of South Padre Island, Texas, in 2005; Rehoboth and Dewey Beaches in Delaware in 2006; and the Chaland Headland Restoration Project in Louisiana in 2007.

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ABOUT ASBPA

Founded in 1926, the American Shore and Beach Preservation Association (ASBPA) represents the scientific, technical and political interests along the coast in an effort to shape national research and policy concerning shore and beach management and restoration. ASBPA strives to engage in a factual debate on coastal issues and economics that will foster sound, far-sighted and economical development

and preservation of our beaches; thereby aiding in placing their beliefs within the reach of the largest possible number of people in accordance with the ideals of a democratic nation. For additional information about ASBPA, please visit www.asbpa.org.