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West Hampton Dunes Beach Named One of America's Top Restored Beaches

Beach called "a blueprint for shoreline restoration and habitat enrichment"

Fort Myers, FL – On the eve of the summer beach season, the American Shore and Beach Preservation Association (ASBPA) named the West Hampton Dunes Beach Restoration Project in Long Island, N.Y. one of America's Top Restored Beaches. The West Hampton Dunes Project received the award following successful efforts by local, state and national authorities to reverse the effects of erosion and storm damage on its shoreline.

"West Hampton Dunes represents a blueprint for shoreline restoration and habitat enrichment," said (contact). "At one time the beach was a poster child for coastal mismanagement – plagued by erosion and poor responses to destructive storms. No longer. A dedicated corps of local, state and federal officials worked hard to restore its coasts and the fragile wildlife habitat along its shores, making West Hampton Dunes one of our nation's premier beaches."

The shoreline of what is now the Village of West Hampton Dunes began experiencing increased erosion following the construction of a groin fields, set of finger-like extensions from the shoreline, east of the village. This eventually led to extensive over wash and a breach of the barrier island in 1992. Since that time, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Suffolk County Department of Public Works and the Village of West Hampton Dunes have worked together to successfully restore the beach, boost public access and safeguard endangered wildlife habitat.

"The Top Nourished Beach award was created in 2001 as a way of highlighting nourished beaches," said Mayor Harry Simmons of Caswell Beach, N.C. and President of ASBPA. "As Americans begin to flock to our nation's coastline during the upcoming beach season, most beach-going Americans don't even realize they may be enjoying a nourished beach."

Beach nourishment – the process of placing sufficient quantities of beach quality sand on eroding beaches to combat erosion – began occurring in the United States over 40 years ago in coastal communities on the East, West and Gulf Coasts. America now has over 370 nourished beaches, including Miami Beach; Coney Island, N.Y.; Waikiki and Venice Beach, Calif. Studies have shown that each dollar spent on beach nourishment generates an additional four to five in taxpayer benefits.

The Top Restored Beaches were chosen based upon three criteria: the economic and ecological benefits the beach brings to its community; the short and long-term success of the nourishment project; and the challenges each community overcame during the course of the project. In addition to the West Hampton Dunes project, the 2007 winners included: Chaland Headland Restoration Project, La.; East Beach,

Norfolk, Va.; Collier County Beaches, Fla.; Folly Beach; S.C.; Perdido Pass, Ala.; and Surfside-Sunset Beach, C.A.

For more information about ASBPA, to schedule an interview with Harry Simmons or to obtain photos, please contact Larry Farnsworth of Crosby-Volmer International Communications at lfarnsworth@crosbyvolmer.com.

ABOUT ASBPA: Founded in 1926, the American Shore and Beach Preservation Association 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.aspba.org.

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