

Ted Strickland, Governor
Ed Hammett, Executive Director

One Maritime Plaza, Fourth Floor
Toledo, Ohio 43604
(419) 245-2514 lakeerie.ohio.gov

Contacts: Ed Hammett, Executive Director at (419) 245-2514

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2006 COASTWEEKS CELEBRATION IS SEPTEMBER 7 THROUGH 22
Organizations along Lake Erie encouraged to plan now for this two week-long celebration

TOLEDO , OH – Restoring and protecting Ohio 's Great Lake is the focus of this year's Coastweeks 2006 observance, September 7-22, according to the Ohio Lake Erie Commission (LEC), which coordinates the program.

Ohio 's Coastweeks is part of an annual nationwide effort to educate the public about protecting America 's coastlines. In Ohio , the focus is Lake Erie and its watershed.

Last year, beach walks, cleanups, and nature programs were examples of the popular activities that took place during Coastweeks. This year, Ohio 's Coastweeks will focus on cleanup events. International Coastal Cleanup Day takes place on Saturday, September 16, and is the world's largest one-day volunteer effort to clean up coastlines and waterways.

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

Visit the LEC web site at <http://www.epa.state.oh.us/oleo> or call 419-245-2514 to learn more about Coastweeks, to organize an event and to obtain an event application form. LEC will provide the tools needed to promote Coastweeks events. Coastweeks is also part of the federal "Take Pride in America " program, recognizing citizen volunteer efforts.

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 of 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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