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LAKE ERIE COMMISSION SPONSORS 2006 "LIFE ON LAKE ERIE" PHOTO CONTEST

Winning photos from 2005 contest now on exhibit at the Lake Erie Nature & Science Center

TOLEDO , OH – Camera buffs and photo aficionados are encouraged to enter this year's "Life on Lake Erie" photo contest, sponsored by the Ohio Lake Erie Commission.

"Last year, the contest drew a record 400 entries and produced some extraordinary images of the lake and its people," said Edwin Hammett, executive director of the commission.

The 2006 contest is open to amateur photographers who enjoy taking snapshots of Lake Erie . As with the 2005 contest, this year's competition has no specific subject categories and may depict a person, plant, wildlife, activity or scene that captures the unique character of the Lake Erie watershed. All contestants must be age 18 or older. All photo entries must have been taken between August 3, 2005 and July 10, 2006. The deadline for submitting photos is July 20, 2006.

To enter, send a 5x7-inch print via U.S. Mail (along with a completed entry form) to the commission's headquarters at One Maritime Plaza , Fourth Floor, Toledo , Ohio 43604 . Black and white, as well as color photographs will be accepted. No more than four entries will be accepted from one household. Individuals can win up to two times.

Winning photographs will be exhibited at various points of interest along the lake shoreline as part of the Lake Erie Commission Photo Gallery.

Last year's "Life on Lake Erie" photo contest winners are on exhibit until the end of April at the Lake Erie Nature & Science Center in Bay Village (Cuyahoga County .) Additional exhibits are planned for the Ottawa County Regional Welcome Center near Port Clinton in May; the on-site Keepers' House Museum at Marblehead Lighthouse State Park (Ottawa County) in June; the Black River Historical Society in Lorain (Lorain County) in July; the Great Lakes Marine & Coast Guard Museum in Ashtabula (Ashtabula County) in August.

Complete rules and entry form for the 2006 "Life on Lake Erie" photo contest are available at the commission's web site at <http://www.epa.state.oh.us> or by calling the office at 419-245-2514.

The Lake Erie Commission is an Equal Opportunity Employer

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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.

The commission oversees the Ohio Lake Erie Protection Fund, which is supported by Ohioans each time they purchase a Lake Erie license plate displaying either the Marblehead Lighthouse or the Toledo Harbor Lighthouse designed by Ohio artist Ben Richmond. This money is used to fund grants that focus on improving the quality of Lake Erie and furthering the goals laid out in the *Lake Erie Protection & Restoration Plan*.

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