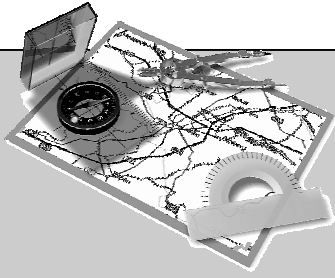




Lake Erie Coastal Ohio 2006 Annual Report

Lake Erie Coastal Ohio
PO Box 1639
Sandusky, OH 44870
419.609.0399
info@coastalohio.com





Lake Erie Coastal Ohio mission:

Lake Erie Coastal Ohio strives to improve the tourism economy and quality of life by telling the story of Lake Erie while advocating for the preservation and enhancement of the lake's natural, historical and cultural resources.

Lake Erie Coastal Ohio, Inc. formed in 2002 following planning with tourism officials, business owners, resource managers, biologists, and others along the lakeshore. A 24-member board oversees activities, and the organization is funded, in part, by OSU Sea Grant, OSU Extension, and the seven visitors bureaus along Lake Erie (Greater Cleveland, Greater Toledo, and those in Ashtabula, Lake, Lorain, Erie, and Ottawa counties.)

How do we develop a regional strategy for promoting and preserving Lake Erie? After meeting with more than 800 stakeholders, a corridor management plan was developed that provided the long-term visions and ideas. To make sure we "keep on the right track," the Lake Erie Coastal Ohio board conducted a strategic planning session at Lake FarmPark in December 2005. The accomplishments and activities conducted in 2006 are presented in this report under the goals and objectives identified in the Lake Erie Coastal Ohio strategic plan and byway corridor management plan.

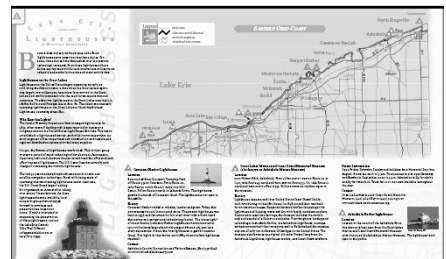
In October 2005, the Lake Erie Coastal Ohio Trail was designated a national scenic byway by the Federal Highway Administration. The 126 designated byways in the United States are collectively called "America's Byways®." The Lake Erie Coastal Ohio Trail will be promoted as a way to "Come Closer. Experience the Great Lakes along an America's Byways."



GOAL 1: The Lake Erie region experiences increased economic growth due to increased visitor spending.

Objectives include raising the economic impact of tourism along Lake Erie by focusing on the promotion and preservation of our coastal resources, linking natural and historical sites with similar "stories" to encourage new visitors and extend the lengths of stays of existing visitors, and increasing the number of folks requesting information about the Lake Erie Coastal Ohio region.

- Reached 351,097 visitors thru www.coastalohio.com with 4.5 million hits in 2006. This is nearly double from 2005 when we reached 172,000 visitors and had 2.5 million hits. The www.coastalohio.com web site is being graphically re-designed in 2007 and will feature a mapping system.
- Promoted more than 1,078 events on www.coastalohio.com in 2006. More than 50 events were also posted on the National Scenic Byway web site (www.byways.org)
- Provided real-time information for potential visitors by posting 364 bird sightings on www.coastalohio.com.
- Distributing 100,000 copies of *Lake Erie Lighthouses and Maritime Adventures* publication, a publication and map linking 35 lighthouses and maritime museums along the coast. These publications are being distributed via visitors bureaus, rack distribution, 1-800-BUCKEYE, ODOT Travel Information Centers and through the sites themselves to encourage guests to extend their lengths of stay by visiting multiple sites.
- The Lake Erie Coastal Ohio Trail was included in the National Scenic Byways publication highlighting the 126 national scenic byways in America.
- Assisted 297 visitors who contacted the Lake Erie Coastal Ohio office requesting additional travel information.
- Launched a Lake Erie Tourism Information topic on the Ohio Sea Grant Discussion Board. This interactive forum is hosted on the Ohio Sea Grant web site, but will be linked to www.coastalohio.com. People will be able to post questions about visiting Lake Erie.
- Helping to bring in an estimated 200 bicyclists through an XOBA bike event featuring the Lake Erie Lighthouses in July 2007.
- Developing ways to promote scuba diving opportunities along Lake Erie by assisting OSU Sea Grant agents with creation of a web site and printed publication.
- Brought together representatives from gardens and arboretums in the coastal region to identify cooperative opportunities and to discuss development of a *Lake Erie Gardens & Arboretums* publication. Collected information and images for this publication that will be printed in 2007.
- Encourage group tours to visit the region by creating group tour information sheets profiling hands-on restoration activities. These sheets provide information on prairie restoration and Stone Lab experiences. Sheets were distributed to visitors bureaus and the Ohio Division of Travel and Tourism to use in attracting packaged travelers.
- CVB of Greater Cleveland used the *Lake Erie Lighthouses and Maritime Adventures* publication to create a packaged travel itinerary focused on regional lighthouses.



- ▲ Coordinating efforts to reach Lake Erie beach managers through a coordinated effort with Cuyahoga Board of Health. Cuyahoga Board of Health is sponsoring a beach manager forum in January 2007. Lake Erie Coastal Ohio will be presenting at this forum and gathering a group of beach managers to assist in the development of a map showcasing Lake Erie beaches.

- ▲ Created a thematic plan to link sites with common storytelling abilities (such as Underground Railroad sites, lighthouses, Western Reserve sites) into efforts to promote these sites, as well as to coordinate possible cooperative projects.



- ▲ Assisted with editorial content to be included in *National Geographic's Highways and Byways* third edition travel series. The Lake Erie Coastal Ohio will be included within this edition.

< Distributing 10,000 Lake Erie Fact Sheets in cooperation with OSU Sea Grant.

- ▲ OSU Extension featured the availability of the Lake Erie Fact Sheet and the lighthouse publication within its employee

newsletter.

- Developed color ad to be included in the State of Ohio travel planner and events calendar.

- ▲ Created Lake Erie Coastal Ohio marketing plan with the assistance of a Public Awareness Committee representing marketing experts and visitors bureau personnel from all along the coastline.

- ▲ Footage shot by Lake Erie Coastal Ohio (through a grant agreement with Ohio Coastal Management) was used by Ohio Wine Producers for their marketing efforts.



▲ Revised the Lake Erie Coastal Ohio public service announcement (PSA) with the national scenic byway trail logo. These PSAs were developed through cooperation with the Ohio Coastal Management grants program.

- ▲ Created horizontal and vertical banner ads available for use by museums, natural areas, and visitors bureaus wishing to link to www.coastalohio.com.



< Assisted WGTE Public Television in development of an hour-long documentary, "Lake Erie: Ohio's Great Lake." This documentary is now airing throughout the Midwest and features sponsorship mention of Lake Erie Coastal Ohio and www.coastalohio.com. Helped coordinate refreshments at two of

the events, and attended premiere events in Cleveland, Toledo and Port Clinton.

- ▲ Sent b-roll video footage to The History Channel for development of "The States: Ohio" and "The States: Pennsylvania" programs airing summer 2007.

During a recent strategic planning session of the Lake Erie Coastal Ohio Board,



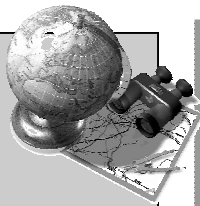
questions related to the America's Byways experience were discussed. Board response is noted below and represents the organization's top priorities. Let us know if you have any comments and/or other ideas by email at info@coastalohio.com.

We will consider the byway a success when...



- Museums, natural areas, and other sites begin to notice increased visitation and revenue
- More people view the Lake Erie area as a top destination
- Local residents and businesses feel like stakeholders in the scenic byway along Lake Erie
- Overnight stays by travelers increase significantly and tourism dollars increase
- Communities revitalize and Main Streets and downtowns are enhanced.
- Lake Erie Coastal Ohio becomes totally self-sustainable
- We receive regional and national media recognition
- Lake Erie marshes are restored to their natural condition
- Lake Erie Coastal Ohio offers small grants for tourism conservation projects
- Packaged travel itineraries are developed around the scenic byway
- America's Byways routes make a complete circle around Lake Erie
- Fourth graders are aware of why Lake Erie is important.
- Motorcoach tours request information on byway
- Our legislators are aware of why tourism is economically important and why our historical and natural sites are important to our future

What has to be done to prepare for byway travelers?



- Create maps and visitors guides
- Install signage along route
- Educate media
- Train volunteers at museums and natural areas, as well as hospitality and tourism visitors bureau staff
- Analyze traveler's needs
- Advertise
- Have scenic outlooks and pull-offs
- Identify and create new products
- Create opportunities for enhanced interpretation at sites, such as signs connecting the stories
- Preserve natural resources
- Create a coastwide event connecting many communities
- Maximize website links
- Link to NY/PA and byways
- Highlight theme offerings
- Put information kiosks in place
- Prepare information packets about the scenic byway for local businesses
- Offer web mapping and an 800 information number
- Monitor national tourism trends and respond by offering unique products
- Offer clean rest stops
- Offer incentive passport to creative visitors
- Offer consistent hours/dates at our museums and natural areas
- Spruce up the joint
- Give businesses the opportunity to coupon
- Encourage corporate cooperation
- Promote scenic byway as landmark and destination
- Encourage cross-promotion of activities
- Create year-round activities

These are ideas generated during a strategic planning session with the Lake Erie Coastal Ohio Board. Some projects are completed; others are underway. We'd love your ideas and comments. Please send them to info@coastalohio.com.

GOAL 2: Residents, community leaders, public officials and business owners feel like stakeholders in the Lake Erie Coastal Ohio Trail national scenic byway and support its goals, enhancements and activities.

Objectives include securing regional partners for cooperative marketing projects, working with regional media to ensure that they are aware of the community and economic benefits and opportunities associated with national scenic byway designation, educating board members of museums, natural areas and visitors bureaus about their role and importance, working with environmental groups and preservation agencies to ensure that they identify tourism as a potential partner, and educating policymakers regarding tourism and conservation issues and their impacts on regional economies.

- ▲ The Lake Erie Coastal Ohio Board developed a strategic plan through a facilitated planning process to guide the future of the organization and prioritize strategies.
- ▲ Developed legislative information kit with information related to Lake Erie tourism, the importance of our natural and historical areas, and statistics to assist policymakers.
- Melinda Huntley, executive director of the Lake Erie Coastal Ohio Trail, served as co-chairman of the OSU Sea Grant Congressional and Legislative Day at Stone Laboratory, Cedar Point, and Put-in-Bay.
- ▲ Presented to the following organizations:
 - Lakeside Board of Trustees
 - Ottawa County Commissioners
 - Erie County Commissioners
 - Sandusky Maritime Museum
 - Ohio Parks and Recreation Annual Conference
 - Black River Historical Society
 - Lake Erie Western Basin Conference
 - Ashtabula Convention & Visitors Bureau membership meeting
 - Portage River TMACOG Committee
 - Peninsula Chamber of Commerce
 - NOAA/National Estuarine Research Reserve annual conference
 - Reynolds Road Public Forum
 - Ohio Lake Erie Conference
- ▲ Interviewed by Kent State University professor conducting study of key issues relating to the Great Lakes. Tourism was identified as a key partner in Great Lakes recovery efforts.
- ▲ Working through the Ohio Travel Association, assisted in acquiring economic impact results of Michigan's recent school opening legislation that delayed school opening dates till after Labor Day.
- ▲ Assisted Bowling Green State University graduate student working on thesis related to nature-based tourism.
- ▲ Met with CVB of Great Cleveland regarding ways to enhance regional cooperation and marketing efforts.
- ▲ Worked with statewide preservation society in sending information to gubernatorial candidates regarding Pennsylvania's new heritage tourism budget.
- ▲ Sent United States Coast Guard information regarding potential weapons testing on Lake Erie during public comment period.
- ▲ Provided information to Congressman Denis Kucinich at his request regarding potential weapons testing on Lake Erie.



- ✦ Assisted Cleveland Lifestyle Boating Expo with statistics regarding population and sprawl within coastal counties.
- ✦ Met with Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur's staff to discuss future projects.
- ✦ Sent six info@coastalohio.com newsletters to more than 570 recipients.
- ✦ Attended Ohio Tourism Roundtable meeting, comprised of the leadership of Ohio's top tourism industry associations — Ohio Travel Association, Ohio Hotel & Lodging Association, Ohio Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus and Ohio Restaurant Association. The goal of the Ohio Tourism Roundtable is to strengthen tourism's value within the State of Ohio and to coordinate activities among all sectors of the tourism industry.
- ✦ Attended Governor's Fish Ohio Day held in Port Clinton.
- ✦ Wrote tourism text for Lake Erie Atlas being developed by the Ohio Coastal Management Program.
- ✦ Assisted with development of a membership survey for the Ohio Travel Association that identified the needs and opinions of the tourism industry on key issues facing the tourism industry, such as smoking policies, gambling, post-Labor Day school starting dates and funding of the Ohio Division of Travel and Tourism. Using the results of this electronic survey, developed white papers communicating the industry's position on some of these issues.
- ✦ Moved into new office space thanks to the generosity of Erie MetroParks. The new office is located at the Community Foundation Preserve at Eagle Point, part of the East Sandusky Bay Preserve. The location at 4011 Cleveland Rd. in Sandusky provides the opportunity for future growth. (Pictured is Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur at dedication of the Community Foundation Preserve at Eagle Point.)



How will visitors find their way along the Lake Erie Coastal Ohio Trail Scenic Byway and to our attractions?



- Visitor bureau travel guides and magazines
- America's Byways map and publications
- Audio tapes/cds sold by Lake Erie Coastal Ohio
- Boaters and marinas will have information about the scenic byway
- Cross-promotion of museums and natural areas by others in the Lake Erie region, as well as tourism suppliers and visitors bureau offices
- AAA offices and magazines
- By using a compass
- DiscoverOH.com
- Travel information centers
- Cell phone tours
- CD
- Kiosks
- Lighthouse website
- OnStar
- GPS
- Word-of-mouth
- By following the lake!
- AAA and State Maps
- Low-watt radio

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In what matters will Lake Erie Coastal Ohio take the lead and develop products and opportunities for partners?



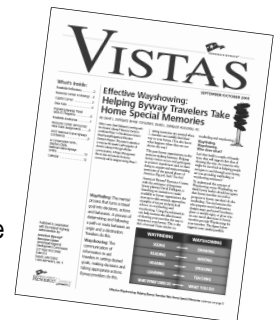
- Marketing
- Public relations
- Education
- Networking with other existing, and potential, Great Lakes National Scenic Byways
- Leadership and liaison with National Scenic Byways Program and America's Byways Resource Center
- Coordinating calendar of special events occurring along the Lake Erie Coastal Ohio Trail
- Identifying funding resources for tourism and preservation projects along the Lake Erie coast
- Serving as a "lightening rod" for tourism ideas
- Advocacy for new and existing tourism products, museums, natural areas, and sustainable development
- Advocacy to other tourism programs
- Advocacy within the tourism industry for ecotourism
- Creating a Lake Erie vision
- Stewardship of America's Byways signage along the route
- Glue to hold seven coastal visitors bureaus together
- Developing office with qualified staff beyond one person
- Monitoring studies and serving as an advocate for Lake Erie water quality
- Serving as a liaison between scientific and tourism community

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GOAL 3: Lake Erie Coastal Ohio is a leader in promoting sustainable tourism within the Great Lakes and throughout the America's Byways® network.

Objectives for this goal include being an active participant in the America's Byways program and providing leadership and ideas for continued growth of this Federal Highway Administration Program, forming new partnerships with other Great Lakes states considering America's Byways designation and pursuing development of a Great Lakes tourism initiative that promotes sustainable tourism and enhances the image of the Great Lakes states and their communities.

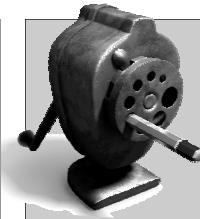
- ▲ Melinda Huntley, executive director of Lake Erie Coastal Ohio, was selected as chairman of the America's Byways Economic Impact Study Steering Committee. Coordinated site selection process, meeting details, minutes and accounting for meeting held in Cleveland Nov. 20-21. Received 32 applications from byway leaders for the committee. Conducted interviews and proposed final members to the America's Byways Resource Center. Committee members include Lakes and Locks Passage (NY), Native America Scenic Byway (SD), Billy the Kid Trail (NM), Michigan Scenic Byways (MI), Country Music Highway/Red River Gorge (KY), Wetlands and Wildlife Trail (KS), Vermont Scenic Byways (VT) and Hells Canyon All-American Road (OR). Attended first meeting of the committee in Cleveland and three conference calls with the America's Byways Resource Center/Yellow Woods firm.
- ▲ Melinda Huntley was elected as board member for the National Scenic Byways Foundation. Drafted strategic plan for the foundation that emphasized tangible benefits for byways who are members of the foundation. This plan was drafted with assistance from Bobby Koeplin of the Sheyenne River Valley Trail (ND) and Teresa Mitchell from the Seaway Trail (NY.)
- Wrote article for the America's Byways Resource Center newsletter, *Vistas*, regarding work of the economic impact steering committee.
- ▲ Met with stakeholders in Monroe, Mich., interested in pursuing a cooperative relationship with Lake Erie Coastal Ohio. This group recently conducted a resource inventory modeled after the Lake Erie Coastal Ohio project. Lake Erie Coastal Ohio and this group in Monroe will be pursuing promotion of War of 1812 sites.
- ▲ Discussed funding of a gathering of tourism professionals from throughout the Great Lakes to begin a discussion about branding and promoting the Great Lakes region with Healing Our Waters Coalition (H.O.W.)
- ▲ Attended Ohio Byways Links meeting attended by state byway leaders.
- ▲ Melinda Huntley was appointed to the America's Byways Marketing Committee.
- ▲ Contacted Great Lakes Commission regarding development of a Great Lakes branding initiative.
- ▲ Served as a member of the planning committee for the Ohio Lake Erie Conference. Presented two poster sessions, as well as a speaker program during the conference. Assisted as a registration volunteer at the conference.
- ▲ Contacted National Park Service and Parcs Canada regarding War of 1812 bicentennial activities and how Ohio can become involved.
- ▲ Assisted two national communities with information about how we developed our corridor management plan required for national scenic byway designation
- ▲ Receiving FHWA funding for a cooperative maritime brochure between Ohio, Michigan and Pennsylvania.



GOAL 4: Preservation and conservation of Lake Erie's intrinsic features and their stories remain central to Lake Erie Coastal Ohio Trail activities.

Objectives include assisting conservation and preservation projects, as well as natural areas and museums; developing a program to enhance sustainable tourism practices within the hospitality industry; and providing interpretive information linking the stories found at various museums, historic sites, nature areas, and cultural sites.

- ▲ Assisted the following projects with support letters and/or information related to their economic importance:
 - East Sandusky Bay property acquisition (City of Sandusky/Erie MetroParks)
 - Toledo Lighthouse preservation (Toledo Lighthouse Preservation Society)
 - Lake Erie waterfront acquisition (City of Port Clinton)
 - Lake Erie waterfront acquisition (South Bass Island)
 - Lake Erie waterfront acquisition (Metroparks of the Toledo Area)
 - Lake Erie waterfront acquisition (Lake Erie Islands/Black Swamp Land Conservancy)
 - Mentor Marsh project (City of Mentor)
- ▲ Provided birding economic impact information to The Nature Conservancy to prepare for a possible birding event on the Great Lakes.
- ▲ Assisted Metroparks of the Toledo Area with announcement regarding acquisition of Howard Farm.
- ▲ Attended Old Woman Creek Advisory Board meeting.
- ▲ Provided research statistics regarding tourism economics and travelers' needs to Metroparks of the Toledo Area.
- ▲ Attended Lake Erie Wing Watch meeting. Working with a facilitator to bring focus and strategic planning to this organization.
- ▲ Submitted, upon request, a project to the Ohio Environmental Council for funding through the Great Lakes Restoration initiative. Submitted proposal to establish a "futures vision" for Lake Erie that identifies existing waterfront development plans, potential access related to ongoing projects, needed access and recreational opportunities, and opportunities for enhancing access and recreation.
- ▲ Provided economic impact information, training, and/or information related to resource-based travelers to the following:
 - Dike 14, Cleveland
 - Black Swamp Bird Observatory
 - Lake Erie Islands Land Conservancy
 - Euclid Creek
 - Genoa historic preservation group
 - Lower Big Creek/Old Brooklyn
 - Ottawa County
 - Old Woman Creek National Estuarine Research Reserve
- ▲ Submitted comments to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regarding proposed preservation and restoration activities with Cleveland West Breakwater Lighthouse. Called the Corps of Engineers about progress and likelihood of including public access into preservation plans for the lighthouse.



How will Lake Erie Coastal Ohio Trail activities be funded?



- Grants -- government, public and private
- Corporate sponsors
- Tourism-related business support and/or memberships
- Private foundations
- Endowment
- Consumer 'pay to play'
- Species adoption
- Tour commissions
- Advertising and promotional products
- Ads on web site
- Race/bike ride fundraiser
- In-kind volunteer time
- Corporate in-kind services, donations and goods
- Athletic fundraisers
- Senior volunteer program
- Memorials
- State license plate
- Retail items
- Adoption of segments of the Lake Erie Coastal Ohio Trail Scenic Byway route
- Individual memberships and support
- Special events and/or fundraisers
- Auction on the web site
- Sell picture/coffee-table book
- Sell Lake Erie Coastal Ohio Trail Scenic Byways logo t-shirts etc.
- Solicit comps for in-kind staff
- Identify Ohio-based celebrities to champion the Lake Erie Coastal Ohio Trail

These are ideas generated during a strategic planning session with the Lake Erie Coastal Ohio Board. Some projects are completed; others are underway. We'd love your ideas and comments. Please send them to info@coastalohio.com.



What absolutely has to be done before the Lake Erie Coastal Ohio Trail can begin marketing itself to visitors?



- Marketing plan
- Signage
- Brand identity
- Cooperative advertising campaign with community buy-in
- Visitors guide
- Public Relations
- Have a plan for ongoing signs, maintenance, etc.
- Conduct consumer focus groups
- Develop ad campaign for the entire coast with consistent message
- Identify key markets
- Consider a national/regional PR firm with contacts
- Conduct hospitality training program
- Identify partners and sponsors
- Create an umbrella campaign
- Develop itineraries linking Discovery Sites among various themes
- Install wayfinding signage linking Discovery Sites
- Place paid advertising
- Develop a crisis communications plan/rapid response team
- Develop a plan and budget activities

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- ▲ Assisted with the coordination of a field trip to Magee Marsh Wildlife Area for City of Cleveland officials and others involved with the Dike 14 project. Coordinated attendance by members of the hospitality industry to demonstrate the economic value of birdwatchers to the Ottawa County region.
- Coordinated field trip and training session for City of Conneaut, Conneaut Port Authority and Ashtabula County Convention and Visitors Bureau to Conneaut Township birding area. Coordinated this gathering with members of the birding community, Ohio Ornithological Society representatives, and ODNR Division of Wildlife to discuss the economic impact of birders and their needs and expectations. Discussed addition of an overlook, coordination of a birding checklist, incompatible users, and improved access.
- ▲ Assisted Old Woman Creek National Estuarine Research Reserve with a survey of potential attendees to a national conference they were hosting.
- ▲ Coordinated organic refreshments for WGTE Public Television for premiere events related to the broadcast of "Lake Erie: Ohio's Great Lake." Refreshments were provided by Center for Innovative Food Technology and the Culinary Vegetable Institute.
- ▲ Met with Arts Commission of Toledo and Bowling Green State University regarding feasibility of initiating a byway-wide plan for landscaping and beautification. The plan would also incorporate wayfinding, scenic overlooks, etc.



GOAL 5: Residents and non-residents view the Lake Erie Coastal Ohio Trail National Scenic Byway as a Destination

Objectives include installing national scenic byway signage along the lakeshore; generating national, regional and local media coverage; encouraging guests to visit multiple museums and natural areas during their visits; developing new products, tours and attractions that showcase the resources of Lake Erie; monitoring byway use and activities to ensure that the public's needs are being met, as well as the interests of local communities and resource managers; and developing a few key portal sites where visitors will find both interpretive and visitor information.

- ✦ Lake Erie Coastal Ohio Trail route signage is complete in Erie, Ashtabula, Lake, Lorain and Cuyahoga counties. It is partially completed in Ottawa County on county and township roads only. We are working with ODOT District 2 to complete the remaining signage as soon as possible.
- ✦ Met with regional metroparks agency about a potential new product that will enhance the byway experience for travelers.
- ✦ Coordinating weeklong sailing trip for editor of German sailing publication for August/September 2007. This is in partnership with Great Lakes North America and the Ohio Division of Travel and Tourism.
- ✦ Assisted individual interested in beginning an ecotour cruise in the Cleveland area.
- ✦ Assisted developer interested in a resource-based project along the coastline.
- ✦ Assisted a charter captain in developing a birding cruise alternative to diversify his business. Assisted him in contacting experts to serve as birding guides.
- ✦ Assisted the JET EXPRESS in coordinating birding cruises to Point Pelee Provincial Park in Leamington, Ontario.
- ✦ Assisted two photographers working on publication projects.
- ✦ Contacted both U.S. Fish and Wildlife and ODNR Division of Wildlife regarding the need to update an economic impact study of birding activity previously done for the Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge/Magee Marsh Wildlife Area.
- ✦ Articles and/or features regarding Lake Erie Coastal Ohio appeared in the following:
 - Cleveland Plain Dealer* — 8-page special section feature
 - Toledo Free Press*
 - Lorain Morning Journal*
 - WLEC/WCPZ
 - Columbus Dispatch*
 - Great Lakes Boating* magazine
 - Port Clinton Beacon*
 - Black Swamp Trader Gazette*
 - Lake Erie Commission newsletter
 - OSU Sea Grant newsletter, *Twinline*
 - Ravenna Herald*
 - Columbus Dispatch*
 - Sandusky Register*
 - Port Clinton "Now You Decide" television program
 - Toledo Blade*
 - North Coast Business Journal*
 - Port Clinton News Herald*

How do we keep preservation and conservation central to what we do?



- Partner with environmental groups and organizations
- Use website to promote preservation and conservation of our natural and historical resources
- Adopt and promote green practices within the coastal tourism industry
- Link tourism with conservation messages
- Develop tour themes
- Coordinate with CoastWeeks
- Provide resources for conservation and preservation
- Approach the "green" press
- Assist nonprofits with conservation and preservation projects
- Provide stewardship opportunities with scouting groups
- Offer awards to sites for excellent preservation and conservation
- Identify access areas
- Link with national groups
- Educate politicians about economic value of conservation/preservation
- Choose corporate partners wisely
- Be customer-driven
- Encourage educators to teach preservation/conservation
- Encourage non-motorized use
- Identify conservation mascot
- Market preservation and conservation of authentic experiences
- Set up recycling locations
- Educate and provide learning opportunities along trail
- Identify best practices
- Elderhostel classes

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Why Look at a New Way to Promote Lake Erie?

Traditional tourism efforts have focused primarily on the family traveler. Our efforts have focused on this market because our major attractions tend to provide experiences primarily for these travelers, and these attractions have the money to spend in making sure Ohioans and others from other states know they're available.

At the same time, there are more and more travelers seeking nature and history. Primarily Baby Boomers and empty nesters, these travelers are available to travel year-round and midweek, thus creating an opportunity to stabilize Ohio's highly seasonal and weekend-dominant tourism industry.

What do these travelers want to do? They're seeking historic sites, museums, natural areas, and places where they can "see, tour and learn" about a destination, says a recent Geotourism study conducted by *National Geographic Traveler* and Travel Industry Association of America.)

Lake Erie Coastal Ohio focuses on linking these sites into experiences sought-after by these travelers. By connecting our stories, we create additional reasons for people to visit Lake Erie and for them to stay longer.

At the same time, we demonstrate the importance of these natural areas, historic downtown areas, heritage sites, cultural attractions to our local economies. These places define who we are. They differentiate us from other places, because these places tell our story . . . the story of Lake Erie and its role in shaping our culture, communities, industry and natural landscape.

GOAL 6: Lake Erie Coastal Ohio is a creative and viable organization with resources to meet its mission and goals.

Objectives include generating a program for encouraging business community support, creating and evaluating innovative non-traditional funding mechanisms, and creating a financial plan for long-term organizational operations.

- ▲ Coordinated multiple committee members for Lake Erie Coastal Ohio, including two meetings of the Public Awareness Committee and meetings of the Finance Committee and Board and Staff Committee.
- ▲ Coordinated four Lake Erie Coastal Ohio Full Board meetings
- ▲ Coordinated Lake Erie Coastal Ohio Executive Committee meetings.
- ▲ Attended Ohio Travel Association Full and Executive Committee meetings, as well as the Ohio Travel Association Fall Conference, the Ohio Travel Association Board Retreat, and an Ohio Travel Association Focus on Tourism luncheon.



- ▲ Created membership program for the hospitality program to support Lake Erie Coastal Ohio and to connect hotels, restaurants, retail shops and other attractions to the byway traveler.

◀ Secured personnel partnership with The Ohio State University Extension/Ohio Sea Grant. This agreement creates opportunities for additional cooperation with the university, Extension and Sea Grant in fulfilling the goals and objectives of Lake Erie Coastal Ohio.

- ▲ Received two National Scenic Byway Grants from the Federal Highway Administration and Ohio Department of Transportation — \$25,000 for seed grant funding to implement the strategies developed within our corridor management plan and \$12,208 for funding a cooperative maritime heritage brochure with New York and Pennsylvania.
- ▲ Edited and revised report issued by Longwoods International regarding possible results of increase the state's investment in travel and tourism funding.

2007 Lake Erie Coastal Ohio Board Members

PRESIDENT — Scott Carpenter, Metroparks of the Toledo Area
 VICE PRESIDENT— Melissa Hathaway, ODNR Division of Wildlife
 TREASURER — Frank Lichtkoppler, Ohio Sea Grant
 SECRETARY — Mark Winchell, Ashtabula County Convention & Visitors Bureau
 PUBLIC AWARENESS CHAIR — Cathy Miller, CVB of Greater Toledo

Jim Barchok, Ohio Coastal Management Program Advisory Committee
 Jim Bissell, Cleveland Museum of Natural History
 Sandy Chiamonte, Ohio State Parks
 Rick Finch, Fort Meigs
 Larry Fletcher, Ottawa County Visitors Bureau
 Lynda Nemeth, Lake MetroParks
 Emilie Poua, CVB of Greater Cleveland
 Chris Riddle, Ohio Lake Erie Commission
 Natalie Ronayne, Cleveland Botanical Garden
 Len Smith, Sheffield Lake
 Fred Snyder, Ohio Sea Grant
 Paul Staley, Ohio Department of Transportation
 Bob Ulas, Lake County Visitors Bureau
 Joan Van Offeren, Sandusky/Erie County Visitors & Convention Bureau
 Jennie Vasarhelyi, Cuyahoga Valley National Park
 Donnie Winchell, Ohio Wine Producers