



## PRESS RELEASE – For Immediate Release

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### Port of Cleveland wins Environmental Enhancement Award

*International association lauds Port for opening the Cleveland Lakefront Nature Preserve*

**OCTOBER 17, 2012** – The Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority has won an international industry award for opening and managing the Cleveland Lakefront Nature Preserve, an honor that underscores the Port’s commitment to environmental stewardship and public access to the lakefront.

The American Association of Port Authorities (AAPA) has awarded the Port its 2012 Environmental Enhancement Award for the preserve, a unique 88-acre site on Lake Erie near downtown Cleveland that the Port opened to the public on a daily basis in February.

“We are honored and excited to receive this award,” said Port President and CEO Will Friedman. “We have made environmental stewardship along our waterfronts a major organizational priority, and to be recognized by the AAPA for our efforts is rewarding. We hope this award will further raise the profile of the preserve and draw even more people to enjoy nature and bird watching on Cleveland’s Lake Erie shoreline.”

Since February, the Preserve has had nearly 14,000 visits by people from 39 states and 13 countries. The wildlife refuge is a man-made peninsula, originally created as the Dike 14 repository for sediment dredged by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to keep the Cuyahoga River clear for maritime traffic. The Corps stopped using the site in 1999. The area was then claimed by a diverse array of plants and wildlife, and designated as an “Important Bird Area” by Audubon Ohio. Over time the site was periodically opened to visitors. Then in February the Port opened it as a preserve for daily enjoyment.

“For the past four decades, the American Association of Port Authorities has recognized outstanding environmental achievements at its member ports,” said Meredith Martino, AAPA’s director of environmental policy and advocacy outreach. “The Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority’s Lakefront Nature Preserve is truly an environmental enhancement for the Cleveland metro region, as it provides unique recreational, research, and educational opportunities for area residents and visitors to connect with nature on their waterfront, and is emblematic of the type of program that AAPA’s environmental improvement awards seek to encourage. The judges who gave this Environmental Improvement Award to the port praised the project’s creativity and high levels of partnership with academic institutions and nonprofit organizations.”



AAPA is a trade association founded in 1912 and based in Alexandria, Virginia. It represents more than 130 port authorities in the United States, Canada, the Caribbean, and Latin America. Since 1973, it has recognized activities at its member seaports that benefit the environment in four categories: environmental enhancement; mitigation; stakeholder awareness, education and involvement; and comprehensive environmental management. Winners will be recognized during an Oct. 24 awards luncheon at AAPA's 101<sup>st</sup> annual convention, which is being held in Mobile, Ala.

*The Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority operates the Port of Cleveland, a leading gateway for waterborne trade on the Great Lakes/St. Lawrence Seaway System. Nearly 18,000 jobs and \$1.8 billion in economic activity result from the roughly 13 million tons of cargo that move through the Cleveland harbor on average each year. The Port also provides innovative financing services for a wide range of development projects in Northeast Ohio, and is leading initiatives to solve critical infrastructure challenges along Cleveland's waterfronts.*