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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ocean Isle Beach Named One of America's Best Restored Beaches

FORT MYERS, FL – The American Shore and Beach Preservation Association (ASBPA) announced today that Ocean Isle Beach is a winner of its 2008 Best Restored Beach Award.

“ASBPA created the Best Restored Beach award in 2001 as a way of highlighting the value of America's restored beaches,” said Harry Simmons, mayor of Caswell Beach, N.C., and ASBPA president. “As Americans flock to our coastline during the upcoming beach season, most don't even realize they may be enjoying a restored beach.”

Ocean Isle Beach's quest for a federal beach restoration program began after Hurricane Hugo devastated the area in 1989. The Town lobbied members of Congress for federal funding and opened a capital reserve savings account to provide the local share of funding necessary for the restoration.

Coastal engineers began this project in 2001 with sand dredged from Shallotte Inlet, located on the east end of the island. The inlet provided high-quality sand for the beach, which enabled the planned three-year renourishment interval to be extended to five years – a major benefit. Additionally, it created a deeper channel for boaters.

“The Ocean Isle project is an excellent example of regional sand management in an area that has limited offshore sand reserves,” said Mayor Debbie Smith. “Since its inception, the Ocean Isle Beach restoration project has been distinguished by exceptional project performance and habitat restoration for endangered sea turtles and shorebirds. In addition it has provided storm protection and greatly increased recreational space. This project has been such a huge success and provided such great benefit that we continue to set aside funding annually in a capital reserve account to perform maintenance when needed.”

Beach restoration began taking place in America more than 40 years ago in coastal communities on the east, west and Gulf coasts. Beach restoration is the process of placing beach-quality sand on eroding beaches to reverse or offset the effects of erosion.

The three main reasons for restoration are storm protection (a wide sandy beach helps separate storm waves from upland structures and infrastructure), habitat restoration (numerous species rely on wide, healthy beaches as a place to live, feed and nest) and recreation (America's beaches have twice as many visitors annually as all of America's national parks combined). Studies have shown that for each dollar spent on beach restoration projects; at least \$4 to \$5 accrues back to taxpayers in benefits.

Coastal communities have restored more than 370 beaches in the United States, including such iconic coastlines as Miami Beach, Coney Island and Southern California's Venice Beach.

Coastal communities nominated their restoration projects for consideration, and an independent panel of coastal managers and scientists selected the winners. Judging was based on three criteria: the economic and ecological benefits the beach brings to its community; the short- and long-term success of the restoration project; and the challenges each community overcame during the course of the project.

Other beaches honored this year include: the beaches of North Boca Raton, Fla.; Olympic Sculpture Park, Seattle, Wash.; Destin & Walton County, Fla.; Kuhio Beach, Waikiki, Hawaii; and Venice Beach, Fla.

Past award winners include: Panama City Beach, Fla., in 2002; San Diego Beach in 2003; Ocean City, Md., in 2004; the beaches of South Padre Island, Texas, in 2005; Rehoboth and Dewey Beaches in Delaware in 2006; and the Chaland Headland Restoration Project in Louisiana in 2007.

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ABOUT OCEAN ISLE BEACH

Ocean Isle Beach is a family oriented community with mostly residential development and little commercial activity, so the beach is the main attraction. Ocean Isle Beach has historically enjoyed a naturally wide sandy beach with wide frontal dunes. In 1989 Hurricane Hugo, which made landfall in South Carolina, caused severe damage to protective frontal dunes and the beach. Shortly following, three close brushes by Fran in 1996, Bonnie in 1998 and Floyd in 1999, allowed little time for the beach to recover naturally. Restoration provided storm protection previously enjoyed at Ocean Isle Beach. The wide sandy

recreational beach was restored to provide for public enjoyment by visitors from near and far. Mayor Smith says, "The restoration provided great benefit to tourism revenue, property values and recreational enjoyment. This cooperative program between federal, state and local entities has been the most beneficial program the town has ever undertaken to positively improve our economy and our community. "

ABOUT ASBPA

Founded in 1926, the American Shore and Beach Preservation Association (ASBPA) 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.asbpa.org.