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For Immediate Release

National Water Access Organization SOBA Recognizes Five States and Three Individuals with Outstanding Achievement Awards

Awards recognize the excellent work done to grow and maintain water access for the nation's 66 million boaters

Chicago, IL: November 30, 2010: The States Organization for Boating Access (SOBA), a national organization devoted to the acquisition, development and administration of public recreational boating facilities throughout the U.S., announced today the recipients of its 2010 annual SOBA Awards Program. Awards are given to states and individuals for their work in creating public boating access areas. Recognized include Michigan, New Jersey, Ohio, Virginia, and Wisconsin. In addition to the five state awards, three boating access professionals were recognized for their service to SOBA and their individual state boating programs. Awards were distributed during SOBA's 24th National Meeting in Park City, Utah in October.

The SOBA Awards Program recognizes the outstanding work that goes into growing and maintaining water access for the nation's estimated 66 million boaters. Award recipients are selected by SOBA's Executive Board. Visit www.sobaus.org to learn more about the annual Awards and how to nominate someone for the 2011 program.

"Recreational boating is big business in the U.S. and access to the water is what makes this possible. State agencies are a critical component in providing affordable access to our nation's public waterways and lakes," said SOBA president James Adams. "State agencies overcome numerous challenges to continue providing some of the best facilities for our boating constituents and we are proud to recognize them for their efforts."

The 2010 National Awards are as follows:

Public Boating Access:

Small Access Category: Eight Point Lake Boating Access Development Project, Clare County, Michigan: The Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment constructed a new one lane ramp with 22 parking spaces to provide anglers and boaters access to the largest public water body in Clare County. The total project cost was \$30,000.

Mid-size Access Category: Lawnes Creek Boating Access Facility, Surry County, Virginia: The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries rehabilitated the popular Lawnes Creek Boating Access site to provide boaters with a safer updated launch site using new alternative construction materials. The total project cost was \$220,000.

Large Access Category: Huron River Wildlife Area Ramp Access, Erie County, Ohio. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Watercraft constructed a large scale boating access site on the Huron River Wildlife Management Area to provide boaters and anglers increased access to Lake

Erie's western basin. This new 9 acre development features 4 launch lanes, 135 parking spaces, courtesy docks and modern restroom facilities. The total project cost was \$2.4 million.

Marina and Harbor Development: Straits State Harbor, Mackinaw, Michigan: The Michigan Department of Natural Resources converted a previously used ferry terminal into a state of the art public marina. The marina has 134 slips, a 3 lane launch ramp, sewage pumpout facilities while utilizing "green" technologies to limit the environmental impact. The total project cost was \$11 million.

Overall Boating Access Boating Program: The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources' boating access was recognized for their efforts with providing access to the state's public waters. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources owns and operates 620 boating access sites statewide and partners with local governments to operate an additional 2,290 facilities. The agency developed and released its popular internet website in 2007.

Clean Vessel Act Program Excellence Award: New Jersey's diverse and public/private partnership based Clean Vessel Act program was recognized for its efforts with providing sewage pumpout facilities for recreational boaters. The program cooperators include the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife, New Jersey Division of Coastal Engineering, the state Marine Trades Association, as well as the New Jersey Marine Science Consortium. The overall program is credited with safely collecting and disposing of more than 5 million gallons of sewage and waste removed from recreational vessels.

Individual Award Recipients for 2010:

SOBA Outstanding Service Award: Kim Elverum, Boat and Water Safety Coordinator for the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. Elverum was recognized for his expertise and commitment to providing Minnesota's boaters and anglers with public boating access sites and consistently seeking ways to maximize the amount of the public access sites completed by the agency.

Special Recognition Award: Lacy E. Nichols, Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife. Nichols has been a member of SOBA since 1991 and has been involved in numerous committees and task forces. He was instrumental in developing SOBA's renowned Operational and Maintenance Program Guides for Recreational Boating Facilities and also the Boating Access Construction Best Management Practices instructional DVD.

William H. Ivers Award: Mike Hough, Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife (retired). Hough has been actively involved in countless SOBA activities, including serving as the organization's President in 2000. This award is SOBA's most prestigious individual award named to honor the memory of its namesake who helped found the organization.

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About the State's Organization for Boating Access: SOBA is the nation's premier organization for boating access engineers and public access providers. SOBA will celebrate its 25th anniversary at its upcoming annual meeting in La Crosse, Wisconsin on September 25-29, 2011. For additional information, please visit SOBA's web site (<http://sobaus.org>).