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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Rosewood Beach Named One of America's Best Restored Beaches for 2016

HIGHLAND PARK, IL, May 19, 2016 - The Park District of Highland Park announced today that the American Shore and Beach Preservation Association (ASBPA) has named Rosewood Beach is a winner of its 2016 Best Restored Beach Award.

“ASBPA created the Best Restored Beach award as a way of highlighting the value of America’s restored beaches,” said Tony Pratt, ASBPA president and administrator of the Shoreline and Waterway Management Section within the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control. “As Americans flock to our coastline during the upcoming beach season, most don’t even realize they may be enjoying a restored beach.”

The Park District of Highland Park’s recently completed restoration of Rosewood Beach was achieved through a partnership with the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and represents the combination of two separate but complementary projects -- a unique opportunity to build an ecosystem restoration project concurrent with a separate recreation and education project, resulting in the restoration of beach, bluff and ravine ecosystems along a 1,500-foot section of the west shore of Lake Michigan.

The two projects represent the culmination of a waterfront vision for the site that dates back to 1928, when the land was donated to the Park District by Julius Rosenwald, chairman of Sears, Roebuck Co. The planning and implementation of these projects included extensive resident involvement, strong

partnerships and a clear vision to blend ecological best practices with forward-thinking recreational and educational programming to serve the community's needs today and for future generations.

- The project has successfully restored a beach that has suffered decades of deterioration due to human-caused influences along the west shore of Lake Michigan;
- The restoration work has successfully achieved multiple objectives, including ecosystem restoration (beach, bluff and rare ravine habitats), erosion protection and recreational and educational opportunities;
- The project will achieve these objectives over the long-term without the need for significant maintenance work.

“The Park District of Highland Park is honored to receive the 2016 ASBPA Best Restored Beach award for Rosewood Beach,” said Liza McElroy, executive director of the Park District of Highland Park. “The restoration of Rosewood Beach is a lasting legacy to Highland Park’s commitment to environmental stewardship, recreation and education.”

“The Rosewood Park project demonstrates how you can combine both hard and soft coastal engineering to restore habitat and restore a public beach,” said Weishar. “The restoration of Rosewood Beach has helped provide public access to the Great Lakes.”

For more than 50 years, beach restoration has been the preferred method of shore protection in coastal communities on the east, west, Gulf and Great Lakes coasts. Beach restoration is the process of placing beach-quality sand on dwindling 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.
- **Recreation** – America’s beaches have twice as many visitors annually as all of America’s federal and state parks combined. Every year, there are more than 2 billion visitors to America’s beaches.

Coastal communities have restored more than 370 beaches in the United States, including such iconic beaches as Jones Beach in New York, Ocean City in Maryland, Virginia Beach, Miami Beach, South Padre Island in Texas, Venice Beach in California and Waikiki Beach in Hawaii.

During times of economic hardship, the beach can be an even more desirable vacation destination than other domestic and foreign alternatives, offering families and visitors an accessible and affordable getaway. It is also an employment and tax generator:

- Beaches contribute an estimated \$225 billion annually to the America's economy.
- Each year, governments take in \$570 in taxes from beach tourists for every dollar it spends on beach restoration.
- Well over half of the nation's gross domestic product (\$7.9 trillion) is generated in 673 counties along the oceans and Great Lakes, according to NOAA's National Ocean Economics Program.

To enter the Best Restored Beach competition, coastal communities nominated their 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.

A complete list of award-winning beaches, and more information about beach restoration and ASBPA, is available online at www.asbpa.org.

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ABOUT THE PROJECT:

The newly restored Rosewood Beach debuted in 2015 and was the result of a project partnership agreement between the Park District of Highland Park (PDHP) and the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). The restoration and expansion of Rosewood Beach was part of the Great Lakes Fishery and Ecosystem Restoration (GLFER) program which authorized federal funding for the USACE to cooperate with other federal, state, and local agencies and the Great Lakes Fishery Commission to implement projects that support the restoration of the fishery, ecosystem, and beneficial uses of the Great Lakes. The physical aspects of the Rosewood Beach restoration project were two-fold: a shoreline and ecosystem restoration project undertaken by the USACE and a beach infrastructure improvement plan led by the Park District of Highland Park.

The USACE's portion of the project included removal of existing steel groynes and the construction of new breakwaters creating three distinct beach coves for public use to which 65,000 cubic yards of sand have been added. The low-profile breakwaters, extending 200 feet into the lake from the bluff, provide erosion protection that supports dune structures and native plantings central to the restoration.

Additional ecological components of the GLFER project included daylighting the ravine stream, which will provide fish habitat and cleaner water; the addition of native plantings and bluff restoration that will improve the health of the unique ravine ecosystem; and the installation of permeable pavers in the parking lot to decrease runoff and naturally clean storm water. Nearly 40,000 plants and acres of seeds will be reintroduced to promote the health of the lakefront park's ravine, bluff and shoreline.

The PDHP's beach infrastructure improvement plan, highlighted by the construction of a boardwalk system, lifeguard house, concession stand, restroom and interpretive center, are both minimalistic in

design and naturalistic in appearance. The buildings are small in scale, natural in appearance and blend into the environment allowing Lake Michigan to be the focus of attention.

The gateway for educational exploration is the beach's interpretive center, a 1,960 square foot building intended to be a gathering and departure point for park district camps and school groups as they explore the diverse lakefront ecosystem. Interpretive information panels, dissecting and projecting microscopes, computers and a 70-inch video monitor will help communicate the conservation efforts in progress and the fragile ravine system so unique to Highland Park.

Geothermal technology provides heating and cooling of the year-round facility. To mitigate bird collision, bird-friendly glass was installed throughout the interpretive center, as well as in the other beach facilities. The glass features a patterned, UV reflective coating making it visible to birds while remaining virtually transparent to the human eye, thus allowing undisturbed views of Lake Michigan from the interior of the Interpretive Center.

ABOUT ASBPA: Founded in 1926, the ASBPA is a 501(c)3 nonprofit that advocates for healthy coastlines by promoting the integration of science, policies and actions that maintain, protect and enhance the coasts of America. For more information on ASBPA, go to www.asbpa.org, Facebook or www.twitter.com/asbpa. This information is provided by the American Shore & Beach Preservation Association.