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JOHN DEBO RECEIVES 2009 SIERRA CLUB DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif. – John Debo, the former superintendent of the Cuyahoga Valley National Park, has won the Sierra Club 2009 Distinguished Service Award. He will be honored Sept. 26 in San Francisco at the Sierra Club Honors and Awards Banquet.

For more than two decades, Debo was highly successful in expanding park services, enlisting public support, and making the Cuyahoga Valley National Park a model of the urban national park. When Debo became superintendent in 1988, the park was little known and little used. Debo improved relations with surrounding communities, introduced innovative programs, became an effective fund-raiser, and greatly increased the park's visibility.

From a Sierra Club perspective, his most important achievements have been to create a national heritage corridor that extends for 101 miles, develop an extensive environmental education program that features a large campus within the park, protect park boundaries from encroachment and incompatible uses, and preserve the historical and cultural heritage of the Cuyahoga Valley.

“The Distinguished Service Award is a fitting capstone to a long career on the frontline of bringing parks to the people,” said Dan Nelson, vice chair of the Sierra Club’s Portage Train Group, which nominated Debo for the award.

Debo recently retired as park superintendent and now serves as Chief Development Officer of the Cuyahoga Valley National Park Association.

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