

You signed the petition and saved the Great Lakes. Thank you.

The Coast Guard has decided not to do any live-fire target practice on any of the five Great Lakes, and **you are the reason why**. In announcing its decision, the Coast Guard said it was responding to the outpouring of public opposition. It is clear that **the only thing that stopped the Coast Guard from shooting was that people like you spoke out** and made themselves heard. We literally spoke truth to power, and we prevailed.

Congratulations! You are part of an **historic grass roots effort**. For years the Bush administration has been trying to discourage people from expressing themselves by cordoning protestors off behind barricades and telling the country they don't pay attention to polls. But this time we were heard, and we won an absolute victory.

From the time we started working on this issue, some people were asking us if we would compromise. They suggested that we drop our objections if the Coast Guard would agree to push their target practice further out into the lake. But that wouldn't do anything about the pollution problem, so we said no. They suggested that we agree that the Coast Guard could shoot on the lakes if they used bullets that were not made of lead. But that wouldn't be any safer for the boaters and fishers, so we said no. **We stood our ground**, we stood together, and we won.

What you did is important. We helped protect the Great Lakes from a serious threat. We formed a coalition of people who otherwise would probably never have had the chance to work with each other. We expanded our relationships with a number of elected representatives. We stopped the Department of Homeland Security from needlessly encroaching on our domestic tranquility. We acted with dignity. **We demonstrated the power of ordinary people**.

In this season of celebration, please take a moment to **celebrate the victory of the people over apathy, discouragement, and cynicism**.

In coming days we will be in touch with you as other issues demand our attention. We hope you will continue to help bring peace and justice to the world. As we move forward, we will bring with us the lessons we learned this time, and the knowledge we gained that although right does not always prevail, sometimes it does.

Thank you, and blessings.

Citizens For Lake Safety founding committee

P.S. If you would like to contribute to help defray some of the expenses that were incurred in this effort, and to lay the groundwork for future efforts, you can contribute online at <http://www.citizensforlakesafety.org/contribute.html> or send a check to: Citizens for Lake Safety, P.O. Box 2324, Northbrook, IL 60065. Your contribution is not tax deductible, but it will help make this a better world.