

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESS RELEASE FROM: The Joint Ocean Commission Initiative

Joint Ocean Commission Initiative Congratulates Admiral James D. Watkins USN (Ret.) on Receiving the Presidential Citizens Medal

Presidential Citizens Medal is one of the Highest Honors that can be Awarded to a Civilian.

December 10, 2008 (Washington, D.C.) – Today, in a ceremony in the Oval Office, President Bush awarded Admiral James D. Watkins USN (Ret.) the Presidential Citizens Medal. The Presidential Citizens Medal is one of the highest honors that the President can confer upon a civilian.

“President Bush officially recognized what our community has known for decades, that no one has worked harder than Jim Watkins to protect and defend one of our nation’s greatest military and natural assets, our oceans,” said the Honorable Leon Panetta, who co-chairs the Joint Ocean Commission Initiative with Watkins. “I am confident that the next administration will continue to recognize the important work that Admiral Watkins is doing and work with us to pass comprehensive ocean policies that will secure the country’s economic and national security.

“Admiral Watkins’ dedication to the protection and defense of our nation as well as its natural resources makes him uniquely qualified to receive this award,” said the Honorable William D. Ruckelshaus, commissioner at the Joint Ocean Commission Initiative and original Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. “Under Jim’s leadership, the best in industry, policy and science in the ocean community have been brought to the table to collectively address these significant issues. He is a highly respected voice; his continuing efforts are helping ensure that that real reform of the nation’s ocean policies will be a top priority for the next administration.”

The Joint Ocean Commission Initiative congratulates Admiral Watkins on this prestigious award and looks forward to continuing its work with him and the incoming Obama Administration to significantly improve our understanding of the ocean’s role in climate change, its impact on our economy and ecosystems, and advancing U.S. leadership in international ocean policy.

For more information on the Joint Ocean Commission Initiative and our work, please visit www.jointoceancommission.org.

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The Joint Ocean Commission Initiative is a collaborative effort of the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy and Pew Oceans Commission to catalyze ocean policy reform. The Joint Initiative is guided by a ten-member task force, five from each commission, and led by Admiral James D. Watkins (U.S. Navy, Ret.) and the Honorable Leon E. Panetta, chairs of the U.S. Commission and Pew Commission, respectively. The primary goal of the Joint Ocean Commission Initiative is to accelerate the pace of change that results in meaningful ocean policy reform.