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Media Release

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Dodge Foundation Awards Funds to Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association

The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, which focuses on supporting the quality of life for Jersey residents today and assuring that it will be sustainable for future generations, recently announced grants of \$5,170,000 to nonprofits in the state and surrounding areas. For a second year, Dodge recognized Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association's dedication to these goals with awards totaling \$275,000.

"We were heartened to learn from your report on last year's grant that the Project for Municipal Excellence made great progress helping municipalities move toward proactive land-use planning that sustains and enhances meaningful human activity and environmental protection," said Dodge Foundation Executive Director.

The Watershed Association's Municipal Excellence program received \$100,000 to continue partnering with the region's municipalities to achieve proactive land-use planning that sustains and enhances community activity and environmental protection in each municipality. The program began in 2002, and has steadily grown to include 12 of the 26 municipalities within the watershed region are currently participating in this program.

Explaining the rapid acceptance of a new approach for environmental groups and municipalities to work together, Lawrence Township Mayor Pam Mount has said: "We had a very positive experience producing the assessment of our master plan and ordinances with Stony Brook, and will count on their continued advice as we enhance our regulations to assure adequate protection for Lawrence Township's environment in the future."

"We also look forward to working with Stony Brook as we implement the state's new rules for stormwater control, said Mount.

"They fully understand the proposed rules as well as watershed concerns. If they develop the plan, I know our township will be able to implement it. Why go anywhere but to Stony Brook for this kind of assistance?," added Mount.

The Watershed Association's Watershed Institute is a clearinghouse and source of technical assistance for New Jersey watershed associations, and received \$175,000. Offering tailored advice for individual organizations and providing workshops, meetings, and a wide range of guidelines and information, the Institute helps the more than 40 watershed organizations in New Jersey build their effectiveness and organizational support. \$100,000 of their Dodge award will fund a grants program to enable small grassroots watershed organizations to carry out effective programs and become financially independent. In September, 2004, 17 organizations received Watershed Institute Grants. Applications for 2005 awards are due in July, and more information about the program is available on the Watershed Association website, www.thewatershed.org.

The Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association protects water quality in the 265-square miles of central New Jersey drained by the Stony Brook and the Millstone River. The Association works with citizens of all ages, municipalities and organizations in the 26 communities and five counties of its watershed, providing technical support, monitoring and education to safeguard water and other natural resources. For more information, call 609-737-3735, visit the Association's headquarters at 31 Titus Mill Road in Pennington, on an 825-acre preserve open to the public, or the website at www.thewatershed.org.