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Media Release

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Watershed Association Butterfly Festival a Soaring Success

Pennington, NJ - On August 13, 2005, the Stony Brook Millstone Watershed Association hosted the 5th annual Butterfly Festival, celebrating the beauty and magic of New Jersey's native butterflies. The event featured children's games and crafts, tours of the Kate Gorrie Memorial Butterfly House, naturalist-led hikes, live music, organic food vendors and local "green" vendors and businesses, as well as a presentation by Princeton resident and Master Gardener Teresa Knipper on using native plants to attract butterflies to gardens. This year's festival focused on sustainability and included displays of alternative fuel and energy-efficient vehicles, a model solar car race and solar panel and photovoltaic suppliers for home and business.

This year's Butterfly Festival drew over 1,000 people. Proceeds from the event will support the Butterfly House as well as the Watershed Association's conservation and education programs.

Mercer County Executive Brian Hughes spoke at the Festival, emphasizing the importance of preserving natural lands and waterways as a means to maintain and enhance quality of life in central New Jersey today and for future generations.

Executive Director Jim Waltman awarded River Friendly designations to the following local residents at the Festival: Anna Drago of Cranbury; Sarah Roberts and Lawrence Koplik of Belle Mead; Steven and Laurie DeRochi of Skillman; and Tom and Barbara McGeachen of East Windsor for engaging in property maintenance practices that help to preserve and improve the local environment. These practices include planning a landscape that uses native species to attract wildlife; conserving water; and substituting alternatives for toxic chemicals, pesticides and fertilizers. Other residents receiving the River Friendly designation are: Peter and Margie Gibson, Dennis and Kathy O'Neal and Ted Stiles, all of Hopewell Township and Myra and Van Zandt Williams, Jr., of Princeton Borough. Watershed Association staff members Peggy Savage and Amy Weaver worked together with these residents in helping them attain the River Friendly certification.

The Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association itself also earned a River Friendly designation for meeting even higher standards in its property maintenance practices,

including: developing a written pond management plan and a wildlife homes conservation plan, establishing a rain garden to filter roof runoff and installing interpretive signs for visitors.

Architect and Princeton Borough resident William Wolfe also received an award from Watershed Association, presented by board member and property chair Bill Porter of Pennington. Mr. Wolfe was recognized for donating his time and expertise to the design and installation of the solar electric system at the Watershed's Buttinger Nature Center. The solar installation offsets more than one half of the electricity used at the Nature Center. Funding for this installation was provided by the David Mathey Trust and the J. Seward Johnson Sr. Charitable Trust.

Jim Russell of Wharton raced his solar model car, Sparky the Nerd in the Model Solar Car Showcase. His model competed in the 2005 Northeast Championship Junior Solar Sprints, placing second on Technical Merit and third on Craftsmanship.

The Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association is a non-profit membership organization dedicated to preserving water quality and the natural environment in the 265-square mile area of central New Jersey drained by Stony Brook and the Millstone River. The Watershed Association preserves open space by maintaining an 830-acre nature reserve in Pennington; provides year-round environmental education programs for children and adults; and works with towns, businesses, and landowners to improve land use decisions that impact our environment. The Watershed Reserve contains 14 miles of hiking trails, a nature center and gift shop, and the Honey Brook Organic Farm—an independently operated, community supported farm. Visitors are welcome from dawn to dusk all year long. The Kate Gorrie Memorial Butterfly House is open from dawn until dusk, seven days a week from May to October. For more information, call 609-737-3735 or visit us online at www.thewatershed.org.



Mercer County Executive Brian Hughes greets Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association Executive Director Jim Waltman at the Butterfly Festival on the Watershed Reserve.



Presenting a River Friendly Business Award to Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association is Erik Silldorff, River Friendly Technical Advisory Committee member from Princeton Hydro (on the right). Pictured from left to right are Executive Director Jim Waltman, Peggy Savage, Watershed Institute Coordinator and Green Team member Laura Alex, Property and Open Space Manager Bay Weber, and Amy Weaver



At its fifth annual Butterfly Festival, the Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association awarded the following local residents River Friendly Awards for engaging in property maintenance practices that help to preserve and improve the local environment (left to right) Tom and Barbara McGeachen of East Windsor, Sarah Roberts and Larry Koplik of Belle Mead, Steven and Laurie DeRochi of Skillman, and Anna Drago of Cranbury.



A close encounter of the butterfly kind at the Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association's fifth annual Butterfly Festival.

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