



News Release

For Immediate Release

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A new year, a new land preservation record and soon, a new home for D&R Greenway Land Trust

PRINCETON, NJ, January 19, 2005 – D&R Greenway Land Trust’s 15th anniversary year was truly something for the organization to celebrate. The land trust’s 2004 accomplishments ranged from placing a record number of properties under permanent protection to successfully completing the first phase of a \$3.5 million capital campaign to open the Johnson Education Center.

First and foremost, D&R Greenway Land Trust’s objective is to preserve the open space and natural lands that protect our biodiversity, our water supply and our quality of life.

In 2004, D&R Greenway Land Trust preserved a record 28 properties valued at \$24 million that encompass 1,260 of these acres – from mature forests in the Sourlands that provide habitat for wildlife and safeguard the headwaters of eight of our region’s streams, to working farms that maintain the agricultural heritage of central New Jersey. D&R Greenway Land Trust executed a wide variety of preservation projects. The organization protected urban lands along important waterways such as the Drezner property on the D&R Canal in Trenton and the Thorn property on Black’s Creek in Bordentown City. Suburban projects included the preservation of farmland and watershed lands throughout Mercer, Somerset and Middlesex counties in townships under continued development pressure: Cranbury, Upper Freehold, Montgomery, Hillsborough, West Windsor, Washington, Hopewell and Princeton. Pristine natural lands in the Amwells and Delaware townships were also protected by D&R Greenway Land Trust.

“Our success in 2004 represents a giant leap forward in achieving our goals to preserve our region’s open space,” commented Linda J. Mead, Executive Director of D&R Greenway Land Trust. “And while we have a superb professional team, we could not have done it without our partners in preservation – officials at every level of government, local conservation groups and the generosity of individuals whose contributions make our work possible.”

Over its 15-year history, D&R Greenway Land Trust has preserved 7,893 acres of land valued at \$ 149.4 million, a total of 122 separate properties.

This record is especially remarkable when you consider that central New Jersey is our country's most densely populated state and that the pressure for development here is tremendous. In fact, a recent study by Rutgers University projects that if development continues at its current rate, New Jersey will be the first completely "built out" state within 30 years. To reverse this alarming trend, all organizations charged with preserving our land must increase their pace of preservation dramatically – before the land is irretrievably altered.

In response to this situation, D&R Greenway Land Trust will open the Johnson Education Center in the fall of 2005. The mission of the Johnson Education Center is to strengthen the capacity of local governments, grassroots organizations and state, county and nonprofit partners to protect and effectively manage land. D&R Greenway Land Trust's professional staff and other industry experts will provide hands-on education and technical assistance to empower leaders who can accelerate the pace of open space preservation in the most densely developed state in the nation. The programs offered by D&R Greenway Land Trust at the Johnson Education Center will be designed to answer the urgent need to protect as much viable land as possible as quickly as possible. By increasing the knowledge base of individuals and groups involved in land conservation work and encouraging regional cooperation, more acres can be preserved and the stewardship and use of already preserved acres can be integrated with community interests.

Members of the Johnson Family provided a generous contribution towards the renovation of a circa 1900 barn, which will become the Johnson Education Center. The barn is located on the former Robert Wood Johnson family estate in Princeton, New Jersey. The 60-acre property, now known as Greenway Meadows Park, was preserved by D&R Greenway Land Trust in 2001 through a model public/private partnership. The Johnson Education Center will also provide a permanent home for D&R Greenway Land Trust.

Besides moving into a new location, the organization will be making a few additional changes for 2005. In order to more clearly reflect the D&R Greenway's preservation work as a land trust and to account for the expansion of their work beyond their traditional focus of lands surrounding the Delaware & Raritan Canal, the organization has evolved its name to D&R Greenway Land Trust (from Delaware & Raritan Greenway). And, to make information about land preservation more accessible, they have launched a new website – **www.drgreenway.org**. Here supporters and partners will find updates on D&R Greenway Land Trust's preservation activities, educational programs and fundraising events. The site will also supply information about access to preserved lands on public trails and links to other environmental and conservation websites.

To learn more about D&R Greenway Land Trust and the importance of land preservation in our area visit **www.drgreenway.org** or call **609-924-4646**.