



## News Release

Contact:

Jo-Ann Munoz

Director of Communications

609-924-4646 ext. 125

[jmunoz@delrargreenway.org](mailto:jmunoz@delrargreenway.org)

**For immediate release:**

### **Sourland Region Preservation Initiatives Announced**

**Princeton, NJ, April 15 2004** – Delaware & Raritan Greenway, central New Jersey's regional land trust, is pleased to share in the NJDEP Green Acres Program's announcement of the preservation of eight new properties located in the Sourlands. D&R Greenway was a facilitating partner with the Green Acres program in five of the eight properties.

The announcement was made at Fiddler's Creek Farm, over 180 acres of farmland and stream corridor, preserved by Mr. Mazur and Mr. Salkin with D&R Greenway in partnership with the State of New Jersey.

The Sourlands have been an area of focus for D&R Greenway since the organization's inception in 1989. The 180 acre McBurney Woods Preserve in East Amwell Township was the first preservation transaction completed by D&R Greenway and the first Green Acres non-profit project completed in New Jersey. Since then the land trust has preserved, either as a facilitating partner or through direct acquisition, 48 properties representing 3,400 acres of land in the Sourlands, approximately one third of land preserved in the region to date. Included in this list is the Olukotun property in Hopewell Township, D&R Greenway's 100<sup>th</sup> preservation transaction.

According to D&R Greenway Executive Director Linda J. Mead, "D&R Greenway, in partnership with municipal and county officials and local grass roots preservation organizations, has been spearheading the effort to protect the Sourland region's environmentally sensitive land. Our goal was to raise the profile of the Sourlands with the State's Green Acres Program in order to accelerate the preservation process and place as much contiguous land as possible into preservation, resulting in the extension of the Sourlands Greenway."

The 62 square mile main Sourland Ridge is a critical natural resource for central New Jersey. It encompasses large areas of mature intact forests and perched wetlands and provides the geographical conditions necessary for the formation of the headwaters of most of the streams in our region. These lands capture and recharge the groundwater that feeds these streams that in turn feed larger rivers such as the Stony Brook, Beden's Brook, Rock

Brook, Back Brook, Alexauken Creek, Swan Creek, Moore's Creek and the Neshanic River. Much of the water from these rivers flows into the D&R Canal, supplying the drinking water for about one million people.

In addition to sustaining the quality and quantity of our water, the large unbroken forests and wetlands of the Sourlands provide the essential habitat for many birds, plants and other wildlife species. In particular, in order to successfully breed many types of neo-tropical migrating birds require the large areas of unbroken forest habitat that the Sourlands provide.

Because the Sourlands region encompasses 9 townships and boroughs and three counties, the heightened focus by the State's DEP Green Acres Program will benefit its preservation as a unique entity.

### **About Delaware & Raritan Greenway**

Celebrating 15 years of land preservation successes, Delaware & Raritan Greenway is central New Jersey's regional land trust. Their mission is to safeguard the water quality, environment and livability of our area by permanently preserving its watershed lands and large-scale landscapes. Since 1989 D&R Greenway has preserved 6,800 acres of land valued at \$129.5 million.

In 2005, D&R Greenway plans to open *The Greenway Center*, a focal point for land preservation in New Jersey. *The Greenway Center* will offer programs and resources to engage and strengthen the capacity of municipalities, grassroots organizations and other groups to protect and effectively manage land. D&R Greenway's staff will provide hands-on education, technical assistance and direct action to assist their preservation partners in achieving their goals. *The Greenway Center* will also provide a home for the D&R Greenway.

For the second year in a row Charity Navigator, America's premier evaluator of independent charities, has awarded D&R Greenway four stars – their highest rating – for excellence in the area of strong fiscal management

For more information please contact D&R Greenway at 609-924-4646 or at [info@delrargreenway.org](mailto:info@delrargreenway.org).

Photo captions:

D&R Greenway Executive Director Linda J. Mead and New Jersey DEP Commissioner Bradley M. Campbell at the April 15 press conference announcing the preservation of eight significant properties in the Sourland Mountain Region.

A view of Fiddler's Creek Farm, over 180 acres of land in the Sourlands, preserved by D&R Greenway in Partnership with the State of New Jersey.