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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Renovations Progressing at the Johnson Education Center in
Princeton's Greenway Meadows Park, Future Home of
D&R Greenway Land Trust**

Princeton NJ, April 27, 2005 – Visitors to the playing fields and playground at Greenway Meadows Park on Rosedale Road in Princeton may be wondering what's going on up at the old barn. The historic structure that has been a part of Princeton's agricultural landscape for over 100 years is looking more and more like an ungainly beach house on stilts.

But the **Johnson Education Center** as the barn is now known, named through a generous contribution from the members of the Johnson Family, is actually undergoing a sensitive renovation. When completed in the late fall of 2005, this unique and innovative and resource for the land preservation community and the future home of **D&R Greenway Land Trust** will be a model of adaptive reuse that helps preserve the rural heritage of Princeton. D&R Greenway completed the first phase of the \$3.5 million capital campaign for the Johnson Education Center in October of 2004, raising \$2.7 million, including the gift from the Johnson Family. A public campaign to complete the project will be launched in late 2005. Several named gift opportunities are also available.

The barn is located on land that was part of the lower farm of the Edgerstoune estate, later the Robert Wood Johnson estate. The 60-acre property, now known as Greenway Meadows Park, was preserved in 2001 at a cost of \$7.4 million. D&R Greenway spearheaded the model public/private partnership, which included the State of New Jersey, Mercer County, Princeton Township and Borough and numerous private individuals and made the preservation of this magnificent open space in the heart of Princeton Township a reality.

Princeton Township Mayor Phyllis L. Marchand commented, "The combination of Greenway Meadows Park and the Johnson Education Center represents Preservation with a capital 'P' – the protection of both our beautiful Princeton open space and our township's historic agricultural character. We are delighted to have D&R Greenway as part of our community and to have a facility like the Johnson Education Center located here."

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At the time of the groundbreaking ceremony for the Johnson Education Center in October 2004, the Johnson family expressed their belief that Robert Wood Johnson would be very pleased to know that the estate's beautiful grounds have been preserved for the enjoyment of the residents of Princeton and that the barn is taking on a new life, sustaining and encouraging the work of land preservation, conservation and environmental organizations throughout the state.

The Johnson Education Center barn was originally built in the shape of a "U". The center courtyard contained a corn crib and watering trough supplied by a spring. The structure had space for eighteen cows, eight calf pens and a bull pen, standing stalls for thirteen work horses and eight box stalls for mares and foals. The barn's hayloft had room to store approximately two hundred tons of hay.

The Johnson Education Center will retain many of the barn's structural details including the hand-hewn timber frame. Noted architect Jeremiah Ford III of Ford 3 Architects LLC is the designer of the Johnson Education Center and E. Allen Reeves, Inc. is the project's contractor.

According to Jeremiah Ford, the Johnson Education Center's barn conversion is unique because its future use does not require substantive changes to the original details. "Unlike barn-into-home conversions, there was no need to add windows or divide large spaces into rooms. The first floor office space will use the window openings that were present in the original barn. The large second floor meeting rooms, originally the hayloft, will not need to have windows added. The wide-open upstairs interior with its exposed timber and wood framing and sheathing will look pretty much as it did when the structure was a working barn."

Steven J. Doerler of Doerler Landscapes, Inc. is donating the landscape design surrounding the Johnson Education Center, which will emphasize native plants and harmonize with the surrounding parkland.

Designed to be a focal point for land preservation in New Jersey, the Johnson Education Center will be a place where partners can learn, share resources and collaborate to leverage land preservation results. The Johnson Education 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 professional staff and other experts will provide hands-on education, technical assistance and direct action to help our partners achieve their goals. Through the Johnson Education Center, D&R Greenway hopes to pass on their proven models, tools and techniques that result in land preservation success!

"We hope the Johnson Education Center will become an asset for the land preservation community and other like-minded organizations as well as the residents of central New Jersey," commented Linda J. Mead, Executive Director of D&R Greenway Land Trust. "We look forward to being a good neighbor and becoming a valued partner in the Princeton community."

The Johnson Education Center will also be the home of D&R Greenway Land Trust, the non-profit land preservation organization founded in 1989. D&R Greenway's mission is to preserve an interconnected system of lands in central New Jersey by creating and extending *Greenways*, safeguarding the watersheds, water quality, and biodiversity of our region. D&R Greenway will protect these natural lands and open spaces so that nature can flourish in perpetuity and the

residents of central New Jersey can enjoy a healthier and more livable environment. D&R Greenway will also promote land preservation as a fundamental social value. Since 1989, D&R Greenway has preserved 8,006 acres of land valued at over \$162 million, representing 126 separate preservation transactions.

In March 2005 Charity Navigator, America's largest independent evaluator of charities, awarded D&R Greenway their highest rating – four stars – for excellence in the area of strong fiscal management for the *third* year in a row. Trent Stamp, Executive Director of Charity Navigator, characterizes D&R Greenway's rating's consistency as "an exceptional feat". And this past November, D&R Greenway was named a winner of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection 2004 Environmental Excellence Award, for outstanding environmental performance, programs and achievements in the State of New Jersey. D&R Greenway won in the category of Open Space Protection and Preservation.

For more information please call 609-924-4646 or visit www.drgreenway.org.