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Office of the Secretary 50 Harry S. Truman Parkway Annapolis, Maryland 21401

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CONTACT: Sue duPont, MDA
410-841-5889
Julie Oberg, MDA
410-841-5888
Olivia Campbell, DNR
410-260-8016

Eleven Rural Communities Awarded Free Trees this Spring

Pilot Program Supports Public Shade and Beautification Projects

ANNAPOLIS, MD (March 19, 2008) – Eleven rural communities have been selected to receive trees through a new pilot project sponsored by the Rural Maryland Council and the TREE-Mendous Maryland Program of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Forest Service.

"This partnership is a prime example of how we are working in a more sustainable way to preserve and protect our natural resources and the quality of life that we enjoy as Marylanders," said Governor Martin O'Malley.

This joint project set out to identify rural communities and/or organizations that could plant trees on public property to provide shade, add greenery or re-green a public area. To be eligible, trees had to be planted to create shade, wildlife habitat, beautifying town streets and to achieve other purposes related to preserving and expanding urban and community forests.

"We are very pleased to partner with DNR's TREE-Mendous Maryland Program to offer this exciting opportunity to our rural communities," said Rural Maryland Council Executive Director David M. Jenkins. "Many rural communities have such pressing needs that they simply do not have the resources to purchase trees for shade and beautification projects. That is indicated by the fact that we had many more applicants than we could handle. We are grateful to DNR and the TREE-mendous Maryland Program for making this project possible."

The agency, organization or local government that applied is responsible for obtaining appropriate permits, planting the trees and ensuring that the trees are properly cared for after they are planted, which includes watering, pruning, mulching, and possibly staking if needed. DNR provides technical assistance.

"Trees perform environmental services that directly benefit the quality of life in both urban and rural communities," said DNR TREE-Mendous Coordinator Terry Galloway. "In addition to their aesthetic values, trees provide cool comfort for pedestrians on hot days, improve water quality, and absorb and store greenhouse gases, thus removing air pollution from the local atmosphere."

Trees are provided by DNR's Maryland Gift of Trees Program. Manpower from Maryland's Conservation Corps is available in certain locations.

<u>2008 Spring Awardees:</u>

- **City of Frostburg (Allegany County) -** to provide shade around the public parking lot at Glendenning Recreational Complex. (Applicant: Susan Keller, Commissioner of Public Works)

- **Kent Farm Museum (Kent County) -** to provide shade and reduce runoff along the museum's driveway and parking lot. (Applicant: Phil Larkin)

- **Town of Trappe (Talbot County**) - to plant at Branble property at the Water Tower Park. (Applicant: Jennifer Shull, Town Planner)

- **Creekside Park in Westernport (Allegany County)** - to plant at Creekside Park in Westernport. (Applicant: Cassandra McCrae, George's Creek Watershed Association)

- **Westminster Nonprofit Center (Carroll County)** - to create shade on the grounds of the Center and to promote a healthier lifestyle for citizens (Applicant: Rebecca Herman, Grants Manager.)

- **Pine Valley Park (Carroll County)** - to reforest and provide shade along an area cleared for a utility access road. (Applicant: Ellen Rugemer)

- **Town of Luke (Allegany County)** - to plant behind the Luke City Building to provide shade. (Applicant: Janet M. Bryan, Parks and Recreation Commissioner)

- **Brunswick (Frederick County)** - to plant at City's Family Campground to promote environmental awareness and beautification. (Applicant: Carrie Myers, Grants Coordinator, City of Brunswick)

- **Woodland Park or Pleasant Acres Park (Town of Thurmont)** - to create shade at Woodland and/or Pleasant Acres Park. (Applicant: William Blakeslee, Chief Administrator, Town of Thurmont)

- **Sykesville (Carroll County)** - to provide tree cover in downtown areas, encourage pedestrian activity, promote economic development, provide storm water management, and create cooling affect in parking lot. (Applicant: Matthew Candland, Town Manager)

- **City of Cumberland (Allegany County)** - to complement current tree planting programs in neighborhoods where funding is not available. (Applicant: Paul Erickson, Natural Resource Specialist)

The Rural Maryland Council is an independent state agency housed within MDA. The Rural Maryland Council and the TREE-Mendous Maryland program hope to offer this program again later in the year. For more information, about the Rural Maryland Council, visit: www.ruralforvm.state.md.us/. For more information about TREE-Mendous Maryland, visit: www.dnr.state.md.us/forests/treemendous/.

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