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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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National Association of Regional Councils Recognizes *Regional Centers of Excellence* *Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission and Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission Receive Awards for Green Infrastructure Outreach*

Washington, DC (May 18, 2009) – The National Association of Regional Councils (NARC), in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service, recognized two green infrastructure programs, which will receive grants and serve as national models of land conservation and natural resource protection: the Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission (Bay-Lake) in Green Bay, WI, and the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) in Philadelphia, PA. As *Regional Centers of Excellence (RCE)*, the organizations will be featured at NARC's 43rd Annual Conference and Exhibition and through *Green Regions*, NARC's public awareness campaign focused on the environment.

"We are excited to acknowledge the achievements of these distinguished regional planning organizations and provide additional funding to further their efforts," said NARC President Stephen Cassano, Selectman, Town of Manchester, CT. "The expertise of these regions in promoting green infrastructure and Landcare highlights the importance of working regionally on environmental issues."

Bay-Lake – In 1997, Bay-Lake began defining and mapping environmental corridors, providing information to cities and counties to facilitate green infrastructure protection in local planning and zoning efforts. With the *RCE* grant, Bay-Lake will prepare, distribute and publish posters on their website about the benefits and tools for protecting valuable regional green infrastructure in their environmental corridors. Bay-Lake will also work with partner organizations, universities and natural resources organizations to raise awareness about green infrastructure protection.

"We are honored to participate in this initiative, and to showcase our program as an innovative practice," said Mark Walter, executive director, Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission. "We look forward to working with NARC and promoting the importance of green infrastructure and sustainable land use practices."

DVRPC – In DVRPC's Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), *Connections – The Regional Plan for a Sustainable Future*, the importance of regional green infrastructure is exemplified by the key plan principle to protect an additional 500,000 acres of natural resources, farmland and greenways to create an interconnected network of greenspace throughout the Greater Philadelphia region. Using a new environmental screening tool, DVRPC links environmental and transportation planning within its LRTP, while also promoting a local "Green Streets" program to address the environmental consequences of impervious surfaces. With the *RCE* grant, DVRPC intends to increase its region-to-region outreach through an expanded website, written materials, community meetings, partnerships with local and state environmental organizations, and public speaking opportunities at national conferences.

“We are honored to be chosen as a *Regional Center of Excellence*,” said Barry Seymour, executive director, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission. “DVRPC has made it a priority to include green infrastructure planning in our transportation program and welcomes the opportunity to share our experiences with others.”

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About the National Association of Regional Councils

The National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) serves as the national voice for regionalism by advocating for regional cooperation as the most effective way to address a variety of community planning and development opportunities and issues. NARC’s member organizations are composed of multiple local governments that work together to serve American communities – large and small, urban and rural. In 2008, NARC launched the first of four public awareness campaigns – Green Regions, Mobile Regions, Build Regions and Secure Regions. For additional information, please visit www.NARC.org or www.GreenRegions.org.

About the U.S. Forest Service

The U.S Forest Service manages over 193 million acres of National Forests, has the world’s largest forestry research organization, and facilitates the conservation of state and privately owned forest land across the country. The Forest Service promotes the use of Green Infrastructure and Landcare to help conserve and manage public and private forest land that spans the urban to rural continuum.

About the Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission

The Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission was created to address regional land use, economic, and intergovernmental issues in northeast Wisconsin. The Commission evolved from a long tradition of state and local interest in land and water conservation and balanced economic development in the State of Wisconsin. The Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission was established by Governor Patrick Lucey in April 1972 to provide advisory planning service on area-wide issues, to represent local interests on state and federal planning program activities, and to provide local planning assistance to communities in the counties of Brown, Door, Florence, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Marinette, Oconto, and Sheboygan. For additional information, please visit www.baylakerpc.org.

About the Delaware Regional Planning Commission

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission is dedicated to uniting the region’s elected officials, planning professionals and the public with the common vision of making a great region even greater. Shaping the way we live, work and play, DVRPC builds consensus on improving transportation, promoting smart growth, protecting the environment, and enhancing the economy. We serve a diverse region of nine counties: Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia in Pennsylvania; and Burlington, Camden, Gloucester and Mercer in New Jersey. DVRPC is the official metropolitan planning organization for the Greater Philadelphia Region - leading the way to a better future. DVRPC fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. For additional information, please visit www.DVRPC.org.

About Green Infrastructure and Landcare

Green infrastructure is the network of natural lands, working landscapes and other open spaces that are strategically planned and managed to conserve their ecological functions while also providing associated benefits to human populations. Green infrastructure includes woods, meadows, forests, wetlands, farmland, animal habitat, etc., and plays an important role in reducing air pollution, filtering stormwater, maintaining ecological balance, and increasing the effectiveness of traditional infrastructure. Landcare, the community-based practice of holistic, cooperative and sustainable land management techniques is an integral aspect of maintaining green infrastructure. Please see [NARC’s Green Regions Campaign website](#), the [U.S. Forest Service’s Urban and Community Forestry website](#), the [Conservation Fund’s Green Infrastructure website](#), and [Landcare Central](#) for more information.