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NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

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Watershed Association Supports Voting “Yes” on Public Question #1 *Urges Voters to Continue NJ’s Green Acres, Clean Water Commitments*

October 21, 2009 (Hopewell, NJ) – With the beauty of Wargo Pond as its backdrop, the **Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association**, central New Jersey’s first environmental group, rallied for protection of clean water and open space at a press conference at the Watershed Association’s 860-acre Watershed Reserve in Hopewell on Wednesday morning.

The Watershed Association, area leaders, and the NJ Keep It Green Coalition of 135 organizations teamed up to show support for Public Question #1 – the Green Acres, Clean Water and Farmland Preservation Act – and urge voters to vote ‘yes’ on the November 3 statewide ballot question.

“A ‘yes’ vote on question #1 is a ‘yes’ vote for clean water,” said **Jim Waltman**, Watershed Association Executive Director. “Open space preservation and clean water protection go hand-in-hand in New Jersey. Public question #1 will renew funds to the Garden State Preservation Trust and allow our state to continue to preserve lands that are crucial to protecting our water resources and ensure families will have enough clean water to drink today and tomorrow.”

Approval of the November 3 referendum on the Green Acres, Clean Water, Farmland Preservation Act will replenish the Garden State Preservation Trust by allowing the state to bond for up to \$400 million to ensure that open space, farmland, and historic preservation continues in New Jersey. The cost of the \$400 million bond issue will be \$10 annually per household – less than \$1 per month.

“Voting ‘yes’ to public question #1 on Election Day gives us the opportunity to provide our children with a future that includes clean water, healthy habitats, and open spaces for urban, suburban, and rural areas,” said Assemblywoman **Bonnie Watson Coleman** (D-15).

Assemblywoman **Linda Greenstein** (D-14) agreed. “Open space is very significant to all of us, not just for the reason of having something pretty to look at, but because it protects our clean water and air, which we cannot get back once it disappears,” she said.

“Protecting our clean water is a statewide need, and voting ‘yes’ to Public Question #1 on November 3 is something specific we can do to continue these protections,” added **Kelly Mooij**, Coordinator of the NJ Keep It Green coalition of more than 135 organizations. “By voting ‘yes’ we’ll also be preserving our natural lands, supporting working farmland, and investing wisely in our economy, all of which will make New Jersey a better place for our children and grandchildren.”

After the press conference, attendees joined third grade students from the Brunswick Acres School in Kendall Park for a lesson in pond ecology with Watershed Association teacher-naturalists. Dignitaries – including Watershed Association Executive Director Jim Waltman – donned waders to help students and teachers net for pond life.

“Without New Jersey’s successful open space programs, these children and others like them would not be making such a vital connection with the natural world,” said Jennifer Coffey, Watershed Association Policy Director. “New Jersey’s open space programs helped to preserve portions of our 860-acre Reserve, which provides opportunities for hiking, birding, peace and tranquility for all New Jersey residents. Voting ‘yes’ November 3 ensures our children and future generations will have clean water to drink and natural places like this to explore, learn and grow.”

“Investments we make in open space pay dividends for many years to come,” added Dan Benson, Mercer County Freeholder. “It makes a difference in everyone’s lives. We need open space for future generations.”

To learn more about the Green Acres, Clean Water and Farmland Preservation Act, visit www.NJKeepItGreen.org. The NJ Keep It Green Campaign is a coalition of over 135 organizations from across the state working to renew the Garden State Preservation Trust, and provide for clean water, open spaces, farmland preservation and historic preservation. Visit www.NJKeepItGreen.org or [www.Facebook.com/NJKeepItGreen](https://www.facebook.com/NJKeepItGreen).

About the Watershed Association

The Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association, a not-for-profit organization, protects the 265-square-mile region drained by the Stony Brook and Millstone River – an area spanning 26 towns and five counties. Founded in 1949, the Watershed Association is central New Jersey’s first environmental group protecting clean water and the environment through conservation, advocacy, science and education.

Photos of the event and interviews with Executive Director Jim Waltman are available upon request. Contact Gwen McNamara, Communications Manager, at (609) 737-3735 x16 or gmcnamara@thewatershed.org.