



RARITAN HEADWATERS ASSOCIATION FORMED
Merger of Upper Raritan and South Branch Watershed Associations
Strengthens Protection of New Jersey's Water Supplies

Gladstone, NJ (September 20, 2011) - New Jersey's waters will be better protected by the merger of two highly regarded independent, non-profit watershed associations – Upper Raritan and South Branch – it was announced today in a ceremony at the New Jersey Water Supply Authority in Clinton.

“By combining our two organizations, we create the largest watershed organization in New Jersey and become a powerful voice in advocating for the state's water supplies,” said Executive Director Cindy Ehrenclou. Joined by Bill Kibler, Director of Policy and Science for the new association and Henry Patterson, Executive Director of the New Jersey Water Supply Authority, Ehrenclou made the announcement near the banks of the Spruce Run Reservoir. Kibler believes, “Joining forces will strengthen our ability to address today's water quality issues and the enormous challenge to protect and provide clean drinking water for future generations.” Patterson praised the union of the watershed groups, saying, “I applaud both organizations, two of the oldest and most venerable watershed associations in the country, on coming together to more effectively protect the water resources of the Raritan Basin. The Authority looks forward to a close working relationship with the newly formed Raritan Headwaters Association.”

The mission of the Raritan Headwaters Association (RHA), as the new non-profit organization will be known, is to protect the natural resources of the headwaters of the Raritan River and the 39 municipalities that make up the 470-square mile region located in Morris, Somerset and Hunterdon Counties. The watershed plays a critical role in meeting the demands of 1.5 million residential, commercial, agricultural, municipal and manufacturing water users within the region and beyond. The Raritan Basin is the largest river basin entirely within New Jersey, and part of the Highlands water supply system, serving more than half the state's population.

Other environmental groups and funding agencies have reacted favorably to news of this merger. “We are particularly impressed by the vision of URWA and SBWA to move toward a strategic alliance that will improve environmental and stewardship efforts, as well as create organizational efficiencies,” commented Chris Daggett, President and CEO of the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation. “We also appreciate the investment in supporting the cultural shifts and relationship building that are key to such alliances.”

Elected officials from across the region have also endorsed the merger. Congressman Rush Holt, who serves New Jersey's 12th District in the U.S. House of Representatives observed, “Because natural watersheds can span thousands of square miles across county and state lines, too often nobody accepts responsibility for protecting their safety and quality. For decades, the South Branch Watershed Association and the Upper Raritan Watershed Association have welcomed that responsibility in New Jersey, serving as fierce and effective advocates for conservation. I am pleased that they are joining forces to fight to protect New Jersey's water resources in the years to come.”

For the past 18 months, the two associations worked together to conduct due diligence, review synergies and compatibilities and formulate a plan for consolidation. Raritan Headwaters has a 12-person staff and is

headquartered out of Fairview Farm Wildlife Preserve in Bedminster with a satellite office in Flemington. 23 volunteers representing a diverse array of backgrounds and professional experience are serving on the Board of Trustees to guide the new organization.

The merger is enhancing the administrative efficiency of the two former associations and building on their shared legacies of public education, science-based advocacy and environmental stewardship. In addition to its 170-acre Fairview Farm preserve, the RHA owns and manages 12 natural areas and holds easements on 33 privately owned lands across the region. It offers a wide range of educational activities for children and adults, monitors water quality and organizes stream clean-ups, offers a well-testing program and plays an active role in policy discussions at the state and local level to ensure that sound policies are in place to protect water and other critical natural resources throughout the region.

For additional information, please refer to the enclosed Fact Sheet or access the new RHA web site at www.raritanheadwaters.org.

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