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Bridle Path Conservancy Wins National Stewardship Award

Westbrook, Connecticut, October 6, 2005 – The Bridle Path Conservancy (BPC), a non-profit group dedicated to the preservation and enhancement of multi-purpose recreational trails in Connecticut, has been chosen as the winner of the Trail Trotters' National Stewardship Award 2005. The Trail Trotters program, sponsored by the Equestrian Land Conservation Resource, National Forest Foundation, Anheuser Busch Company, and TreadLightly!, recognizes groups that take an active part in preserving our nation's nature trails.

"The BPC was chosen for the award for its work done restoring trails and bridges in the Weber Woods section of the Cockaponset State Forest," says Kandee Haertel, Executive Director of the Equestrian Land Conservation Resource (ELCR). "Volunteers from the Bridle Path Conservancy began their trail day project in early May with completion on June 5. Their trail project engaged 211 volunteers and 465 man-hours to reconstruct a multi-use bridge, resurface a muddy trail, and replace two rotting pedestrian bridges in Weber Woods. The work done by the BPC, and the cooperative relationship it has established with state officials and other local volunteer groups, is a great model for others to follow to help preserve our natural resources."

"We are very pleased to win the Trail Trotters award and the \$1000 prize offers a significant injection of much needed funds to continue our mission of improving trails for everyone to enjoy," says Brad Turley, president of the BPC. "Programs like this one sponsored by ECLR help raise the awareness of trail projects and afford groups like ours an opportunity to get our message and draw attention to the work being done to preserve our riding trails."

The Trail Trotters program, launched by the Equestrian Land Conservation Resource (ELCR) with assistance from the National Forest Foundation, TreadLightly!(R), and Anheuser-Busch Company, engaged over 1,200 individual volunteers across the country who logged in more than 5,500 man-hours. The program's mission was to promote

equestrian involvement in the restoration, repair, and establishment of trails and trailheads.

Based not only on the successful completion of trail projects but also on the high level of interest and participation in Trail Trotters 2005, it is anticipated that this will be a continuing program for ELCR. For additional information regarding the ELCR or its Trail Trotters program contact Kandee Haertel at PO Box 423, 126B N. Main St., Elizabeth, IL 61028; phone (815) 858-3501; e-mail: info@elcr.org.

The Bridle Path Conservancy is a non-profit group dedicated to the preservation, enhancement and acquisition of multi-purpose, passive-use, recreational trails on public and private land in Connecticut and southern New England. While the Conservancy was founded by equestrian enthusiasts, it seeks to support all open space and trail initiatives. By managing, educating and cooperating with others to create opportunities to facilitate and preserve trails, the Conservancy strives to keep recreational land available for present and future generations to enjoy. For more information, to donate, or to partner with the BPC contact Pati Martin at (203) 318-0400 or email ContactUs@BPConservancy.org.

Suggested Caption: *Members of the Bridle Path Conservancy (BPC) receive the 2005 Trail Trotters' National Stewardship Award and \$1000 check during ceremonies in Weber Woods on October 5, 2005. Pictured L to R are Brad Turley of Killingworth, President BPC; Alex Sokolow, Park Supervisor for Cockaponset State Forest; Kristen Elliott-Leas of Westbrook, BPC; Pati Martin of Westbrook, BPC; and Kandee Haertel, Executive Director of the Equestrian Land Conservation Resource*