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News Release

Pilot View RC&D Presents Annual Awards for 2008

On August 5, friends and supporters of Pilot View Resource Conservation and Development, Inc. gathered at the Piedmont Club for the eighth annual awards luncheon. Al Engler, board chairman, welcomed the attendees, who heard the remarks of keynote speaker, Fifth District Congresswoman Dr. Virginia Foxx.

Again this year Pilot View RC&D recognized the accomplishments of communities who have completed significant work in helping protect and appropriately develop land and water resources in the organization's service area. With the help of emcee David Plyler, current candidate for and former member of the Forsyth County Board of Commissioners, Pilot View presented two awards.

The 2008 Project Award was presented by Pilot View RC&D board president Al Engler to James R. Griffith, Jr. and the E.C. Griffith Company for the West Fork of Linville River project in Avery County. The torrential rains and flooding that accompanied back-to-back Hurricanes Frances and Ivan in 2004 seriously eroded many tributaries in western North Carolina and destroyed substantial aquatic habitat. Trout Unlimited teamed with the Avery County Soil and Water Conservation District to approach land owners in the area, including the family farm owned by the E.C. Griffith family, about restoring some of these streams. Pilot View RC&D undertook this project outside its six-county region because the sponsors recognized Pilot View's experience and expertise with large-scale

stream restoration projects. Engineered improvements restored the natural streambed, reduced stream bank erosion, rejuvenated native vegetation, and reduced the effects of pollutants washing from adjacent roadways into the designated and sensitive trout streams. A second mile-long stretch of stream running through the property of other owners in the area is slated for restoration this fall.

The 2008 Environmental Award was presented by Pilot View RC&D to Phyllis Jessup and the Shoals Community Recreational Park in Surry County. With Ms. Jessup's persistent and diligent leadership in the face of years of disappointing setbacks, the Shoals Community has now added 80 acres to the 11-acre recreational park established in 1995. The project receiving recognition included the restoration of 6,000 feet of eroding stream to help improve water quality in the Ararat River and the Yadkin River. When completed, the expanded park will include ball fields, soccer fields, and benches along hiking trails through natural areas. Surry County and the Surry County Soil and Water Conservations District were two of the partners in this project. The Clean Water Management Trust Fund and the NC Division of Water Resources were among the project partners on both award-winning projects.

Congresswoman Virginia Foxx thanked Pilot View RC&D for inviting her to address this gathering. She pointedly thanked all those attending and their organizations for the important work they do to promote wise stewardship and conservation of our state's environmental resources. "I am a big conservationist," she added as she recounted the efforts she and her staff make to recycle and reuse materials in the Congressional offices. "I go nuts when I see the waste that goes on in Washington," she said. She added as a caution that the energy crisis we are now experiencing will pale in comparison to the water crisis that could well be on the horizon. It could come sooner rather than later, she said, except for the good work of those represented in the room to help conserve our watersheds and streams.

Pilot View, Inc. is a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization established in 1991 to work with communities throughout six counties—Davidson, Davie, Forsyth, Stokes, Surry and

Yadkin—to support local efforts to conserve and responsibly develop natural resources. The Council includes representatives from each of the six counties. In Davidson County, John L. Hedgecock and Billy Joe Kepley serve. In Davie County, Rep. Julia Howard,, Jack Jerome and John Barber serve. In Forsyth County, the Council members are Chuck Green, and Jimmy Flythe; in Stokes County, they are Al Engler and Horace Stimson. The Council members from Surry County are Ralph Williams and Earl Shepherd. Yadkin County is represented by Bobby Todd.



James R. Griffith, Jr., (r) President, E.C. Griffith Company, received the Project Award from Pilot View RC&D, Inc. Chairman, Al Engler.



Congresswoman Dr. Virginia Foxx (right) congratulates Phyllis Jessup on her receipt of the Environmental Award for her work on the Shoals Community Recreational Park.

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