



Maryland Environmental Trust Elects New Chairman

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Crownsville, Md (June 17, 2010) -- Maryland Environmental Trust (MET) has recently named James O'Connell as its new Chairman of the Board of Trustees. O'Connell succeeds K. King Burnett, who completed his term as chair on May 30, 2010. O'Connell has served as a trustee of the MET since 2006. MET works with private landowners and local land trusts to permanently protect scenic open space, forests and working lands, primarily through donated conservation easements.

"I'm thrilled to be taking the helm at such a critical time in MET's history," said O'Connell. "Land conservation in Maryland during the next 10-15 years needs to be a priority and to keep up with the increased pace of development and population. The restoration of the Chesapeake Bay is contingent on the protection of the wetlands, forests and open space in the watershed."

O'Connell is a member of many conservation organizations. He is the President of the Sugarloaf Countryside Conservancy, a local land trust for the Montgomery County Western Agricultural Reserve. He is also a life member of Trout Unlimited and the Izaak Walton League of America.

A resident of Montgomery County, O'Connell owns a farm which is protected with a Rural Legacy Easement. He and his family have also preserved three properties in Dorchester County with conservation easements.

O'Connell is a senior partner in O'Donoghue & O'Donoghue LLP in Washington, D.C. He graduated from the University of Maryland and Georgetown Law School. Following service as an officer in the United States Marine Corps, he joined the firm, where he has been involved in all aspects of the firm's practice for more than thirty years.

Also elected to the Board of Trustees were James Constable, who will serve as Vice Chair; Ann Holmes Jones, who will continue as Secretary, and Jay Plager as Treasurer.

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MET was established in 1967 by the Maryland General Assembly to preserve privately owned farm and forest lands and significant natural resources. MET holds more than 1000 easements, protecting over 125,000 acres of forest, farmland and scenic open space across the state of Maryland. MET is a statewide land trust affiliated with the MD Department of Natural Resources and governed by a citizen board of trustees. For more information about MET, please visit www.dnr.maryland.gov/met.