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NEWS RELEASE

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Governor Whitman Dedicates More Open Space this time at Liberty State Park in Jersey City

The Garden State just got even greener. Governor Christie Whitman joined state and local officials, and school children, today for a ribbon-cutting ceremony to dedicate Green Park, a newly developed 88-acre recreation area within Liberty State Park in Jersey City.

"I'm happy to be here today for the dedication of this beautiful new park. With its 88 acres of lawns, meadows and trails overlooking the Manhattan skyline, Green Park is a great addition to Liberty State Park," said Gov. Whitman. "This magnificent park showcases historic Ellis Island, the Statue of Liberty and our renowned Liberty Science Center. And I'm sure that the new playground and picnic areas will be a special favorite for our youngsters.

Green Park, a three-year project, began in 1996 and was completed this month. A 1995 Green Acres Bond Issue gave \$10 million to Liberty State Park, of which approximately \$5 million was used to develop Green Park. Liberty State Park was opened on June 14, 1976 (Flag Day) as the state's bicentennial gift to the nation. While most of Liberty State Park's 1,122 acres are considered open space, there are approximately 300 acres developed for recreational usage.

According to Gov. Whitman, Green Park is a great example of how New Jersey can preserve open space while meeting the need for more recreational facilities in its cities. In recognition of the difference that parks can make to the quality of life across the state, the Whitman administration has dedicated \$10 million in this year's budget to park development in urban, suburban and rural areas.

"What's more," said the Governor, "I am committed to continuing this level of funding for parklands over the next decade. With these funds, children across our state will have more space to play, picnic, or just be kids. And all our residents can enjoy the beauty and tranquility that open space brings to the landscape."

In addition to 200,000 acres of parkland, the Whitman administration - in its commitment to quality of life in the state and smart growth - will ultimately preserve 500,000 acres of farmland, 200,000 acres of greenways and 100,000 acres of watershed

protection. This open space preservation amounts to about half of the remaining undeveloped land in New Jersey.

The Garden State Preservation Trust Act dedicates a stable source of funding to save one million more acres of undeveloped land by 2009. The Garden State Preservation Trust is responsible for approving projects submitted by Green Acres, the State Agricultural Development Committee and the New Jersey Historic Trust. It will also submit at least two appropriation bills to the Legislature each year.

"Considering that New Jersey is the most densely populated state in the nation," concluded Gov. Whitman, "what we've achieved in the way of land preservation is truly amazing,"

