

PO BOX 004
TRENTON, NJ 08625

CONTACT: Jayne O'Connor
Wendi Patella
609-777-2600

RELEASE: April 26, 1999

NEWS RELEASE

Governor's Sustainability Initiative Earns National Recognition Deemed an Example of Excellence to Serve as National Model

Governor Christie Whitman's Sustainability Initiative and strong commitment to providing a healthy and sustainable New Jersey will be honored by Renew America and the President's Council on Sustainable Development as a national model demonstrating that communities, businesses and government can all contribute to the sustainability effort.

"New Jersey's commitment to sustainability and smart growth is evidenced in many ways and can be seen throughout the state. We are preserving over 40 percent of the state as open space, promoting environmentally responsible industry, and encouraging successful urban redevelopment plans," said Gov. Whitman. "Also, our State Development and Redevelopment Plan is a blueprint to redevelop cities, contain sprawl and relieve congestion."

"Sustainability efforts are key to keeping New Jersey and the rest of the country on track in balancing the need to preserve our valuable open space with the need for growth. I am pleased that New Jersey's efforts to promote smart growth are being recognized," Governor Whitman said. "The residents of New Jersey should be proud that their commitment to keep New Jersey green, as well as the state's initiatives to encourage smart growth and sustainable business, are being recognized for their forward thinking approach and their efforts to protect the resources that we have today so they are here for us tomorrow."

The Governor's Sustainable Development Initiative was recognized in the category of Growth Management/ Regional Planning and will be honored at an awards ceremony on May 3rd, in Detroit, Michigan, as part of the landmark National Town Meeting for a Sustainable America. Department of Community Affairs Commissioner Jane Kenny will travel to Detroit to accept the award for the State. The event is cosponsored by the President's Council on Sustainable Development and the Global Environment and Technology Foundation.

"These awards celebrate the ways in which Americans are working together to protect public health and the environment and to demonstrate that a healthy environment and a growing economy really do go hand-in-hand," lauded Carol Browner, Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and co-chair of the National Town Meeting for a Sustainable America.

Anna Slafer, Executive Director of Renew America, said the awards give the national environmental nonprofit group a chance, along with the President's Council, to honor the people and programs that safeguard the environment and enhance the nation's communities every day.

As part of the state's effort to encourage a more sustainable New Jersey, the Governor created the Office of Sustainable Business and directed every agency to incorporate sustainability into their policies and practices. Today, as a result, the State is expanding its use of cleaner, alternative-fuel vehicles beyond federal mandates, creating 2,000 miles of new bike paths and helping New Jersey businesses to export "green" products such as pollution-free solar energy technologies.

The winners were selected through a rigorous process from over 300 applicants. The winners were selected by representatives of the National Awards Council for Environmental Sustainability (NACES) and the President's Council on Sustainable Development. NACES is coordinated by Renew America and is comprised of 60 national environmental, nonprofit, government and business organizations, including the US EPA, National Audubon Society, The Nature Conservancy, the Sierra Club, The Humane Society of the United States, AT&T, the National Geographic Society and the Smithsonian Institution.

Renew America promotes model programs that protect, restore and enhance the environment. By doing so, Renew America is able to inspire communities, government agencies and businesses to meet today's environmental challenges.

The President's Council on Sustainable Development is an advisory committee established by the President to develop approaches to achieving the nation's economic, environmental and equity goals.