



Embargoed for Release:
November 19, 2009

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St. Charles Man Singled Out for Environmental Leadership *Honoree Receives Audubon/Toyota TogetherGreen Fellowship*

New York, NY, November 19, 2009-A St. Charles, Missouri man is the recipient of a national fellowship designed to advance the work of individuals with outstanding leadership potential to help shape a brighter environmental future.

Ralph Rollins is one of 40 individuals nationwide selected as a 2009 *TogetherGreen* Fellow. The *TogetherGreen* Fellowship offers specialized training in conservation planning and execution, the chance to work and share best practices with gifted conservation professionals, and assistance with project outreach and evaluation. Each Fellow receives \$10,000 towards a community-focused project to engage local residents in conserving land, water and energy, and contributing to greater environmental health.

For his fellowship, Rollins will restore a section of the Mississippi waterfront in St. Louis to its former condition based on historic records and scientific research. His efforts will include the removal and control of invasive species like bush honeysuckle, garlic mustard, and Japanese hops; the removal and control of existing cool-season grasses; and installation of 2,000 wet prairie plants grown from regional native plant seed. Rollins' project will give local residents the opportunity to learn how to practice conservation by participating in hands-on restoration experiences – and when coupled with other efforts, it will have a significant impact on regional environmental conservation along the Mississippi.

Rollins is currently the project director of Greenway Network, Inc. In that capacity, he has assisted in the organization's development since its inception, as well as planning and implementing various conservation projects and programs.

“Ralph is the kind of person who can make a real difference in the health of our environment and the quality of our future,” said Audubon President John Flicker. “Each of our *TogetherGreen* Fellows demonstrates exceptional environmental understanding and commitment, combined with tremendous potential to inspire and lead others. Together, they represent the talented and diverse leadership the environmental community will need to tackle the huge challenges and opportunities confronting us now and in the years to come.”

“Everyone needs to be a conservationist or adopt a conservation-aware life-style to protect the only home humanity has. Those of us who have already made a commitment to conservation have an obligation to educate and convince others of the need to protect that home,” said Rollins. “The *TogetherGreen* Conservation Leadership Program will provide valuable training, contacts,

and mentors who can help further my goals of becoming an exceptional, full-time conservation leader in my community.”

Rollins has been affiliated with Greenway Network since 1993. Half of the *TogetherGreen* Fellows come from within Audubon’s far-reaching national network; half channel their environmental efforts through other organizations.

Rollins attended the graduate landscape architecture program at Louisiana State University and received his Bachelors in urban affairs and regional development from Austin Peay State University. A dedicated conservationist, Rollins has previously worked for the St. Louis County Department of Parks & Recreation and the St. Louis County Department of Parks & Recreation. Besides his duties as Project Director with Greenway Network he has his own consulting firm, Environmental Strategies Design and Planning.

A distinguished advisory committee - composed of conservation professionals and experts in environmental education, communications, outreach, and conservation planning-selected the fellowship beneficiaries from a competitive pool of scores of highly qualified individuals. Qualified applicants must have at least six years of experience in conservation, environmental education, policy, or environmental issues, as demonstrated through current and past work experience, academic studies related to conservation, and/or volunteer work. Candidates must have a passion for conservation, the desire to learn and grow, and demonstrate a proven ability in reaching previously unengaged audiences.

"We must engage the best and brightest leaders representing the broadest and most diverse communities in this country to solve our ever more complex conservation challenges," said Diane Wood, President, National Environmental Education Foundation. "TogetherGreen is a creative program that uncovers such leaders, nurtures their talents, supports their dedication to conservation and holds them up to inspire others to follow."

A complete list of the 2009 *TogetherGreen* Fellows can be found at www.TogetherGreen.org/fellows.

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About *TogetherGreen*

Audubon and Toyota launched the five-year *TogetherGreen* initiative in 2008 to build the promise of a greener, healthier future through innovation, leadership and volunteerism. To date, 80 environmental leaders-half from within Audubon and half from outside organizations-have received *TogetherGreen* Fellowships to protect land, water, and energy resources nationwide. For more information, visit www.togethergreen.org.

About Audubon

Now in its second century, Audubon connects people with birds, nature and the environment that supports us all. Our national network of community-based nature centers, chapters, scientific, education, and advocacy programs engages millions of people from all walks of life in conservation action to protect and restore the natural world. Visit Audubon online at www.audubon.org.

About Toyota

Toyota (NYSE: TM) established operations in the United States in 1957 and currently operates 10 manufacturing plants. Toyota is committed to being a good corporate citizen in the communities where it does business and

believes in supporting programs with long-term sustainable results. Toyota supports numerous organizations across the country, focusing on education, the environment and safety. Since 1991, Toyota has contributed more than \$464 million to philanthropic programs in the U.S. For more information on Toyota's commitment to improving communities nationwide, visit www.toyota.com/community.