

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 27, 2015

Haslam, TDEC Announce 2015 Governor's Environmental Stewardship Award Winners

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam and Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation Commissioner Bob Martineau today announced the winners of the 2015 Governor's Environmental Stewardship Awards (GESAs). The 11 winners will be recognized at an awards ceremony in Nashville on June 23.

"Today's award winners have demonstrated a commitment to our environment that will pay dividends for current Tennessee residents and generations to come," Haslam said. "We want to thank all of the nominees for playing an important role in the continued health of Tennessee's air, land and water."

"The quality of our environment directly impacts our quality of life, impacting how Tennesseans live, work and play," added TDEC Commissioner Bob Martineau. "It's important that we pause to recognize the people and organizations that work so hard to protect our environment while teaching others about sustainability."

The Governor's Environmental Stewardship Awards program recognizes exceptional voluntary actions that improve or protect the environment and natural resources with projects or initiatives not required by law or regulation. Now in its 29th year, the GESAs cover nine categories: Building Green; Clean Air, Energy and Renewable Resources; Environmental Education and Outreach; Environmental Education and Outreach (school category); Land Use; Materials Management; Natural Heritage; and Sustainable Performance.

In addition, the 2015 awards roster includes one *Pursuit of Excellence Award*, which recognizes past award winners who continue to demonstrate a high regard for environmental stewardship practices. The *Robert Sparks Walker Lifetime Achievement Award* will be announced at the awards ceremony.

A panel of 22 professionals representing agricultural, conservation, forestry, environmental and academic professionals judged more than 80 nominations and selected this year's award recipients based on criteria including on-the-ground achievement, innovation and public education.

Category: Building Green

Sevier Park Community Center (Davidson County) - Nashville's newly constructed Sevier Park Community Center received LEED Gold certification for its green building strategies in October 2014. The center, built by Metropolitan Board of Parks and Recreation, incorporates rain gardens and pervious concrete to help control stormwater and vegetated/cool roofs to reduce the heat island effect. Other sustainable features include the use of recycled materials from the former community center. The development did not disturb mature trees and the building was integrated into the natural slope of the terrain helping to conserve natural resources and conserve energy through passive heating and cooling technologies. Green infrastructure improvements helped to improve water quality.

Category: Clean Air

Building a Natural Gas Infrastructure (Shelby County) - Memphis Light Gas and Water (MLGW) is reducing area diesel emissions and improving air quality in Memphis and on state highways by building and assisting in the development of natural gas fueling stations. Providing alternative fuels helps to reduce air pollution and address the city's poor air quality.

MLGW is currently operating the only public access compressed natural gas station in Memphis. In 2014, it built a second compressed natural gas station in South Memphis and there are plans to construct a third one. MLGW has 92 compressed natural gas powered vehicles and four tank trailers allowing them to save more than 37,000 gallons of gasoline and more than 100 tons of greenhouse gas. Last year, their stations sold more than 250,000 units of compressed natural gas which resulted in reductions of greenhouse gas emissions, NOx and VOCs, particulate matter and other tailpipe air pollutants.

In 2014, MLGW's fueling station enabled local companies to switch out their fleets to compressed natural gas because of easy access to their fueling stations. Inland Waste, a garbage collection in Memphis, purchased 24 new trash trucks powered by compressed natural gas; which in turn saves the company's bottom line 30 percent and reduces its emissions by 90 percent per truck.

Category: Environmental Education and Outreach

GreenTrips (Hamilton County) - The Chattanooga-Hamilton County Regional Planning Agency established the GreenTrips program in 2014 to educate and encourage citizens to reduce emission and improve air quality in Hamilton County. The program encourages people to think about "green trips" like walking, biking, carpooling or taking public transit instead of driving. Their website allows members to register and log their green trips to get points that can be redeemed for prizes through contests.

The program was funded through a three-year \$600,000 grant from the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Transportation Planning Organization given to the agency in 2011. GreenTrips' staff educates the public about the program at neighborhood meetings, fairs, summits, festivals and work with organizations like the Sierra Club, Outdoor Chattanooga, Bike Walk Chattanooga, Bike Chattanooga, the Chattanooga Area Regional Transportation Authority and other sustainable transportation organizations. Area companies are taking part in the program like Amazon, BlueCross BlueShield of TN and Unum. In 2014, GreenTrips organized the MoveRight Challenge where Chattanooga-based employer partners competed to see which company could log the most green trips. The competition helped to save more than 83,000 pounds of automobile emissions among other gases and matter as well cut down on traffic congestion.

Category: Environmental Education and Outreach - Schools

Trevecca Urban Farm (Davidson County) - The Trevecca Urban Farm was formed in 2011 as a way to create good quality, fresh food for neighbors in the area, educate the community about growing fresh food and as a teaching tool for Trevecca Nazarene University students to help food-insecure neighborhoods. The farm includes livestock guardian dogs, heritage goats, pigs, chickens, a worm farm, an aquaponics fish farm, campus composting, beekeeping, an urban orchard, a greenhouse, a vegetable garden and community gardens where they teach the public to grow food. The concept for the farm began because the university is located in an urban area where it is difficult to buy affordable or good-quality fresh food or as some call it a "food desert." The neighborhood also has a high-crime rate and low-performing schools.

Discussions and research began as part of the university's Social and Environmental Justice Program. The university received a grant from Aetna Foundation and an environmental education grant from the Environmental Protection Agency to build the farm.

The farm helps to conserve fuel that would have been needed to truck in food, helps to reduce crime by turning unattractive deserted lots into gardens, improves the skill sets of citizens and increases neighborhood interaction. Farm staff and students have taught their planting and growing methods to local organizations like Hands on Nashville and have done presentations locally, nationally and worldwide in places like the Philippines.

Category: Energy and Renewable Resources

McMinnville Leads the Way with LEDS (Warren County) - McMinnville converted its entire city street lights to LED's reducing their energy use, saving tax payers money and providing citizens with safely lit streets. McMinnville is the first city in the Tennessee Valley to totally convert its street lights to LED's.

Approximately three years ago, Mayor Jimmy Haley decided he wanted to replace city street lights with LED (light emitting diodes) and he began working with McMinnville Electric System to find a cost-effective LED. The city chose an extended life, 15-year photocell to control when the street lights come on and off and saved more money as LED's don't have to be maintained as much as the standard street lights. The city also plans to replace outdoor yard lights with LED's controlled by managed photocells.

Category: Land Use

New Alcoa High School (Blount County) - The City of Alcoa is opening a new energy-efficient high school built on 26 acres of a 350-acre Brownfield site. The site was once home to West Plant, an aluminum fabricating mill operated by the Aluminum Company of America (ALCOA, Inc.). In 2008, ALCOA began to look for firms to redevelop the site.

Data was compiled from environmental studies and reports to form a mixed-use development plan. West Plant, who occupied the site for 69 years, had by-products from their manufacturing processes that were disposed of in several on-site landfills. To build the 170,000 square foot high school on the site safely, officials had to eliminate using the landfill area that included various contaminants. They also remediated a 2.5 acre storm water management area once containing settling ponds to make green space for the school campus.

Category: Materials Management

Lawrence County Recycling Program (Lawrence County) - Since October 2013, Lawrence County's regional recycling program has prevented more than 35,000 tons of waste from landfills, created more than \$200,000 in recycling revenue for the area and helped the county avoid transportation and disposal costs. Recyclable materials are pulled from Lawrence, Hickman, Lewis and Perry counties resulting in a landfill diversion rate of 64 percent. Area students are helping to recycle with 15 county and private schools housing recycling drop off storage buildings. The schools accounted for 80 percent of materials recycled in Lawrence County. In 2014, the schools helped to collect nearly 1 million pounds of material. The county donated an old school bus dubbed the "Re-User Cruiser" to collect recyclables from schools storage buildings and transport them to the recycling facility. At the Lawrenceburg industrial park area recycling facility, they receive and dispose of batteries, motor oil, tires, paint and electronic waste as well

as receive and grind wood waste and transport it to an industrial plant for boiler fuel. In addition, a truck collects cardboard and paper products from more than 200 area businesses.

Category: Natural Heritage

Lower North Potato Creek Watershed Project (Polk County) - Glenn Springs Holdings Inc., the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation and the United States Environmental Protection Agency has been remediating the environmentally degraded Lower North Potato Creek Watershed for the past 14 years. Dating back to the 1850s, the watershed, part of the Copper Basin in Polk County, was a site of extensive copper mining and processing. To improve the water quality and biological integrity and diversity, Glenn Springs Holdings Inc. has installed and is maintaining fences to restrict access to designated hazardous areas, removed and isolated waste materials, constructed passive and active water treatment systems, captured poor quality water for treatment, diverted water of good quality, enhanced vegetation and wildlife habitat and restored stream segments and wetlands. In 2014, modifications were made to the North Potato Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant allowing contaminated water to get treated for metal removal before going to the Ocoee River.

Category: Sustainable Performance

Enhancing the Nashville Airports Experience (Davidson County) - Metropolitan Nashville Airport Authority (MNA) began implementing sustainability initiatives in 2010 that promote water conservation, energy efficiency, social well-being and community involvement.

MNA opened a car facility that reclaims water for washing rental cars and a lighting management system that adjusts lighting levels as well as opened solar-covered electric vehicle charging stations. It reuses and repurposes materials including recycled/reused concrete and asphalt to build runways; using recycled or repurposed demolition debris; reusing asphalt millings for roads, shoulders and entrances; using excavated rock and demolished concrete for erosion control and for slope stabilization and reusing tree mulch for berm material, erosion control and matting for new grass seed. It has also implemented an energy savings project upgrading lighting fixtures and motion sensors. The airport has helped educate people about sustainability by presenting their sustainability program at national and regional conferences, hosting community recycling days, working with local contractors on development and this summer they are installing an interactive green screen in the terminal to allow passengers and business partners to learn about their sustainability initiatives.

Category: Pursuit of Excellence

ThyssenKrupp Elevator Manufacturing LEED Improvement Projects (Hardeman County) - ThyssenKrupp Elevator Manufacturing in Middleton reduced their energy consumption by 38 percent in 2014 and in February of this year the plant became LEED Gold certified. The company achieved a Governor's Award for Environmental Stewardship for the Salvagnini project in 2011. That same year, it began to work with the Department of Energy's Better Building Better Plants program pledging to reduce energy consumption.

To reach this goal, the plant has reduced energy and improved sustainability in various ways. It is maintaining and repairing HVAC units to be more efficient and putting a system in place to control or monitor HVAC, air systems, natural gas and water. ThyssenKrupp added high speed exterior doors to keep hot and cold air from getting inside. They have replaced 28 propane fork lifts with electric fork lifts.

It has installed refrigerated air dryers and additional air storage capacity reducing the number of air compressors and saving over 1,400,000 kWh/per. The plant has added energy efficient bulbs with motion sensors and replaced outside lighting with LEDs. It has reduced irrigation and added low flow fixtures to save over 600,000 gallons of water per year and covered 75 percent of the plant's roof with reflective coating to reduce the building heat load. ThyssenKrupp is increasing recycling efforts to divert 97 percent of waste from landfills. In addition, it is practicing sustainable housekeeping, pest control and purchase of office supplies as well as setting aside land for native vegetation growth.

###

Eric Ward
Deputy Communications Director
Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation
(615) 532-8723
Eric.Ward@tn.gov