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Contact Information:
Tim Center, Director
850/219-0082 x. 104
850/212-2684
tcenter@collinscenter.org

Council for Sustainable Florida Presents Awards for Protecting Florida's Economy and Environment

Tallahassee, FL– Renowned nature photographer John Moran joined the Council for Sustainable Florida today in Tallahassee to honor business, non-profit, education and individual leaders committed to preserving the environment and creating a healthy economy for Florida.

The Council presented awards in several categories including Leadership, Small Business, Large Business, Government, Non-Profit, Business Partnership, a Green Building Award and the Legacy Award. Award winners will also receive a resolution from the Governor and Cabinet at a ceremony on Tuesday morning.

Honored at the Best Practices Awards program in Tallahassee were:

Non-Profit Award: A Gift for Teaching, Inc.

Using the old adage “Waste Not, Want Not” as a guide, *A Gift for Teaching* recycles surplus goods that would normally be discarded by local businesses and puts them in the hands of deserving children. The Orlando-based non-profit has opened two free stores where teachers can shop for essential school supplies such as books, backpacks, paper, crayons and glue. *A Gift for Teaching* has gathered donations from more than 4,600 businesses and individuals and distributed more than \$27 million worth of educational supplies.

Legacy Award: Babcock Ranch

The *Conservation and Community* initiative represents the first partnership between Florida's conservation land acquisition program and the private sector. This success pairing resulted in a planned community with a town center, high school and shopping center, while also including 9,000 acres of green space, recreation trails and restored wetlands.

Business Partnership Award: myregion.org - How Shall We Grow?

Central Florida's *How Shall We Grow?* Initiative is an example of many parties coming together—citizens, community leaders and elected officials—to find a common vision for their region. The project goal is to create a 50 year vision for the growth of the 93 jurisdictions that are included in the area and has become one of the most successful regional visioning projects in the nation.

Sustainable Government Award: Pinellas County

With a burgeoning population and little land for continued growth, Pinellas county commissioners began to understand the importance of urban sustainability. Commissioners completed a Blueprint and Strategic Plan in partnership with the University of Florida and created the Bushnell Office of Sustainability. In addition to addressing problems associated with the county's growth, the roof of the Bushnell Office was converted to a "cool roof" which now saves the county money, reduces its environmental impact and serves as an example to the community.

Large Business Award: Florida Power and Light

The Florida Power and Light *Green Fleet Program* is an initiative to reduce fuel consumption in utilities' fleets. George Survant, director of fleet services for FPL, led a group of utilities from across the nation to develop a pilot hybrid utility truck program. In the three hybrids used by FPL, the vehicles have reduced fuel consumption by 53 percent as well as reducing petroleum use.

Large Business Award: Publix Super Markets, Inc.

The Publix *Get into a Green Routine* initiative is designed to eliminate excess costs and promote environmental stewardship. The company has begun the use of reusable crates for shipping and donates surplus food to local food banks. Results show a 7 percent reduction in electricity consumption overall with 23 percent reduction in new stores.

Leadership Award: The Honorable Michael S. Bennett, Florida Senate

Senator Michael Bennett's commitment to preserving Florida goes well beyond sponsoring and advocating legislation. When his bill creating the Century Commission for Sustainable Florida was passed, he remained actively involved by serving on its board. His efforts have helped the commission respond to critical issues throughout Florida such as transportation, water quality, housing, health care, education and growth.

Small Business Award: Trifecta Construction Solutions

Founded to facilitate environmentally sustainable construction practices, this growing organization has certified approximately 80 percent of the green homes in the state using the Green Building Coalition standards. By educating construction industry stakeholders, they are establishing the environment as a valued and quantifiable factor in construction.

Green Building Award: Verandah by Bonita Bay Group

Recognized by the Green Building Coalition as Florida's first green land development, the *Verandah* located along the Orange River, re-established wildlife habitat and protected the site's ecosystems. The Bonita Bay Group partnered with the Florida Energy Extension Services *Build Green and Profit* program to develop green guidelines for Verandah's amenity buildings and single-family homes, resulting in a new community that minimizes its impact on the environment, conserves energy and water usage and protects and enhances natural habitat.

Winners of the best practices award were selected by an independent panel including government and corporate representatives involved in the sustainability movement. The panel reviewed projects to determine if they were environmentally friendly, provided a strong business model and could be replicated.

"The work of each of these groups and individuals demonstrates that a healthy economy and a healthy environment are mutually supportive," said Karen Childress, Council chair. "These programs and initiatives are truly best practices that can teach us all how to protect Florida's vital natural resources while promoting strong economic growth—both of which are necessary for Florida's future generations."

The Council also identified nominees that received a Promising Practices certificate for their outstanding efforts to promote sustainability in Florida.

Promising Practice certificates went to:

Arthur R. Marshall Foundation and Florida Environmental Institute, Inc. - It Does Take a Village!	West Palm Beach
Centerville Conservation Community	Tallahassee
City of Dunedin - Community Center	Dunedin
City of Gainesville - Regional Transit Employee Pass Program	St. Augustine
City of Tallahassee - Solid Waste Administrative Building	Tallahassee
City of Tallahassee Commission - Energy Efficiency Initiative	Tallahassee
City of Winter Park - Swoope Water Plant and Railroad Avenue Initiative	Winter Park
Collier County Stormwater Management Department	Naples
Drew Smith, Two Trails, Inc.	Sarasota
Florida A & M University - - Green Coalition	Tallahassee

Florida Biomass Energy Group, LLC	Gulf Breeze
Florida Keys Green Living & Energy Education (GLEE)	Key West
Gainesville Regional Utilities	Gainesville
Green Real Estate Education	Tampa
Indian River Habitat for Humanity	Vero Beach
Manatee Technical Institute - Photovoltaic Learning Laboratories	Bradenton
Massey Services, Inc.	Maitland
Nestle Waters North America	Lee
Plum Creek - Swallow-tailed Kite Initiative	Gulf Hammock
Program for Resource Efficient Communities, University of Florida - Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Extension	Gainesville
Progress Energy Florida - Energy Education Program for Students	Lake Mary
Progress Energy Florida - Renewable Energy Program	Lake Mary
Rayonier Biomass Boiler Team	Fernandina Beach
Safety-Kleen	Plano
Solar Direct	Bradenton
T.K. Wetherell, Florida State University – Utility Conservation Program	Tallahassee
The Original Florida Tourism Task Force	Gainesville
The St. Joe Company - Bay County Sector Plan	Jacksonville
Titan America Medley Plant	Deerfield Beach
Walt Disney World - Strive for Five	Lake Buena Vista
WORKFORCE plus	Tallahassee

The Council is an independent, non-partisan program of the Collins Center for Public Policy and has been defining excellence in sustainability practices since 1990. Since initiating the Best Practices Awards program in 1998, the Council has recognized and honored more than 100 businesses, non-profit organizations, governmental groups and individuals whose work is committed to the future success of Florida.

Best and Promising Practice Award winners will participate in future events promoted by the Council for Sustainable Florida. The Council will work with Florida colleges and universities to create case studies of the winners for use in business programs statewide.

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