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NEWS RELEASE

**Statement of Jim Waltman
Executive Director, Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association
Before a special meeting of the D&R Canal Commission
Stockton, NJ
May 12, 2011**

The Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association strongly endorses the continuation of the D&R Canal Commission and urges the Christie Administration to withdraw its proposal to abolish the commission and fold its responsibilities into the already overburdened and understaffed Department of Environmental Protection.

The D&R Canal is an exceptional environmental, historic, and scenic resource that supplies drinking water to more than a million people in central New Jersey. The Canal is an asset of statewide and indeed national significance, in addition to being treasured by each of the municipalities and counties through which it passes.

The D&R Canal Commission is a highly functional and efficient regional planning and regulatory body. The Commission exists to provide localized experience and expertise, ensuring that the issues that relate to the Canal are not lost in the shuffle at DEP. At the same time, the Commission ensures that the individual municipalities do not bear the responsibility or authority to determine how to protect this critical resource that impacts so many people in the state. No single town should have the authority, or the burden, to make decisions that impact others downstream along the canal.

The Commission has been a solid protector of the canal and its watershed, carefully reviewing projects for their impact on stormwater runoff, stream corridors, and historic and cultural resources. The Commission's regulations are more protective of water quality and quantity than DEP's, while its efficiency at making regulatory decisions is admired by the region's major developers and its municipal governments.

Video of today's special meeting of the D&R Canal Commission is available at:

<http://player.vimeo.com/video/23691354>

