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Killens Pond Nature Center Groundbreaking Scheduled

Striking new LEED™ Nature Center Facility To Enhance the Visitor Experience at Delaware State Park

September 12, 2006 (Felton, DE). Ground will be broken in October for the new Nature Center at Killens Pond State Park. The new 11,356-SF facility, designed by GWWO, Inc./Architects (GWWO) of Baltimore, Maryland, will serve as the headquarters for environmental education activities offered throughout the Park.

Planned for opening in the summer of 2007, the facility will be constructed by Commonwealth Construction Company of Wilmington, Delaware.

Gracefully situated at the transition between the forest and pond, the \$4.37 million facility will enable the Park to offer expanded programs and to more fully interpret the Pond's natural environment, which they are unable to do with current facilities. The upper level of the building will house exhibits, designed by Peeling Productions of Allenwood, Pennsylvania, and a multi-purpose room for classes, presentations and special events. The lower level will include a laboratory for student experiments, office spaces and a gift shop area. The project will also include construction of a new boat shed at the Pond's edge, which will accommodate the Park's watercraft rental operation.

The dramatic design for the new facility is intended to "unite interior spaces with the surrounding environment and to immerse visitors in nature" says GWWO President and Design Principal Alan Reed. Covered decks wrap the building's second level, expanding learning and gathering space and providing graceful transition from building to site.

"The new building will connect visitors with nature, enabling new exploration, discovery, and appreciation of the Killens Pond environment," says Greg Kindig, Park Architect for Delaware Department of Parks and Recreation.

The new Nature Center is registered with the US Green Building Council as a LEED™ project and is pursuing a LEED™ Silver certification. Sustainable elements within the building include rainwater recovery and reuse, geothermal heating and cooling and on-site wastewater treatment through a composting toilet system. The large amount of glass used in the building also helps to achieve LEED™ credits for daylighting and views to the exterior. The lower level corridor acts as a thermal mass – with a wall of glass on one side and a wall of stone and masonry on the other – providing substantial natural heat retention through the winter months.

Killens Pond State Park, located in Kent County in central Delaware, offers fishing, boating, campground and water park facilities to thousands of visitors each year. The park's centerpiece is the 66-acre millpond, which was established in the late 1700s. Prior to the pond's creation, the Murderkill River and surrounding hardwood forest were sites of several Native American homes and hunting camps. According to legend, the river's unusual name refers to a local tribe's massacre of a Dutch trading party at the mouth of the river in 1648. Now a peaceful oasis, Killens Pond became a state park in 1965.

www.destateparks.com/kpsp/kpsp.htm

GWWO, Inc./Architects is a full service architectural firm that specializes in the planning and design of cultural and educational facilities, with emphasis on quality design that is both inspirational and evocative. Other current firm projects include the new Ford Orientation Center and new Donald W. Reynolds Museum and Education Center at George Washington's Mount Vernon, a new Education Center for the Russell W. Peterson Urban Wildlife Refuge in Wilmington, Delaware and a new Heritage Center for the Homestead National Monument of America in Homestead, Nebraska. The firm celebrates its 15th anniversary in 2006.

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