

For Immediate Release

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**Wildlands Conservancy Receives Grant from IronPigs Charities to Reach Out to
Inner-City Youth**

(Emmaus, Pa., February 18, 2009) - Wildlands Conservancy received a \$5,000 grant from IronPigs Charities to fund a week-long “Bats to Bats” program designed to create an appreciation for the natural world and introduce 120 inner-city children to close to home environmental pursuits. The grant was awarded through the charities’ “13 Days of Giving” program at the 2nd annual Phillie Caravan on Wednesday, January 21 at the Holiday Inn Lehigh Valley in Fogelsville. Environmental education director, Mauren Ruhe, and chief program officer, Scott J. Cope, received the award on behalf of the organization.

The “Bats to Bats” program, which will be hosted during the summer, will introduce kids to outdoor recreational activities that have the potential to become lifelong pursuits. It is the Conservancy’s belief that through firsthand experiences with the environment – such as hiking, biking, canoeing, and observing wildlife – children will foster an appreciation and understanding for the value in protecting their natural surroundings.

“It is our hope that these half-day programs allow children, who may not have had the chance, to connect with the environment in their very own backyard,” says Ruhe, “Along with the educational portion of the program, children will see the beauty and recreational opportunities that are right here in the Lehigh Valley.”

Wildlands Conservancy’s environmental education department provides programming that assists local schools in meeting state academic standards. It also offers innovative and exciting programs for families, schools, scouts and other groups at Pool Wildlife Sanctuary and other locations throughout the Lehigh River watershed including the popular “Go Wild” summer camps which take place June through August. A half a million individuals have participated in Wildlands Conservancy’s education programs since the beginning of the organization, with an average of 16,000 school students participating each year.

About Wildlands Conservancy

Wildlands Conservancy is dedicated to saving the natural treasures of the Lehigh Valley and the Lehigh River valley for current residents and future generations. Its mission is to preserve, protect, restore and enhance the land, water, ecological and recreational resources of the Lehigh Valley and the Lehigh River valley. Established in 1973, the Conservancy collaborates with partnerships throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to achieve its goals. As a non-profit organization, the Conservancy receives funding from individuals, foundations, corporations, businesses, and government grants. For more information, please visit www.wildlandspa.org.

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