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Press Release

For Immediate Release
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Highlands Council Poised for Leadership Change

Chester, NJ - The Highlands Council has opened a search for a new executive director following an announcement by Dante Di Pirro that he will be resigning from the agency to pursue a new opportunity.

Council Chairman John Weingart praised Mr. Di Pirro for his leadership and major role in guiding the Council through release of the release of the draft regional master plan in November 2006 and the subsequent public comment period. "Dante has been an important leader in the Highlands preservation initiative since the creation of the Governor's Highlands Task Force in 2003." He served as the Council's first deputy executive director before being promoted to executive director just over one year ago.

The Council will immediately begin an open search for a new director. Any gap between Mr. Di Pirro's departure and selection of his replacement will be filled by the deputy executive director, Tom Borden, as provided in the Council bylaws.

"Tom Borden's agreement to serve as acting executive director will ensure a smooth transition," stated Chairman Weingart. Mr. Borden joined the Council in 2005 as its Chief Counsel and then was promoted to Deputy Executive Director and Chief Counsel, where he has been involved in all major aspects of plan development and Council operations.

The Council seeks candidates with extensive land use and regional planning background, experience with multiple levels of government, and exceptional leadership skills. Applications should be submitted to ExecSearch@highlands.state.nj.us by March 19, 2007. Further information about the Highlands Council is available at www.highlands.state.nj.us.

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In August 2004, the New Jersey Legislature enacted the Highland Water Protection and Planning Act in order to protect over 850,000 acres which supply drinking water for more than sixty-five percent of New Jersey's residents. The Highlands Act created the Highlands Council as a regional planning entity charged with protecting the water resources and natural beauty of the New Jersey Highlands while allowing for planned, sustainable development and redevelopment of the region. The fifteen Council members include a broad and representative range of elected officials from Highlands municipalities and counties, as well as individuals with diverse backgrounds and area perspectives.

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