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156 Ramapo Valley Road • Mahwah, NJ 07430 • T 201.512.9348 • F 201.512.9012 • www.nynjtc.org

New York –New Jersey Trail Conference

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release May 16, 2013

Contact: Ed Goodell, Executive Director, 201-512-9348 x 12, goodell@nynjtc.org

Bolger Foundation Challenges the New York–New Jersey Trail Conference to Complete Funding to Restore the Historic Darlington Schoolhouse

Mahwah, NJ: The Trail Conference welcomes a challenge from The Bolger Foundation to raise an additional \$1 million by November 1, 2013 to complete the restoration and expansion of the Darlington Schoolhouse. When the Trail Conference meets this challenge the Bolger Foundation will make a gift of \$500,000 to complete the funding of the capital project.

The Trail Conference engages thousands of trained volunteers to maintain trails in 20 counties of New Jersey and New York. These trained volunteers donate 70,000 hours annually working with public agency land managers to protect public open space and make it accessible to the public.

"Many people are surprised to learn that state and local governments rely on the nonprofit Trail Conference to help maintain park trails," said Edward Goodell, Executive Director of the Trail Conference. Currently the organization does not have adequate space to train its volunteers. "The Darlington Schoolhouse will serve as an indoor and outdoor training center, a gateway to the vast network of accessible trails, and help us serve more than one million people who rely on the Trail Conference for maps and other services" Goodell added.

The Trail Conference was established in 1920 to create a marked trail system in the Palisades Interstate Park, including the first section of the Appalachian Trail. Currently maintaining 1,850 miles of recreational trails in the greater New York metropolitan area, the Trail Conference has 10,000 members and 100 affiliated organizations comprising 100,000 outdoor enthusiasts.

"We are asking everyone who values conservation service learning, access to open space and the preservation and re-use of historic buildings to join with us to meet the Bolger Challenge. The response to our efforts to date has been enormously positive and we are confident we will meet this challenge. All gifts are fully tax deductible. We are offering naming gift opportunities at the restored schoolhouse and we welcome your help to reach out to your friends and neighbors to help us meet this challenge," Goodell said.

To learn more about the Darlington Schoolhouse project, to become a campaign volunteer and help meet the Bolger Challenge, or to make a pledge call the Trail Conference at 201-512-9348.

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