

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 19, 2009

### Contacts:

Brad Cardwell, Wildlife Habitat Council, 240-247-0930, [bcardwell@wildlifehc.org](mailto:bcardwell@wildlifehc.org)

Joyce Watson, Oldcastle Materials, 770-522-5605, [joyce.watson@oldcastlematerials.com](mailto:joyce.watson@oldcastlematerials.com)

### THE SHELLY COMPANY RECEIVES INTERNATIONAL HABITAT CONSERVATION AWARDS

BALTIMORE, MD—Employees at The Shelly Company, an Oldcastle Materials company, received international recognition for their contributions to wildlife habitat conservation at the Wildlife Habitat Council's (WHC) 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Symposium, *Evergreen: A Celebration of Conservation in a Changing World*. Oldcastle Materials demonstrates its commitment to environmental stewardship and increasing native biodiversity by achieving *Wildlife at Work*<sup>SM</sup> certification at the Montpelier North Wildlife Habitat Site.

The employees at Oldcastle Materials further distinguished themselves by winning the coveted Rookie of the Year award, which goes to one newly certified program each year and exemplifies a superior wildlife habitat program. WHC's prestigious International Conservation Awards recognize voluntary activities by companies who demonstrate excellence in the areas of wildlife habitat enhancement and restoration.

"The Wildlife Habitat Council believes that collaboration among all stakeholder groups is critical to addressing the complex issues facing the sustainability of the planet," said Robert Johnson, WHC President. "WHC members take a leading role in connecting community stakeholders through wildlife habitat enhancement, community outreach and conservation education. Congratulations to Oldcastle Materials for their commitment to a healthy natural world and connected communities."

The 70-acre Montpelier North Wildlife Habitat Site, a past sand and gravel mining operation, is located in a rural area outside of Montpelier, Ohio. The site is located half a mile north of the St. Joseph River and five miles south of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources' Lake La Su An Wildlife Area. The wildlife team works to enhance the existing habitat on the site for a variety of wildlife through a number of projects.

The wildlife team planted five acres of cool season grasses in 2008 and added an additional 10 acres of native warm season grasses in 2009 to expand grassland habitat on site, which are on the decline in Ohio. The eastern shoreline was graded and slopes were enhanced to improve wildlife access to the 50-acre lake, which is partially located on site, and grasses were planted on the slopes to control erosion. The lake was further enhanced for wildlife with the addition of basking logs, which are valuable to a number of wildlife species, including frogs, turtles and waterfowl. The wildlife team also increased habitat for native pollinator species by installing a water feature, basking rocks, logs and planting an acre of wildflowers in 2009. The wildlife team will plant an additional acre of wildflowers, native scrubs and trees in 2010 to further benefit valuable pollinator species.

A number of invasive species, including autumn olive, multiflora rose, Canada thistle, and phragmites were found in various areas of the site. The wildlife team is working to control these invasive plants because, without control, these species can spread over large areas and displace native plants, which are of higher value to native wildlife.

The site hosted its first annual *Wildlife at Work* day in 2009, during which 100 saplings of native trees were planted. The wildlife team has also transformed a building on the site into a Wildlife Learning Center, which they

-MORE-

plan to use for environmental education opportunities in the future, including an Open House for the community in the spring of 2010.

The Montpelier North Wildlife Habitat Site was one of 238 sites recognized at the 2009 Symposium for creating a *Wildlife at Work* program. In addition, 47 *Corporate Lands for Learning<sup>SM</sup>* (CLL) programs were recognized, reaching thousands of learners from schools and scout groups to master gardeners and university researchers. Since 1990, WHC has certified 560 *Wildlife at Work* and 113 CLL programs worldwide. The certification program recognizes outstanding wildlife habitat management and environmental education efforts at corporate sites, and offers third-party validation of the benefits of such programs. Certification requirements are strict and require that sites apply for periodic renewal.

The Wildlife Habitat Council (WHC) is a nonprofit, non-lobbying organization dedicated to increasing the quality and amount of wildlife habitat on corporate, private and public lands. WHC devotes its resources to building partnerships with corporations and conservation groups to create solutions that balance the demands of economic growth with the requirements of a healthy, biodiverse and sustainable environment. WHC-assisted wildlife habitat and conservation education programs are found in 48 states, the District of Columbia and nine other countries. To learn more, visit [www.wildlifehc.org](http://www.wildlifehc.org).