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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Martinsburg- Opequon Creek Project Team has been recognized by the West Virginia Watershed Network for their accomplishments in improving watershed health through their outreach efforts and educational programs. On November 6, 2010 the Opequon Creek Project Team was awarded an Outreach and Education award during the 12th Annual Watershed Celebration Day at The Resort in Glade Springs.

The Opequon Creek Project Team (OCPT), a 501(c)(3) tax exempt corporation, was formed in April 2005 to plan and implement nonpoint source pollution reduction projects in the watershed. Several local, state and federal government agencies are represented at OCPT's regular meetings, and clean-up and tree planting events have attracted many watershed residents and their families. Opequon Creek Project team quickly has become a dynamic force of progress in the community's effort to protect and enhance its natural resources.

OCPT spent 2009 and 2010 getting the word out to people in the community in many unique ways. Their monthly meeting includes presentations on some topic of interest to the watershed residents. A middle school student presented the science fair project that studied the amount of bacterial pollution in the Opequon as it runs by his house. Members have become experts in rain barrel construction and installation. They hold workshops and attend fairs and festivals to promote rain barrels with homeowners. They have created a "Buffer in a Bag" program to encourage the growth of plants along stream banks and educated people on how these plants will stabilize the earth and filter pollution run off. Everyone knows a clean stream means good fishing and OCPT demonstrated this during Free Fishing Days by setting up a display with five fish species swimming in a pool filled with creek water. And for those interested in water recreation, OPCT sponsors float trips to celebrate the beauty of the waterway and to give people the fish eye view. These trips peak interest and result in the recruitment of volunteers willing to work to protect it.

“OCPT volunteers are working hard and helping people have fun in their stream. This is the best way to support watershed protection and for these tireless efforts The WV Watershed Network thanks them,” said Jennifer Pauer, WVWN member.

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