



## NEWS RELEASE

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### **Allegheny Energy donates to the Burgettstown Area School District's Outdoor Classroom**

**Hagerstown, Md., March 8, 2002** – Allegheny Energy, through its Environmental Stewardship Fund, has donated \$2,500 to the Independence Marsh Foundation. The Independence Marsh Foundation will use the donation to assist in the development of the Burgettstown Area School District's Outdoor Classroom. The donation is part of Allegheny Energy's ongoing commitment to environmental education, leadership, and stewardship for the enhancement of the region and its communities.

“By partnering with local businesses such as Allegheny Energy, our school is creating an inviting and readily accessible facility where students can begin a lifetime of environmental awareness,” said Victoria E. Michaels, Executive Director, Independence Marsh Foundation. “Students can use the facility to learn about local mining history and current land use issues.”

The donation from Allegheny Energy will help support various projects at the Outdoor Classroom, including:

- Installation of a display at the ponds to educate visitors on the history of the mine under the school, including photographs of the area decades before the strip mines were reclaimed and the effect of mining on the town and its landscape;
- Completion of the limestone sand surface on the access trail to the Outdoor Classroom, improving its accessibility;
- Construction of a roof over the observation docks to provide shelter and shade for visitors and to extend the life of the structures; and
- Installation of a weatherproof display featuring a field guide to the site's plant life and wildlife, detailing the history and purpose of the treatment ponds, and presenting the coal-mining heritage of Burgettstown.

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“Allegheny Energy strongly supports environmental education as a key to preserving our natural resources,” said Pamela M. Pershing, the Company’s Advisor, Strategic Environmental Management. “We especially recognize the importance of environmental education for children who will become leaders in our communities.”

In addition to the Independence Marsh Foundation, other sponsors of the Burgettstown Area School District Outdoor Classroom include the Raccoon Creek Watershed Association, Western Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation, Moran Excavation, the Pennsylvania Game Commission, Mulligan Mining, the Wildlife Habitat Council, and the Burgettstown Area School District.

More information is available from the Independence Marsh Foundation at [indmarshfdn@aol.com](mailto:indmarshfdn@aol.com) or from Victoria E. Michaels, Executive Director, at 888-990-5585.

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