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### **National Wildlife Federation and West Virginia Rivers Coalition formally join forces for West Virginia**

Reston, VA (December 6, 2010) – West Virginia Rivers Coalition (WVRC), the leading organization dedicated to seeking the conservation and restoration of West Virginia’s exceptional rivers and streams, has been selected as the West Virginia affiliate of National Wildlife Federation (NWF). The decision was made at NWF’s most recent Board of Directors meeting.

“We are very pleased to be joining the NWF affiliate network,” said Shanda Minney, executive director of West Virginia Rivers Coalition. “NWF has always been a strong voice working to conserve our natural resources for the benefit of all. West Virginia is blessed with a bounty of natural lands, wildlife and recreational resources, and WVRC has worked for over two decades to protect those assets. We look forward to joining forces with NWF to strengthen that protection and expand our efforts at the national level.”

“We are delighted to expand our conservation network and welcome West Virginia Rivers Coalition as our 47th state and territorial affiliate,” said Larry Schweiger, president and CEO of National Wildlife Federation. “West Virginia Rivers Coalition has been crucial to protecting habitat as well as outdoor recreation in the state, including paddling, fishing, and hunting, through their advocacy and education efforts. We are excited to bring West Virginia Rivers Coalition’s influential voice to our national efforts and to support their state conservation work.”

Working from the deeply held belief that everyone deserves clean water and a healthy environment, WVRC has been a tireless advocate for implementation of the Federal Clean Water Act and has worked to confront acid mine drainage and mercury contamination in the state. The organization has successfully worked to improve water quality

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standards in West Virginia and was instrumental in the listing of the Potomac, Coal, Cheat, and Monongahela Rivers on the National Most Endangered Rivers List. WVRC currently operates the first, ongoing consumer drug return in the state to reduce the amount of pharmaceuticals entering West Virginia waterways.

West Virginia is part of NWF's Chesapeake Mid-Atlantic region, one of nine such regions throughout the United States. Affiliates in each region work together and with partners to advance conservation and protect the region's unique natural treasures. The Mid-Atlantic region includes Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Washington D.C., Virginia, West Virginia and North Carolina.

"We already are working with West Virginia Rivers Coalition to protect and restore headwater rivers and streams in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, so we're familiar with their fantastic policy track record," said Tony Caligiuri, NWF Mid-Atlantic regional executive director. "West Virginia Rivers Coalition will be a great addition to our region-wide efforts to conserve our resources and to connect West Virginia families to nature for generations to come."

"We expect this affiliation to be a win-win for West Virginia Rivers Coalition and National Wildlife Federation," said William Turner, chair of the WVRC Board of Directors. "We are excited to have access to NWF's expertise and hope to help NWF expand its outreach in the Mountain State."

*National Wildlife Federation, founded 74 years ago, has four million members and supporters nationwide. Affiliate representatives elect the NWF Board of Directors and set the organization's policy objectives in the form of resolutions.*

*West Virginia Rivers Coalition was founded in 1989 and is headquartered in Elkins, West Virginia with more than 3,000 supporters across the region.*

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