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BANROCK STATION WINES AWARDS GRANT TO NATIONAL AQUARIUM IN BALTIMORE

Fort McHenry Wetland Restoration Efforts to Benefit from Monetary Donation

Baltimore (July 7, 2004) — Banrock Station Wines has awarded the National Aquarium in Baltimore a \$3,500 grant to support the Aquarium conservation team's stewardship and wetlands restoration efforts at the wetland adjacent to Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine.

This grant, awarded in partnership with the Conservation Fund, will fund four public field days at the Fort McHenry site throughout 2004, during which volunteers collect marine debris; remove invasive weeds; plant beneficial marsh grass, which provides food and shelter to marsh animals; and continue to monitor the improving function of this important urban wetland. On previous restoration days the volunteer teams have removed 155,583 pieces of marine refuse (about 15 tons), 95% of it plastic.

“Community involvement in wetland restoration like the project at Fort McHenry is a great demonstration of the willingness of folks to lend a hand in the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay” says Glenn Page, the Aquarium's director of conservation. “These hands-on habitat restoration experiences also serve to reinforce the value of wetlands and help inspire stewardship for the environment.”

Wetlands provide vital habitat to birds, mammals and fish. They also help prevent erosion, control flooding and absorb excess nutrients; all help provide healthy environments. This wetland is one of the few remaining in the lower Patapsco River watershed. It provides habitat to an astounding number of animals, including fish, foxes and more than 220 species of birds – more than 50% of all bird species found in Maryland.

The National Aquarium in Baltimore, a non-profit organization, is Maryland's most exciting and popular cultural attraction, as well as one of the region's leading conservation and education resources, hosting more than 1.6 million visitors per year. The Aquarium's mission is to connect people with aquatic life in order to create a better world for both. It's dedicated to education and conservation through more than a dozen programs that serve the environment and the community. Visit the Aquarium's Web site at www.aqua.org.

Banrock Station Wines is located on a spectacular 4,200-acre property on the mighty River Murray in South Australia. Renowned for crafting flavorsome, full-bodied wines, Banrock Station has carefully restored the wetlands on the property, which has been named a Ramsar Wetland of International Importance, and is also involved in preserving nature reserves in nine countries around the world. For its leadership in the Florida Everglades restoration, Banrock was awarded the Regional Director's Conservation Award in June of 2001 by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

The Conservation Fund, a national nonprofit organization, acts to protect the nation's legacy of land and water resources in partnership with other organizations, public agencies, foundations, corporations, and individuals. Seeking innovative conservation solutions for the 21st century, the Fund works to integrate economic and environmental goals. Since its founding in 1985, the Fund has helped its partners safeguard wildlife habitat, working landscapes, community "greenspace" and historic sites totaling more than 3.9 million acres throughout the nation.

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