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### **NJMC ANNOUNCES RENEWAL OF DOCENT PROGRAM**

**LYNDHURST, NJ** - The New Jersey Meadowlands Commission is proud to announce the continuation of the successful Meadowlands docent program, offering students the opportunity to learn about and educate others on the unique value of the Meadowlands. Now, in its second year, the docent program is open to high school students (ages 14-18) who successfully complete the required training and agree to fulfill a minimum of 32 hours per season.

“This program provides real world, hands-on learning experiences both for the young people that engage in our program and the public they serve through the training,” says New Jersey Meadowlands Commissioner, Eleanore S. Nissley. “I am heartened by the spirit of public service and leadership these students demonstrate and I believe we will see good things from them as they carry the lessons of the Meadowlands with them in their lives.”

The students are trained by the NJMC’s Meadowlands Environment Center educators to lead visitors seeking to navigate the trails of the Meadowlands park system and help them understand the ecological secrets of the flora & fauna found here. Participants volunteer on weekends during the year assisting MEC educators. Some of the opportunities open to docents include assisting with educational programs, acting as interpretive guides for the Interactive Learning Center and leading groups as DeKorte Park trail guides, engaging in dip-netting, working on archaeological digs, and learning reptile care. Some students utilize these offerings as an opportunity to earn hours for school-based civic service programs.

“Along with the environmental field school, expansion of our campus to include more sophisticated scientific offerings and building on our existing outreach programs we are creating a concentration of educational excellence and public service here in the Meadowlands,” said NJMC Executive Director Robert Ceberio. “Nearly two dozen students volunteered 385 combined hours last year. I think the next generation is showing us their ability to get their hands dirty and help their communities.”

To be considered, all applicants must complete a 4 hour in-house training session. This session will be offered on Saturday, September 22nd, 2007 from 10am to 2pm. Final acceptance into the program is contingent upon successful completion of the training course.

Those interested in becoming a NJMC Meadowlands Environment Center Docent, contact Michelle Spataro at 201-777-2413 or [michelle.spataro@njmeadowlands.gov](mailto:michelle.spataro@njmeadowlands.gov).