



# CTE

**The Center for Transportation and the Environment**

North Carolina State University

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **State Environmental Initiative Cited as One of Nation's Top 50 Government Innovations**

Raleigh, NC – The North Carolina Ecosystem Enhancement Program, launched in July 2003 through an inter-agency agreement between the state of North Carolina and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, has been selected from more than 1,000 applicants as one of the top 50 innovations in American government.

The EEP initiative is advancing in the awards program to compete for the \$100,000 grants that will be used to replicate six winning programs in other states. The 2005 Innovations in American Government Awards Program is sponsored by the Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government and the Council for Excellence in Government of Washington, D.C.

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CTE Senior Research Associate Dr. David Robinson, P.E., a strategic planning consultant to the EEP core management team, said, "This is a rewarding development. EEP has been working hard to creatively preserve and enhance the state's wetlands and natural resources through good science and vital partnerships. I think we're only beginning to see the positive outcomes this program can generate for the state's environment and economy."

Housed within the state Department of Environment and Natural Resources and primarily funded by the state Department of Transportation, EEP represents a bold new approach to protecting the environment while promoting responsible road building and economic development. EEP seeks out opportunities to restore, enhance, and protect critical natural land and water resources far in advance of the environmental impacts anticipated from planned transportation projects.

Since EEP's launch, no road project has been delayed in North Carolina because of environmental mitigation problems. The initiative has helped to preserve more than 29,000 acres of natural areas to date and is managing 400 stream and wetland restoration projects in partnership with private sector contractors. EEP is also assisting with the development of 22 local water plans in communities across the state.

For more information on EEP, please visit [www.nceep.net](http://www.nceep.net). Information on the American Innovations in Government Awards Program is available at [www.ashinstitute.harvard.edu](http://www.ashinstitute.harvard.edu).

The Center for Transportation and the Environment is a national university transportation center located at the Institute for Transportation Research and Education at North Carolina State University. CTE is funded in part by the U.S. Department of Transportation and the North Carolina Department of Transportation.

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