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Portland Man Singled Out for Environmental Leadership *Honoree Receives Audubon/Toyota TogetherGreen Fellowship*

New York, NY, November 19, 2009-A Portland, Oregon man is the recipient of a national fellowship designed to advance the work of individuals with outstanding leadership potential to help shape a brighter environmental future.

Robert Sallinger is one of 40 individuals nationwide selected as a 2009 *TogetherGreen* Fellow. The *TogetherGreen* Fellowship offers specialized training in conservation planning and execution, the chance to work and share best practices with gifted conservation professionals, and assistance with project outreach and evaluation. Each Fellow receives \$10,000 towards a community-focused project to engage local residents in conserving land, water and energy, and contributing to greater environmental health.

For his fellowship, Sallinger will develop a campaign to establish a permanent funding base for the Oregon Department of Fish and non-game program – a bird seed tax. Sallinger will use his Fellowship to build a campaign to pass a bird seed tax in Oregon’s next legislative session. A 10 percent tax on birdseed could generate more than \$2 million a year, which could go a long way towards protecting native wildlife and habitat. State game programs in Oregon have flourished because of funding sources provided by taxes placed on hunting and fishing gear, but no such mechanisms exist for the non-game program. The non-game program is responsible for managing 88 percent of the species found in the state of Oregon, but it receives less than two percent of the Department of Fish and Wildlife’s budget, and so would greatly benefit from additional funds.

Sallinger is currently the conservation director for the Audubon Society of Portland. In that capacity, he develops and promotes Portland Audubon policy initiatives at local, statewide and national levels, develops outreach programs, and supervises an activist network of over 1,500 people.

“Bob is the kind of person who can make a real difference in the health of our environment and the quality of our future,” said Audubon President John Flicker. “Each of our *TogetherGreen* Fellows demonstrates exceptional environmental understanding and commitment, combined with tremendous potential to inspire and lead others. Together, they represent the talented and diverse leadership the environmental community will need to tackle the huge challenges and opportunities confronting us now and in the years to come.”

"Birding is one of the fastest growing activities in the United States. I am excited that this grant will give me an opportunity to explore how to built stronger connections between birding and conservation," said Sallinger.

Sallinger has been affiliated with the Audubon Society of Portland since 1992. Half of the *TogetherGreen* Fellows come from within Audubon's far-reaching national network; half channel their environmental efforts through other organizations.

Sallinger received his Juris Docterate degree in environmental law from Lewis and Clark Law School and his Bachelor's in biology from Reed College. A dedicated conservationist, Sallinger has previously worked for the East Multnomah County Soil and Water Conservation District and Lewis and Clark Law School.

A distinguished advisory committee - composed of conservation professionals and experts in environmental education, communications, outreach, and conservation planning-selected the fellowship beneficiaries from a competitive pool of scores of highly qualified individuals. Qualified applicants must have at least six years of experience in conservation, environmental education, policy, or environmental issues, as demonstrated through current and past work experience, academic studies related to conservation, and/or volunteer work. Candidates must have a passion for conservation, the desire to learn and grow, and demonstrate a proven ability in reaching previously unengaged audiences.

"We must engage the best and brightest leaders representing the broadest and most diverse communities in this country to solve our ever more complex conservation challenges," said Diane Wood, President, National Environmental Education Foundation. "TogetherGreen is a creative program that uncovers such leaders, nurtures their talents, supports their dedication to conservation and holds them up to inspire others to follow."

A complete list of the 2009 *TogetherGreen* Fellows can be found at www.TogetherGreen.org/fellows.

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About *TogetherGreen*

Audubon and Toyota launched the five-year *TogetherGreen* initiative in 2008 to build the promise of a greener, healthier future through innovation, leadership and volunteerism. To date, 80 environmental leaders-half from within Audubon and half from outside organizations-have received *TogetherGreen* Fellowships to protect land, water, and energy resources nationwide. For more information, visit www.togethergreen.org.

About Audubon

Now in its second century, Audubon connects people with birds, nature and the environment that supports us all. Our national network of community-based nature centers, chapters, scientific, education, and advocacy programs engages millions of people from all walks of life in conservation action to protect and restore the natural world. Visit Audubon online at www.audubon.org.

About Toyota

Toyota (NYSE: TM) established operations in the United States in 1957 and currently operates 10 manufacturing plants. Toyota is committed to being a good corporate citizen in the communities where it does business and believes in supporting programs with long-term sustainable results. Toyota supports numerous organizations across

the country, focusing on education, the environment and safety. Since 1991, Toyota has contributed more than \$464 million to philanthropic programs in the U.S. For more information on Toyota's commitment to improving communities nationwide, visit www.toyota.com/community.