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**WILDLIFE HABITAT COUNCIL AND U.S. EPA PERFORMANCE TRACK  
RECOGNIZE BRIDGESTONE FIRESTONE'S OKLAHOMA CITY FACILITY**

***Recognizing Excellence in Environmental Performance and Wildlife Habitat Restoration***

BALTIMORE, Md.—The Wildlife Habitat Council (WHC) and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) National Environmental Performance Track (NEPT) presented on Tuesday, Nov. 15, 2005, a special honor of recognition to Bridgestone Firestone North American Tire, LLC (BFNT). This acknowledgement honors the Oklahoma City plant in Oklahoma City, Okla., for a commitment to outstanding environmental performance and wildlife habitat enhancement and restoration as a member of both Performance Track and WHC. BFNT's Oklahoma City plant is a charter member of the Performance Track program, which recognizes companies with a proven track record of improving environmental performance. BFNT's Warren County plant was also recognized.

In addition, the Oklahoma City plant was recognized for achieving WHC recertification for maintaining a wildlife habitat program since 2003. Phil McCowan, Environmental Manager, BFNT Oklahoma City, accepted both honors during WHC's 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium, *Shades of Green*, in Baltimore, Md.

"As community members who value our natural resources and clean environment, we take great pride in improving our environment for our grandchildren to enjoy," McCowan said.

"The unification of conservation and industry, already well established at the Wildlife Habitat Council, serves as a model for protecting natural resources while emphasizing collaboration and community involvement. This multidisciplinary view draws on knowledge and skills from a range of disciplines working together for a better environment. Congratulations to BFNT for its commendable efforts towards the restoration and enhancement of wildlife habitat. Together, we are committed to being good stewards of the earth," said Bill Howard, WHC President.

Bridgestone Firestone North American Tire, LLC's Oklahoma City plant covers 395 acres, of which 100 acres are reserved for wildlife habitat enhancements. The area surrounding the plant satisfies many commercial, agricultural and residential land uses, yet a large portion of the plant property itself is composed primarily of forestland and grassland habitat. In addition it has an ephemeral creek running through the northern portion of the property that is dry much of the year. There is also a closed Resource Conservation and Recovery Area Land Treatment Unit on the property that was cleaned and developed into a wildlife habitat area. The goal of the wildlife team and wildlife habitat management plan is to increase the overall biodiversity of the natural areas on plant property.

A project started in 2000 to gradually remove red cedars from the land treatment project area is ongoing. Following recommendations of wildlife conservation personnel, the project intends to promote regeneration of more diverse native vegetation. Employees actively remove selected red cedars each year in a 25-acre field area. Some of the cedars that are removed are placed in the on-site pond to increase cover habitat for aquatic species. Native trees, such as sand

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plum and Shumard oak, were planted in a 16-acre area of the land treatment unit in place of the red cedars. The wildlife team also planted approximately 25 acres of the plains area, both inside the land treatment unit and adjacent to that area, with sunflowers, red clover, cowpeas and corn to provide foraging for wildlife. Additional reforestation has included planting over 1,200 seedlings on 16 acres with help from 65 Western Heights Middle School students.

The wildlife team undertook a large project in 2002 to provide electrical services to the nature training area. The area is intended for educational purposes, and the electrical service provides lighting for presentations given to local school children, home school children and scout groups. In addition, employees developed a digital video presentation about habitat creation projects and partnerships that resulted in the creation of a beneficial wildlife habitat at the site.

The arid climate of the area made it difficult for wildlife species to locate a water source onsite during the summer months. The wildlife team previously created a pond and drilled a well to provide a water source, but due to dry summer conditions they noted that the pond was still drying up. In March 2004, six team members installed a 2000-foot pipeline from a storm water retention pond to the wildlife pond using 4-inch PVC pipe. A valve was placed at the storm water retention pond to control water flow to the wildlife pond. Prior to transfer, the water is tested to ensure it is not contaminated.

In July 2004, the site began work on a bridge to span the creek bed, which would allow employees and the public access to greater portion of the habitat. With a donation of labor and materials, Boldt Construction created the bridge from 38-foot long I-beams. In July 2005, the concrete foundations were poured on either side of the creek, and the bridge was lifted into place. Bat boxes were erected at the site to provide roosting structure. Students from Western Heights Middle School constructed the boxes, and in April 2005 they installed boxes around the site.

“Working in partnership, the Wildlife Habitat Council (WHC) and EPA’s National Environmental Performance Track program are creating opportunities for public and private facilities to reduce their impact on the environment, protect human health and safety, and preserve wildlife habitat. After reviewing the notable accomplishments of our respective members in these critical areas, EPA and WHC are pleased to commend two exemplary Bridgestone Firestone North American Tire, LLC facilities for their outstanding achievements in environmental management and wildlife habitat restoration,” said Daniel J. Fiorino, Director, EPA’s National Environmental Performance Track.

“We believe these two facilities deserve special recognition for both setting and achieving challenging environmental goals as Performance Track members,” said Fiorino. “In addition, their ambitious habitat restoration and land improvement projects can serve as models for current and future organizations that work closely with Performance Track and WHC to achieve exemplary environmental results and enhance wildlife habitat in their communities.”

Nashville-based Bridgestone Firestone North American Tire, LLC is a subsidiary of Bridgestone Americas Holding, Inc., whose parent company, Bridgestone Corporation, is the world’s largest tire and rubber company. BFNT develops, manufactures, and markets Bridgestone, Firestone, and associate and private brand tires. The company is focused on wholesale and original equipment markets, supplying passenger, light truck, commercial vehicle, off-road, motorcycle, agricultural and other tires to its customers in North America. [www.BridgestoneAmericas.com](http://www.BridgestoneAmericas.com)

The Wildlife Habitat Council is a nonprofit, non-lobbying organization dedicated to increasing the quality and amount of wildlife habitat on corporate, private and public lands. WHC devotes its resources to building partnerships with corporations and conservation groups to create solutions that balance the demands of economic growth with the requirements of a healthy, bio-diverse and sustainable environment. More than 2 million acres in 48 states, Puerto Rico and 16 other countries are managed for wildlife through WHC-assisted projects. [www.wildlifehc.org](http://www.wildlifehc.org)