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-- News Release --

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For Immediate Release

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Virginia Soil Conservationist Wins International Award for Work in Erosion and Sediment Control Industry

Steamboat Springs, Colo. – A veteran soil conservationist from Fairfax County, Va., with extensive experience as a leader in both the US federal government and the erosion control industry, has been honored for outstanding achievement in promoting effective erosion and sediment control practices around the world.

John Peterson, president of KEMPS Consultants, Inc., Burke, Va., has received the 2005 Sustained Contributor Award from the International Erosion Control Association.

The annual award recognizes a person who has demonstrated a significant and long-term contribution to the erosion control industry through education, government involvement, research or development of technology.

The award will be presented to Peterson during formal ceremonies at the annual IECA conference in Dallas, Tex., Feb. 22, 2005.

Peterson, who was raised in rural Minnesota and on a Wisconsin cherry orchard, retired from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Soil Conservation Service, SCS, (now the Natural Resource Conservation Service or NRCS) in 1994 as an assistant chief, capping a 40-year career with the agency. During that time he advanced soil and water conservation efforts throughout the country, in roles ranging from a conservation technician, to field civil and project engineer, to a Senior Executive Deputy Chief responsible nationally for public information, financial, personnel, contract, and information resources management; and he retired as an Assistant Chief, one of the agency's top line officers. He was at the top level of the federal career service.

Since then, Peterson has been an effective, visionary leader in many professional organizations. As a director of IECA from 1994 to 2002, and a three term IECA President, he helped establish programs and policies that have helped advance erosion and sediment control practices around the world. During his terms as president of the organization he forged a partnership between IECA, NRCS, and the Society for Range Management (SRM), and worked with a number of foreign embassies to develop IECA's relationships with other countries. As a director, Peterson also chaired a number of committee and continues today to serve on several committees. He has long been a supporter of IECA's growth internationally.

He represented IECA at the International Soil Conservation Organization (ISCO) conference in Beijing in 2002. In addition to trips to China, including one with the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, he has spoken in other Asian countries as well as Australia, Spain, and India to promote more effective erosion and sediment control practices.

Peterson has played a key role in developing IECA's Mid-Atlantic Chapter as one of the organization's top chapters in terms of educational programs, membership and service to the industry.

A Certified Professional in Erosion and Sediment Control (CPESC), he was instrumental in establishing this international certification program in 1982. A CPESC designation certifies the experience and educational qualifications of an individual in providing erosion and sediment control services.

Peterson also served as executive director of the National Watershed Coalition (NWC) and as watershed program specialist with the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD). He is the original drafter of Public Law 106-472, the Small Watershed Rehabilitation Act of 2000. It was the first major USDA water resources legislation to be passed in over 24 years.

Peterson now operates his own natural resources, water resources, erosion and sediment control consulting firm, KEMPS Consultants, Inc., in the Washington, D.C., area.

The IECA, founded in 1972, is a non-profit professional organization with members in 39 countries around the world who share a common interest in the prevention and control of erosion.

This is the 14th year of the annual IECA Environmental Excellence Awards.

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