

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 26, 2009

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Mark Platts Receives Statewide Award for Preservation of Susquehannock Indian Historic Sites

Presented during Archaeology Day Celebration at the State Capitol

Harrisburg, PA – Earlier today, archaeologists from around the Commonwealth gathered in the East Rotunda of the Capitol to celebrate Archaeology Month and presented the John Stuchell Fisher Award to Susquehanna Gateway Heritage Area President Mark Platts. Steve Warfel, former Senior Curator of Archaeology at the State Museum of Pennsylvania, and Richard Geidel, President of the Pennsylvania Archaeological Council, presented the award to Mr. Platts.

The Fisher Award, named in honor of Pennsylvania's 28th Governor, is awarded annually to local, state and national officials who contribute to the promotion and understanding of archaeology in Pennsylvania. Mr. Platts received the 2009 award for his role in preserving the historic sites of the last two Susquehannock Indian settlements, along the Susquehanna River in York County.

The Upper Leibhart site, dating to 1665, is now owned and managed as an archaeological preserve by the Archaeological Conservancy. The last village site, dating to 1676 and known as the Byrd Leibhart site, is now part of Native Lands County Park. Mr. Platts and the Heritage Area helped lead the community coalition that acquired and permanently preserved both sites.

"The work to save these significant and sacred Native American heritage sites was truly a team effort," said Mr. Platts. "I share this honor with all those who played a part to ensure that these places and their stories are preserved and celebrated as part of our region's rich cultural history."

Event sponsors included the Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology, Inc, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation and the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. This year's theme, "Save the Past for the Future", focused exhibits and festivities on raising public awareness about the significance of Pennsylvania's archaeological resources and advocating for their preservation so that they may be appreciated and enjoyed by future generations.

The Susquehanna Gateway Heritage Area, part of Pennsylvania's network of officially designated Heritage Areas, helps raise awareness and appreciation of the cultural & economic value of the Susquehanna Gateway region, and preserves, enhances and celebrates its most significant heritage assets as economically vital attractions for residents and visitors alike. For more information about our mission and programs please visit www.SusquehannaHeritage.org.

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