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STMA Announces Sponsorship Support for First Ever U.S. National Arboretum Peer-Reviewed Exhibit

*“Grass Roots” Initiative, Still In Fundraising Stage, Planning Four-Year Run to Educate Public About
“Importance of Turf and Turf Research on the Landscape and the Environment”*

LAWRENCE, Kan. (May 16, 2013) – The Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA) today announced its sponsorship and planning support of the United States National Arboretum’s (USNA) “Grass Roots” Initiative, the first peer-reviewed exhibit of its kind hosted by the governmental research center. The exhibit will feature an educational section entitled “Game Winning Grass” that will examine turf in sports fields and its importance to athletes and athletic performance, among other related topics.

The exhibit will be peer-reviewed by Division C-5 (Turfgrass Science) of the Crop Science Society of America and is expected to run four years on USNA grounds with construction anticipated to begin Fall 2013. Efforts will encompass a variety of informational outreach programs to eventually include “...an onsite exhibit, symposia, workshops, and demonstrations, all aimed at expanding knowledge at a range of levels – from school children to policymakers – about the importance of turf and turf research on the landscape and the environment”, according to material provided by USNA Director Colien Hefferan.

“STMA’s participation in the Grass Roots Initiative is especially important, as it will take a science-based approach to grass research in general and, specifically, its examination of the turfgrass industry,” said STMA President Michael Goatley, Jr., Ph.D. “Our hope is that this

informational exhibit will demonstrate to a wider audience – who perhaps might not be as familiar with our industry – all the benefits of turfgrass, including carbon sequestration and soil stabilization.”

Sports fields and lawn games will be one of 14 topics featured at the exhibit, which will feature three main focal points related to lawns and field grass – people, plants, and environment – and will include information on lawn care equipment, rain gardens, fertilizer, green roofs, danthonia, agricultural grasses, golf, grass structure, and cool-season/warm-season grasses, among others.

Fundraising efforts are currently underway to meet the USNA’s \$400,000 goal. Those interested in donating to the turfgrass exhibit - both individuals and companies alike, of all sizes – are encouraged to contact U.S. National Arboretum Director Dr. Colien Hefferan directly at Colien.Hefferan@ars.usda.gov or 202-245-4539.

The U.S. National Arboretum, according to department materials, “...encompasses more than 440 acres of land in northeast Washington and also has worksites in Beltsville, Md., and McMinnville, Tenn., and is one of the world's premier woody plant research facilities and public gardens. The arboretum was established by Congress in 1927 to serve the public need for scientific research, education and gardens that conserve and showcase plants that enhance the environment. More than 475,000 people each year visit the arboretum’s plant collections and participate in events and education programs.”

ABOUT STMA:

STMA is the not-for-profit, professional association for the men and women who manage sports fields worldwide. Since 1981, the association and its 33 local chapters have been providing education, information and sharing practical knowledge in the art and science of sports field management. Its more than 2,600 members oversee sports fields and facilities at schools, colleges and universities, parks and recreational facilities, and professional sports stadiums. For more information, log on to www.stma.org.

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