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**BLUE SPRINGS NATURE PRESERVE HIRES CONSULTANTS TO ASSIST WITH MASTER PLAN
Design charette slated for early October**

Birmingham, Ala. - August 28, 2006 - Blue Springs Nature Preserve announced today that it has tapped Huntsville-based planning consultants 4Site, Inc. to develop a master plan for a proposed park in Ragland, Ala.

4Site, Inc. will work with the CAWACO Resource Conservation & Development Council and the Coosa Valley Resource Conservation & Development Council to interface with the Ragland and St. Clair County communities and to define design guidelines for the development. The team was assembled in cooperation with the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham (RPC), which provides planning services for six counties, including St. Clair County.

"We're pleased to have them aboard," said Spencer Weitman, President of National Cement Company and Chairman of the Blue Springs Nature Preserve Steering Committee. "With their expertise, we expect substantial progress in the coming months towards our goal of providing a place where the community can learn about the environment or simply enjoy spending time outdoors."

The design team is led by Drew Wharton, a principal with 4Site with over 30 years of experience in land planning and landscape architecture, and Paul Kennedy, a project coordinator with CAWACO with over 20 years of experience in forestry and conservation.

"These are the type of projects that we love to do," said Wharton. "We are definitely excited to help bring the vision of the Blue Springs Nature Preserve into focus."

The next step in the planning process will be to conduct a charrette in early October. A charrette is a collaborative session where the steering committee, designers and others meet to create a vision for the development.

"A charrette essentially provides a forum for the exchange of ideas and lets people give immediate feedback as the design is taking place," said Wharton. His firm has recently held design charrettes for other communities in Alabama, namely Midfield, Center Point and Brookside in Jefferson County.

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4Site has invited renowned architects Jack LaQuatra of LaQuatra Bonci Associates in Pittsburg, Pa., and Bob Shemwell of Overland Partners in San Antonio, Texas to participate in the charrette. LaQuatra's firm worked with 4site to create a master plan for a new residential community in Gadsden, Ala. that has already received an award from the American Planning Associates, Alabama Chapter. Shemwell is famous for his design of the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center in Austin, Texas.

"Both of these nationally-recognized firms have done outstanding work in their areas of the country," said Wharton. "Their interest reflects the significance of this unique project."

Toby Bennington, former director of regional and community planning of RPC, and Dr. Ellis Bacon, former director of the Tremont Environmental Center, and are also anticipated to participate in the charrette. Bennington was instrumental in assembling the project team while with RPC, while 4Site has worked with Bacon on the master plan for Tremont.

The CAWACO and Coosa Valley RC&D Councils will provide environmental and economic counsel to the project. CAWACO, which serves Blount, Chilton, Jefferson, Shelby, and Walker counties, will work in cooperation with Coosa Valley, which serves St. Clair County. The purpose of both organizations is to plan and carry out projects for natural conservation and community development.

Blue Spring Nature Preserve, a non-profit organization, is the result of a public-private collaboration between National Cement Company, citizens and elected officials of Ragland and St. Clair County, Ala.

Blue Springs Nature Preserve consists of a 147-acre parcel of land in Ragland provided by National Cement, a major producer of cement in the United States, that will serve in perpetuity as a public nature preserve. The site is located near the conjunction of Trout Creek and Blues Springs Fork and includes pastures, wetlands and heavily-wooded areas. While the project is currently in the master planning stage, exhibits are being considered to demonstrate the history of the area, environmental science and other educational subjects.

About National Cement: National Cement is a major producer of cement in the Southeastern United States. It employs over 1,255 in Birmingham, AL and California. The company is highly committed to environmental stewardship and supporting community activities and projects. Since 1974, the company has been owned by the Paris, France-based Vicat Group, which manufactures cement and produces ready-mixed concrete and aggregates at facilities employing more than 5,700 people in France, the United States, Turkey, Senegal, Switzerland, Egypt and Italy. For more information, visit www.vicat.com.

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