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**BACK TO NATIVES RESTORATION RECEIVES \$10,000 GRANT FROM
WACHOVIA FOUNDATION FOR SERVICE LEARNING PROGRAMS**

IRVINE, Calif., June 23, 2008 – **Back to Natives Restoration**, a 501 (c)(3) non profit public charity recently received a \$10,000 grant from the Wachovia Foundation to assist with Service Learning Programs. Service Learning is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities.

The Back to Natives Service Learning Program is designed to introduce students to ecological concepts through field study and community service. Students will perform habitat quality monitoring, biological assessments, and wildlife surveys, as well as design and implement restoration projects. Students will become aware of their civic responsibilities, as they improve habitat for wildlife as well as humans.

“The program is intended to introduce potential science careers, and generate interest in the environment,” said Back to Natives Director of Restoration Reginald Durant. “Students will learn what it is like to be a real restoration ecologist, as they participate in the entire restoration process, from beginning to end. Students will become aware that, even if they do not choose a career in the natural sciences, they can play a direct role in the health of their local natural areas.”

Back to Natives strives to involve the community in the process of ecological restoration and conservation because it believes that a little "ecological enlightenment" and a chance to "get your hands dirty" is the best way to improve relations between people and nature.

“Supporting this program was an easy decision for The Wachovia Foundation. The Back to Natives Service Learning Program links education to environmental stewardship in a unique and compelling way that really engages kids and introduces them to career options they might not have considered before” said Frank Newman, Wachovia’s president for Southern California.

About Back to Natives

Back to Natives Restoration, a 501(c)(3) non profit organization, is dedicated to the restoration and conservation of Orange County and California wildlands, though education and restoration programs featuring native plants as a centralizing theme. For more information, please visit www.backtonatives.org or call 949-509-4787.

About the Wachovia Foundation

The Wachovia Foundation is a private foundation that provides grants to eligible 501(c)(3) tax-

exempt organizations to support four primary focus areas: Education, Community Development, Health and Human Services and Arts and Culture. The mission of The Wachovia Foundation is to build strong and vibrant communities, improve the quality of life, and make a positive difference.

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