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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Local Law Firm Donates Settlement Money to Freshwater Land Trust**

*Donation to help protect the integrity of local rivers and streams.*

**BIRMINGHAM, Ala., Nov. 29, 2006**—The law offices of Cory Watson Crowder & DeGaris, P.C., a Birmingham-based law firm, recently made a \$20,000 donation to the Freshwater Land Trust, a locally-based 501(c)(3) organization. The donation represents the settlement fees awarded as the result of *Byram v. USX Corporation, et al.*, (Case No.: 99-769, Circuit Court for Jefferson County, Alabama, Bessemer Division), regarding an alleged hazardous materials spill near areas of Opossum Creek and Valley Creek.

“We are so honored that Cory Watson Crowder & DeGaris has chosen to donate its attorney fees from this particular suit to our organization,” said Wendy Jackson, Executive Director of the Freshwater Land Trust. “The law firm should be commended for their generosity. The donation will help us in our mission of acquiring and caring for lands that enhance water quality and preserve open space.”

The Freshwater Land Trust was formed in 1996 to administer a 10-year, \$30 million greenways program in Jefferson County to protect lands along rivers and streams. Today, the Land Trust works with private landowners, corporations, and local communities to conserve spaces throughout the county by acquiring land along rivers and streams to create a natural buffer around the water. The greenways work like a filter. When water runs off a parking lot or construction site it picks up silt, fertilizers, and other toxins. The trees and plants in the greenways reduce the pollutants before they can reach the water.

“Our law firm is pleased to be able to make this donation to the Freshwater Land Trust,” states Annesley DeGaris, shareholder at Cory Watson Crowder & DeGaris. “We all benefit and enjoy our local rivers and streams, but few people really think about how their actions impact our environment. Through a variety of initiatives, the Land Trust demonstrates how important it is to protect our natural resources. Our firm applauds and supports the Land Trust for its preservation efforts in our community.”

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### **About Cory Watson Crowder & DeGaris**

Cory Watson Crowder & DeGaris was founded in 1995 and has become known as one of the region's leading law firms devoted to representing individuals and businesses injured by the wrongful conduct of others. Some of the senior shareholders in the firm have 25 years of legal experience and have represented clients all across the United States and beyond including Africa, Greece, Latin America, and Canada. The firm's 12 experienced attorneys and staff of more than 40 handle a variety of cases. The largest area of the firm's practice is products liability, including litigation of defective consumer and household products, motor vehicles, medical devices, and pharmaceuticals. Other practice areas include business litigation, personal injury, nursing home negligence, insurance law, civil rights, class action lawsuits, employment law, workers' compensation, and construction accidents. Visit [www.cwcd.com](http://www.cwcd.com) for more information.

### **About Freshwater Land Trust**

The Freshwater Land Trust acquires, conserves, and connects open spaces that are critical for the protection of rivers and streams and provide recreational opportunities for the community. The Freshwater Land Trust's mission is the acquisition and stewardship of lands that enhance water quality and preserve open space. For more information, visit [www.freshwaterlandtrust.org](http://www.freshwaterlandtrust.org).

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