



ENVIRONMENTAL AND PUBLIC PROTECTION CABINET

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NEWS RELEASE

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OFFICE OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS CONTINUES EARTH DAY PROJECT *Group clears weeds from Kentucky State University historic site*

FRANKFORT, Ky. (April 27, 2007) – A historic site on the Kentucky State University (KSU) south campus received another facelift today as staff members from the Office of Financial Institutions (OFI) continued their selected Earth Day project.

Last year, several OFI employees cleared the historic springhouse area of invasive garlic mustard plants with the help of KSU's Michael Bomford, principal investigator of organic/sustainable vegetable production. More of these invasive plants have grown in the year since, so OFI staff returned to the site to clear the area once again.

“We believe everyone should work to protect the environment. And as part of the Environmental and Public Protection Cabinet, OFI has a special interest in keeping our world clean and beautiful,” said Kelly May, public information officer for OFI. “Our jobs entail aspects of public protection every day of the year. Earth Day gives us a chance to contribute to environmental protection.”

Five staff members who perform a range of duties for OFI – from financial institution and securities regulation to legal resources – participated in the event. Before the group started work, Bomford explained that garlic mustard is a non-native biennial that is crowding out native wildflowers. Last year, the hillside surrounding the springhouse was overrun with the plants. This year, he said, only about a fourth of the plants had reappeared, and he hoped the area could be completely cleared of garlic mustard in five years.

“I was surprised to see that the plants were not surrounding the springhouse. So, I feel like we made serious progress,” Bomford said.

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Located next to a sidewalk connecting KSU's stadium and aquaculture facilities to the main campus, the springhouse was built sometime between 1912 and 1916 by students at the school. The thick concrete walls and natural spring keep the building cool without electricity. It was used to store perishable goods, likely grown right on campus, Bomford said.

Anne Butler, director of the Center of Excellence for the Study of Kentucky African Americans, has acquired a grant from the National Parks Service to restore the historic springhouse, and architects recently visited the site to begin working on plans.

For more information about the springhouse project, you may contact Bomford at 502-597-5752.

OFI is an agency of the Department of Public Protection in the Environmental and Public Protection Cabinet. It licenses, charters and regulates the activities of state-chartered/licensed depository and nondepository financial institutions. OFI's mission is to serve the public through effective and efficient regulation that promotes consumer confidence and economic growth.

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OFI employees assisted KSU's Michael Bomford in removing an invasive plant from the historic springhouse site on the south campus. Among those who participated are, left to right, Bomford, principal investigator of organic/sustainable vegetable production; Colleen Keefe, OFI Securities Division director; Tony Silvernail, co-investigator of organic/sustainable vegetable production; Paula Call, administrative specialist in OFI Legal Services; Kelly May, OFI public information officer; Emily Draper, OFI office support assistant; and Chris Thompson, OFI Compliance Branch manager.