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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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# Governor Christie taps Mayor Jim Rilee as Highlands Council Chairman

*Roxbury Township Mayor designated to serve and chair Highlands Council*

CHESTER, N.J. – Governor Chris Christie has designated Jim Rilee, the Mayor of Roxbury Township in Morris County, as the Chairman of the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council. Chairman Rilee was appointed by Governor Christie to serve on the Highlands Council and received the consent of the State Senate on May 23, 2011. The Highlands Council has been led by Acting Chairman Jack Schrier since the December 2009 departure of former and founding Chairman John Weingart.

Chairman Rilee has lived in Roxbury Township since 1992 and has served as Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Councilman, and Planning Board member for the Township for over a decade. He also served as the Chairman of the Morris County Open Space & Farmland Preservation Trust Fund. He has extensive experience in municipal land use planning, redevelopment and open space preservation helping to rewrite Roxbury Township's Master Plan and land use ordinances to promote responsible development. During his tenure serving Roxbury Township, he has been the liaison to the volunteer fire departments, an original member of the Main Street Committee, and a member of the Economic Development Committee. Chairman Rilee has also been a member of the Lake Musconetcong Regional Planning Board and a Trustee of Morris Tomorrow.

Since 1981, Chairman Rilee has been employed by Allied Management Inc., the management arm of Bottle King Liquors, and is presently one of the senior managers of the 14 store chain. Chairman Rilee is involved with all aspects of the business and has been an effective manager for nearly 30 years. Chairman Rilee lives in Roxbury with his wife Stacey.

Chairman Rilee will join the Highlands Council along with four other new members of the Highlands Council appointed by Governor Christie. These five new members include:

- ❖ Jim Rilee, the Mayor of Roxbury Township

- ❖ Timothy P. Dougherty, the Mayor of Morristown
- ❖ Robert G. Walton, Hunterdon County Freeholder
- ❖ James E. Mengucci, a Councilman in Lopatcong Township
- ❖ Michael R. Dressler, Bergen County Surrogate

The Highlands Act sets specific requirements for Highlands Council membership and its 15 members must include eight elected municipal and county officials and seven public members. The nearly 860,000-acre Highlands Region supplies drinking water to more than 5 million of the state's residents, the great majority of whom live outside the Highlands Region. The five new members were appointed by Governor Christie to fill "elected official" seats, in these instances, three municipal officials and two county officials. They represent Morris, Hunterdon, Bergen, and Warren Counties.

"I am honored to be designated by Governor Christie to lead the Highlands Council," said Highlands Council Chairman Rilee. "I very much look forward to working with my fellow Council Members to address the numerous challenging aspects of the implementation of the Highlands Act and the Highlands Regional Master Plan. The Governor's appointment of new Highlands Council Members will bring a wealth of municipal and county experience to the Council and I am confident that together we can address both the successful and controversial aspects of the Highlands Act."

Chairman Rilee thanked Acting Chairman Jack Schrier for his leadership of the Highlands Council for the last year and a half. "I applaud Jack Schrier for his tenure as Acting Chairman and his longstanding commitment as a founding Council Member and a member of the original Highlands Task Force. I also want to give thanks for the many years of service and dedication to the Council members that have been replaced by the new members: Liz Calabrese, Bill Cogger, Janice Kovach, Glen Vetrano and Mimi Letts."

The new Council Members bring extensive municipal and county experience to the Highlands Council. Hunterdon County Freeholder Walton is a member of the Hunterdon County Planning Board and the Open Space Advisory Board. He is also a former Councilman and twice elected Mayor of Hampton Borough. Mayor Dougherty was formerly a Morristown Councilman At-Large. He served as Chairman of the Morristown Board of Adjustment and on the board of the Southeast Morris County Municipal Utility Authority. James Mengucci serves as a Lopatcong Township Councilman and he is also the town's Municipal Public Safety Director. Judge Dressler was elected to the Cresskill Council at age 22 and was elected as the Borough's Mayor in 1983. He served as counsel to both the Bergen County Board of Freeholders and the New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority. In 1997 he was elected as the Bergen County Surrogate.

"We welcome the new Chairman of the Highlands Council and Governor Christie's new members" said Highlands Council Executive Director, Eileen Swan "the Council has a full agenda for our meeting on June 16<sup>th</sup> at 4 p.m. where the Council will review petitions from Hackettstown, Pohatcong, Bloomingdale and Bloomsbury."