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Urban Ecology Center to Break Ground in Menomonee Valley

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Milwaukee, WI – The Urban Ecology Center will officially begin construction on its third branch in the Menomonee Valley on Tuesday, September 27th 2011 at 5:00pm at 3700 W. Pierce Street, Milwaukee. The new Menomonee Valley Urban Ecology Center Branch will convert a 1933 tavern, on 37th and Pierce, into a sustainably built environmental community center, designed by Uihlein-Wilson Architects. The Center will open in the fall of 2012, serving students attending 8 neighborhood schools and south side neighborhood residents with stewardship projects, urban adventures recreation, citizen science and other education and community programs. The Center plans to grow to serve students in 22 south side schools and 10,000 visitors annually by its fifth year of operation.

For this branch, the Urban Ecology Center has formed a unique partnership with Menomonee Valley Partners (MVP), a nonprofit whose vision is to redevelop the Menomonee Valley into a strong, ecological, economic and cultural area in the city for the benefit of the entire region. Together with the State of Wisconsin and City of Milwaukee, the two non-profits are working on these components of the joint effort, Menomonee Valley – From the Ground Up:

- Vastly improving pedestrian/bike access into the Valley and its surrounding neighborhoods (which includes the Valley Passage completed fall 2010).
- Doubling the Hank Aaron State Trail with construction of a six-mile western extension (which includes 4.5 miles to 94th Place that was completed fall 2010).
- Establishing a third branch of the Urban Ecology Center, to be opened in fall 2012.
- Transforming 24 acres of wasteland into a public park and ecologically significant natural area that will be used as the Center's outdoor classroom.

The day's events also include a neighborhood clean-up for the United Way Days of Caring by service groups from the Greater Milwaukee Foundation and Godfrey & Kahn.

The evening's event, starting at 5:00pm, will include a program featuring several local dignitaries and special guests, including Mick Hatch, President of the Menomonee Valley Partners and Ken Leinbach, Executive Director of the Urban Ecology Center starting at 5:15pm.

For more information regarding the Menomonee Valley Groundbreaking event please contact Ginger Duiven, Director of Development and Marketing at gduiven@urbanecologycenter.org or 414-964-8505.

The Urban Ecology Center is a neighborhood-based, 501(c)(3) nonprofit environmental community center with two current locations in Milwaukee's historic Riverside and Washington Parks. The Center educates and inspires people to understand and value nature as motivation for positive change. Using county parks and the adjacent Milwaukee River as living laboratories, the Center provides programs for children and adults and coordinates research related to the urban environment. The Urban Ecology Center reaches thousands of visitors, including students from over 40 neighborhood schools, and helps provide a positive, safe place for everyone to learn more about how the world around us works. For more information, visit www.urbanecologycenter.org or call (414) 964-8505.

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