

**NEWS RELEASE
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Contact: ECO office, 828-692-0385

EARTH DAY 2010 – Celebrating 40 Years of Environmental Stewardship

(HENDERSONVILLE, NC, February 23, 2010) – To celebrate the 40th Anniversary of Earth Day, ECO (the Environmental & Conservation Organization) is planning an Earth Day festival, the largest event in its history, to celebrate 40 years of environmental stewardship. The festival will include an outdoor solar stage featuring local musicians, storytellers and performance artists, workshops on sustainable gardening and green energy, a water festival, art projects and a green Olympics for kids, a greenway hike, a student short film festival, recycling of household batteries, tree planting, an electric car race and much more. All activities are planned at the large field at Blue Ridge Community College in Flat Rock.

According to ECO Executive Director, David Weintraub, “For forty years, Earth Day has been an opportunity to acknowledge that what we do to our earth, we do to ourselves. It’s a chance to redouble our efforts to protect the environment that sustains us. While we have many successes under our belt, there are many challenges that lie ahead. Our Earth Day Festival will be a chance to celebrate our successes as we plan for the future.” In addition to the planned festival, an Earth Day Concert is scheduled for the evening of April 24th at the Blue Ridge Conference Hall featuring highly acclaimed bluegrass band, **Balsam Range** as well as **Shannon Whitworth** and her band. Other events include the screening of the award winning documentary, *Earth Days*, on Thursday April 22nd and a lecture on climate change by noted NOAA scientist, Michael Squires.

ECO is looking for vendors interested in participating, sponsors who wish to reach a targeted audience and volunteers who are passionate about the environment and want to make a difference. For more information about the planned events, contact ECO at (828) 692-0385 or online at www.eco-wnc.org.

Please see the schedule of activities and summary sheet attached.