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**HILTON LONGBOAT KEY BEACHFRONT RESORT RECEIVES FLORIDA *GREEN*
LODGING PROGRAM DESIGNATION**

--Environmentally-friendly hotel conserves resources, saves money and attracts customers--

LONGBOAT KEY – The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) today welcomed the Hilton Longboat Key Beachfront Resort to the Florida *Green Lodging* Program. The property is the first in Longboat Key and 157th in the state to become a designated member of the program. The voluntary state initiative provides the lodging industry with technical assistance, encouraging hotels and motels to adopt cost-saving “green” practices that reduce waste and conserve natural resources.

“Florida *Green Lodging* Program facilities serve as an example and a challenge to other hotels to adopt innovative green practices,” said DEP Southwest District Director Deborah Getzoff. “Program participants are industry leaders in environmental commitment.”

To become a designated member of the Florida *Green Lodging* Program, hotels must follow certain green practices. These practices include, but are not limited to, water conservation measures through low flow plumbing fixtures, a linen reuse program, energy efficiency achieved by installing ENERGY STAR® appliances and programmable thermostats. The waste reduction criteria are met by providing the opportunity to recycle, purchasing items in bulk, purchasing recycled materials and by recycling ink and toner cartridges. All designated properties must also use green cleaners and high efficiency air filters.

"Sitting so closely to nature, on this pristine barrier island, our location is one of the reasons our guests come to experience Longboat Key. It is important to us that this area remains unspoiled so guests can continue to enjoy this with their families for the years to come," stated Hilton Longboat Key Beachfront Resort General Manager, Roy Padgett. "We're delighted to do our part by becoming as environmentally friendly as possible."

Recently, Governor Crist announced the 2008 Serve to Preserve Florida Summit on Global Climate Change this week, building on the foundation for Florida's energy future that began at last year's summit. During the 2007 summit, Governor Crist signed three executive orders initiating state energy-use policies, including one that requires state agencies and departments to hold meetings and conferences only at hotels with Florida *Green Lodging* Program designation as of January 1, 2008, whenever possible. This year's summit will explore technologies and strategies to stimulate economic development in clean technologies as well as “green” Florida's business community.

Launched in March 2004, the Florida *Green Lodging* Program establishes environmental guidelines for hotels and motels to conserve natural resources and prevent pollution. As a reward for designation, the state is recommending designated properties in the Florida *Green Lodging* Program to companies and trade organizations seeking environmentally conscious lodging and

convention facilities. With the addition of the Hilton Longboat Key Beachfront Resort, the program has 204 designated properties and more than 380 applicants. For more information about the Florida *Green Lodging* Program, visit www.dep.state.fl.us/greenlodging.

DEP's Office of Sustainable Initiatives is comprised of three voluntary, non-regulatory programs that assist Florida industry and citizens in protecting the environment. The *Clean Marina* Program, the Florida *Green Lodging* Program and the Florida Pollution Prevention Program offer a variety of services including on-site assessments, consultations, speakers and workshops, all at no cost to citizens or organizations. The goal of the Sustainable Initiatives programs is to meet the needs of the present population without compromising resources for future generations. To learn more about DEP's Sustainable Initiatives, visit www.dep.state.fl.us/green/.