

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: David A. Kahley
President & CEO
The Progress Fund
(724) 529-0384
dkahley@progressfund.org

Eric Martin
Co-owner
Trillium Lodge, LLC
(724) 329-1000
eric@wilderness-voyageurs.com

Trillium Lodge Completes Tourism Trifecta

The Progress Fund backs new lodging to match Ohiopyle's adventure offerings

Ohiopyle, PA – July 7, 2005 – Imagine a day on the rapids, an evening in a quality family restaurant and pub, and a night in a hot tub overlooking miles of undeveloped wilderness. Now that's all available in the Ohiopyle area, thanks to entrepreneurs Eric and Kasia Martin and The Progress Fund.

Trillium Lodge, is a nine-bedroom rustic-style lodge built on 40 acres, situated 2,400 feet above sea level, overlooking the Youghiogheny River Gorge and Ohiopyle State Park.

Trillium Lodge transforms a hilltop home that sat empty for five years into a unique addition to the area's offerings, says Eric Martin. Trillium Lodge's combination of affordability, rustic atmosphere and full amenities isn't found elsewhere in the Laurel Highlands, and enhances the area's competitiveness with other resort-and-adventure areas in Pennsylvania, West Virginia and beyond.

The Martins initially approached banks about financing the purchase and rehabilitation of the property, but then turned to The Progress Fund, which is state-certified to finance tourism businesses. Banks "got bogged down in their own bureaucracy, whereas The Progress Fund did not," says Martin. "They were actually able to move faster than a traditional bank." A brother-and-sister team, Eric and Lynne Martin, have operated Wilderness Voyageurs Outfitters in Ohiopyle for 14 years. They later expanded that whitewater rafting business to include still-water excursions, rock climbing, kayaking, mountain biking and a retail operation. They also founded the Falls City Restaurant and Pub in Ohiopyle.

With the opening of Trillium Lodge, the Martins can finally provide “a lodging experience that is commensurate with visitors’ activities experience,” says Eric. “The setting up there is just incredible,” he says. “You can see for 30 miles. At night, you can see six lights.”

The Progress Fund has financed each of the Martins’ entrepreneurial expansions. “Their businesses really complement each other and offer innovative services that aren’t otherwise available near Ohio,” says Jim Gonsman, Commercial Loan Officer for The Progress Fund.

The Martins expect that the opening of Trillium Lodge will mean several additions to their staff, which peaks at 60 in the summer.

Trillium Lodge welcomes family reunions, business meetings, adventure travelers, and anyone who loves a great view. For information on Trillium Lodge, call Eric Martin at (724) 329-1000. For information on The Progress Fund, call (724) 529-0384, or visit www.progressfund.org.

The Progress Fund is a vigorous non-profit loan fund that creates jobs and improves communities by providing entrepreneurial coaching and capital to small businesses in the travel & tourism industry. The Progress Fund serves 39 counties in Pennsylvania and the entire state of West Virginia. The Progress Fund was founded in 1997, and has loaned more than \$10.6 million to 108 enterprises, creating or preserving more than 795 jobs. The Progress Fund is an Equal Opportunity Lender. Discrimination is prohibited by Federal Law. Complaints of discrimination may be filed with the Secretary of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250.