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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
February 09, 2016

## Shirley Heinze Land Trust Announces Capital Campaign Success

Shirley Heinze Land Trust announces that it has successfully concluded its first-ever Capital Campaign. In 2013 the organization embarked on a project to raise \$3.5 million dollars to permanently protect an additional 500 acres of environmentally significant land, provide enhanced restoration, maintenance, and management of new and existing preserves, and educate and promote conservation awareness by providing increased access to natural areas.

“Over the past few years many committed volunteers worked tirelessly to organize campaign events and hikes, speak at numerous public gatherings, and share their passion for the organization,” Campaign Co-Chair Dale Engquist says. “Thanks to the support of individual donors, partner organizations, corporate and foundation grants, we have not only reached, but actually surpassed the goals we set for our campaign.”

Campaign Co-Chair Nancy Johnson reports the following campaign accomplishments: “We raised more than \$4.6 million dollars in total contributions, nearly half of which were donations of land. We anticipate the acquisition of an additional 400 acres of permanently protected land before the end of 2016, and work has begun on the restoration of another 250 acres. The number of children receiving on-the-ground environmental education through the Northwest Indiana Mighty Acorns Partnership has increased from 1,500 to 3,500.”

“We’ve also increased public access at many sites, created an illustrated *Guidebook to the Nature Preserves of Shirley Heinze Land Trust*, and launched the largest reforestation project in northern Indiana,” she adds. “The acquisition of Meadowbrook Nature Preserve and Conservation Center is also directly linked to the campaign’s success.”

“The campaign’s dynamism has shown itself in many ways,” notes Executive Director Kristopher Krouse. “A conservation vision to protect the Little Calumet River corridor, including ten miles of continuous riverfront, was endorsed by the State of Indiana, and about 265 acres along the river have already been preserved. The Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelly Foundation, Save the Dunes, the Indiana Bicentennial Nature Trust, and other partners were integral to this achievement.”

“We are so grateful to those who have helped make the campaign a success,’ adds Board President John Swanson. “Their efforts demonstrate how much progress can be made when committed people invest in an important cause.”

Major foundation and corporate donors include Arcelor Mittal, Lakeside Wealth Management, Northern Indiana Public Service Company, The Times Media Company, Porter County Community Foundation, and the Louise H. Landau Foundation.

Shirley Heinze Land Trust has been protecting natural land in the southern Lake Michigan watershed of Indiana since 1981. More than 1,700 acres in Lake, Porter, and LaPorte Counties have been preserved for the public’s benefit. Shirley Heinze nature preserves feature significant scenic and ecological value, and most are open to the public for hiking and enjoying nature. The organization protects, restores, and maintains examples of the entire spectrum of the region’s rich and significant natural communities; including tallgrass prairie, high dune, oak savanna, boreal flatwoods, dune-and-swale, woodlands, marshes, swamps, ponds, fens, and riparian habitat. Five of its properties – Cressmoor Prairie, Seidner Dune & Swale, John Merle Coulter Preserve, Barker Woods, and Ambler Flatwoods – have been dedicated to the people of Indiana as state nature preserves.

For more information on the work and nature preserves of Shirley Heinze Land Trust, visit [www.heinzetrust.org](http://www.heinzetrust.org), call (219) 242-8558, or access its Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/heinzetrust](http://www.facebook.com/heinzetrust).