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SHIRLEY HEINZE LAND TRUST 2009 Annual Appeal

The Shirley Heinze Land Trust is in the midst of its 2009 Annual Fundraising Appeal. Kris Krouse, Executive Director of the Michigan City-based land trust, explains, “our annual fund drive is vital for the continued preservation and restoration of high quality natural areas in Northwest Indiana. During these difficult and challenging economic times, financial support is both needed and appreciated more than ever.”

Since 1981, The Shirley Heinze Land Trust has protected, preserved and restored over 1,100 acres of ecologically significant and sensitive natural lands in Northwest Indiana, with properties in Lake, LaPorte and Porter counties. The non-profit organization also serves the community by providing outreach programs to educate the public about the diverse natural resources in this area. Nature preserves are open to the general public year around and represent a great variety of landscapes and natural communities, including tallgrass prairie and oak savanna, interdunal ponds and woodlands, boreal flatwoods and dune-and-swale, and many kinds of wetlands. Five properties owned and managed by Shirley Heinze Land Trust are dedicated Indiana State Nature Preserves.

Contributions from individual donors and charitable foundations make it possible for the Trust to acquire land and restore and steward it responsibly. Over the past year, Shirley Heinze Land Trust has made significant additions to its natural land holdings. Recently it acquired 30 acres of wetlands along the Little Calumet River in Chesterton. The property, which is adjacent to Brummitt Elementary School, will be accessible to the public. Ninety acres will also soon be added to the 208-acre state-dedicated Ambler Flatwoods Nature Preserve in Michigan City. Other additions were made to Ivanhoe South in Gary, Green Heron Pond in Miller, and to the Beverly Shores project area.

“Many acres of land that we have acquired over the last 28 years,” continues Krouse, “would otherwise have remained vulnerable to the relentless development pressures that are a fact of life in our region. Unprotected natural habitats, even those too wet or steep for development, might have been degraded by trash dumping or invasive plants. Instead, the properties managed by Shirley Heinze Land Trust will always be open, green and accessible to visitors. In partnership with public and private land

protection agencies, we help save and restore precious natural areas in our region. Yet we make few demands on local tax-supported services.”

“If you would like to support the work of Shirley Heinze Land Trust with a financial contribution,” says Krouse, “you can send your tax deductible gift to: Shirley Heinze Land Trust, 444 Barker Rd., Michigan City, IN 46360, or donate online at www.heinzetrust.org. Gifts in honor or memory of someone special are encouraged. Contributors who send a first-time gift of \$20 or more will receive a reusable tote bag made of 85 % recycled post-consumer plastic bottles. It is decorated with a beautiful landscape photo of Cressmoor Prairie Nature Preserve.” Cressmoor Prairie is the largest black-soil prairie preserve in the state of Indiana and is located in the city of Hobart south of Ridge Road and west of Highway 51, on Lake Park Ave, ¼ mile south of 37th Avenue. There is a parking lot and trails for public use.

To learn more about Shirley Heinze Land Trust or to inquire about volunteer opportunities, visit its newly redesigned website at www.heinzetrust.org, or contact the office at (219) 879-4725 or land@heinzetrust.org.

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