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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: FEBRUARY 22, 2017

Shirley Heinze Land Trust Earns National Recognition

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Shirley Heinze Land Trust announces that it has achieved accredited status from The Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an entity promoting the highest national standards for ensuring permanence in the conservation of American lands. The Commission, an independent body of the Land Trust Alliance, awards accreditation to land trusts that meet standards for excellence, uphold the public trust, and ensure that their conservation efforts are permanent.

“It is exciting to recognize Shirley Heinze Land Trust with this distinction,” says Tammara Van Ryn, Executive Director of the Commission. “Accredited land trusts are united behind strong ethical standards ensuring the places people love will be conserved forever. Accreditation recognizes that Shirley Heinze Land Trust has demonstrated sound finances, ethical conduct, responsible governance, and lasting stewardship.”

The Commission requires accredited land trusts to produce extensive documentation and undergo a comprehensive review of standards and practices. Shirley Heinze Land Trust now joins a national network of 372 accredited land trusts that have demonstrated their commitment to professional excellence and to maintaining the public’s trust in their work.

John A. Swanson, President of Shirley Heinze Land Trust, says: “Accreditation signifies the continued organizational advancement of Shirley Heinze Land Trust. We meet or exceed the high national standards which have been established for such organizations, and we utilize ‘best practices’ in the ongoing conduct of our work.”

“This designation is a testament to Shirley Heinze Land Trust’s integrity as a nonprofit,” says Executive Director Kristopher Krouse. “It also attests to the fact that exceptional land conservation is occurring right here in Northwestern Indiana, thanks to the many partners, donors, and volunteers who are working with us to shine a national spotlight on the natural environment of our region.”

Shirley Heinze Land Trust has been protecting and preserving natural land in Northwestern Indiana since 1981. More than 2,200 acres in Lake, Porter, LaPorte, and St. Joseph Counties have been preserved for the public’s benefit. The organization’s efforts are currently focused on advancing a new strategic plan, implementing work in the Little Calumet River Corridor and the Hobart Marsh Conservation Project Areas, and protecting a rare bog habitat in St. Joseph County which was acquired last year.

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 Northwestern Indiana’s rich and significant natural communities, including tallgrass prairie, high dune, oak savanna, boreal flatwoods, dune-and-swale, woodlands, marshes, swamps, ponds, fens, bogs, 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.

A complete list of accredited land trusts and more information about the process and benefits are available at www.landtrustaccreditation.org.

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

Preserving Natural Places & Inspiring People to Appreciate and Enjoy Nature

