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DORIS DUKE
CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

Environment Program

\$4.4 Million Awarded to Accelerate Implementation of State Wildlife Action Plans

Grant will enable expansion of the Wildlife Conservation Society's "Wildlife Action Opportunities Fund"

New York – The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation (DDCF) today announced a grant of \$4.4 million over two years to the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS). The grant will enable WCS to expand its successful Wildlife Action Opportunities Fund.

“The Wildlife Action Opportunities Fund has played a vital role in recent years, bringing nonprofit conservation organizations and state wildlife agencies together on what are often small but essential projects that address what the states themselves have identified as their top conservation priorities,” said Dr. Mark Shaffer, director of DDCF’s Environment Program. “The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation is pleased to support this Fund, and, in turn, help the states realize the vision they have put forward in their wildlife action plans.”

The Wildlife Action Opportunities Fund was created in 2006 to support the implementation of projects that address needs identified by the states as priorities in their wildlife action plans. Between 2006 and 2008, the Opportunities Fund has provided more than \$3.5 million in funding to 42 projects in 38 states. These projects have helped restore natural areas for the benefit of wildlife and recreation; helped prevent species from becoming endangered; and addressed the critical issue of climate change.

“In the wildlife action plans we can see an outline of what we need to do together in order to achieve conservation success,” said Darren Long, manager of the Wildlife Action Opportunities Fund at WCS. “We have been overwhelmed by the way in which organizations are rallying around the plans, and are most impressed by the quantity and quality of projects that they have brought forward - innovative initiatives with strong partnerships between states and nonprofits that are ready-to-go to address conservation priorities.”

State wildlife action plans were first conceived in 2000, when Congress mandated that each state develop a comprehensive strategy for conserving its wildlife. The states submitted their plans to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the fall of 2005, and they were all approved by February of 2007. In developing these plans, the state wildlife agencies were careful to consider the broad range of wildlife, including game and non-game species, common species as well as endangered ones. They identified and prioritized key wildlife habitat, in many cases using the latest technology to map these lands. They also brought multiple stakeholders to the table - academics and activists, scientists and sportsmen, along with other interested members of the local public – to establish a common conservation agenda that could achieve broad acceptance within each state.

WCS expects to solicit new grant applications through a Request for Proposals (RFP) process that will begin on or before February 27, 2009. Details regarding this year’s funding priorities, application requirements, and timeline will be released in conjunction with the RFP. For other questions regarding applications to the Wildlife Action Opportunities Fund, please contact Darren Long at 406-556-7203 or dlong@wcs.org.

The mission of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation (www.ddcf.org) is to improve the quality of people’s lives through grants supporting the performing arts, environmental conservation, medical research and the prevention of child maltreatment, and through preservation of the cultural and environmental legacy of Doris Duke’s properties.