



PRESS RELEASE

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DORIS DUKE
CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

Environment Program

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Doris Duke Charitable Foundation Recognizes Land-Protection Strategies in FL and MA

Nashville, TN – Dr. Mark Shaffer, the Program Director for the Environment at the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, today announced two \$1 million grants for the conservation of high-priority lands in Massachusetts and Florida.

“Both Florida and Massachusetts have been leaders in undertaking comprehensive, statewide planning for wildlife conservation,” said Dr. Shaffer. “We are delighted to recognize their leadership through these grants, which will be used to underwrite land-acquisition projects that emerged as top conservation priorities in each state.”

Shaffer made the announcement at the Annual Meeting of the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (IAFWA) in Nashville, where representatives of state fish and game agencies from 54 states and territories had gathered to review progress toward the development of “Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategies.” These federally mandated action plans for protecting each state’s unique flora and fauna are scheduled for completion in October 2005.

In Massachusetts and Florida, Shaffer said, the wildlife action plans not only demonstrated outstanding work in identifying critical, unprotected wildlife habitats, but more importantly were being used to focus available resources on protecting the highest-priority tracts of land. The DDCF grants will be coupled with significant investments of state funds and contributions from local NGOs, thus enabling the purchase of large, intact parcels of habitat explicitly designated as a priority in the state action plans.

The Florida chapter of The Nature Conservancy and the Massachusetts Audubon Society were the formal recipients of the grants. The nonprofit grantees will work closely with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, and the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife to acquire and manage the priority lands.

“These grants serve multiple purposes,” said Dr. Joan Spero, president of DDCF. “They provide a strong incentive for partnerships between public agencies and nonprofits; they reward leading states for engaging in strategic habitat planning; and they demonstrate to other states the wonderful conservation potential of these state wildlife action plans.”

In his remarks at the IAFWA meeting, Dr. Shaffer also stressed the importance of habitat maps in the foundation’s decision. He saluted the Massachusetts and Florida state governments for having the courage and foresight to publish spatially explicit versions of their action plans, and encouraged other states to do the same. A good map, he suggested, would be one of the criteria used by the DDCF to identify future conservation investments.

The mission of the foundation’s Environment Program is to preserve wildlife in the US by supporting efforts to complete the nation’s wildlife conservation system. The Environment Program seeks to support key opportunities – such as the development and implementation of state wildlife conservation strategies – that will bring greater focus, clarity and resources to efforts underway across the nation to conserve America’s native plants and animals.

Visit www.ddcf.org for more information on the foundation and its Environment Program.

For information on individual grantees, see: www.massaudubon.org
www.tnc.org

For information on IAFWA, see: www.iafwa.org