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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Fire Island Land Trust to receive Conservation Partnership Grant from New York State DEC and the Land Trust Alliance

40 Community-Based Land Trusts Across New York State to Benefit

Albany, NY April 16, 2008 -- The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and the Land Trust Alliance announced this month the awarding of 52 grants to 40 local and regional land trusts across New York State including the newly formed Fire Island Land Trust.

The Fire Island Land Trust is the recipient of a New York State Conservation Partnership Program “Capacity & Excellence Grant” to complete a comprehensive strategic conservation plan for Fire Island, New York. The \$20,000 matching grant is one of the largest such grants ever awarded by the Land Trust Alliance and it recognizes the important conservation work to be done on Fire Island.

A land trust is a nonprofit community-based organization that works to conserve open space and important wildlife habitat by working with private landowners who wish to protect their land in perpetuity. Founded in 2006, the Fire Island Land Trust’s mission is to accept contributions of qualified real property interests exclusively for conservation purposes to preserve the unique coastal natural resources and community of Fire Island, NY. Fire Island Land Trust aims to fill the gap left by federal, state, and local authorities by working in the private communities of Fire Island to protect historic, scenic, and critical habitat areas throughout Fire Island.

“I applaud the Fire Island Land Trust for its dedication to conserving this significant New York land” said Senator Schumer, in a letter of support for the grant. “This grant will help Fire Island Land Trust protect fragile coastal habitat and cherished open space before it is lost forever. We support the Fire Island Land Trust and other land trusts in New York State that strive for excellence by investing in strategic planning and community outreach programs,” said Ethan Winter, New York Conservation Manager of the Land Trust Alliance. “This grant is essential to our planning process as we work with all the communities on Fire Island to identify vulnerable areas and bring about a public-private partnership to implement common goals” said Jansen Hahn, Executive Director of the Fire Island Land Trust.

“Land trusts are an invaluable partner to state and local governments” said DEC Commissioner Pete Grannis. “As building patterns drive us further and further from the center of our communities and we see more random development and sprawl, the need to conserve natural places like Fire Island has become more critical than ever before,” Commissioner Grannis said. “Through this and the other

grants provided, we're helping private landowners, local government and citizens save important open space resources in their communities.”

Since 2002, the Land Trust Alliance's New York State Conservation Partnership Program has provided a total of \$3 million for technical assistance and funding for over 200 competitive grants to 64 different land trusts serving rural, suburban, and urban communities in more than 30 counties across the state. To date, the land trust grants have also leveraged over \$9 million in privately raised conservation funds, directly leading to protection of nearly 10,000 additional acres of important land through permanent conservation easements and fee acquisitions.

Owners interested in protecting their property and those who wish to find out more about the Land Trust are encouraged to contact the Fire Island Land Trust at (631) 418-5214 or visit www.fireislandtrust.org.

Founded in 1982 and headquartered in Washington D.C., the Land Trust Alliance works in support of more than 1,660 land trusts nationwide, including 90 New York land trusts representing more than 36,000 individual members. For more information about the Land Trust Alliance go to www.LTA.org or contact Ethan Winter at (518) 587- 0774