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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Nature Conservancy of Canada and Northumberland Land Trust celebrate the donation of 100 acres of conservation land on the Oak Ridges Moraine

Port Hope, ON – The Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) and the Northumberland Land Trust (NLT) today gratefully celebrated the donation of 100 acres (40 hectares) from the family of Don and Barb McEwen. The property is located in the Ganaraska Forest Natural Area on the eastern end of the Oak Ridges Moraine which contains some of the largest examples of glacially formed moraine forest complexes, tallgrass prairies and savannas in southern Ontario. NCC accepted the donation of land, which has now been transferred to NLT for long-term management.

The McEwen's approached NCC in 2006 regarding the donation of their property to NCC. The transaction was completed in March 2007, with the support of the Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation. Mark Stabb, NCC's Central Ontario Program Manager, publically thanked the McEwens for their generous donation, "I know I speak on behalf of everyone at the Nature Conservancy of Canada and the Northumberland Land Trust when I say thank you for helping to make this project a reality and for creating a legacy that future generations of Canadians will enjoy. It is a beautiful, significant property."

"This land has given our family many memories," remarked Catherine McEwen. "We wanted to be able to always touch these memories, by walking through the oaks and cedars, uplands and wetlands. And we wanted to offer others the opportunity to enjoy such natural beauty in perpetuity. We thank NCC and NLT for being the organizations to enable this.

The McEwen property contains rolling wooded moraine forest and open fields with prairie elements. The provincially significant Prairie Buttercup can be found growing in the meadow and the Pine Warbler and Black-throated Green Warbler make their homes in the canopy and understory of the White Cedar forest. The pond on the property contains healthy populations of amphibian species, including the Blue-spotted Salamander.

James Thomas, President of the Northumberland Land Trust, who accepted the transfer of this property from NCC, also thanked the McEwen's and NCC saying "We are extremely appreciative of the donation of this property made by NCC and to the McEwen family for making this possible. Many thanks also to Mark Stabb for facilitating the transfer and for ensuring that the Stewardship Plans for the future care of the land are in place."

Mayor Linda Thompson, from the Municipality of Port Hope, also joined NCC and NLT in thanking the McEwens for their contribution to the community.

Field studies are underway as part of the management planning process. The stewardship goals for this property include restoring and managing the woodland, grassland and other habitats by removing invasive species such as non-native Scotch Pine and potentially conducting prescribed burns.

The Nature Conservancy of Canada is a non-profit, non-confrontational organization that takes a business-like approach to land conservation and the protection of biological diversity. Its plan of action involves partnership-building and entering into creative conservation solutions with any individual, corporation, community group, conservation organization or government body that shares its passion. Since 1962, NCC and its supporters have protected nearly 2 million acres of ecologically significant land nationwide.

The Northumberland Land Trust (NLT) is a non-profit organization, founded in 2004 to work with landowners to preserve the natural, historical and cultural heritage of Northumberland County. The mandate of the volunteer Board of Directors is to establish, maintain and manage protected areas. NLT can be contacted through their website www.northumberlandlandtrust.ca or by telephone at 905.349.9990.

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