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Maui Coastal Land Trust Earns National Recognition Accreditation Awarded by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission

FOR RELEASE February 25, 2009: Wailuku, Hawai'i – The Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance, announced today that Maui Coastal Land Trust has been awarded accredited status. Of 1800 land trusts nationwide, Maui Coastal Land Trust is one of less than a hundred to achieve this status, and the first in Hawai'i.

"Accredited land trusts meet national quality standards for protecting important natural places and working lands forever," says Commission Executive Director Tammara Van Ryn. "The accreditation seal lets the public know that the accredited land trust has undergone an extensive, external review of the governance and management of its organization and the systems and policies it uses to protect land."

"Maui Coastal Land Trust's accredited status demonstrates our deep commitment to land conservation," says Dale Bonar, MCLT Executive Director. "Our mission is to protect our lands in perpetuity, which means we must grow as a healthy, sustainable, and permanent organization. The accreditation process was rigorous, requiring us to carefully examine and, in some cases, refine our operations. Now I feel we are a stronger, more professional organization capable of that permanence."

Maui Coastal Land Trust was founded in 2001 and serves all of Maui County. The land trust has worked with conservation-minded landowners to protect nearly 4,000 acres of coastal and culturally significant lands. Maui Coastal Land Trust owns and manages the Waihe'e Coastal Dunes and Wetlands Refuge, a 277-acre site undergoing restoration as an environmental, cultural, and educational resource.

Land is our most important and valuable resource. Its conservation helps ensure clean air and drinking water, food security, scenic landscapes and views, recreational places, and habitat for a diversity of ecosystems. In Hawai'i, land conservation is especially imperative due to the added significance of inseparable cultural relationships and our intrinsic space limitations.



Local citizens and communities nationwide have come together to form land trusts to save the places they love. Community leaders in land trusts throughout the country have worked with willing landowners to save over 37 million acres of farms, forests, parks, and places people care about. Strong, well-managed land trusts provide local communities with effective champions and caretakers of their critical land resources, and safeguard the land through the generations.

Maui Coastal Land Trust was awarded accreditation this February along with other land trusts from across the country. They join the inaugural group of 39 land trusts awarded accreditation at a special ceremony in September 2008. Accredited land trusts are able to display a seal indicating to the public that they meet national standards for excellence, uphold the public trust and ensure that conservation efforts are permanent. The seal is a mark of distinction in land conservation.

The Land Trust Accreditation Commission based in Saratoga Springs, N.Y., awards the accreditation seal to community institutions that meet national quality standards for protecting important natural places and working lands forever. The Commission is an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance established in 2006, and is governed by a volunteer board of diverse land conservation and nonprofit management experts from around the country. The Alliance, of which Maui Coastal Land Trust is a member, is a national conservation group based in Washington, D.C. that works to save the places people love by strengthening conservation throughout America. More information on the accreditation program is available on the Commission's website, www.landtrustaccreditation.org. More information on the Alliance is available at www.landtrustalliance.org.

The Maui Coastal Land Trust is a non-profit organization with the mission of preserving and protecting coastal and culturally and environmentally significant lands in Maui Nui for perpetuity. For more details on the organization and its protected lands, call (808) 244-5263 or visit www.mauicoastallandtrust.org.

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