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**More than 200 Acres of Blossom Music Center Land Conserved
for Cuyahoga Valley National Park**

CLEVELAND, OHIO: Nearly one-third of the property of the popular Blossom Music Center, situated outside both Akron and Cleveland and entirely within the Cuyahoga Valley National Park, has been conserved as an addition to the National Park, the Musical Arts Association, The Trust for Public Land, and the National Park Service announced today.

The Cleveland Orchestra and its governing organization, the Musical Arts Association (MAA), own and manage the 780-acre Blossom Music Center. In 2007 MAA began the process of selling upwards of 578 acres of its property to the National Park Service (NPS) for conservation and to raise funds. MAA asked the Ohio office of The Trust for Public Land (TPL), a national conservation organization, to assist with the conservation efforts, and today the partners have completed the purchase of more than 233 acres, the first of two purchases that help The Cleveland Orchestra, and also add important forest and waterway resources to Cuyahoga Valley National Park (CVNP).

“Our partnership with The Trust for Public Land has ensured that funding to acquire a portion of the land for Cuyahoga Valley National Park has been secured. The sale of the land has no effect on our current operation of Blossom Music Center, the most beautiful and acoustically superior outdoor musical venue in America,” said Gary Hanson, executive director of The Cleveland Orchestra.

“We have a long history supporting the expansion of the Cuyahoga Valley National Park, and we are grateful to have played a role in both enhancing public access to the park and also helping Blossom sustain its programming for generations to come,” said Bill Carroll, TPL’s Ohio state director. “Blossom is a cultural treasure for Northern Ohio and it and the park are remarkable destinations for our enjoyment.”

CVNP is the tenth most visited National Park in the United States. Conservation of this and the next phase of Blossom Music Center properties will connect more than 5,000 acres of forest ecosystems in the CVNP.

“Protecting this vital landscape is a big benefit to the Park,” said Stan Austin, Superintendent of Cuyahoga Valley National Park. “The acquired lands now become a part of the largest forested block in the Park. This land is extremely valuable because it helps sustain critical woodland species and protects several watersheds. We greatly appreciate Musical Arts Association’s interest in selling the land and the critical role of TPL in managing this mutually beneficial project. We also want to acknowledge the vital support of the Congressional delegation.”

The \$3,960,780 purchase of the 233 acres was funded entirely by a fiscal year 2010 appropriation from the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). Since its inception, the project has been supported by members of Congress, including U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH) and former Senator George Voinovich (R-OH), and U.S. Representatives Betty Sutton (D-13), Steve LaTourette (R-14), and Tim Ryan (D-17). The LWCF uses revenues generated from offshore oil and gas drilling leases, rather than taxpayer dollars, to acquire critical new lands.

The fate of conserving the remaining Blossom land hangs in the balance of the federal budget debate that continues to unfold in Washington. President Obama’s budget for the current fiscal year (2011) included LWCF funding to complete the Blossom purchase, but that budget is yet to be resolved as the House and Senate continue negotiations.

“The Cuyahoga Valley National Park and the Blossom Music Center together represent one of our state’s finest jewels: a spectacular natural resource combined with a scenic outdoor music venue,” Sen. Brown said. “Preserving this land as part of the National Park Service will ensure that this pristine treasure can be enjoyed by Ohioans for generations to come.”

“I am extremely pleased that the first phase of this incredibly important conservation effort in the Cuyahoga Valley National Park has been completed,” said Congresswoman Sutton. “The CVNP is a great natural and economic asset to the area, and the acquisition of the land surrounding the Blossom Music Center is critical to improving and expanding the park.”

“I applaud the coordinated effort to move the expansion of the Cuyahoga Valley National Park from dream to reality,” said Congressman Tim Ryan. “I’m proud to support this national treasure, and I urge my colleagues to ensure that the funding to accommodate this expansion is secured.”

At Cuyahoga Valley National Park, TPL has been assisting NPS acquisition efforts for over 30 years having played a vital role in the park's acquisition of 25 properties protecting over 1,500 acres. One of the most notable and complex transactions was the Richfield Coliseum, which is now a new grassland habitat that is benefiting many bird species, several of which have been in decline due to loss of habitat.

Since it was founded in 1972, The Trust for Public Land has helped protect nearly 3 million acres of land in 47 states. In Ohio, TPL has protected more than 12,000 acres valued at more than \$101 million. TPL depends on the support and generosity of individuals, foundations, and businesses to achieve its mission to preserve land for people. TPL's operating support for this purchase includes private donations and grants from the Akron Community Foundation, The

Cleveland Foundation, The George Gund Foundation, John P. Murphy Foundation, Kelvin and Eleanor Smith Foundation, The Louise H. and David S. Ingalls Foundation, GAR Foundation, and Maltz Family Foundation.

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