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NEWS RELEASE

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Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences Awarded Packard Grant for Shorebird Conservation Initiative on Chiloé Island, Chile

PLYMOUTH, MA, November 2, 2010—The David and Lucile Packard Foundation (“the Foundation”) has awarded a \$250,000 grant to Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences (Manomet) to implement strategies and actions for the conservation of shorebirds and their habitats on Chiloé Island, Chile. This initiative will be carried out by Manomet’s Shorebird Recovery Project (SRP) as the lead organization for a coalition of international institutions and local partners.

The island of Chiloé, Chile, was selected by the Foundation as a priority site for the shorebird conservation portfolio of its new Marine Birds Initiative, based on recognition of the island’s importance to wintering Hudsonian Godwits and Whimbrels. Chiloé Island supports up to 27% of the global population and 99% of the Pacific coast population of Hudsonian Godwits (*Limosa haemastica*) and 61% of the Pacific coast population of Whimbrels (*Numenius phaeopus*) breeding in North America, making it one of the most important places in the world for these two species. Both species are ranked as “of high concern” in the U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan. The Chiloé Island region has been recognized as a biological priority by a number of organizations. The coalition of international partners involved in this project includes the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Nature Conservancy, the National Audubon Society in alliance with local partners of recognized ability and experience in the area.

Safeguarding this region is the primary goal of the Foundation-funded initiative with an innovative conservation strategy aimed at eliminating or mitigating the major threats to the viability of shorebirds and other biodiversity. Identifying these threats and the strategies to abate them were the focus of a previous award from the Foundation to The Nature Conservancy as lead for the Chiloé coalition. The present award will fund work that combines education and outreach, social marketing, awareness-building, long-term monitoring, land protection, and conservation infrastructure development. Throughout all of these actions, Manomet will provide coordination among partners and accountability for conservation outcomes and financial reporting. The current phase of the project will begin in November 2010 and be completed by December 2011.

“Chiloé Island is a critical site for shorebirds where prompt action involving the full suite of local stakeholders including landowners, businesses, governments and conservation groups can ensure its conservation,” said Charles Duncan, Shorebird Project Director at Manomet. “We are grateful for the Packard Foundation’s commitment to this important effort and to our partner organizations for their confidence in selecting us as the lead entity to receive this award.”

About the Foundation: Established in 1964, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation is a family foundation that works to help improve the lives of children, enable the creative pursuit of science, advance reproductive health, and conserve and restore the Earth’s natural systems. For more information, visit www.packard.org.

About the Shorebird Recovery Project: Manomet has played a leadership role in shorebird research and conservation for nearly 40 years. Its long-term commitment to understanding populations of shorebirds and the factors that affect them has revealed dramatic decreases for many species. Manomet’s Shorebird Recovery Project strives to rebuild populations with a three-pronged approach: (1) building the science foundation, (2) advancing site-based conservation, and (3) using explicit success measures to evaluate and demonstrate progress. Read more about this initiative at www.manomet.org.

About Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences: As one of the nation's oldest non-profit environmental research organizations, Manomet is dedicated to conserving natural resources for both humans and wildlife. Through science and public engagement, Manomet works to integrate society’s social, economic, and environmental values to create sustainable systems for present and future generations. Manomet’s headquarters are in Plymouth, Massachusetts, and it also has offices in Maine, Vermont, and Chile. Learn more about Manomet at www.manomet.org.