



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **PUBLIC DRIVE TO HELP PROTECT LAND WITH THE NATIONAL TRUST FOR THE CAYMAN ISLANDS**

**27<sup>th</sup> July 2021 –**

The National Trust for the Cayman Islands (NTCI) Land Reserve Fund aims to purchase and hold for conservation environmentally sensitive lands across the Cayman Islands.

Executive Director Annick Jackman said a public drive to support the initiative was launched through a recent fundraising event, sponsored by CIBC FirstCaribbean.

"Currently, the National Trust protects over 3,531 acres of land across all three islands, preserving just under 6% of land in the Cayman Islands with a goal to reach 11%," she said. "The support of organisations like CIBC FirstCaribbean and individual donors is critical for the National Trust to achieve its conservation goals. Together we can preserve the natural beauty and precious ecosystems that are unique to our three islands."

NTCI properties include important nature reserves, such as the Brac Parrot Reserve in Cayman Brac, the Mastic Trail in Grand Cayman and Booby Pond in Little Cayman, and culturally significant sites such as the Mission House.

"While international travel remains limited, we are pleased to see so many members of our community visiting the National Trust's properties across all three islands to explore our natural and historic treasures," Mr. Olson Anderson said. "It is our privilege to hold these important sites in trust for the people of the Cayman Islands to enjoy for generations to come."

The Land Reserve Fund aims to identify and purchase wild areas of ecological importance. The NTCI acquires prospective land, deemed environmentally critical, from willing land owners and developers. Three priority areas have been identified for purchase, including acreage in the Mastic Trail area, ancient forest in the Frank Sound area, and an area of Central Mangrove Wetland.

The Central Mangrove Wetland - the largest continuous mangrove system in the Caribbean - is under increasing pressure from physical development. More than 70% of Grand Cayman's western mangroves have been lost since the 1970s.

"This year we have an opportunity to purchase a parcel of old-growth forest. We are excited about this because it is ancient forest that has not been disturbed and is home to many endemic species. Persons donating to the fund would be contributing to the legacy of Grand Cayman's natural heritage," Ms. Jackman



explained. "We are grateful to the landowners for making their land available for the NTCI to purchase and protect."

The NTCI also has opportunity to preserve land in Cayman Brac and Little Cayman and is seeking additional funding to support these specific purchases. The public is encouraged to pledge funds to protect these areas and other sites of environmental importance identified by the NTCI Land Reserve Fund going forward.

Please visit our website [www.nationaltrust.org.ky](http://www.nationaltrust.org.ky) to learn more and donate towards the Land Reserve Fund.

**ENDS**

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## **About the National Trust for the Cayman Islands**

The National Trust for the Cayman Islands is a non-governmental organization whose mandate under the National Trust Law (2010 Revision) includes the preservation of the historic, natural and maritime heritage of the Cayman Islands for present and future generations.

## **About the Blue Iguana Conservation Programme**

The Blue Iguana Recovery Programme began in 1990 with only 30 dedicated Blue Iguanas and the primary goal to restore the wild population to 1,000 Blue Iguanas, encouraging viable population in the long-term. Having met its primary goal in 2018, the initiative formally transitioned to the Blue Iguana Conservation Programme in 2019 with a new focus of sustainably conserving the native species of Grand Cayman.



### **About the National Trust's Environmental Programme**

The National Trust for the Cayman Islands' environmental programme was founded on the concept that the protection of native plants and animals is best achieved by protecting the natural areas in which they depend.

### **About the National Trust Conservation Programme**

The National Trust for the Cayman Islands' conservation programme strives to protect Cayman's native species and the habitats in which they live, and includes the endemic Blue Iguana of Grand Cayman, the Sister Islands Rock Iguana and Cayman's native bat species.