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Florida Author Creates Coral Reef Preservation Fund.

Little Cayman, Cayman Islands – April 5, 2011 - Florida's fragile coral reefs have a new advocate. Tim W. Jackson, author of the literary novel *Mangrove Underground*, this week established the Coral Reef Preservation Fund through the Nature Conservancy. Contributions will go to the study and conservation of coral reefs in Florida and the Caribbean.

"Reefs are facing increasing threats from bleaching, acidification and rising sea levels," Jackson said. "Scientists estimate that without immediate action, we could lose up to 70 percent of our coral reefs by 2050.

"As the foundation of the region's marine fisheries, our reefs provide food and livelihoods for many area residents. They also provide much-needed income streams from scuba divers, sport fishers and other outdoor enthusiasts.

"The next 10 years are critical for reef health. Without immediate action, we may not be able to reverse the current damage. We risk losing not just the reefs' beauty, but also the food, jobs, medicines and other resources healthy reefs provide."

Jackson, a long-time Florida resident and staff photographer with the *Tampa Tribune*, released his debut novel, the Florida-based *Mangrove Underground*, in January 2011. He currently works as a boat captain and scuba instructor in the Cayman Islands, where he is finishing a second novel, set in the Caribbean, as well as a related collection of short stories. His short fiction has appeared, or is forthcoming, in the *High Plains Literary Review*, *Confrontation*, *Palo Alto Review*, *Oracle Story and Letters* and *Conceit*.

Jackson is personally donating to the fund a portion of the proceeds of all copies of *Mangrove Underground* purchased directly through www.timwjackson.com, unless otherwise requested.

"As an avid scuba diver for more than 30 years, I cut my teeth diving Florida's incredible reefs. I've wanted to help protect them for a while, but wasn't sure how," Jackson said. "The Nature Conservancy made it easy. It's less money in my pocket, but it feels good and right to give something back. I think of it as the rent I pay for the time I've spent on the reefs."

For more information, or to donate to the Coral Reef Preservation Fund, please visit the fund's website at: $\frac{http://support.nature.org/site/TR/Events/General?pxfid=2420\&fr_id=1030\&pg=fund.$