

# SAVING Land

learn . inspire . act

FALL 2015

[www.landtrustalliance.org](http://www.landtrustalliance.org) VOL. 34 NO. 4

## SAVING THE *Sacred*

**Partnering on Ballot Measures  
Kingsbury Browne Fellows**

# SAVING land

FALL 2015  
www.landtrustalliance.org VOL. 34 NO. 4



ANIA RZEPKO PHOTOGRAPHY, SYCUAN BAND OF THE KUMEYAAY NATION

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As the land trust community reaches out to collaborate with Native Americans, tribal groups are also creating their own land trusts to protect traditional lifeways on ancestral lands.

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**The Amah Mutsun Land Trust in California holds gatherings for young tribal members like Tribal Ethnobotanist Sara Reid French to practice traditional ways of tending and gathering food, medicine and basketry plants.**

HARRY WHO PHOTOGRAPHY



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—Gavin Ricklefs, Bitter Root Land Trust\* (MT)



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SAVING LAND®, a registered trademark of the Land Trust Alliance (ISSN 2159-290X), is published quarterly by the Land Trust Alliance, headquartered at 1660 L St. NW, Suite 1100, Washington, DC 20036, and distributed to members and donors at the \$35 level and higher.

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# A Fundamental Human Right

**R**ue Mapp has a big smile and the boundless enthusiasm of a camp counselor. She was raised by foster parents in Oakland, and grew up fishing and hunting at the family ranch north of the city.

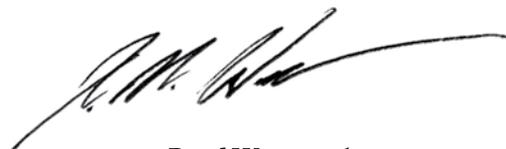
Throughout her successful stint at Morgan Stanley and after graduating from Berkeley, Rue still enjoyed getting out in nature on weekends. She was perplexed why she was the only African American on these camping trips and was determined to overcome the stereotype that “black people don’t do nature.” So she created a blog and an organization called Outdoor Afro, which plans outings and provides transportation. Rue was amazed by the response and now has over 7,000 active participants.

Rue is offering a threshold experience for people who would not go into nature on their own. And she’s not alone. Land trusts are finding that it takes well-planned programs to attract racial diversity to their organizations. Some are expanding public access and offering ethnic music, food festivals and installing picnic tables and grills on their properties. Others offer education programs like the Bristol Bay Heritage Land Trust (created by an Alaska Native village corporation), which started the Bristol Bay River Fly Fishing and Guide Academy to teach local youth about salmon stewardship and to train them for jobs in the area’s fishing lodge industry.

Many land trusts are connecting people to nature by protecting nature close to home. Openlands\* is turning asphalt into gardens at Chicago public schools. And, in downtown Pittsburgh, it’s hard to walk a block without enjoying a park, garden, flower planter or street tree created by the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy.\* Many other land trusts provide transportation funding to take inner city kids out to their preserves.

Xavier Morales, a California parks advocate, says that we need to think of parks as “community wellness centers” and, indeed, researchers have demonstrated how a walk in nature improves attention, memory and mental health. If nature is essential for human health, then access to nature should be considered a fundamental human right. This compelling mission will bring new friends, funders and vitality to land trusts. With the help of people like Rue Mapp, land trusts are connecting people to nature and helping the land trust family look like the rest of America.

*Rue Mapp will deliver the keynote address at Rally 2015: The National Land Conservation Conference on October 8–10 in Sacramento, California. See [www.alliancerally.org](http://www.alliancerally.org).*



**Rand Wentworth**



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BY Rose Jenkins



MARIANNE JENSEN

Citizen scientists work with a partner scientist from the Arizona Geological Survey to map milky quartz deposits in the McDowell Sonoran Preserve.

## Collecting Data, Growing Passion

The McDowell Sonoran Conservancy has one scientist on its staff, ecologist Melanie Tluczek. Yet the organization conducts extensive research on the 30,200-acre desert preserve that it helps manage north of Phoenix. The conservancy has completed flora and fauna inventories, a seedbank study, a map of quartz veins and a study of a historic military road. It is tracking impacts along trails, studying bird diversity, counting butterflies and monitoring sensitive species. It has published in peer-reviewed journals and its work guides the management of the publicly owned preserve.

How does the organization do so much research? With volunteers! Every year, staff train 75 to 100 citizen scientists to collect data about the desert ecosystem. More advanced citizen scientists help to analyze data, manage projects and train new volunteers. “With the volunteers, we’re able to expand exponentially what we can do,” Tluczek says. Investing in volunteers brings a big return. For example, the hours that volunteers contributed to the flora and fauna inventories are valued at \$242,880.

The citizen science program also gets local residents passionate about the desert and its conservation. Tluczek says, “We find that the more challenging a task and the more people have to expand themselves, the more invested they get.” •

## Creating Places for Nature Play

Children learn to love nature by playing in it. To nurture that connection, a number of land trusts and conservation groups in Pennsylvania have created nature play areas within their preserves. The Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania offers a 1-acre nature play area, called DiscoverGround, on its Beechwood Farms Nature Preserve. Set among woodlands and a wildflower meadow, the play area features a sandpit, a tree house, a climbing trunk, tunnels and serpentine walls. Operations Director Brian Shema says, “Time spent in this unstructured space enables children to build confidence, use their imagination and appreciate what nature can offer.”

Tips from *Nature Play: Nurturing Children and Strengthening Conservation Through Connections to the Land*, by the Pennsylvania Land Trust Association:

- It can be simple! You just need natural elements that kids can interact with, like dirt, sand, water, flowers, sticks, trees, logs, berry bushes or leaf piles.
- Attract wildlife with butterfly gardens, birdhouses or boards that kids can lift to find bugs.
- Encourage kids to play *with* nature—not just outdoors.
- Let children invent their own play.
- Offer quiet spaces for peaceful, reflective activities.
- Relax your rules. Kids may do some damage—like trampling plants or muddying a stream—but it’s minor in perspective.
- Check for safety hazards on a regular basis and carry liability insurance. •



AUDUBON SOCIETY OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

Children at the Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania’s DiscoverGround

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# Saving the Sage Grouse

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Utah rancher Andy Taft feels a personal connection with sage grouse. “They’re a species I’ve lived with all my life, hunted all my life, and they add color to my life,” he says. “I want to see them; I want to co-exist with them. There’s no question about that.”

But the iconic birds have been disappearing, due to the loss of sagebrush habitat throughout the West. Their population, once in the millions, has fallen to around 500,000 and the species is a candidate for protection under the Endangered Species Act.

Ranchers like Taft are trying a different approach to saving the species—through programs that incentivize voluntary, cooperative habitat restoration. Taft, along with his neighbors, has adapted his land management and grazing practices, and in their area, sage grouse populations are up. Taft points out that healthy habitat for grouse is also healthy grazing land for his sheep. Pronghorn, mule deer and many other wild species also thrive where sage grouse are thriving.

Since 2010, voluntary programs coordinated by the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Sage Grouse Initiative have led to the restoration of 4.4 million acres of habitat. The Sand County Foundation recently published a collection of success stories, including Taft’s, called *Stories from the Range: Ranching*

*and Sage Grouse Conservation*. These stories explore Aldo Leopold’s premise, “Conservation will ultimately boil down to rewarding the private landowner who conserves the public interest.”

Download the PDF at [www.sagegrouseinitiative.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Sand-County-Foundation-sage-grouse-FINAL-.pdf](http://www.sagegrouseinitiative.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Sand-County-Foundation-sage-grouse-FINAL-.pdf). •



Male sage grouse on a lek in Butte County, South Dakota

STEVE FAIRBAIN, U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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# Spreading the Good News in New Jersey

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Last fall, New Jersey was running out of money for open space preservation and the future hung on a ballot initiative. Previous initiatives had passed by thin margins, providing short-term funds. This one was different because it would dedicate a long-term funding source—essential to land trust work but often hard to come by. Conservation groups built their strategy around urban voters, emphasizing clean water and quality of life—and it worked! The initiative passed with two-thirds of the vote.

The ballot measure will provide more than \$3 billion over 20 years—but most of that doesn’t kick in until after 2020. Now the goal is to get local governments on board, says David Epstein, president of the accredited Land Conservancy of New Jersey. In the past, towns and counties provided \$2.50 in matching funds for every \$1.00 from the state, but local funding evaporated during the recession. Now land trusts can use the voting data to make the case that local citizens want more open space preserved—and they want their communities to play a leading role.



“Our job for the next four years is to get these local folks excited about land conservation again,” Epstein says. “The time is right to spread the good news about conservation in New Jersey.”

To read about how other land trusts worked on ballot measures with help from national partners, see page 22. •

## Connecting to Nature *En Español*



LAURA ELMORE, TEATOWN LAKE RESERVATION

(L to R): New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Joseph Martens; children and a teacher from Teatown's Head Start/Nurtured by Nature program

**T**eatown Lake Reservation in New York is all about connecting people with nature, but a language barrier keeps getting in the way. In some parts of its region, north of New York City, more than 40% of people speak Spanish as their first language. So the environmental education center is adding a bilingual science education coordinator to its staff, thanks to a grant through the Land Trust Alliance's New York program and matched by a donor.

Teatown maintains a 1,000-acre preserve in Westchester County and offers programs that include field trips, camps, leadership training, an environmental science academy and in-school programs. As part of its commitment to the underserved, Teatown provides nature education for preschoolers in Head Start; it offers scholarships for field trips; and it has recently expanded programming in two school districts with large Spanish-speaking populations.

The new coordinator will develop a curriculum for middle and high school students and serve as an ambassador to school districts, teachers, parents and the public—expanding Teatown's mission of inspiring people to lifelong environmental stewardship. •

## Isn't That Already Protected?

**W**hen an uproar arose over the development of a forest with public hiking trails in Pennsylvania, the cry was, "Wasn't that land protected?" The answer was "nope." "It's been a rude wake-up call for folks about the fact that land isn't protected unless it's... well...*actually* protected," says Kirsten Werner, director of communications at the accredited Natural Lands Trust.

Even if property was historically set aside for conservation, even if it's been open to the public for decades, even if it's owned by a nonprofit, land can be at risk. Priorities shift. Money runs out. Land changes ownership.

In recent years, Natural Lands Trust has been working on several projects to ensure that community open space will be protected forever. These have included a conservation easement on an environmental education center in Philadelphia and the land trust's current work to conserve a historic arboretum in Philadelphia that offers free public access, as well as educational activities, youth programs and community events.

Werner sees a trend among their funders, who increasingly recognize that these community gems need permanent protection. •

## Return on Investment: \$600 Billion

**A** new study adds up the economic benefits of visits to protected areas worldwide—and they're pretty hefty. The study, called "Walk on the Wild Side: Estimating the Global Magnitude of Visits to Protected Areas," was published in *PLOS Biology*. It found that protected areas comprise one-eighth of all land on earth and that together they draw 8 billion visits per year, of which 80% occur in North America and Europe. Tourism and recreation at protected areas generate an estimated \$600 billion per year—far more than the \$10 billion spent to maintain them. The study concludes: "Even without considering the many other ecosystem services that [protected areas] provide to people, our findings underscore calls for greatly increased investment in their conservation."

Find the study at <http://journals.plos.org/plosbiology/article?id=10.1371/journal.pbio.1002074>. •

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## Got Baselines?

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**A**n easement from 1980 was put to the test in a recent conservation defense case in Connecticut. The Lyme Land Conservation Trust prevailed, winning a \$650,000 award to cover restoration and legal fees. However, the lack of detailed baseline documentation could have cost them that win, says Executive Director George Moore.

“Like many small land trusts, we used to be a little cavalier about our recordkeeping,” he says. “No more!” Fortunately, they were able to document the condition of the land based on testimony by the prior owner, an aerial photo and their inspection reports. Moore also credits their success to an excellent legal team and the intervention of the state attorney general. [The case is under appeal.]

The 17-acre property in dispute is bounded by water on three sides—the Connecticut River, Selden Creek and Selden Cove—and lies at the center of hundreds of acres of protected land. The court found that, upon acquiring the property, the new landowner converted a floodplain meadow into a lawn and gardens and enlarged a beach. It held that the “defendant’s actions were willful and caused great damage to the protected area’s natural condition.”

The land trust, which was accredited last year, has been addressing gaps in its records and implementing new policies for monitoring and recordkeeping. Moore notes that thorough documentation and adequate insurance (including TerraFirma and Directors & Officers insurance) are essential for conservation defense. •

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## Exploring the Future of Land Conservation

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**P**ermanent protection of natural areas requires that people care enough about the land to work to conserve it for generations to come. As many mainstream conservation organizations watch their traditional supporters age, their attention is increasingly focused on how best to attract new, younger, more diverse groups to finding value in natural areas—which requires that those individuals have access to and choose to engage with such lands.

This July a group gathered in Maine for the 10th annual “Berkley Symposium: An Exploration into the Future of Land Conservation” sponsored by Yale University and the Land Trust Alliance. Participants

at the conference, with financial support from Forrest Berkley, Marcie Tyre, the Overhills Foundation, Sewall Foundation, the Center for Business and the Environment at Yale, the Land Trust Alliance and an anonymous Yale donor, explored ways to increase access to conserved lands for a broader range of audiences—through physical design and facilities, social networks and programming and the civil rights dimension of equal access to publicly funded resources.

For more information on the symposia, including proceedings from past sessions, visit [http://environment.yale.edu/publication-series/land\\_use\\_and\\_environmental\\_planning.html](http://environment.yale.edu/publication-series/land_use_and_environmental_planning.html). 



The gathering at the 2015 Berkley Symposium

BY Sean Robertson



An aide to Rep. Mike Fitzpatrick (PA) checks out a map of Land and Water Conservation Fund projects in a meeting with Steve Schwartz of Delaware Highlands Conservancy and Gary Bloss of Friends of Cherry Valley.

SEAN ROBERTSON

## SAVING A 50-Year Legacy

Imagine a program that takes federal oil and gas royalties—money generated from the earth’s natural wealth—and invests them to conserve national treasures like Gettysburg National Military Park and the Pacific Crest Trail, along with hometown parks and natural areas in almost every county across America.

It’s a great idea, and for the past 50 years, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) has been doing exactly that. It has been called “America’s most important conservation program,” and over the past five decades it has infused more than \$16 billion into more than 41,000 conservation projects from coast to coast.

But that essential link between energy royalties and conservation funding could be severed soon if Congress fails to reauthorize the fund by September 30.

With that in mind, a half dozen land trust Ambassadors came to Washington, D.C., for the Land and Water Conservation Fund Fly-In Day in July.

Sue Currier, executive director of the accredited Delaware Highlands Conservancy (NY, PA), came to advocate for The Northeast Connection, a Forest Legacy project that depends on the Senate’s higher funding level to make the cut this year.

When a staff member for Rep. Matt Cartwright (PA) asked for ideas for an upcoming hearing on innovation and the National Parks System, Currier had the perfect response: nontraditional partnerships.

After hosting an event back home, Bob Bugert (left) of Chelan-Douglas Land Trust (accredited) came to Land Trust Advocacy Day, where he joined Leda Chahim of Forterra (accredited) and Russ Shay of the Alliance to meet with Rep. Dave Reichert (WA).



The Northeast Connection partners with three rod and gun clubs and leverages private and government funds to conserve a key corridor adjacent to Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area—all for a fraction of the cost of federal acquisition.

Carrier noted, “These unconventional partnerships have elevated the presence of the conservancy in our community. Bringing real local examples, past and present, seemed persuasive to staff of representatives who haven’t yet cosponsored LWCF reauthorization.”

The landscapes the LWCF conserves are not only places for us to camp, hike, hunt and fish, they are also major economic drivers—recreation, conservation and historic preservation add more than \$1 trillion annually to the overall economy, supporting 9.4 million American jobs.

That’s a point Chelan-Douglas Land Trust Executive Director Bob Bugert drove home at an in-district event celebrating the leadership of Rep. Dave Reichert (WA). Two state legislators, the mayor, seven outdoor industry leaders and more than 70 other supporters showed up for the event at Wenatchee, Washington’s new public market.

“We were honored to have Congressman Reichert affirm the importance of land conservation to the economy and quality of life for the citizens of North Central Washington,” Bugert said. “He has been a strong supporter of the LWCF, and this investment has yielded strong returns to our local economy.”

Thanks to events like these, there is reason for hope. A bipartisan coalition in Congress has introduced S. 338, S. 890 and H.R. 1814—all bills to permanently reauthorize the fund.

The lead sponsor of S. 338, Sen. Richard Burr (NC), said, “I have experienced firsthand the importance of the LWCF and its ability to help preserve, protect and celebrate our many parks, trails and outdoor recreational areas. It is encouraging to see lawmakers and stakeholders alike take on the call to action for LWCF reauthorization, which expires at the end of September. I hope more of my colleagues will hear us and join in helping to preserve our future.”

Some of his colleagues are taking notice: 35 senators and 130 representatives have already cosponsored. But there’s plenty more

to do—27 senators and 72 representatives who supported LWCF in the past have not yet signed on to one of the bills.

That’s where you come in. Visit [www.lta.org/lwcf](http://www.lta.org/lwcf) for the latest lists and materials to get your legislators on board. Each additional co-sponsor will add fuel to the urgency of passing LWCF legislation before the deadline.

One potential dealmaker is Senate Finance Committee Ranking Member Ron Wyden (OR), who said, “The Land and Water Conservation Fund is a down payment on the health and success of rural America. Investing in public lands has paid off time and again for local communities that depend on clean air and water and a strong recreation economy. America’s land trusts have been doing yeoman’s work to build support for this critical program, and I’m proud to work with them to make this fund permanent.”

As the LWCF Fly-In wrapped up, Senate Energy Committee Chair Lisa Murkowski (AK) and Ranking Democrat Maria Cantwell (WA) announced a breakthrough. Their framework would allow a permanent reauthorization while urging agencies to “consider conservation easements where feasible and appropriate.” It’s far from a done deal, but clearly land trusts’ hard work is paying off.

### Land Trusts Can Help Forest Legacy Do More

This year the Forest Legacy Program celebrates its 25th anniversary of providing grants to state and local governments for the acquisition of land and easements to conserve working forests.

Like other programs funded through the LWCF, Forest Legacy often depends on land trusts to coordinate partners, negotiate with landowners and monitor easements. However, land trusts are currently prohibited from holding these easements or title to the land directly.

That’s why Reps. Chris Gibson (NY) and John Garamendi (CA) have introduced the Forest Legacy Management Flexibility Act, H.R. 1582, which would enable states

to “opt in” and allow land trusts to directly acquire, hold and manage easements with Forest Legacy funds. The Alliance believes this innovation could eventually provide a model for other LWCF programs and is working with national partners and land trusts across the country to seek co-sponsors for H.R. 1582. To learn more, visit [www.lta.org/topics/federal-programs/forest-legacy-program](http://www.lta.org/topics/federal-programs/forest-legacy-program).

### Help Reauthorize NAWCA

Could LWCF survive if legislation doesn’t pass in time? Consider the case of the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA), which expired in the fall of 2013.

Despite the lapse, Congress has continued to appropriate funds for NAWCA projects. For example, just this summer, New York’s Thousand Islands Land Trust (accredited) received a \$1 million NAWCA grant to enhance and protect critical wetlands in the St. Lawrence River Valley.

So expiration is not necessarily a death sentence, but it’s a tenuous state in which even longtime friends may raise “good government” concerns. That’s why we hope you’ll join the Alliance in supporting NAWCA reauthorization. Provisions to reauthorize NAWCA, as well as the useful Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act, are included in two of this year’s “sportsmen’s bills”—S. 405 and H.R. 3175. For more details, visit [www.lta.org/nawca](http://www.lta.org/nawca).

## Learn About LWCF at Rally 2015 in Sacramento!

Come to Workshop E11 –  
*Land and Water Conservation Fund:  
Achieving Reauthorization in 2015*

Saturday, October 10  
10:30 a.m.-Noon  
Learn more: [www.alliancerally.org](http://www.alliancerally.org)

Tribal Chair Val Lopez helps Tribal Steward Nathan Vasquez learn the traditional ways of their ancestors.

HARRY WHO PHOTOGRAPHY



## Until the Last Sunrise

*The Amah Mutsun Tribal Band in Northern California has never been federally recognized because of a reporting error that occurred in 1927. Suffering oppression first from the Spanish Missions, then Mexico, then the American government, the tribe works to heal from a history of trauma with help from the land.*

**I**n spite of our history and continuing injustices, our Tribe is determined to find a path that will allow us to fulfill our mandate from the Creator and follow the path of our Ancestors. We believe restoring our lost ceremonies, language, songs and other traditional practices will allow healing for our Tribe and our members to find balance within our life and our world. Our work is also designed to ensure our Tribe's existence until the last sunrise.

These are the goals of our wellness meetings. We say to find balance we must have healthy relationships with all things. This theme is important in everything we do. Our Tribe is actively working to restore a healthy relationship with the Creator. In 2005, elders told our Tribal Council that the Creator never rescinded his mandate that we take care of Mother Earth and all living things. They told us, "We must find a way to fulfill this obligation." Among ourselves

we thought, "We are an unrecognized tribe and most of our members live at or below the poverty line; we own no property—how are we going to do this?"

As a result of this request, we began to develop relationships with Pinnacles National Park, California State Parks, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District and local land trusts. We signed tending and gathering permits and memoranda of understanding to allow us to consult on the management of their lands. At the same time we also began to restore our traditional land stewardship knowledge. We entered into partnerships with UC Berkeley, UC Santa Cruz and other educational institutions that could help us, leading to a 55-acre Mutsun garden at UC Santa Cruz that is designed to help us restore our indigenous knowledge of plants and to use the plants to help restore landscapes.

We created the Amah Mutsun Land Trust to conserve and protect our sacred and sensitive sites and to relearn our indigenous knowledge so we can return to the path of our ancestors. We created a two-year Mutsun Stewardship Corps to help our youth learn traditional land stewardship knowledge so they can develop a healthy relationship with Mother Earth. We teach them our ethnobotany and traditional ways so they can understand how to tend and gather our food, medicine and basketry plants. They learn to speak our Mutsun language, make tools and hunt. They attend dances and ceremonies, most of them outside our territory as we seek to restore these ceremonies and bring them back. It is our hope that at the end of this two-year program they will want to continue to work for the land trust or obtain degrees in the natural sciences.

Our Tribe has a long way to go if we are ever to achieve balance. But it feels good to know that we have identified our path and are working to fulfill our obligation to the Creator. At a recent wellness meeting, a 6-year-old member accepted the eagle feather during our healing circle and said, in a strong voice, "My name is Angelo and I'm here because I'm Mutsun," and then he proudly passed the feather. I immediately thought to myself, "He knows who he is and why he's here; what more could we ask?" 🌿

EDITED EXCERPT IS FROM "HEALING FROM HISTORICAL TRAUMA" IN NEWS FROM NATIVE CALIFORNIA, WINTER 2014/2015. VALENTIN LOPEZ IS CHAIR OF THE AMAH MUTSUN TRIBAL BAND.

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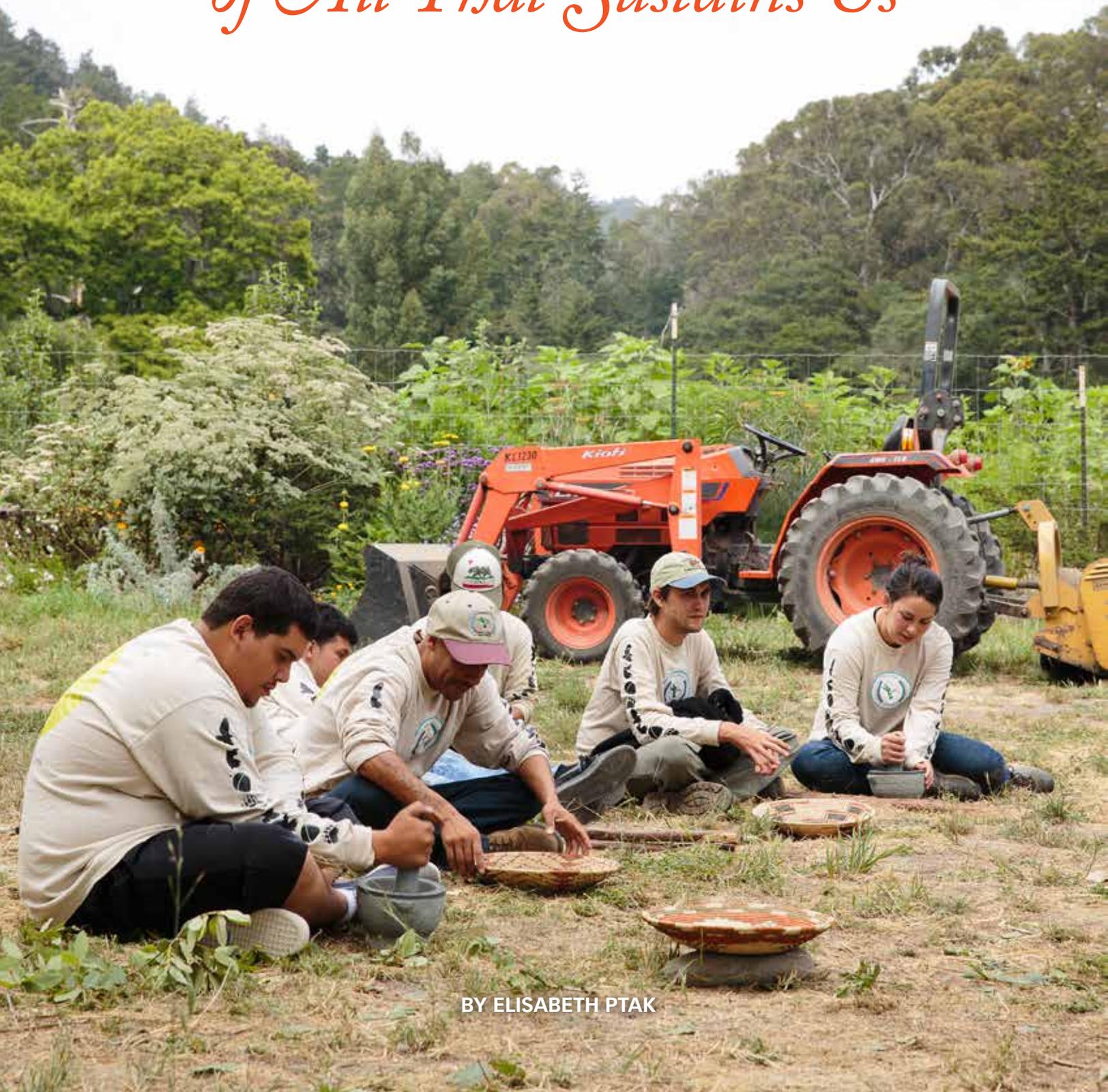
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# THE SOURCE

*of All That Sustains Us*



BY ELISABETH PTAK

Young people of the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band learn how to process California brome into pinole, a food their ancestors ate. The Amah Mutsun Land Trust is working to restore coastal prairies that provide this seed.

HARRY WHO PHOTOGRAPHY



## Stories of Native Americans collaborating with each other and with land trusts

*“In the settler mind, land was property, real estate, capital or natural resources. But to our people, it was everything: identity, the connection to our ancestors, the home of our nonhuman kinfolk, our pharmacy, our library, the source of all that sustained us.”*

— *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer, Potawatomi

The author and wilderness advocate Wallace Stegner called national parks “The best idea we ever had. Absolutely American. Absolutely democratic. They reflect us at our best rather than at our worst.”

Who could disagree?

“In their early years, a number of national parks evicted Native people,” says Hawk Rosales, executive director of California’s InterTribal Sinkyone Wilderness Council. “There’s a long history of cultural and social injustice within the conservation movement.”

Now a nascent effort in the land trust community is achieving meaningful

collaborations informed by the ancient and remarkably effective Native American land management practices that are based on the relationship between people and the natural world. At the same time, tribal groups are creating their own land trusts to protect traditional lifeways on ancestral lands located outside reservation boundaries.

### Land Trust for the Little Tennessee/Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians

*Tsigeyu?i ga:dohi* – love of the land

One of those collaborations began serendipitously in 1999 in North Carolina’s Upper Little Tennessee River Basin, in the heart of the southern Blue Ridge Mountains where the accredited Land

Trust for the Little Tennessee (LTLT) is based. It starts with the story of a little girl on a drive to Bryson City. “My mother would tell me to look at the Kituwah Mound as we passed it,” says Joyce Dugan, former chief of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI). “At the time I knew it had significance, but not why.”

In her first year as chief in 1996, Dugan was approached by the owners of the mound to ask if the tribe wanted to buy it. “They felt that the mound belonged back with us.”

As Dugan researched the mound, she discovered it is considered “the mother town of Cherokees.” She says, “Many of our oral histories say that all Cherokees came from that place.”

Dugan went before the Tribal Council of 12 who needed to approve the purchase. “My knees were shaking. Here I am asking

“The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR 25 Part 151) explains governing the acquisition of land by the United States in trust status for individual Indians and tribes. It can be a very long, very expensive and sometimes controversial process. By establishing a land conservancy, tribes can protect culturally significant, ethnobotanical or traditional use lands through ownership, cultural easements or conservation easements. A tribal land conservancy is also a way for several federally recognized tribes to own land jointly.” —Lisa Haws, Kumeyaay-Digueño Land Conservancy

# THE SOURCE

## *of All That Sustains Us*

### What is a cultural conservation easement?

[C]ultural conservation easements place greater emphasis on the stewardship and use of a property in order to perpetuate cultural practices and enhance culturally important plant and animal species. These easements affirm certain land uses, such as tending and harvesting culturally important plants...As they grow in popularity, cultural conservation easements may serve to push conservation easements to become more attentive to cultural land uses and cultural preservation.

—From *Trust in the Land*, by Beth Rose Middleton, The University of Arizona Press (2011)

them to buy some land, and here they are with needs that are unsurpassed, such as housing and roads. After many years of poverty, the casino that we opened in 1995 was finally allowing us to address those needs.”

But the purchase was approved unanimously. “After we bought the land it created a kind of renaissance in our tribe of preservation and protection,” says Dugan. “Our people love it, that it’s ours. They used to drive by it like me but now they can visit it.” An archeologist

estimates that there are more than 1,000 remains on the property.

“To me, as an American Indian, conservation includes preservation of culture. It’s not just about saving the natural resources but about saving the human resource also,” says Dugan. She says the Land Trust for the Little Tennessee gets that.

“The things that are important to the Cherokees are also important to our land trust,” says Executive Director Sharon Taylor. “Many significant cultural sites are close to major water bodies and on prime farm soil.” One of those sites is Cowee Mound, which had been the political, economic and social center of the tribe until it was seized 190 years ago. The land trust worked with the landowners, whose family had owned the property since 1838.

Juanita Wilson, deputy administrative officer for the tribe at the time of this project, helped broker a collaboration between the Tribal Council and the land trust. She says the effort wasn’t an easy one—“You have to know how to stroke the feathers”—but it resulted in the purchase and transfer of the mound to EBCI in 2007. A conservation easement held by the state of North Carolina allows only traditional agricultural and educational uses. Other collaborative projects followed.

“The land trust moved slowly to gain our trust,” says Dugan, who serves on LTLT’s board. “Most important, they have not



LITTLE TRAVERSE CONSERVANCY

Little Traverse Conservancy helps the Odawa Natural Resources Department with the Getting Kids Outdoors Emmet County project. The kickoff event is held at a local farm that has been protected, in part, with a conservation easement.

only shown respect for the land but for those who live on it.”

### Little Traverse Conservancy/ Little Traverse Bands of Odawa Indians

*Aaki gee Zah gay e go –*  
love of the land

Though not yet in widespread use, a new type of protection mechanism—a cultural conservation easement—is being considered by some groups as a way to safeguard historic geographic areas and sacred sites.

Frank Ettawageshik, executive director of the United Tribes of Michigan and former tribal chairman of the Little Traverse Bands of Odawa Indians, has been working to develop cultural



SHARON TAYLOR

Standing on Cowee Mound, Cherokee elder, council member and language specialist Marie Junaluska speaks to participants in the Right Path Program for Eastern Band of Cherokee adults. The program’s goal is to produce “generations of strong Cherokee leaders grounded in tribal culture and values.”



conservation easement models with Tom Bailey, executive director of Little Traverse Conservancy. “In some sense, cultural conservation is implicit in preserving nature, and so it is inextricably tied with natural history,” says Bailey. “Natural history includes human history, and human history includes the history of Native people.”

The sentiment is echoed by Ettawageshik, who also serves on the land trust’s board of directors. “For Native people, land preservation is our mission. We view ourselves as part of the environment, not masters of the environment. In that respect, anything that helps protect the natural landscape falls within our Native philosophy. We want to honor and respect Mother Earth. Any way we can work with others who have that as part of their mission is a good thing.”

Working together is key because conflicts can arise if traditional uses like ceremonies, fishing rights or seed collection and disbursement are outlawed when a property is conserved. “How do we preserve land and not make criminals out of our grandmothers collecting medicinal plants? How do we recognize that relationship to the land?” asks Ettawageshik.

### **InterTribal Sinkyone Wilderness Council/ Consortium of 10 federally recognized tribes in northern California**

“For Native peoples, the relationship with the natural world is the core of our existence, the foundation of who we are and why we exist,” says Hawk Rosales, executive director of the InterTribal Sinkyone Wilderness Council. He believes respect for this profound and multilayered bond is essential for the future work of non-Native land conservation organizations, too. “It’s remarkable that the conservation movement, as well-intentioned as it is, has—by and large—not sought to partner meaningfully with the tribes in order to understand and

apply principles that are central to ancient tribal relationships with nature.”

Rosales encourages non-Native land trusts to build meaningful relationships with Native peoples through authentic and respectful efforts toward collaboration based on mutual understanding and the need to protect both traditional lifeways and conservation values. He notes that, “Traditional knowledge is usually very guarded due to the history of indigenous peoples and places having been colonized and devastated. I hope that ultimately we will get there, but it will require a lot of sincere respect, dedication, learning and hard work.”

The consortium of 10 federally recognized tribes in northern California has been very successful in its own efforts with various partners to protect marine areas, redwood forests and salmon streams in the ancestral Sinkyone tribal territory. It established the 3,845-acre InterTribal Sinkyone Wilderness Area, the first of its kind in America.

### **Kumeyaay-Digueño Land Conservancy/ Kumeyaay Bands**

*éMut Mobeý* – love of the land

Each of the nine Kumeyaay Bands that are members of the Kumeyaay-Digueño Land Conservancy (KDLC) are recognized by the Secretary of the Interior as individual tribal governments with jurisdiction over their nine separate Indian reservations. Together, they straddle coastal San Diego County and northern Baja California, spanning 75 miles north and south of the international border and from the Pacific Ocean to western Imperial County.

“Native tribes see conservation as one holistic unit,” says Lisa Haws, assistant executive director of KDLC. “They view it on a landscape scale, not piecemeal.” So when urban growth threatened traditional sacred lands outside



This 80-year-old Kumeyaay elder has dedicated her retirement from the Marine Corps to training Kumeyaay young adults to protect cultural resources.

the reservations, the tribes formed a nonprofit conservancy to be able to act quickly to preserve endangered locations. KDLC currently owns and manages four properties, including the 42-acre Sacred Mountain Ranch at the base of Mount Kuuchamaa on the Mexican border. Kuuchamaa means “exalted high place” and has been considered sacred since before recorded history. It figures in the tribe’s creation story as the source of teachings about personal discipline and religious harmony, and it’s also considered an important healing site. KDLC hopes to return the ranch to a natural state, healing the land, as well as people.

In the 1950s a communication site was built on the top of the mountain, followed by additional communication equipment placed by the Border Patrol, Drug Enforcement Administration, the FBI and others. “Maybe someday, when technology has advanced, the equipment can be removed and the mountain restored,” says Haws. “Until then, KDLC has developed a relationship with Homeland

# THE SOURCE

*of All That Sustains Us*



ANITA RZEPKO PHOTOGRAPHY, SYCUAN BAND OF THE KUMEYAAY NATION

Padding in a traditional reed boat called a hakuayowo on Halasii ʼeHa Topit (Willow Lake in Kumeyaay) on the Sycuan Indian Reservation in California

Security, providing access to Sacred Mountain Ranch to carry out their border protection programs.”

## **Amah Mutsun Land Trust/ Amah Mutsun Tribal Band**

*muySin-mi pire* – love of the land

“Creator put us here to take care of Mother Earth and all living things,” says Amah Mutsun Tribal Chairman Valentin Lopez, recounting a portion of the central California tribe’s creation story. “For thousands of years, our ancestors worked hard to fulfill that responsibility.” They developed prayers and ceremonies to satisfy the spiritual requirements of their obligation, and they very actively managed the land through burning, pruning, sowing, seed-scattering and more.

The trauma that began when the band lost its traditional homelands—first to the Spanish Missions, then to Mexican land grantees and finally to the U.S. government—is long-lasting. “Without the connection to the land, we are no longer able to keep the balance in our life and world,” says Lopez. Drug addiction, alcoholism, mental illness and suicide plague today’s tribal members.

“For us to restore our balance, to get well again, we have to fulfill our obligation to Creator. That’s why we created our land trust.” Lopez serves as president of the board, which is a mix of tribal members and non-Natives. It receives organizational expertise and support from the accredited Sempervirens Fund and has partnered with UC Santa Cruz, UC Berkeley and Stanford to share traditional stewardship teachings while gaining scientific and botanical knowledge (see page 12).

The Amah Mutsun is not a federally recognized tribe; it receives no assistance from state or federal governments. “The land trust is designed to help bring us back to traditional tribal territory,” says Lopez. But ownership is not the tribe’s main goal. “In our tradition, our ancestors didn’t look at it as owning the land. The obligation is to stewardship. If acquisition is the best way to protect those lands, we will do that, but it’s not a top priority.”

## **Maidu Summit Consortium/ Mountain Maidu**

*hybyktini mym k’odom* –  
love of the land

The Maidu Summit Consortium (MSC) isn’t a land trust, says founder and Executive Director Kenneth Holbrook. “It’s a social and environmental justice-minded nonprofit organization doing advocacy



work for protection of our sacred cultural resources—but we’ll be looking more and more like a land trust as time goes by.”

That’s because one of its main goals is reacquiring ancestral lands and managing them according to traditional Maidu ecological practices. As a largely unrecognized tribe federally, that hasn’t always been easy. In addition, understandable resentments related to sovereign rights, dignity and respect kept the tribe from actively seeking direct participation. Holbrook says that as a nonprofit adjunct to the tribe, MSC will be able to maintain those ethical standards and ways of dealing with the world while representing the concerns in a different way.

The nonprofit has representatives from all nine Maidu member organizations, and provides an opportunity to be effective outside the tribal government setting. “We’re learning new ways of governing programs and projects, like being mission-oriented instead of being caught up in historic trauma issues, which are an exposed wound. The nonprofit is a source of strength for the tribe.”

The group’s major turning point came in 2013 when a 2,325-acre Sierra Nevada mountain meadow in the Humbug Valley was turned over to the consortium by Pacific Gas and Electric in a bankruptcy agreement. Holbrook sees it as an important step in healing and community development. “Without land, without a sense of ownership, we’ll never be able to revitalize our community,” says Holbrook. “We must own our future.”

## An Alliance of Eastern Tribes

*Nuwâmônumumum abkee* –  
we love the land

Ramona Peters, artist, educator and Mashpee Wampanoag Elder, makes coiled pots in the style of Eastern Woodland Native American pot builders. Beautifully incised with traditional symbols, the pots are delicate, yet utilitarian containers, made for cooking and storage.

She also founded the Native Land Conservancy, a Native-run land trust, in 2013 with a consortium of representatives from several tribes. Challenged by the high cost of buying land in their traditional homelands in eastern Massachusetts, the intertribal conservancy hopes to receive donations of land rather than purchase them. In June they got their first gift—a Barnstable, Massachusetts, woodlot. “It’s very small,” Peters says, “but the white pines are of major cultural significance to us.”

“I think people are very receptive to the idea of returning land to Native people. We’re trying to make it easy for potential donors to approach us. Some had the inclination, but no means to do it,” says the potter. “We are now that container.”

## An Alliance of Western Tribes

Kurt Russo, executive director of California’s Native American Land Conservancy (NALC) was instrumental in bringing together six Native-run conservation groups, including several of those profiled here, to pool resources, share information and promote public awareness of traditional knowledge and stewardship practices. In addition to NALC, the founding members also include Amah Mutsun Land Trust, InterTribal Sinkyone Wilderness Council, Kumeyaay-Digüeño Land Conservancy, Maidu Summit Consortium and the Native Conservancy.

“Each organization is unique, yet they have a lot of commonalities,” explains Lisa Haws of Kumeyaay-Digüeño Land Conservancy. “Being part of the larger consortium brings economies of scale and the opportunity to learn how each group is addressing its own conservation work. We support each other’s goals and missions. Learning about the success of others helps each of us.”

Collaborations between Native tribes and non-Native land conservation organizations can offer both opportunities and obstacles as the groups try to balance land conservation and cultural conservation goals and priorities. Perhaps the dilemma, and the hope, are best summed up by Joyce Dugan of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians:

“We have an election this year. I’m hopeful the next chief will continue the tradition of looking at opportunities to purchase and save tribal ancestral land. It’s important for everyone, but especially for our people because it says our history is important. That was never taught in the past. When that information is not available to our students, it tells them we’re not valuable. But we can never lose sight of that—*people are important, as well as the land.*”

ELISABETH PTAK IS A FREELANCE WRITER, AUTHOR AND FORMER LAND TRUST STAFF PERSON. SHE CAN BE REACHED AT EPTAK@HORIZONCABLE.COM.

## What makes a collaboration work?

- Patience and Listening. Don’t come with all the answers. Get to know one another and establish trust.
- Sincerity and Respect. Collaboration should be based on mutual understanding and the desire to protect both traditional lifeways and conservation values.
- Education. Learn about tools, such as cultural conservation easements.

## PROTECTING *What Matters*

By Anna-Lisa Laca

**A**t California Rangeland Trust, an accredited land trust, we protect what matters by working with California ranching families and future generations to conserve our Golden State's rangeland, air and water quality, wildlife habitat and local food supplies. Founded by a group of progressive cattlemen in 1998, we have permanently protected more than 286,000 acres on 55 ranches, including this working cattle ranch in Sunol, California.

Located in the Bay Area, the Koopmann Ranch is protected by a conservation easement that conserves important pond habitat for the California tiger salamander, a state and federally listed endangered species. "As a kid, I remember going to the pond and being fascinated by the salamanders," said Tim Koopmann, who has lived on the ranch his entire life and is a leader in ranch conservation. "Our ranch is healthy open space where all animals, big and small, can do what they were intended to do. Thanks to the easement, we can give the salamander a chance to come back as a thriving species." Rangeland conservation in the 10-county Bay Area is a high priority since 1.2 million acres of the 1.9 million acres of rangeland located there are privately owned and support the tremendous biodiversity found in the region. 🍃





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## Advocating for

# CONSERVATION FUNDING



Local-national partnerships create wins at the ballot box

**A**t first glance, the city of New Bedford, Massachusetts, appears to be an unlikely place for the Land Trust Alliance to get involved in a ballot measure aimed at passing a conservation-oriented property tax surcharge. With approximately 95,000 residents, New Bedford is the sixth-largest city in the state, and it struggles with many of the urban challenges facing similarly sized industrial communities across the nation.

Convincing voters to agree to pay extra taxes for any reason is a challenge in any municipality, but particularly in places like New Bedford, where unemployment and infrastructure issues often take center stage in public funding discussions. “In a working class community, where there aren’t as many funding sources as in more affluent communities, preservation projects are often the first to go,” explains New Bedford native Alicia Pimental, who serves as communications and outreach manager for the Buzzards Bay Coalition (BBC), an accredited land trust.

Nonetheless, in early 2014 a partnership of the Alliance and The Trust for Public Land (the partnership) identified an opportunity in New Bedford to encourage voters to adopt the Community Preservation Act (CPA). CPA is a smart growth tool that helps communities preserve open space and historic sites, creates affordable housing and develops

outdoor recreational facilities. By adopting a local property tax surcharge, local governments receive matching funds from the state’s Community Preservation Trust Fund. Since CPA became law in 2000, 158 cities and towns have adopted it and \$1.4 billion has been raised statewide.

As one of the only communities in the Buzzards Bay region of southeastern Massachusetts that hadn’t already opted in to CPA, the partnership was certain that with the right messaging campaign the citizens of New Bedford would see the benefits of voting in favor of the 1.5% property tax increase. To gain local footing, the partnership worked with the BBC as its partner on the ground and provided education outreach funding to support the project.

“When we talked about what the city could do with the extra funding, people responded very positively,” Pimental says. In November, New Bedford’s voters made their voices heard and adopted CPA at the ballot with 54% of the vote. New Bedford is one of the largest cities in the state to adopt CPA, which will raise at least \$1 million annually for community preservation purposes.

“I found it very encouraging to see the stewardship ethic of this community,” Pimental says. “People around here really care about preserving what makes New Bedford a special place, and as a native, that’s a great feeling.”

### Forming Local-National Partnerships

The Alliance/TPL/local-land-trust-partner collaboration in New Bedford is one of six examples from last November’s election cycle (see page 25). All but one of the ballot measures were successful. The partnership was made possible with funding from the Knobloch Family Foundation.

To start the process, the partnership identified ballot measures across the country that could increase open space and natural resource conservation funding, help build local organizational capacity and serve as examples to others. Next, the Alliance reached out to local land trusts that could bring to the table the intimate knowledge of the local culture, politics and conservation priorities necessary to run a successful campaign. “Without the involvement of a local group anchored in the community, it would be difficult for any national organization to lead a successful campaign alone,” says Mark Ackelson, president emeritus of the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation (accredited), conservation finance advisor to the Alliance and campaign coach for the land trusts.

“I’m a huge believer in the land trust movement, and this partnership program has reinforced to me how important land trusts are to their communities,” Ackelson says. “They can play several roles with the

## CONSERVATION FUNDING



All ages benefit from the open space sales tax in Larimer County, Colorado.

ballot measures, such as leaders, spokespeople and educators.”

The Alliance coached the land trusts’ staff and board members on education and advocacy work. In conjunction with local land trust leaders, TPL’s conservation finance experts provided research and technical assistance to local elected officials to design ballot measures that would have a strong chance of garnering voter support. Its field staff assisted with feasibility research, polling and voter communications, including targeted mailings and digital outreach. “It’s fairly typical that land trusts and grassroots organizations are very thinly staffed and short on resources. We are trying to help them see they can tap into this partnership to vastly expand their capabilities and develop funding to accomplish their missions,” Ackelson explains.

And looking at the big picture, dollars generated by measures approved by voters provide important matches for federal and state farm and ranchland, water quality, wildlife and recreation projects.

### Providing Experience and Expertise

In South Carolina the partnership provided expertise and funding to assist the Beaufort County Open Land Trust (BCOLT) in educating voters about a proposed \$20 million bond issue on the ballot last November.

Although Beaufort County has a strong history of support for conservation efforts, this was the fourth such initiative since 2000 and support for the measure was less certain. A feeling was growing among some in the community that enough land had been preserved, says Lisa Lord, Rural and Critical Lands Program administrator for BCOLT. To counter that message, Lord collaborated with the partnership to spread the word about the economic and quality of life benefits of preservation.

Although Lord, a natural resource biologist, knew her community well, this was her first time running a public education campaign. She relied on the experience of her counterparts at the Alliance and TPL to help her effectively communicate key messages to county voters.

“They helped me get over the learning curve. They were that instant resource for all of the questions I had and that was very

valuable,” Lord says. “Rather than spending hours researching on the Internet, I could get answers from them quickly and then spend my time out in the community.”

More specifically, the partnership helped her craft a message that would resonate with voters and then figure out a strategic timeline. That meant waiting until six weeks before the referendum to blast their message through multiple channels. Email, opinion pieces in the local papers and educational mailers were all timed to go out right before the election when voters were focusing on the bond measure.

The partnership also worked with Lord to help her identify local leaders and supply them with research to turn them into advocates for the cause. For instance, Tom Davis, a well-regarded state senator, spoke very effectively during the campaign using research from BCOLT, Lord says.

The ballot measure ended up passing with more than 70% of the vote. Ackelson views the high approval rate as testament to the quality of the educational campaign run by Lord. “That showed us what somebody with knowledge and passion for the place could accomplish. With the assistance of the partnership, Lisa really got the tools she needed to run a successful campaign despite never having done this before,” he says.

### Engaging Local Land Trusts

The situation was a little different in Larimer County, Colorado, where local partner K-Lynn Cameron—a former conservation director and current advisor to the executive board of Legacy Land Trust—was involved in educating voters on an issue up for debate in November 2014. The county was facing a ballot measure to extend the quarter-cent open space sales tax originally passed in 1995. That tax had been extended in 1999 for 15 years, and the county determined that the timing was right in 2014 to push for a 25-year extension.

Cameron had worked on the public education campaign for this issue in the 1990s,

## Land Trusts Can Lobby

It’s a common misconception that land trusts can’t participate in ballot measure campaigns. While endorsement of candidates is strictly prohibited by the IRS, land trusts can and do lobby within limits, including advocating on behalf of state and local conservation funding measures. See [www.lta.org/issues-action/tools-tips/politics-whats-allowed](http://www.lta.org/issues-action/tools-tips/politics-whats-allowed).

when Legacy Land Trust was unwilling to get involved in anything it perceived to be political. Yet the tax had provided a steady stream of funding for another local land trust that was willing to support the issue over the years, and this time around Legacy Land Trust was far more willing to participate after a little nudging from the Alliance and TPL, she says.

Legacy Land Trust raised a total of \$16,500 to pay for an educational mailer that went to 35,000 households in Larimer County in October just before the election. “Having Mark help facilitate this connection with Legacy Land Trust was one of the most important results of this partnership,” Cameron says. TPL was also instrumental in conducting polling before the campaign to help figure out how to structure the messaging, she adds.

### Assessing the Results

Following the 2014 election cycle, the Alliance and TPL have been evaluating their joint efforts. With five out of six initiatives passing, the results alone make a strong statement. Feedback from the local partners has been helpful, such as that from Cecilia Rosacker McCord in New Mexico, who worked on a ballot measure in Bernalillo County that passed by 72%.

“It was great in terms of getting our names out there in a way that we would’ve never been



TAPTEAL GREENWAY

In the past 20 years, the Tapteal Greenway has reached more than 10,000 students ages 2-71 with interactive exploration of the Yakima River environment.

## November 2014 Partnership Ballot Measures

PLACE	LOCAL PARTNER	BALLOT QUESTION	PASS
<b>Acme Township, MI</b>	Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy (accredited)	Extension of open space mill levy	<b>Yes</b> (57%)
<b>Beaufort County, SC</b>	Beaufort County Open Land Trust	\$20 million bond issue for open space	<b>Yes</b> (73%)
<b>Benton County, WA</b>	Tapteal Greenway	Creation of a Conservation Futures Fund	<b>No</b> (47%)
<b>Bernalillo County, NM</b>	Rio Grande Agricultural Land Trust; New Mexico Land Conservancy (accredited)	Open space 0.20 mill levy	<b>Yes</b> (72%)
<b>Larimer County, CO</b>	Legacy Land Trust; Estes Valley Land Trust (accredited)	Quarter cent sales tax	<b>Yes</b> (82%)
<b>New Bedford, MA</b>	Buzzards Bay Coalition (accredited)	MA Community Preservation Act	<b>Yes</b> (54%)

For more information, see [www.landvote.org](http://www.landvote.org)

able to do without their help,” says McCord, executive director (and sole staffer) of the Rio Grande Agricultural Land Trust. She notes that more guidance from the Alliance and TPL after the election would have been welcome. Mark Ackelson remarks that in mapping out future plans for continued coordination between the Alliance and TPL on similar measures, follow-up tracking will be something that will receive more emphasis.

Research and planning for the next round is already under way, funded by the Knobloch Family Foundation through the 2016 election cycle. Plans include production of case studies and a handbook outlining the process for land trusts, Ackelson says. “We consider the work a great success to be replicated. Even in the one instance where the measure was not successful, we didn’t lose by much and we may revisit that area.”

The loss was in Benton County, Washington, where the creation of a Conservation Futures Fund was narrowly defeated. President Scott Woodward of Tapteal Greenway, the local partner, knew from the start he was facing an uphill battle, but polling data indicated that the measure

had a shot at passing. He relied heavily on the experience of the Alliance and TPL in orchestrating an educational campaign.

After the loss, the campaign committee felt that “the negative votes were uninformed votes,” Woodward says. “The precincts of the losses were ones in which the committee felt it didn’t do the best job on the ground in educating voters.”

Woodward reports that he and his allies are eager to bring this initiative before the public in the near future, and that they would definitely seek advice again from the Alliance and TPL. “Having them on your side is huge,” he says.

Alliance President Rand Wentworth says the organization stands ready to help. “Recognizing that the federal government is no longer the major source of funding for land conservation, we will continue to work with our members to support local and state ballot measures. A record \$13 billion in conservation funds was generated at the polls in 2014 alone. Clearly, with the right approach, America’s voters support land conservation. We should all be thinking about giving them that opportunity.”

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*And the Winner Is...*

## THE LAND CONSERVATION COMMUNITY

Kingsbury Browne Fellows explore cutting-edge issues in land conservation

By Christina Soto

**W**hat happens when you create an award and fellowship, give it annually to a winner nominated from within his or her community of practice and give that winner time to explore and write about cutting-edge issues? The entire community benefits, enriched by the shared knowledge of these honored leaders.

Kingsbury Browne, the lawyer who traveled around the country in the early 1980s to meet people in the new field of land conservation, believed in networking. His ideas led to the formation of the Land Trust Exchange, later renamed the Land Trust Alliance in 1989. The Kingsbury Browne Conservation Leadership Award was created by the Alliance in 2006 in conjunction with the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy establishing the Kingsbury Browne Fellowship, administered by the Institute's Department of Planning and Urban Form.

Kingsbury himself was a Lincoln Institute Fellow in 1980. The nine winners exemplify his goal of sharing ideas, experiences and knowledge with others to nurture and mentor the next generation of conservationists and leaders. The fellowship enables the recipient to undertake a project that can be shared with the broader conservation community. Here are short descriptions of eight of those projects (the ninth is still developing<sup>1</sup>), with links to further reading.

### **Darby Bradley (2006 – 2007)**

When Darby Bradley took the stage to accept the first Kingsbury Browne Conservation Leadership Award

and Fellowship at Rally 2006, many people in the room knew who he was. For 25 years he served as counsel and then president of the Vermont Land Trust,\* a group that in its 38 years has helped landowners protect about 8% of Vermont's private undeveloped land. He decided to tackle a tough topic during his fellowship, writing a working paper titled "Amending Perpetual Conservation Easements Confronting the Dilemmas of Change: A Practitioner's View." He writes, "As conservation easements age, land trusts have begun to confront changed circumstances that they could not have anticipated when the easements were drafted," changes such as those in laws, technology, community needs or climate. He explores questions, such as "What criteria should be used to determine whether an easement amendment would be appropriate?" [www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/1686\\_Amending-Perpetual-Conservation-Easements-Confronting-the-Dilemmas-of-Change](http://www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/1686_Amending-Perpetual-Conservation-Easements-Confronting-the-Dilemmas-of-Change)

### **Mark C. Ackelson (2007 – 2008)**

During his fellowship, Mark Ackelson, then-president of the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation,\* ventured into territory that some considered off the map for land

trusts. “Working within the land trust network, many of us have been acculturated to consider natural communities to the exclusion of our human surroundings,” he wrote in the Lincoln Institute’s *Land Lines* article “Land Conservation and Communities.” “To be most effective, however, we must deal with the complete range of communities and all their human and ecological complexities.” Was this mission creep or something revolutionary, building on the ideas of visionary thinkers such as the Center for Whole Communities, which expounds that people will not embrace conservation unless conservation embraces people? As more land trusts began exploring the concept of “community conservation,” the Alliance created an entire program around it, which launched in 2014. [www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/1651\\_Land-Conservation-and-Communities](http://www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/1651_Land-Conservation-and-Communities)

#### **Laurie Wayburn (2008 – 2009)**

Cofounder and president of the Pacific Forest Trust\* in San Francisco, California, Laurie Wayburn serves as a leading advocate for the significant climate benefits of forests. “U.S. forests, conserved and properly managed for resilience to a changing climate, can double their current sequestration of carbon dioxide while contributing the majority of projected renewable energy supplies in the next 50 years at costs equal to or below other emissions reductions efforts,” she writes in her paper, “Forests in United States Climate Policy: A Comprehensive Approach.” To stem the present trend of U.S. forest loss, she proposes three key actions: reducing forest loss, restoring existing forests’ carbon stocks and reforesting former forests. [www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/1678\\_Forests-in-United-States-Climate-Policy](http://www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/1678_Forests-in-United-States-Climate-Policy)

#### **Jamie Williams (2009 – 2010)**

President of the Wilderness Society since 2012, Jamie Williams was initially a pioneer in collaborative conservation work in the West with The Nature Conservancy.\* As Montana state director for nine years, he focused on conserving the state’s largest, most intact landscapes through strong community programs and private-public partnerships. In his paper “Large Landscape Conservation: A View from the Field,” he writes, “The need to move beyond piecemeal conservation to systemic success has never been greater, as

an estimated three million acres of land a year is lost to development—dividing watersheds, fragmenting wildlife corridors, and disrupting sustainable economic uses of the land.” His stories of community-based conservation efforts in Colorado, Montana and the Northern Rockies demonstrate success through local land-owner leadership backed by strong private-public partnerships. [www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/1913\\_Large-Landscape-Conservation](http://www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/1913_Large-Landscape-Conservation)

#### **Jay Espy (2010 – 2011)**

Another pioneer in collaborative and large-scale land conservation, Jay Espy joined the Elmina B. Sewall Foundation as its first executive director in January 2008, having previously served as president of Maine Coast Heritage Trust.\* During his tenure at MCHT, he helped establish the Maine Land Trust Network, which helps build capacity of local land trusts throughout the state. The goal of his fellowship was “to help foundations more effectively support land conservation and assist the efforts of conservation practitioners working on the ground.” The results of interviews with selected leaders representing land conservation practitioners and philanthropic investors operating in the northeastern United States are published in his paper “Effective Practices in Funding Land Conservation for Impact” with Gina Schrader. [www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/2164\\_Effective-Practices-in-Funding-Land-Conservation-for-Impact](http://www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/2164_Effective-Practices-in-Funding-Land-Conservation-for-Impact)

#### **Audrey C. Rust (2011 – 2012)**

Funding sources, acquisition strategies and key challenges—these are things that Audrey Rust knows about after 24 years with Peninsula Open Space Trust\* in Palo Alto, California, from which she retired in 2011. Now on the board of the American Prairie Reserve, Audrey shares her insights in land conservation through an interview in *Land Lines* in which she compares POST’s and APR’s particular histories and characteristics and offers some universal lessons for all involved in the challenging work of preserving open space. [www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/2220\\_A-Tale-of-Two-Land-Trusts-Strategies-for-Success](http://www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/2220_A-Tale-of-Two-Land-Trusts-Strategies-for-Success)

#### **Peter R. Stein (2012 – 2013)**

In 1990 Peter Stein joined the Lyme Timber Company LP in Hanover, New

Hampshire, and now leads the development and structuring of conservation-oriented forestland and rural land purchases and dispositions. Having a long history with The Trust for Public Land and the Land Trust Alliance, Peter also is a founding commissioner of the Land Trust Accreditation Commission. Venturing beyond the United States, Peter decided to connect with land conservation professionals around the world to try to better understand the scale and scope of activities undertaken by land conservation NGOs in other countries. His research convinced him that “a present-day convening and ongoing exchange of ideas among international private and civic land conservation groups would allow us all to learn a great deal from one another.” That is now happening, as Peter joins other visionaries, including the Alliance’s current chair, Laura Johnson, in the International Land Conservation Network (see page 36). “The Global Reach of Land Trust Organizations” can be found at [www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/2435\\_The-Global-Reach-of-Land-Trust-Organizations](http://www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/2435_The-Global-Reach-of-Land-Trust-Organizations).

#### **Lawrence R. Kueter (2013 – 2014)**

Having recently stepped down from chairing the Land Trust Accreditation Commission since its creation in 2006, Larry Kueter has been a proponent of quality land conservation for many years. A Denver attorney specializing in conservation easements, he has been instrumental in the protection of nearly 600,000 acres of land, has handled legal issues for the Colorado Coalition of Land Trusts and the Colorado Cattlemen’s Agricultural Land Trust\* (CCALT) and serves as an adjunct professor in Environmental and Natural Resource Law at the University of Denver’s Strum College of Law. His paper “Cowboys and Conservation: A Short History of and Reflections on the Dramatic Growth of Private Land Conservation in Western Ranching” traces the rise of rangeland trusts, starting in 1995 with CCALT, the first land trust to come directly out of a statewide cattle producer’s organization. [www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/3569\\_Cowboys-and-Conservation](http://www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/3569_Cowboys-and-Conservation) 🌱

<sup>1</sup> JEAN HOCKER, THE 2014-2015 WINNER, HAS NOT COMPLETED HER PROJECT YET AND THE 10TH WINNER WILL BE AWARDED AT RALLY 2015 THIS OCTOBER.

\* ACCREDITED LAND TRUST

BY Kirsten Ferguson



## An Extra Set of **Hands**

Eastern Shore Land Conservancy board and staff members partner with their community to prepare for climate change.

**I**n the Chesapeake Bay, entire islands are disappearing. Maryland's Holland Island is one of them. In 1910 it was a small fishing community with over 350 residents. Then the Bay water started rising, forcing residents to flee. Several years ago the island's last remaining house finally collapsed into the water. Before it gave way, the house appeared to sit alone on top of the waves.

Today all that remains of Holland Island is marshland, underwater at high tide and home to terns, bald eagles and other wildlife. The Bay's 40 or so other islands face a similar fate: gradually being swallowed by the sea.

The Chesapeake Bay's sea level is rising faster than the world average, in part due to erosion and the natural sinking of land around the Bay, but scientists say climate change is accelerating the problem. In Maryland—and coastal areas all over the country—sea-level rise contributes not only to shore erosion but

The last house stands on Maryland's Holland Island on the Chesapeake Bay before rising waters finally claimed it.

DAVID HARP  
(C) 2009/CHESAPEAKEPHOTOS.COM

also threatens inland areas with flooding, storm surges and erosion.

"Folks are concerned and looking for guidance on what to do," says Brian Ambrette, coastal resilience specialist for the accredited Eastern Shore Land Conservancy (ESLC), which has protected over 50,000 acres of farmland, coastal areas and critical wildlife habitat in six counties along Maryland's vulnerable Eastern Shore. Ambrette joined the organization in 2014, tasked with helping communities assess the risks associated with sea-level rise and become more resilient to the impacts of climate change.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) defines coastal resilience on its website as "the ability of a community to 'bounce back' after hazardous events such as hurricanes, coastal storms and flooding—rather than simply reacting to impacts."

"In nearly every county we have a tremendous amount of property at risk from climate change," says ESLC board member Howard Freedlander. "We have some really low-lying land. We have land affected by shore erosion, storm surge and sea-level rise every day. Property owners naturally are concerned about, and sensitive to, the effect of sea-level rise. Many have taken adaptive measures to minimize impact."

A retired deputy treasurer for the state of Maryland, Freedlander has written several newspaper and online columns calling for action on climate change. "This has been a subject of grave concern for our board members," he says. "Personally, I feel very strongly about climate change and global warming. Denial is not an option."

In 2013, ESLC organized a conference about climate change and coastal resilience featuring experts like Don Boesch, president of the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science, who told conference attendees that current

# Five Ways

## FOR LAND TRUSTS TO HELP COMMUNITIES PREPARE FOR CLIMATE CHANGE

All geographic regions are different, but all are starting to experience the impacts of climate change in some form. Here are five ways to make a difference in your area:

- 1. Evaluate the assets of your particular organization and where you can fill a needed role.** "Think about the strengths that your organization has—whether it's in relationships or expertise in the sciences—and how those strengths can be used as leverage tools. That's a good place to start," says ESLC Coastal Resilience Specialist Brian Ambrette. "Also look at the particular needs of your landscape or community."
- 2. Partner with universities and other experts.** Start by contacting scientific experts or looking for existing studies and climate change projections to find out where land and ecosystems are most at risk. Consider hosting a conference to bring together potential partners or undertake an assessment that sheds light on your region's vulnerabilities. Focusing on the science can help minimize potential controversy, says ESLC board member Howard Freedlander.
- 3. View protected lands as an asset in climate change adaptation and mitigation.** Consider prioritizing land projects that offer some protection against the impacts of climate change. Examine studies that project what the landscape could look like 50 and 100 years from now. "It all goes back to land being our greatest asset in this challenge against climate change and global warming," says Ambrette. "It really makes a strong case for conservation."
- 4. Serve as a resource for the public and policymakers.** "An important role of the land trust is to be a resource—an honest broker," says Freedlander. Look for openings for staff or board members to serve on state or regional committees related to climate change. "Land trusts have an opportunity to be a credible voice at the table" when legislators are making decisions related to climate change, Freedlander says.
- 5. Communicate to the public the value of your work in relation to climate change.** The Yale Project on Climate Change Communication ([environment.yale.edu/climate-communication](http://environment.yale.edu/climate-communication)) offers map-based public polling data that land trusts can use to explore public opinions on climate change in their areas of work. The project also offers tips for how to communicate with the public on the issue. Tell your constituencies about the important role that land trusts already play in addressing climate change, such as keeping resilient natural ecosystems intact, which in turn protects corridors for migrating wildlife and areas for storing water and carbon.

## Get Started

Not sure how your land trust can plan for climate change? The Land Trust Alliance's new website, "Conservation in a Changing Climate," can walk you through the process. Whether you're in a coastal area or on a heartland plain, the website contains resources and case studies that cover a broad array of actions available to land trusts that want to explore climate change impacts and how to make a difference. Visit [climatechange.lta.org](http://climatechange.lta.org) and click on "Get Started." See page 34 for more about the new site.

projections indicate the area could experience a 2.1-foot sea-level rise by 2050.

Attended by farmers, citizens, policymakers and environmental groups, the conference avoided politics and focused on the science of climate change and how the land trust's various constituencies, such as the agricultural community, could be affected by it, Freedlander says.

One important outcome from the conference was the establishment of Ambrette's position, created from scratch to fill a void identified by the land trust. "The issue was becoming a hot topic and few were addressing it," Ambrette says. "Public opinion recognizes that we are vulnerable to coastal hazards and something has to be done about it."

One of the first tasks Ambrette and ESLC undertook was a coastal resilience assessment (available on their website, [eslc.org](http://eslc.org)) that analyzed the coastal hazards facing the Eastern Shore and the capacity of local governments to rebound quickly from weather and climate-related events. "The assessment was the 30,000-foot view of the vulnerabilities for the landscape," says Ambrette. "We did it to understand the needs and priorities of what we're facing, and how we can design our program to meet those needs."

One important finding: Although Eastern Shore counties were fairly well prepared for hazards like hurricanes and tidal flooding, as required by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, they hadn't planned for how climate change could make those hazards more severe. "We saw the need for positioning ourselves as an extra set of hands for counties to start doing this work: to start long-term planning for climate change," says Ambrette.

He admits that at first the work may seem outside the scope of traditional land preservation, but the program allows the land trust to capitalize on its existing strengths: strong relationships with local partners and

governments developed over 25 years of protecting the land. It also helps the land trust live up to its mission of perpetuity and confront changes that may occur in the landscape over time.

"Very few organizations are doing this work on the Eastern Shore," says Ambrette. "There's a need. It was an opportunity for ESLC to use its leadership and reputation for tackling big issues to jump on this. It's exciting because we're bringing conservationists to the table with planners, emergency managers and public health officials. It can be a model for other places in the country."

ESLC also updated the organization's project selection criteria to evaluate parcels in part by a coastal resilience value that scores properties by their importance for protecting coastal communities and habitat from rising sea levels in the future. For instance, they might prioritize land that provides storm surge protection, or low-lying farmland with the potential to eventually become marshland.

The land trust also worked with state agencies to draft easement language that allows for land cover and habitat on protected property to change over time as sea levels rise, for instance, allowing farmland to become wetter and eventually transition to marsh.

"There isn't a silver bullet we can use today to make everything livable in the future," says Ambrette. "With our planning and adaptation strategies, the goal is to give people 100 years from now more options, so they're not hamstrung." As an example, he describes a local town's efforts to use green infrastructure to store tidal waters as a short-term solution to the problem of flooding related to sea-level rise.

"For the next 10 to 20 years, that's a viable option for them," he says. "If you can take measures that will buy your community some time, then you create breathing room to consider longer-term strategies." 

FREELANCE WRITER AND EDITOR **KIRSTEN FERGUSON** CAN BE FOUND AT [WWW.KIRSTENFERGUSON.COM](http://WWW.KIRSTENFERGUSON.COM).

BY Rose Jenkins



# Getting Accredited, GROWING STRONGER

**W**hat’s the hardest part about accreditation? The work it takes to get there.  
What’s the best part about accreditation? The work it takes to get there.

When you ask land trust leaders what they gained from accreditation, they talk about various benefits—like credibility with landowners and funders, or readiness for a legal challenge or an audit. But overwhelmingly they say the number one benefit of accreditation is that the process improved how their land trust does its job.

At the Granby Land Trust in Connecticut, board member David Russell says, “We literally had no written policies before we started this process.” Since its founding in 1972, board members had been going about their work fairly informally. Since achieving accreditation, they have checklists and procedures to ensure quality. They also got their files out of founders’ and board members’ basements, collecting them into well-organized, backed-up archives. Russell says, “The quality and accessibility of our records was turned around 180 degrees.”

It took 18 months for the land trust’s board, volunteers and two-person part-time staff to complete the process, but Russell says, “It’s absolutely worth it. It has made us much better.”

At the quasi-governmental Louisville and Jefferson County Environmental Trust in Kentucky, staff used the accreditation process to knock out important tasks that usually got sidelined—like updating older easements, revisiting their policies and organizing their files. Lisa Hite says, “There was a lot of work that we don’t get to do on a day-to-day basis, but because we were putting a concerted effort into accreditation, it forced us to just do it. It’s like you get your adrenaline going and you’re going to get that stuff done!”

Henry Tepper, a former Land Trust Accreditation Commissioner, says that most land trusts working toward accreditation see the challenges as opportunities. He says, “I talk to land trusts all the time who say that it was sometimes very hard, but it caused us

to take a hard look at our internal practices. What we learned caused us to do better.”

Tepper says that the standards of professionalism and quality required for accreditation are increasingly expected of land trusts. “Even though it’s a challenge in terms of time, in terms of organization, in terms of cost, in this day and age it’s a cost of doing business,” he says.

In a recent survey, 100% of newly accredited land trusts reported the process made them stronger. Land trusts applying for renewal also use the opportunity to identify and address significant challenges.

Fortunately, it’s not just land trusts that are improving. The accreditation process is improving too. In response to feedback from land trusts that the process was too cumbersome, the Accreditation Commission made four major changes:

- Easier planning—with a revamped accreditation website
- Straighter path—with fewer steps that take less time
- Lighter load—with reduced documentation requirements
- Better tools—with an improved online renewal application

As a result, on average, land trusts will complete the process 30% faster. Now it’s easier to grow stronger. 🌱

**Accreditation is 30% LESS WORK.**  
The completion of the “Improving the Journey” project keeps accreditation effective while making it more efficient. This saves accredited land trusts time to do what they do best: save the places people love.

**Easier Planning** + **Straighter Path** + **Lighter Load** + **Better Tools** = **Reach Goal 30% Faster**

# Endowments

The gifts that keep on giving



JOHN HOFFMAN, DUCKS UNLIMITED

Ducks Unlimited's Verona Wetlands Complex in Nebraska is its flagship conservation effort in the Rainwater Basin, one of the most important habitats in the Central Flyway.

**O**ften misunderstood by both donors and nonprofit entities, endowments are gifts that do not provide the immediate impact that an outright gift makes toward a nonprofit's mission. As a result, many nonprofits do not prioritize endowment giving as a regular strategy in their fundraising efforts. However, nonprofits that engage in a successful endowment growth strategy are best positioned to weather difficult economic downturns.

For donors and nonprofits that have a muddled view of endowments, here's a simple definition: An endowment is a gift of capital, investments, land or some other financial instrument to a nonprofit with a restriction on its use that is generally defined as the income produced from the

gift. In other words, endowments are intended to retain their principal into perpetuity while the income generated is used for programs and mission. Endowments date back to the second century and were used for educational institutions to pay for fellowships and scholarships.

The types and restrictions of endowment gifts are endless, as donor intent prevails in how to account for these instruments. Some donors allow the institution to decide how an endowment may be used. Others may want to give an endowment for a certain purpose or time period, and may require it to be invested in a certain way. As part of a donation acceptance policy, nonprofits should develop an endowment policy that provides guidelines that include the following:

- Minimum donation for an endowment
- Minimum donation for an endowment to have naming rights
- Area or program for appropriations to be spent
- Investment guidelines for the gift

There will likely be exceptions to any policy depending on the donor's giving situation, but a policy helps guide a donor to give to a nonprofit's highest and best use for its mission. At the end of the day, the donor and nonprofit should be in sync on the use of resources to accomplish a program or objective.

So how does a nonprofit build its endowments? Unfortunately, there is no easy way to build an endowment overnight. An effective endowment strategy must be supported by all three aspects of a nonprofit: program, fundraising and administration. Pursuing endowment gifts requires that a nonprofit forgo resources in the current period in order to build sustainability for the future. Initially, this concept may not be well received by a board of directors accustomed to using all resources today for its program. Since building endowments takes time, it should become part of an organization's long-term business model that considers the following three ways to grow endowments:

1. **Restricted endowment outright gifting** – Gifts from donors that are directed or restricted to be endowments are categorized as permanently restricted. They are accounted for in a separate net asset category and cannot

be liquidated by the nonprofit's board for another use. Educational institutions are highly successful in pursuing and receiving direct gifts to endowments. However, other nonprofits are finding success in developing endowment giving to be part of their development portfolio.

2. **Quasi-endowments** – These gifts are similar to restricted endowments with one key distinction. Quasi-endowments are gifts to a nonprofit that have been internally or board-restricted to be treated as an endowment. These gifts are categorized in the unrestricted net asset section of a nonprofit's balance sheet and are usually combined in management reporting on an entity's endowment portfolio. The board, at its discretion, may remove the restriction on a quasi-endowment and use its proceeds for operations.
3. **Net market appreciation** – As part of a nonprofit's investment policy, the organization must establish how much of the market appreciation will be spent on program activities. The spending policy can be simple or complex. Nonprofits still at the infancy stage on endowment growth will often establish a very conservative spending policy to allow for the endowment portfolio to take advantage of compounding returns over time.

Endowments do not simply show up at a nonprofit's front door. It takes time for program, fundraising and administration to understand the advantages of engaging in an endowment strategy. The strategy also requires discipline. Many nonprofits have a planned giving program that stewards donors to leave large gifts to the organization upon their death. These gifts can provide significant resources for a nonprofit's programs. Obviously, these are one-time gifts that should be considered capital gifts. Logically, these "capital" gifts should be used for "capital" purposes;

therefore, many nonprofits allocate a portion of their planned gift maturities as the source of their quasi-endowments. The range on this allocation stretches up to 100%. Determining how much to allocate to operations versus quasi-endowments should be carefully considered in the nonprofit's endowment strategy.

Market appreciation is another critical element of an endowment strategy. Best practices among nonprofits suggest the establishment of an investment committee to serve as a fiduciary and to decide how to invest and monitor endowments to maximize returns while limiting risk. Nonprofits should have an investment strategy that diversifies the endowment portfolio and considers the following, at a minimum:

- Investment objectives
- Spending objectives
- Asset allocation
- Performance and monitoring
- Selection and discharge of investment managers

Those nonprofits with the discipline to build organizational sustainability are the ones whose programs and missions will likely endure. An endowment strategy is a critical component in building that strength. A colleague once said, "I went to my annual budget meeting and listened to each fundraising team and program department walk through how important their roles were to the organization for the next year's budget. I listened intently to how many resources would be produced for next year's mission and realized that all of those efforts combined do not approach the amount that will be produced with no effort from our existing endowments." Endowments provide the most efficient resources for a nonprofit's critical mission. 🌱

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# NEW CLIMATE CHANGE Resource Online

“Land trusts are working every day to conserve in perpetuity the places Americans need and love, but the challenges that climate change presents to these long-term aims are incredibly varied and complex,” says Erin Heskett, Land Trust Alliance national director. “Our new website, *Conservation in a Changing Climate*, empowers land trusts to find the information they need to tackle climate change in their conservation work.”

The website, which debuted in early June, acts as a resource center to guide and inspire land trusts to address threats posed by climate change.

“The resource center helps visitors better understand the fundamentals of climate change, plan for climate change in land conservation and incorporate outreach strategies that build public support for such work,” says Heskett. Twenty-seven case studies (so far) provide on-the-ground examples of best practices and lessons learned from an array of Alliance partners, ranging from local land trusts to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

For example:

- *Marc Hudson of North Florida Land Trust:* A public official from a county 100 miles upriver believed he wouldn’t experience any problems from sea-level rise. Through conservation planning and mapping, Marc showed him that the main tributary stream that runs through that county is due for major flooding. Better yet, Marc was able to show the official “we had already identified priority land purchases in the floodplain of that creek, so that the flooding situation would not be exacerbated.”

The website was made possible through the generous financial support of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, and through technical support provided by the Coastal Conservation Networking Partnership and Climate Change Advisory Committee. Visit

<http://climatechange.lta.org>.

## Climate Change in the Midwest

**JOINING RECENT REPORTS ON CLIMATE CHANGE** is *Weather We Don’t Recognize: How climate change is affecting the Midwest’s weather and how communities are responding* from Island Press and the National Wildlife Federation. Author Sandra Tassel describes in the introduction: “The purpose of this report is to help individuals, organizations, corporations, communities, philanthropists and



*Lowell Leaders in Stewardship* is an after-school youth environmental education program run in partnership with the Lowell Parks & Conservation Trust (accredited) and Mass Audubon (accredited) Drumlin Farm Wildlife Sanctuary, with support from the Lowell Public Schools. The program is profiled in the Youth Education section of the new climate change website.

APRIL HUNT



governments understand and respond to new weather patterns.” She says that on the one hand, “Our responses should seek to stem the huge increase in heat-trapping gases in the atmosphere that are the root cause of climate change...However, because we are already experiencing the extreme weather associated with [it], we also need to prepare for the effect on us and our communities.”

Download the report at <http://islandpress.org/midwest>. •

## Studying the Nexus of Water and Land

**SCOTT CAMPBELL**, a joint fellow with the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy and the Loeb Fellowship at the Graduate School of Design at Harvard University, recently gave a talk about how land trusts play a role in the protection and management of water resources. In *Surface Tensions: Large Landscape Conservation and the Future of America's Rivers*, Campbell acknowledges that preserving the integrity of a resource that moves is inherently complex, especially when that resource is subject to vast sets of laws, regulations and bureaucratic systems that have evolved over centuries.

Land trust transactions that include new components such as water rights can be made even more complicated. Campbell recommends building on market mechanisms, incentives and appropriate pricing to encourage maximum efficiency and conservation. Inter-basin compacts, water networks and water trusts require water owners to be a “different kind of neighbor,” he says, with a big-picture view of how the management of the resource can benefit wilderness, agricultural land and urban development.

Formerly the executive director of the accredited Palmer Land Trust, Campbell has worked in conservation, preservation, economics and community development in southern Colorado. The lecture can be found at [www.lincolninst.edu/education/education-coursedetail.asp?id=986](http://www.lincolninst.edu/education/education-coursedetail.asp?id=986). 🍌

# Forecast Ahead: Sunny Skies With Better Reserves

Now you can easily get a more accurate forecast of your land trust's reserve needs with the new Alliance Legal Defense Reserves Calculator.

### Featuring:

- Forecasting model based on actuarial data collected from hundreds of land trusts across the nation
- Risks tailored for your region
- Calculations for reserves for both land you own and easements
- Better data baselines to offer you a fuller risk assessment

Be prepared to survive a significant legal challenge or series of challenges. Use the new Legal Defense Reserves Calculator and know your local forecast.

[tlc.lta.org/calculator](http://tlc.lta.org/calculator)

Questions? Please contact Leslie Ratley-Beach, Conservation Defense Director at 802-262-6051 or [lrbeach@lta.org](mailto:lrbeach@lta.org).



\* The Learning Center is a service offered to Alliance member land trusts and partners, and to individual members at the \$250 level and above. If you are not a member, please email Leslie to receive a digital file of the calculator.



# Connections

## New Network Reaches Across Globe

WHEN LAURA JOHNSON LEFT MASS AUDUBON\* AND BEGAN A BULLARD FELLOWSHIP AT HARVARD FOREST, Harvard University, for 2013–2014, she explored an idea suggested by Jim Levitt, a fellow at the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, director of the Program on Conservation Innovation at the Harvard Forest and former Mass Audubon board member: How do conservationists outside the United States use and adapt conservation tools that have been developed over the years here? When Peter Stein received the Kingsbury Browne fellowship and award, his thoughts turned to the expanding global land conservation movement as well (see page 27). And since 2012, the Land Trust Alliance has been holding international roundtable meetings in conjunction with its Rallies. Great minds converged and created the International Land Conservation Network (ILCN), a project of the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, set to hold its first “congress” on October 19–21 in Berlin, Germany.

Johnson told *Land Lines*, Lincoln Institute’s magazine, that through their different projects, “Jim, Peter and I came to the similar conclusion that many people around the globe shared a strong interest in connecting to each other and to U.S. conservationists. This desire for a community of practice seemed like a remarkable opportunity to help build capacity for privately protecting land.”

Some objectives for ILCN’s first year include:

- Developing and exchanging information, such as mapping existing networks and active organizations to create a baseline that will help when measuring change/growth in the international private land conservation movement over time.
- Building capacity by developing offerings for private land conservation practitioners and organizations that will address basic to advanced topics to allow a continuum of learning.

ILCN believes that by building capacity and empowering voluntary private and civic land conservation, the global land conservation movement will be strengthened, leading to more durable and effective resource protection.

The First Annual Congress of ILCN will assemble practitioners, innovators and experts in land conservation and restoration from around Europe as well as from North, Central and South America, Africa, Asia and Oceania.



A Congress invitation proclaims: “People attending will represent land conservation organizations both large and small, from global NGOs to local volunteer initiatives. Now is the time to share what we know, across continents, to accelerate the pace, quality and effectiveness of private land conservation!”

“We do this for the intrinsic value of the world’s natural and cultural resources,” says ILCN’s website, “and for their importance to the prosperity and well-being of humankind, today and for generations to come.”

To learn more about ILCN, visit [www.landconservationnetwork.org](http://www.landconservationnetwork.org). •

## Peer Learning Connects Midwestern Land Trusts

“WE’RE FILLING A NICHE. THE LAND TRUST ALLIANCE’S MIDWEST PEER LEARNING PROGRAM IS GAME CHANGING,” says MaryKay O’Donnell, Midwest conservation manager for the Alliance. “Most land trusts in the Midwest are isolated from one another by long distances. This program brings land trust peers together to learn from one another. It’s designed differently from a training session or a conference—everyone has an opportunity to lead and share ideas and expertise.”

Land trust staff members are invited to gather together in-person in one of four groups: executive directors, land protection/stewardship, fundraising/communications or community conservation. In addition to the bi-annual gatherings, peer learning includes one-to-one site visits, regular conference calls, online groups hosted on The Learning Center and individual coaching calls. The program was recently expanded and includes member land trusts in Michigan, Wisconsin, Indiana and Chicago, Illinois.

“It’s great to get in a room with peers, break bread and share common experiences,” says Pete DeBoer, with the Land Conservancy of West Michigan.\* “The time commitment allows me to pull away from the day-to-day of work to connect, share and learn from peers.”



LAURA EKLOV

Land protection and stewardship peers at Siena Retreat Center in Racine, Wisconsin

“Peer learning has become central to Midwest Program services,” adds Carolyn Waldron, Midwest director. “Bringing together land trusts from different states provides valuable networking and deeper learning. As important, it provides space to renew. We organize this program every two years in partnership with Gathering Waters and Heart of the Lakes, both land trust state service centers.”

According to O'Donnell, once people connect with each other they continue to network. “They no longer feel isolated.” •



Checking snake traps on the Red Hills field trip at Tall Timbers Research Station & Land Conservancy in Florida

REBECCA ZEROH

## Field Trips Connect People to Land

**SNAKES AREN'T SLIMY AND CRAYFISH DO INDEED PINCH.** Families exploring wetlands and pine forests in the Red Hills, an ecologically rich region of north Florida and southwest Georgia, discovered a diversity of amphibians and reptiles during a hands-on conservation field trip. The outing was part of a Red Hills spring field trip series on conservation lands. Biologists Kim Sash and Pierson Hill provided numerous interactive opportunities for parents and children during the learning-based trek.

This included checking snake traps (used for monitoring species) and dip-netting in a pond to examine animal and plant life.

Connecting residents to their local landscape is critical to long-term conservation efforts and it has been continually demonstrated that people will protect what they know and love. The Red Hills Awareness Initiative, an outreach and education effort of Tall Timbers Research Station & Land Conservancy\* offers seasonal ecology field trips to promote learning experiences for residents. Hiking, birding trips and wildlife bio-blitzes, like the one led by Sash and Hill, connect people to their local landscape and further conservation education. •

## Ear to the Ground



Susanna Danner

**Will Shafroth** is the new president and CEO of the National Parks Foundation. Prior to his work at the Department of the Interior, Shafroth served as executive director of Great Outdoors Colorado and the Colorado Conservation Trust and as chair of the Land Trust Alliance and Resources Legacy Fund.

California's Eastern Sierra Land Trust\* has hired

**Susanna Danner**, who moved from The Nature Conservancy\* in Boise, Idaho, as its new land conservation program director.

On June 1 the Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust\* said a fond farewell to longtime leader **Chris West**, and hello to the new executive

director, **Erik Glenn**. West is now the Rocky Mountain regional director of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

**Jon Hoekstra** is the new executive director of Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust in Washington.

In April **The Warwick Conservancy**, an all-volunteer conservation organization based in Warwick, New York, dissolved and transferred its responsibilities and commitments to the **Orange County Land Trust**.\*

Kansas Land Trust\* thanks **Ginny Moore** for leading and serving the organization for the past four years as executive director. She will continue to work with KLT as a consultant.

After leading California's Big Sur Land Trust for more than 10 years, including a strategic refocusing to broaden community impact, **Bill Leahy** will now lead the 48-year-old Maryland Environmental Trust, a statewide quasi-public entity. 🌿

\* ACCREDITED LAND TRUST

Stonehouse Pond, one of the many beautiful places with “existence value,” was protected by the accredited Southeast Land Trust of New Hampshire and its partners.

JERRY AND MARCY MONKMAN, ECOGRAPHY

## Understanding Your Audience

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**F**or two days in April Land Trust Alliance President Rand Wentworth spoke to classes at Middlebury College as the Environmentalist-in-Residence, asking the students of Professor Michelle McCauley’s psychology class to send him their ideas on how to communicate with young people who are not currently interested in nature and environmental issues. Here’s one of several great suggestions:

“So far it seems as though environmentalists have emphasized climate change’s effects on far away places of beauty, such as the Arctic or the Sahara Desert. For most environmentalists these places have ‘existence value,’ meaning that people are comforted by the fact

that they exist untouched, even if those individuals never visit them. I think that environmentalists assume that everyone appreciates the existence value of beautiful places, but they may be wrong. We need to teach (at a young age) what the impact of climate change will be in American cities and in the homes of the rich. It may be harder to see these changes because the effects of climate change tend to affect poor people first, but it is not impossible (see the California drought). When environmentalists are able to understand the values and priorities of their audiences and tailor their argument to them, then perhaps the environmental cause will achieve the salience it wants and deserves.” 🍂

# Accredited Land Trusts



## CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FOLLOWING LAND CONSERVATION GROUPS

from around the country for achieving accreditation and demonstrating they meet rigorous quality standards and strive for continuous improvement.

### NATIONAL

- Ducks Unlimited and its affiliate, Wetlands America Trust
- The Conservation Fund and its affiliate, Sustainable Conservation
- The Nature Conservancy
- The Wilderness Land Trust ♦

### ALABAMA

- Freshwater Land Trust ♦
- Land Trust of North Alabama
- Weeks Bay Foundation ♦

### ALASKA

- Great Land Trust
- Kachemak Heritage Land Trust
- Southeast Alaska Land Trust

### ARIZONA

- Arizona Land and Water Trust
- Desert Foothills Land Trust

### ARKANSAS

- Northwest Arkansas Land Trust

### CALIFORNIA

- Bear Yuba Land Trust ♦
- Big Sur Land Trust
- California Rangeland Trust
- Center for Natural Lands Management ♦
- Central Valley Farmland Trust ♦
- Eastern Sierra Land Trust
- Elkhorn Slough Foundation
- Feather River Land Trust
- Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County
- Land Trust for Santa Barbara County ♦
- Land Trust of Napa County
- Land Trust of Santa Cruz County
- Marin Agricultural Land Trust
- Northcoast Regional Land Trust
- Northern California Regional Land Trust ♦
- Pacific Forest Trust
- Peninsula Open Space Trust ♦

- Placer Land Trust ♦
- Riverside Land Conservancy \*
- Sacramento Valley Conservancy ♦
- San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust
- Save the Redwoods League
- Sempervirens Fund
- Sequoia Riverlands Trust
- Shasta Land Trust
- Sierra Foothill Conservancy
- Solano Land Trust
- Sonoma Land Trust
- Tejon Ranch Conservancy
- Tri-Valley Conservancy ♦
- Truckee Donner Land Trust
- Wildlife Heritage Foundation ♦

### COLORADO

- Access Fund \*
- Aspen Valley Land Trust ♦
- Black Canyon Regional Land Trust ♦
- Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust ♦
- Colorado Open Lands ♦
- Crested Butte Land Trust
- Douglas Land Conservancy
- Eagle Valley Land Trust ♦
- Estes Valley Land Trust ♦
- La Plata Open Space Conservancy
- Mesa Land Trust ♦
- Montezuma Land Conservancy ♦
- Mountain Area Land Trust
- Palmer Land Trust
- Rio Grande Headwaters Land Trust ♦
- San Isabel Land Protection Trust ♦

### CONNECTICUT

- Colchester Land Trust
- Connecticut Farmland Trust
- Granby Land Trust
- Greenwich Land Trust
- Housatonic Valley Association
- Joshua's Tract Conservation and Historic Trust
- Kent Land Trust
- Lyme Land Conservation Trust

- Norfolk Land Trust
- Redding Land Trust
- Salem Land Trust ♦
- Sharon Land Trust
- Warren Land Trust
- Weantinoge Heritage Land Trust \*

### FLORIDA

- Alachua Conservation Trust ♦
- Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast
- Conservation Trust for Florida
- Tall Timbers Research Station & Land Conservancy ♦

### GEORGIA

- Athens Land Trust ♦
- Central Savannah River Land Trust ♦
- Chattahoochee Valley Land Trust
- Georgia-Alabama Land Trust
- Georgia Piedmont Land Trust \*
- Mountain Conservation Trust of Georgia ♦
- Oconee River Land Trust ♦
- Southern Conservation Trust
- St. Simons Land Trust

### HAWAII

- Hawaiian Islands Land Trust ♦

### IDAHO

- Lemhi Regional Land Trust
- Palouse Land Trust \*
- Sagebrush Steppe Land Trust
- Teton Regional Land Trust ♦
- Wood River Land Trust

### ILLINOIS

- Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation
- Lake Forest Open Lands Association and its affiliate, Lake Forest Land Foundation ♦
- Openlands

### INDIANA

- Central Indiana Land Trust

The mission of the Land Trust Accreditation Commission is to inspire excellence, promote public trust and ensure permanence in the conservation of open lands by recognizing land trust organizations that meet rigorous quality standards and that strive for continuous improvement.

For information on the land trust accreditation program: [LANDTRUSTACCREDITATION.ORG](http://LANDTRUSTACCREDITATION.ORG)

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## IOWA

- Bur Oak Land Trust
- Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation

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## KANSAS

- Kansas Land Trust

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## KENTUCKY

- Bluegrass Conservancy
- Louisville and Jefferson County Environmental Trust

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## LOUISIANA

- Land Trust for Louisiana \*

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## MAINE

- Androscoggin Land Trust
- Bangor Land Trust
- Blue Hill Heritage Trust
- Boothbay Region Land Trust
- Brunswick-Topsham Land Trust
- Cape Elizabeth Land Trust
- Chebeague & Cumberland Land Trust
- Coastal Mountains Land Trust ♦
- Damariscotta River Association
- Forest Society of Maine ♦
- Frenchman Bay Conservancy
- Georges River Land Trust
- Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust
- Harpswell Heritage Land Trust \*
- Kennebec Estuary Land Trust
- Mahoosuc Land Trust
- Maine Coast Heritage Trust
- Medomak Valley Land Trust
- Oceanside Conservation Trust of Casco Bay \*
- Orono Land Trust \*
- Rangeley Lakes Heritage Trust \*
- Sheepscot Valley Conservation Association
- Vinalhaven Land Trust

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## MARYLAND

- American Chestnut Land Trust
- Eastern Shore Land Conservancy
- Potomac Conservancy

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## MASSACHUSETTS

- Ashby Land Trust
- Buzzards Bay Coalition and its affiliate, Acushnet River Reserve

- Dartmouth Natural Resources Trust
- Groton Conservation Trust
- Kestrel Land Trust
- Lowell Parks and Conservation Trust
- Massachusetts Audubon Society \*
- Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust
- Sheriffs Meadow Foundation \*
- Sudbury Valley Trustees
- The Trustees of Reservations and its affiliates, Hilltown Land Trust and Massachusetts Land Conservation Trust
- Wareham Land Trust
- White Oak Land Conservation Society

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## MICHIGAN

- Chikaming Open Lands ♦
- Chippewa Watershed Conservancy
- Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy ♦
- Land Conservancy of West Michigan
- Leelanau Conservancy ♦
- Legacy Land Conservancy ♦
- Little Forks Conservancy
- Michigan Nature Association
- North Oakland Headwaters Land Conservancy
- Saginaw Basin Land Conservancy \*
- Six Rivers Land Conservancy
- Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy

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## MINNESOTA

- Minnesota Land Trust ♦

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## MISSISSIPPI

- Land Trust for the Mississippi Coastal Plain ♦

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## MONTANA

- Bitter Root Land Trust
- Five Valleys Land Trust ♦
- Flathead Land Trust
- Gallatin Valley Land Trust ♦
- Montana Land Reliance ♦
- Prickly Pear Land Trust
- Vital Ground Foundation

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## NEBRASKA

- Nebraska Land Trust

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## NEVADA

- Nevada Land Trust

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## NEW HAMPSHIRE

- Ammonoosuc Conservation Trust
- Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust ♦
- Monadnock Conservancy ♦
- Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests
- Southeast Land Trust of New Hampshire
- Squam Lakes Conservation Society
- Upper Valley Land Trust

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## NEW JERSEY

- D&R Greenway Land Trust
- Harding Land Trust
- Hunterdon Land Trust
- Monmouth Conservation Foundation
- New Jersey Conservation Foundation
- The Land Conservancy of New Jersey ♦

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## NEW MEXICO

- New Mexico Land Conservancy
- Santa Fe Conservation Trust
- Taos Land Trust

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## NEW YORK

- Agricultural Stewardship Association
- Champlain Area Trails \*
- Columbia Land Conservancy
- Dutchess Land Conservancy ♦
- Genesee Land Trust
- Genesee Valley Conservancy
- Greene Land Trust \*
- Hudson Highlands Land Trust ♦
- Lake George Land Conservancy
- Mianus River Gorge Preserve
- Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy
- Mohonk Preserve
- North Shore Land Alliance
- Open Space Institute and its affiliate, Open Space Institute Land Trust ♦
- Orange County Land Trust
- Rensselaer Land Trust ♦
- Rondout-Esopus Land Conservancy
- Saratoga P.L.A.N.
- Scenic Hudson and its affiliate, Scenic Hudson Land Trust ♦
- Thousand Islands Land Trust ♦
- Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust
- Westchester Land Trust ♦
- Western New York Land Conservancy \*
- Winnakee Land Trust

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## NORTH CAROLINA

- Blue Ridge Conservancy
- Carolina Mountain Land Conservancy ♦
- Catawba Lands Conservancy ♦
- Conservation Trust for North Carolina ♦
- Eno River Association
- Foothills Conservancy of North Carolina
- Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust
- LandTrust for Central North Carolina
- Land Trust for the Little Tennessee
- New River Conservancy
- North Carolina Coastal Land Trust
- Piedmont Land Conservancy
- Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy ♦
- Tar River Land Conservancy

## OHIO

- Gates Mills Land Conservancy
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- Three Valley Conservation Trust

## OREGON

- Deschutes Land Trust ♦
- Greenbelt Land Trust ♦
- McKenzie River Trust ♦
- Southern Oregon Land Conservancy
- The Wetlands Conservancy

## PENNSYLVANIA

- Allegheny Land Trust
- Bedminster Regional Land Conservancy ♦
- Brandywine Conservancy & Museum of Art ♦
- Chestnut Hill Historical Society
- ClearWater Conservancy
- Countryside Conservancy ♦
- Delaware Highlands Conservancy
- Edward L. Rose Conservancy
- French Creek Valley Conservancy
- Heritage Conservancy ♦
- Lancaster County Conservancy ♦
- Lancaster Farmland Trust ♦
- Land Conservancy of Adams County
- Natural Lands Trust and its affiliate, Montgomery County Lands Trust ♦
- North Branch Land Trust ♦
- The Land Conservancy for Southern Chester County
- Tinicum Conservancy ♦
- Western Pennsylvania Conservancy
- Westmoreland Conservancy
- Willistown Conservation Trust ♦

## PUERTO RICO

- Conservation Trust of Puerto Rico

## RHODE ISLAND

- Aquidneck Land Trust ♦
- Block Island Conservancy
- Sakonnet Preservation Association
- Tiverton Land Trust

## SOUTH CAROLINA

- Congaree Land Trust
- Edisto Island Open Land Trust ♦
- Lowcountry Open Land Trust
- Pee Dee Land Trust
- Spartanburg Area Conservancy
- Upstate Forever ♦

## TENNESSEE

- Land Trust for Tennessee ♦
- Lookout Mountain Conservancy
- Tennessee Parks & Greenways Foundation ♦
- Wolf River Conservancy \*

## TEXAS

- Bayou Land Conservancy
- Galveston Bay Foundation
- Green Spaces Alliance of South Texas
- Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust
- Hill Country Conservancy
- Hill Country Land Trust
- Pines and Prairies Land Trust
- Texas Agricultural Land Trust
- Texas Land Conservancy

## UTAH

- Summit Land Conservancy
- Utah Open Lands Conservation Association

## VERMONT

- Greensboro Land Trust ♦
- Lake Champlain Land Trust ♦
- Northeast Wilderness Trust ♦
- Stowe Land Trust ♦
- Vermont Land Trust

## VIRGINIA

- Blue Ridge Land Conservancy
- Land Trust of Virginia ♦
- New River Land Trust
- Northern Neck Land Conservancy
- Northern Virginia Conservation Trust ♦
- Piedmont Environmental Council and its affiliate, Piedmont Foundation
- Virginia Eastern Shore Land Trust
- Williamsburg Land Conservancy

## WASHINGTON

- Bainbridge Island Land Trust
- Blue Mountain Land Trust
- Capitol Land Trust
- Chelan-Douglas Land Trust
- Columbia Land Trust
- Forterra ♦
- Great Peninsula Conservancy
- Jefferson Land Trust ♦
- Lummi Island Heritage Trust
- Methow Conservancy
- Nisqually Land Trust
- North Olympic Land Trust
- PCC Farmland Trust
- San Juan Preservation Trust
- Skagit Land Trust ♦
- Whatcom Land Trust
- Whidbey Camano Land Trust

## WEST VIRGINIA

- Cacapon and Lost Rivers Land Trust

## WISCONSIN

- Bayfield Regional Conservancy
- Caledonia Conservancy
- Ice Age Trail Alliance
- Kettle Moraine Land Trust
- Kinnickinnic River Land Trust ♦
- Mississippi Valley Conservancy
- Natural Heritage Land Trust \*
- Northwoods Land Trust
- Ozaukee Washington Land Trust
- Tall Pines Conservancy

## WYOMING

- Jackson Hole Land Trust ♦
- Wyoming Stock Growers Agricultural Land Trust

As of July 2015

\* Indicates Newly Accredited

♦ Indicates Newly Renewed

♦ Indicates Previously Renewed

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