



Excellence · Trust · Permanence

Introduction to Land Trust Accreditation June 2, 2009

Laura DiBetta
Program Manager



www.landtrustaccreditation.org

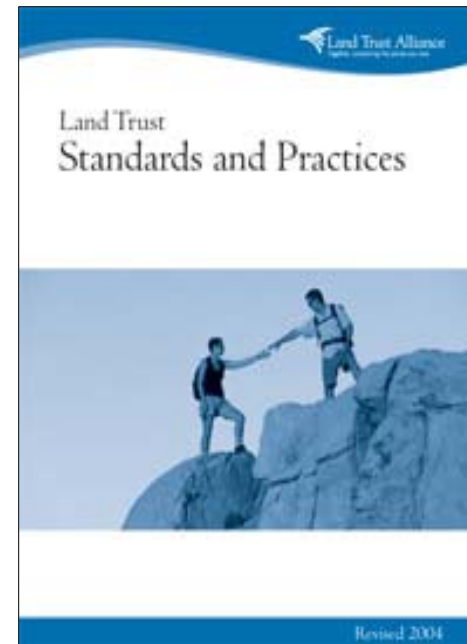
Land Trust 
Accreditation Commission
An Independent program of the Land Trust Alliance

Webinar Outline

- ✓ **Accreditation Background & Overview**
- ✓ **Benefits & Results**
- ✓ **The Commission**
- ✓ **Requirements & Process Overview**
- ✓ **Getting Ready**
- ✓ **Questions**

What is Accreditation?

- Independent verification of 37 indicator practices
- Based on *Land Trust Standards and Practices*
- Voluntary



Goals of the Accreditation Program



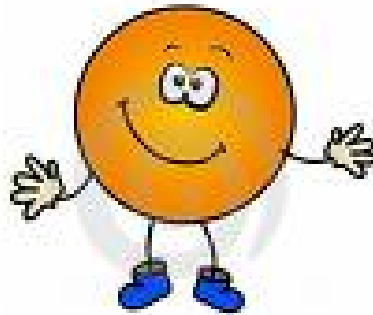
- **Excellence**
- **Trust**
- **Permanence**

Milestones

- **Founded in 2006**
- **2 rounds of pilots in 2007**
- **Lottery held at Rally 2007**
- **Program launched in early 2008**
- **Inaugural awards in September 2008**



Is it Working? You Bet!



Encourage Excellence

- “2-legged stool (fundraising and transactions), now 3-legged (with standards)”
- “Say no easier”
- “Board now asks is this consistent with S&P?”
- “The binders are our bible”
- “This process really helped build a team”
- More money and more land

Foster Public Trust

- **Funders**
- **Agencies**
- **Congress**



Help Ensure Permanence



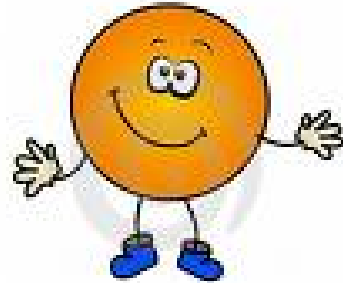
- **More money dedicated to stewardship and defense**
- **Baselines**
- **Monitoring**
- **Management plans**
- **Due diligence**

Land Trust Accreditation Commission

- Independent program of the Land Trust Alliance
- 15 diverse volunteer commissioners
- 4 staff

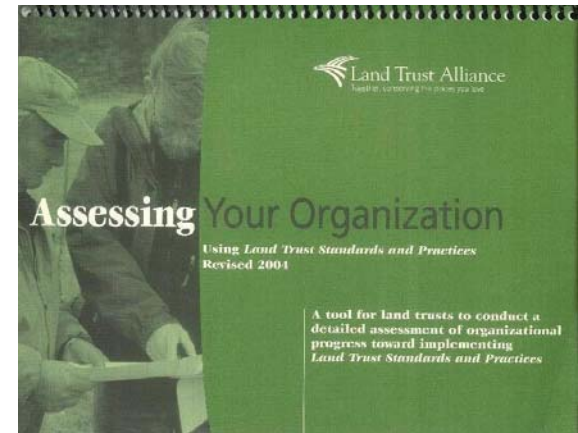


The Accreditation Process



Eligibility

- 501(c)(3) or quasi-governmental
- Land conservation mission
- 2 years
- 2 projects
- Adopted *Land Trust Standards and Practices*
- Self-assessment within last 3 years



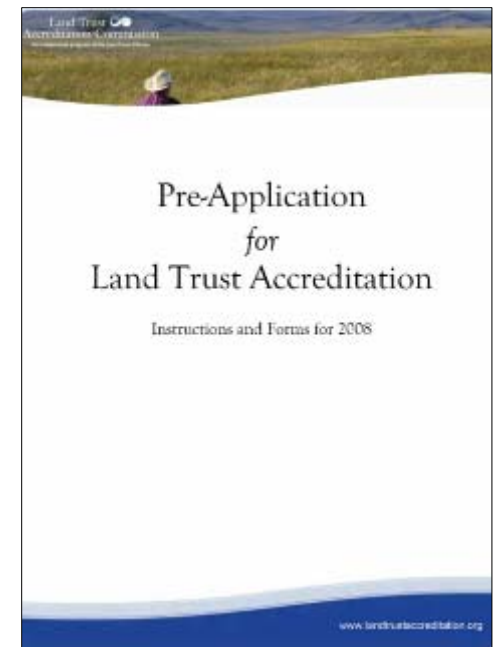
Registration

- **Registration still open for 2009**
- **You can register at**
www.landtrustaccreditation.org
- **Complete form and pay registration fee**



Pre-Application

- **Pre-application questionnaire**
- **Land conservation project lists**
- **Public notice begins**



Project Documentation

- **2-6 projects selected**
- **Project documentation checklist**
- **Newer projects, current practice**
- **Older projects, stewardship focus**



Application

- **Application Questionnaire**
- **Attachments**
 - **Practice documentation**
 - **Project documentation**
 - **Public notice**

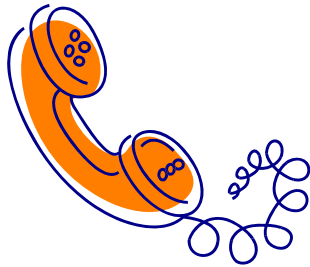


Application Review

- **Review team (staff and commissioners) evaluates compliance with all 37 indicator practices by considering:**
 - **Application**
 - **Supporting documents**
 - **Project documentation**
 - **Public comments**
 - **Research**
 - **Conversations with applicant representatives and or site visit reports**



Applicant Conference Call*



- **Additional information**
 - **Clarification**
 - **Detailed agenda in advance**
 - **Lasts about 1.5 hours**
- * Alternatively, review team may make site visit**

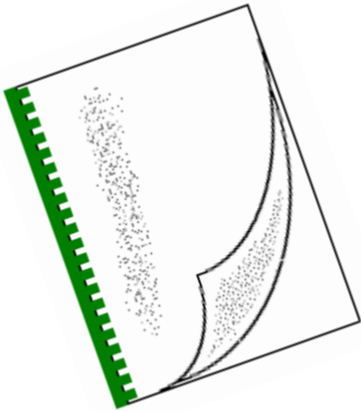
Additional Information Request

- **Follow-up letter with questions and/or document requests**



Review Team Recommendation

- **All practices, however review considers:**
 - **Current practice: variation old and new**
 - **Flexible: range of approaches**
 - **Practical: fosters continuous improvement**



Full Commission Decision

- **Accredit**
 - Commendations
 - Expectations for Improvement
- **Table**
- **Deny**



Fees

- **Based on cost to operate program**
- **Alliance fundraising to keep costs low**
- **2009 fee schedule available on website**



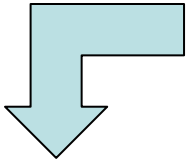
Results

- **Accredited land trusts:**
 - **Are more prepared to defend conservation land**
 - **Have better systems for making and documenting decisions**
 - **Have proven they meet national quality standards**



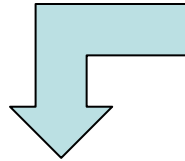
Getting Ready

Land Trust A



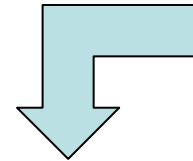
Stage 1:
Assessment

Land Trust B



Stage 2:
Evaluate
Readiness

Land Trust C

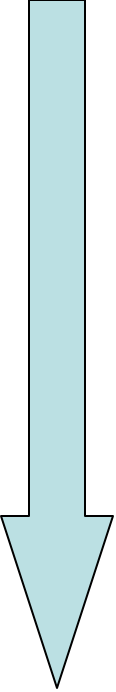



Stage 3:
Final Review

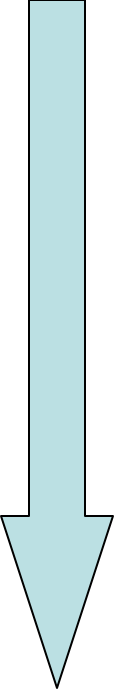




Stage 1: Assessment


- 
- **Complete assessment against full *Land Trust Standards and Practices***
 - **Identify areas for improvement**
 - **Work on high priority areas (indicator practices and others)**
 - **Develop and adopt necessary policies and procedures**
- 

Stage 2: Evaluate Readiness

- 
- Read the application, *Applicant Handbook* and *Guidance Documents*
 - Take the readiness quiz!
 - Work through the Master Attachment Checklist
 - Do you have the documents?
 - Do they meet the practices?
 - Create an accreditation plan



Stage 3: Final Review

- 
- **Assemble your accreditation team**
 - **Gather and review documents, policies and procedures**
 - **Edit final documents**
 - **Register to apply!**
- 

Land Trust Alliance Tools

- **The Learning Center:**
<http://learningcenter.lta.org>
- ***Standards and Practices Guidebook***
- **Standards and Practices Curriculum**
- **Training, conferences, online learning and webinars**



Commission Resources

- **Website:**
www.landtrustaccreditation.org
- ***Applicant Handbook***
- **Fact sheets**
- ***Guidance Documents***
- **Commission staff**



Questions?

