



Excellence · Trust · Permanence

Introduction to Land Trust Accreditation

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www.landtrustaccreditation.org

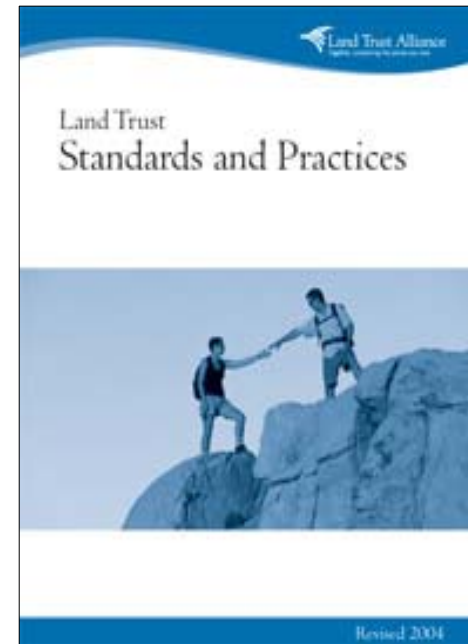
Land Trust 
Accreditation Commission
An Independent program of the Land Trust Alliance

Webinar Outline

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

What is Accreditation?

- Independent verification
- Based on *Land Trust Standards and Practices*
- Voluntary





History & Milestones

- **Talked about since 1989**
 - **2004-2005 – Land Trust Alliance-convened Steering Committee**
 - **3 phases of public comment**
 - **Fall 2005 – General design approved**
 - **April 2006 – Commission established**
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History & Milestones

- **Additional public comment**
- **2 rounds of pilots in 2007**
- **Lottery held at Rally 2007**
- **Program launched in early 2008**
- **Inaugural awards in September 2008**
- **Today – 82 accredited land trusts**



Goals of the Accreditation Program



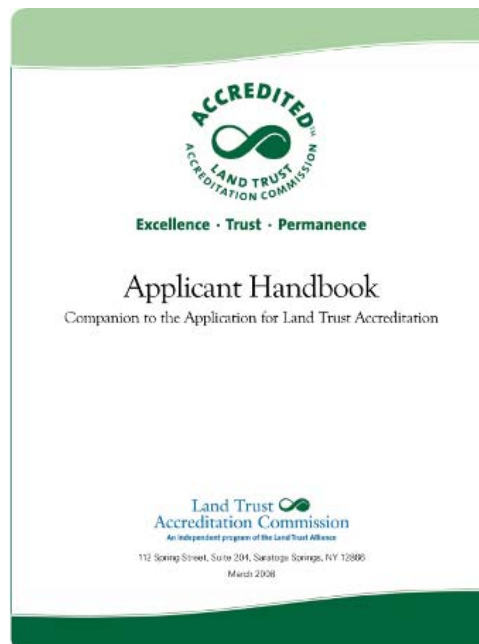
- **Excellence**
- **Trust**
- **Permanence**

Land Trust Accreditation Commission

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

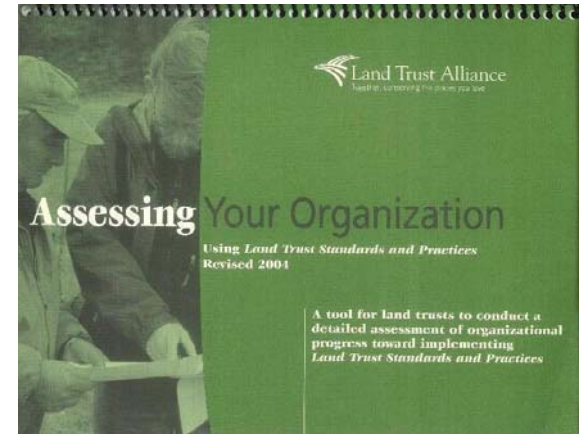


The Accreditation Process



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

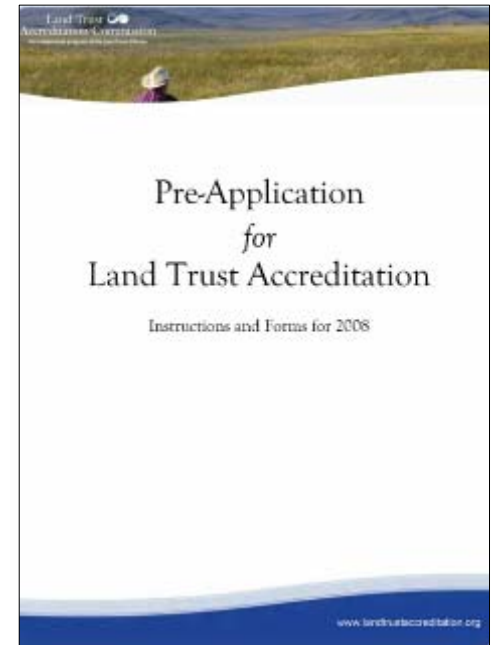


Registration

- Registration now open for 2010 rounds 1 and 2
- You can register at www.landtrustaccreditation.org
- Complete form and pay registration fee
- New requirements for 2010

Pre-Application

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



Project Documentation

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



Application

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

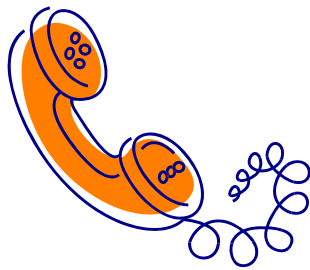


Application Review

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



Applicant Conference Call*



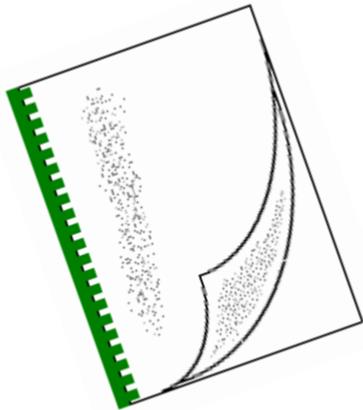
- **Additional information**
 - **Clarification**
 - **Detailed agenda in advance**
 - **Lasts about 1.5 hours**
- * **Alternatively, review team may make site visit**

Additional Information Request

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



Review Team Recommendation



- Review ensures all practices are met
- Review is of *current practice*
 - Recognizes variation between older and newer projects
- Review is *flexible*
 - Recognizes land trust diversity
 - Appreciates range of approaches
- Review is *practical*
 - Considers realities and fosters continuous improvement

Full Commission Decision

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

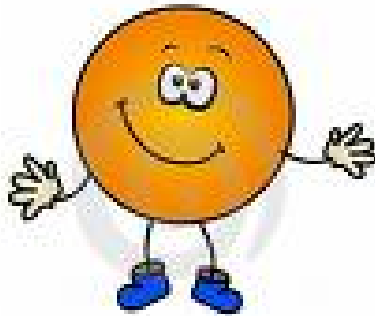


Fees

- **Based on cost to operate program**
- **Alliance fundraising to keep costs low**
- **Other costs**
 - **Time commitment**
 - **Copying, supplies, postage**
- **Fee schedule available on website**



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**

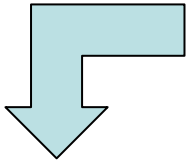
Results

- **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



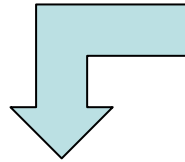
Getting Ready

Land Trust A



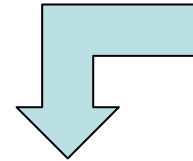
Stage 1:
Assessment

Land Trust B

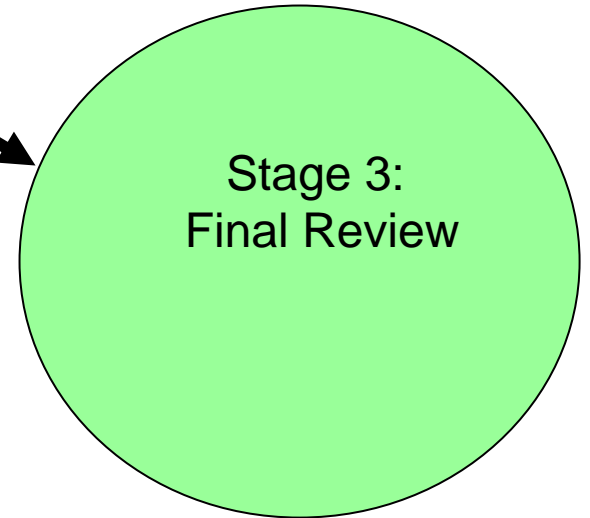
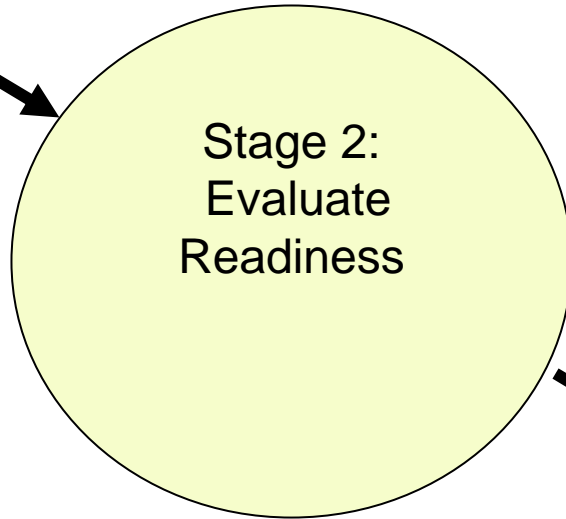
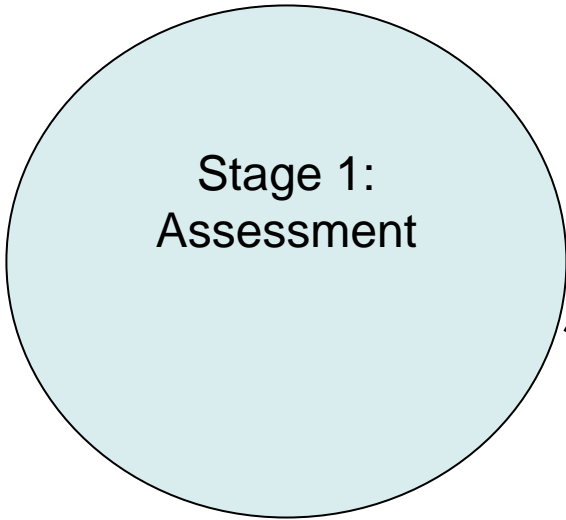


Stage 2:
Evaluate
Readiness

Land Trust C

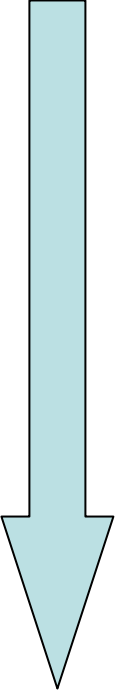



Stage 3:
Final Review





Stage 1: Assessment

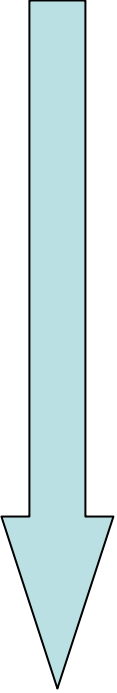

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- **Complete assessment against full *Land Trust Standards and Practices***
 - **Identify areas for improvement**
 - **Work on high priority areas (indicator practices and others)**
 - **Develop and adopt necessary policies and procedures**
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Stage 2: Evaluate Readiness

- 
- Read the application, *Applicant Handbook* and *Guidance Documents*
 - Read the requirements
 - 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**
- **Coming soon: Pathways to Accreditation**



Commission Resources

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



Questions?





Thank you!

