Ever wonder who™s sitting behind the stack of accreditation application materials your land trust submitted to the Land Trust Accreditation Commission? Aside from a team of Commission staff, a volunteer commissioner thoroughly reads (sometimes it takes days!) each land trust application he or she is assigned, before preparing a final recommendation and awarding accreditation.

So what else do these commissioners do in their spare time? Why do they volunteer? And how™d they get involved? Get to know them better.

**Meet Molly, executive director of Skagit Land Trust in Washington State and commissioner since July 2010**

**Q: Tell us a little bit about yourself.**

A: Born and raised in Toronto, Canada, I moved to Wyoming in my early 20s to work for the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS). While at NOLS, I helped run branch schools in Alaska, Canada, Kenya and Patagonia Chile (1979-2002). I earned my MA. ABS in Managing and Consulting at the Leadership Institute of Seattle, Bastyr University, and my Bachelors of Environmental Science at the University of Waterloo in Canada.

While in Patagonia, I met my coworker and now husband. Together, we are the parents of two wonderful young boys. Our family loves hiking, camping, sea kayaking, gardening and traveling to remote places across the country, plus Africa, Canada and Chile. Our home is Washington State in “the Skagit,” which is near the Canadian-U.S. border in Northern Puget Sound.

**Q: Why are you passionate about land conservation?**

A: I™ve spent a good deal of my life living in nature, and to me there is nothing quite as grounding. Although I'm no longer living out of a backpack, many of the best days of our family life are those spent in nature, whether at a local park or in the backcountry.

My passion is addressing the need for there to be access to nature in everyone’s daily life. Americans are fortunate to have relatively clean water and clean air; parks of all sizes; places for wildlife and a wealth of farming and forest resources. But these are not a given, and without conservation on every scale, we risk passing on a far less vibrant and resilient world to each generation.

**Q: What drew you to serve as a volunteer commissioner?**

A: Although it was a lot of work, I enjoyed going through the accreditation process with Skagit Land Trust. The application process made us look at the way we were doing things and it internally raised our own standards. The impact that accreditation has on improving land conservation and ensuring its permanence that™s what attracted me to this volunteer role.

**Q: What™s the most rewarding aspect of being a volunteer commissioner?**

A: You see and hear all the innovative things land trusts across the nation are doing - it's very impressive! And the passion that staff and boards have about their land trust™s mission is equally as impressive.

**Q: How does serving as a volunteer commissioner benefit your work outside of the Commission?**

A: I can become so focused in my daily conservation work that some days it's easy to think that the world stops at the state border. Volunteering for the Commission helps me stay in touch with the bigger picture of what we are doing and why. It gives me a wider view of what is possible in conservation and helps me be a better executive director to the Skagit Land Trust.

Interested in volunteering as a commissioner? [View more information and access the online application](#)