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 Aimee
Executive director of the Sacramento Valley Conservancy, California program manager of the Wilderness Land Trust and commissioner since January 2012

Q: Tell us a little bit about yourself.
A: I have been the executive director of the Sacramento Valley Conservancy since 1996, and the California program manager of the Wilderness Land Trust since 2009, both accredited land trusts. I love doing real estate transactions and fundraising for both groups.

I enjoy surfing, skiing, swimming, biking, hiking, walking my dogs and watching my two sons play soccer and run cross-country and track.

Q: Why are you passionate about land conservation?
A: I love to save special places forever by buying them fair and square from willing sellers, and sharing them with others.

Since I’ve been young, I’ve drawn strength and focus from being in my favorite wild places on the river, in the mountains and on the coast. Providing that opportunity to other folks, especially young folks, is why I’m passionate about conservation. And, I admit, I’m a deal junkie - I love solving problems, bringing people together and making real estate deals that last forever.

Q: What drew you to serve as a volunteer commissioner?
A: I decided to serve as a Commissioner to learn more about land conservation throughout the country and to give back what I can to help land conservation. You want to do your best when you only have one chance to save a special place.

Q: What’s the most rewarding aspect of being a volunteer commissioner?
A: As a commissioner, I have learned a lot and created wonderful new relationships with people who do amazing conservation work across the country.

Q: How does serving as a volunteer commissioner benefit your work outside of the Commission?
A: Accreditation is about making your organization the best it can be. It’s a lot of work, but it does not take away from your mission; it makes your organization ready to take advantage of opportunities when they arise, follow through for the long haul and share these places with your community.

Q: If land trust accreditation were to be on the cover of your favorite newspaper in five years, what would the story be about?
A: The best article would mention that the land trust earned the accreditation seal, but it would focus on the amazing work of the land trust because that’s what it’s all about.

Interested in volunteering as a commissioner? View more information and access the online application