

Here are a few steps to help your land trust maintain its accreditation and prepare for its next renewal.

- Implement any Expectations for Improvement.
- Annually review the [Requirements Manual](#).
- Keep track of any unique set of facts and circumstances that resulted in not meeting one of the accreditation indicator elements or accreditation requirements throughout the accredited term.
- Contact the Commission's [Help Desk](#) if you have questions.

Continuous Improvement

The accreditation program was designed to foster continuous improvement. Accredited organizations are expected to implement [Land Trust Standards and Practices](#). Accredited organizations are also expected to stay current in the field of land conservation, to review annual updates to the *Requirements Manual* and to continually refine their programs.

Conditions for Maintaining Accreditation

Land trusts applying for accreditation or renewal sign a formal Accreditation Agreement accepting conditions for maintaining accreditation, including the following.

- To comply with the accreditation indicator elements and program requirements.
- To implement *Land Trust Standards and Practices*, to be aware of any changes to them, to stay current in the field of land conservation.
- To provide the Commission with information, upon request, regarding your organization's compliance with the accreditation indicator elements and program requirements.
- To notify the Commission in writing of major changes in your structure or operation that could potentially affect your organization's intent and ability to comply with the accreditation indicator elements or accreditation requirements. *See more below.*

Notification

A land trust must notify the Commission in writing of any major change in its structure or operation that could potentially affect its intent and ability to comply with *Land Trust Standards and Practices* and accreditation requirements. Changes that require written notification include the following:

- Change of scope of activities (such as when an organization that only accepted fee properties at the time of accreditation takes on conservation easements, or when an accredited land trust that had not completed any new transactions during its accredited term completes a new transaction after having been awarded renewal).
- Transformation of governance structure (such as [mergers](#), changes in a parent organization, etc.).
- Significant changes in mission (such as taking on activities that are counter to land conservation or eliminating the organization's land conservation program).
- Legal actions taken against the land trust or settlement of actions pending at the time of accreditation.
- Change of tax-exempt or charitable status.
- Other changes that may result in the land trust no longer implementing *Land Trust Standards and Practices* and accreditation requirements.

Other changes that may trigger the need to inform the Commission would include circumstances such as expanding the land trust's service region from a small area to a much larger area, completing a series of transactions during the accredited term (either easement or fee) when the land trust had not completed a recent transaction for evaluation prior to being awarded accreditation, or otherwise substantially expanding the scope of the organization.

Finally, accredited land trusts must notify the Commission of any changes to the land trust's contact information, particularly the accreditation contact information.

Confirming Compliance

The Commission can request additional information from an accredited land trust during its accreditation term to confirm compliance with *Land Trust Standards and Practices* and accreditation requirements. The ability to confirm compliance enables the Commission to assure the public that all accredited land trusts meet the accreditation requirements. For more information see the Commission's [Compliance Confirmation Policy and Procedures](#).

Disciplinary Action

While extremely rare, an accredited land trust can be placed on probation and accreditation can be revoked according to the

Commissionâ€™s [Disciplinary Action Policy and Procedures](#). This policy helps maintain the integrity of the accreditation program for all participants.