

Saratoga Springs, New York (February 27, 2019) - Today, the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, a program promoting national quality standards for ensuring permanence in the conservation of American lands, announced more than 420 land trusts have now earned the national accreditation mark of distinction with the addition of 12 newly accredited organizations. The recent round of awards includes the first accredited land trust in Missouri. There are now accredited land trusts in 46 states and one U.S. territory.

Americans value their open spaces. As we near the March 1 anniversary of the creation of one of the world's first national parks, Yellowstone, in 1872, the national park system is still recovering from the effects of the government shutdown. Land trusts and the lands they save for their communities offer a bright spot on the horizon. These local and regional nonprofits around the country help communities meet their goals for protecting clean water, farms, forests and public recreation areas. Newly accredited groups manage extensive trail networks and their lands serve as places for community needs as diverse as nature study, low-income housing and sustainable agriculture.

"Passing the 420 mark for accredited land trusts is significant," said Tammara Van Ryn, executive director of the Commission. "There are now more accredited land trusts than there are national parks, monuments and historic sites. By earning this distinction, these land trusts have proven they can effectively steward the nearly 20 million acres of land under their care." Accredited groups protect more land for the benefit of their communities than the size of Denali, Yellowstone, Grand Canyon, Glacier, Everglades and Yosemite national parks combined.

A group of 29 land trusts also earned renewed accreditation. Accredited land trusts must renew every five years, confirming their compliance with national quality standards and providing continued assurance to donors and landowners of their commitment to care forever for their land and easements. Three of these land trusts achieved their second renewal "upholding the standards for more than 10 years."

As noted by the renewed Nisqually Land Trust, "We cannot work sustainably at this scale without a rock-solid foundation, and the key to that foundation is the accreditation process: a rigorous and unblinking examination of what we do and how we do it. In short, we believe that accreditation is the best way to hold ourselves accountable at a level that matches our vision, our goals and the challenges before us."

Van Ryn noted that, "the accountability provided by the accreditation seal helps increase public confidence in land trusts. Private foundations and public agencies are increasingly turning to accredited land trusts as trusted partners." Individuals donating to land trusts also look for the mark of distinction offered by the accreditation seal.

By displaying the accreditation seal awarded by the Commission, these groups proudly announce they demonstrate sound finances, ethical conduct, responsible governance and lasting stewardship of the lands they protect. The Commission is an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance, a national land conservation organization working to save the places people need and love by strengthening land conservation across America.

The 12 land trusts achieving first-time accreditation now include Adirondack Land Trust (New York), Cardinal Land Conservancy (Ohio), Davidson Lands Conservancy (North Carolina), Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space (New Jersey), Inland Northwest Land Conservancy (Washington), Keweenaw Land Trust (Michigan), New Canaan Land Trust (Connecticut), Ozark Regional Land Trust (Missouri), Prairie Land Conservancy (Illinois), Sycamore Land Trust (Indiana), The Walthour-Moss Foundation (North Carolina), and Wildlands Conservancy (Pennsylvania).

The 29 land trusts achieving renewed accreditation now include Agricultural Stewardship Association (New York), Arizona Land and Water Trust (Arizona), Aspen Valley Land Trust (Colorado), Bitter Root Land Trust (Montana), Bur Oak Land Trust (Iowa), Estes Valley Land Trust (Colorado), Flathead Land Trust (Montana), Gallatin Valley Land Trust (Montana), Galveston Bay Foundation (Texas), Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust (North Carolina), Kachemak Heritage Land Trust (Alaska), Land Conservancy of Adams County (Pennsylvania), Land Trust of Santa Cruz County (California), Lookout Mountain Conservancy (Tennessee), Lummi Island Heritage Trust (Washington), Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy (New York), Mohonk Preserve (New York), Nebraska Land Trust (Nebraska), New River Land Trust (Virginia), Nisqually Land Trust (Washington), Northcoast Regional Land Trust (California), Northwoods Land Trust (Wisconsin), Ozaukee Washington Land Trust (Wisconsin), Save the Redwoods League (California), Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests (New Hampshire), Solano Land Trust (California), Tar River Land Conservancy (North Carolina), Texas Agricultural Land Trust (Texas), and Westmoreland Conservancy (Pennsylvania).

About the Land Trust Accreditation Commission

The Land Trust Accreditation Commission, based in Saratoga Springs, New York, inspires excellence, promotes public trust and ensures permanence in the conservation of open lands by recognizing land trust organizations that meet rigorous quality standards and that strive for continuous improvement. The Commission, established in 2006 as an independent program of

the Land Trust Alliance, is governed by a volunteer board of diverse land conservation and nonprofit management experts from around the country.

About the Land Trust Alliance

Founded in 1982, the Land Trust Alliance is a national land conservation organization that works to save the places people need and love by strengthening land conservation across America. The Alliance represents 1,000 member land trusts supported by more than 200,000 volunteers and 4.6 million members nationwide. The Alliance is based in Washington, D.C., and operates several regional offices. [More information about the Alliance is available on its website.](#)