Accreditation is making a difference! Land trusts that have gone through the accreditation process tell us over and over that they are stronger organizations having gone through the accreditation process.

Our Profiles in Excellence series, produced jointly with the Land Trust Alliance, features stories of accredited land trusts, why they decided to apply, how they did it, and what it means to them. Read more about these land trusts today.

**Little Forks Conservancy: Help Along the Path to Accreditation**

"Being able to call MaryKay [O'Donnell, Alliance Midwest conservation manager] with questions specific to our land trust and being honest and forthright without worrying about it influencing our application was invaluable," says Joelle Ferguson from The Little Forks Conservancy in Michigan. [Read more](#).

**Colorado Cattlemen’s Agricultural Land Trust: Leading by Example**

"Lead by example," says Chris West, executive director of Colorado Cattlemen’s Agricultural Land Trust (CCALT). "You can’t expect anyone to believe accreditation is valuable if land trusts aren’t willing to take a leap and dive into the process. We said ‘Yes, we’re going to do this, and do it now,’ he explained. [Read more](#).

**Placer Land Trust: Accreditation & Strategic Conservation: A Happy Synchronicity**

In 2007, the Placer Land Trust decided that accreditation was vital to its success in conserving land in Placer County, the fastest growing county in northern California. [Read more](#).

**Thousand Islands Land Trust: Leaving a Legacy in the Thousand Islands**

"Once you get the river under your skin, you never want to leave. It’s the place I call home," said Andrew Wood, executive director of Thousand Islands Land Trust. [Read more](#).

**Greensboro Land Trust: Volunteers Achieve Accreditation, Board Chair Leads by Example**

The farms, forests, open land and lakes of Greensboro, Vermont charm hundreds of tourists each year. Clive Gray, once a summer resident, shares countless memories with his siblings from their family adventures here. [Read more](#).

**Jefferson Land Trust: Evolution of a Land Trust**

Jefferson Land Trust (WA) reached two important milestones in 2009: they marked their 20th anniversary as an organization, and earned the distinction of becoming an accredited land trust. "We’ve come a long way in the last twenty years - having grown from an all-volunteer organization at the land trust’s inception, to a staff of seven today." [Read more](#).

**Dutchess Land Conservancy: Accreditation Helps Land Trust Raise Money**

The rolling hills and pastures of the central Hudson River Valley are home to the Dutchess Land Conservancy, an established land trust with eight full time staff and over 300 easements. The conservancy’s interest in accreditation was to demonstrate that the organization holds itself to the highest possible standards of excellence. After applying for accreditation in 2008 and receiving it in 2009, they achieved this recognition and "can only see the benefits to our organization," according to President Becky Thornton. [Read more](#).
Athens Land Trust: Community Ties

For Athens Land Trust, “it is important that the community know who we are and what we do,” says Executive Director Nancy Stangle. Located in Athens, Georgia, the organization faces the challenge of being in the smallest county in the state where land-use decisions are always a major community issue. The land trust addresses these community needs with a unique, dual mission of land conservation and affordable housing. Read more.

More success stories:

An Accreditation Success Story: Chikaming Open Lands, Saving Land, Winter 2009 (PDF)