

More than anything, our thoughts have been with you and your communities. The outbreak of COVID-19 has brought us many life lessons. One of those being how fortunate we are to have the outdoors as a solace and a respite. Another is how vital our farms and ranches are in keeping us healthy and fed, especially during a time of crisis.

We know that the coming weeks and months will bring unique challenges to us all. What we also know is that accredited land trusts are prepared for many of those challenges. We've already seen your resiliency and creativity as you continue the work of conservation (while observing safe social distancing), and we've seen you continue to be leaders in your community as you reassure people that there are still many ways to engage with the outdoors.

While we know this is a time of uncertainty and questioning, the Commission will continue to stand alongside and support you. We are all in this together. We want to thank those of you who have reached out with questions and thoughts in the past weeks. Please continue to do so! While we might not have immediate answers, we want you all to know that you are being heard. We are actively listening and forging a path for the future. As we have answers and updates, we are using every channel available to get that message to you ([read our article about the best way to stay updated and in touch with the Commission](#)).

As we move forward, the Commission will be making thoughtful decisions that take into account that we all must be flexible. For example, last week we granted additional time to those land trusts with applications due in the next few months. Though these may be times of change and the creation of a "new normal," the accreditation seal still stands as a mark of distinction in land conservation.

Thank you to all of you for your continued dedication to land conservation excellence.