

Celebrating First-Time Accreditation

When a land trust joins the accredited land trust community, it helps build and safeguard the public trust in land trusts and in land conservation. It is truly something to cheer for. Rally 2022 included a special celebration of the 15 land trusts that achieved first-time accreditation over the year. These 15 land trusts are in 11 different states and span from coast to coast. They are engaging their communities in special ways, protecting important lands, improving water quality and providing opportunities for people to get outside and enjoy nature.



Engaging Communities:

- **Okanogan Land Trust (WA)** celebrated World Fish Migration Day with its community as a tribute to the protection of critical habitat for salmon and steelhead.
- **Greater Lovell Land Trust (ME)** designs and instructs curriculum-based weekly outdoor classes for an experiential interdisciplinary program with the Maine Environmental Science Academy.

Protecting a Wide Range of Landscapes and Natural Resources:

- **San Benito Agricultural Land Trust (CA)** and its partners permanently protected a 540-acre ranch that allows cattle grazing and that created a partnership with the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band.
- **Sustainable Iowa Land Trust (IA)** protects farmland that grows nature-friendly table food.
- **Philander Chase Conservancy (OH)** was formed in partnership with Kenyon College to protect the natural beauty of the farms, woodlands, waters and open spaces and to preserve the rural character of the region.
- **The Greenbelt Land Trust of Mid-Missouri (MO)** recently protected 102 acres with old Missouri forest and the largest remnant tallgrass prairie in its area.
- **Desert Tortoise Preserve Committee (CA)** protects critical habitat for the desert tortoise and other desert species in the Mojave Desert.

Improving Water Quality:

- **Captina Conservancy (OH)** works to protect Captina Creek, which has some of the highest water quality in the state.
- **Mid-Michigan Land Conservancy (MI)** is part of a "Forest to Faucet" initiative to help protect drinking water.
- **Walloon Lake Association and Conservancy (MI)** was formed when a lake association and a conservancy joined forces in their shared mission of protecting water quality and connecting people to Walloon Lake.
- The all-volunteer **Rancocas Conservancy (NJ)** has protected 2,000 acres of land in the Rancocas Creek watershed.
- **Payette Land Trust (ID)** started an initiative to protect water quality by creating a connected corridor along the North Fork Payette River.



Providing Public Access:

- **Island heritage Trust (ME)** provides public access that allows for launching boats, fishing, clamming, picnicking and recreation.
- **Sheridan Community Land Trust (WY)** connects people to land and history by providing access to 28-plus miles of

non-motorized trails, all on places permanently conserved.

- The all-volunteer **Open Land Conservancy of Chester County (PA)** works to provide access to open space and preserve wildlife habitat in a region with high development pressure.

Accreditation helps strengthen a land trust; it is an investment in the core infrastructure critical to meeting the promise of perpetuity. These 15 land trusts inspire us all with their commitment to the Standards and excellence.

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