

The Commission is honored to announce that Chris Jage has joined the board of commissioners. The Commission is governed by a diverse board of [18 volunteer commissioners](#) involved in land conservation around the country. Chris is the Conservation Program Director for the Adirondack Land Trust in northern New York State where he works with staff in all aspects of land protection and stewardship, including ALT's initial accreditation and subsequent renewal efforts.



Prior to this, he served in land protection roles for the Adirondack Chapter of The Nature Conservancy and the New Jersey Conservation Foundation where he completed over 100 land transactions, resulting in the protection of thousands of acres from city parks to an 11,000-acre nature preserve in the New Jersey Pine Barrens. He has served on the boards of the Rancocas Conservancy, South Jersey Land & Water Trust, Camden Greenways and Great Egg Harbor Scenic & Recreational River Council. In 2010, Chris was awarded the Environmental Quality Award from the EPA for his conservation work in South Jersey.

Chris holds a B.S in Environmental Resource Management from Penn State, a M.S. in Crop and Soil Environmental Sciences from Virginia Tech and a Certificate in Non-Profit Management from LaSalle University. After work, Chris enjoys hiking, cross country skiing, and eventually paddling the cedar strip canoe that he is currently building.

### **We caught up with Chris to learn more about him and his work in land conservation.**

**Q:** What inspires you to work in land conservation?

**A:** Different things have inspired me over the years but at the moment, having the benefit of visiting protected lands that I knew from decades ago at a time when their fate hung in the balance, I have to say that it is the restorative power of nature. When you give land a chance to heal, it is astounding how quickly nature's missing pieces start to reappear in the landscape.

**Q:** Why did you want to become a Commissioner?

**A:** I began my land trust career in 2000 at the New Jersey Conservation Foundation (NJCF) working in partnership with Alliance staff to help land trusts in South Jersey understand and implement the *Land Trust Standards and Practices*. Later, I helped NJCF with the massive undertaking of preparing our land records and policies for our initial accreditation (successful!) application. This work showed me the immeasurable value of taking the time to get your land trust's house in order because that is what truly safeguards the promise of perpetual conservation. When the opportunity came along to join the Commission, I jumped at the chance because I'd like to use my experiences (good and bad) to help more land trusts continue to improve and build on our collective legacy of lasting conservation.



**Q:** What's your favorite way to spend time in nature?

**A:** I really enjoy hiking in my adopted home of the Adirondack mountains where I have plenty of options from casual streamside strolls to high alpine scrambles all while taking in all the botanizing and birding I can along the way. But I guess my favorite would have to be just going hiking somewhere new. It's that sense of wonder and exploration that really makes me love getting outside and, quite frankly, my day job protecting these places.