



Land Trust Accreditation Commission Contact:

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Land Trusts Prevail in Challenging Times

Saratoga Springs, New York (August 20, 2020) – Commitment to land conservation excellence continues to be paramount even in challenging times. Land trusts invested in accreditation to help fortify their resiliency and to ensure their promise of protecting lands forever. These protected lands help build healthy communities, across the country, in a time where nature is proving to be more important than ever.

The Land Trust Accreditation Commission, a program promoting national quality standards for ensuring permanence in the conservation of American lands, announced that a total of 443 land trusts have now earned the national accreditation mark of distinction. Accredited land trusts span the country and are based in 46 states and one territory.

An additional 47 land trusts, the largest renewal class to date, have successfully navigated the rigorous renewal process and continue to be recognized with the seal of accreditation. Among these are 17 land trusts that achieved their first renewal and 30 land trust that achieved their second renewal.

In recognition of the challenges posed by COVID-19, the Commission is taking extra efforts to support land trusts through the accreditation process by spending time actively listening to land trusts to understand the actual impacts they face. This feedback is helping the Commission implement customizable solutions that respond to the needs of the land trust community.

Executive Director Melissa Kalvestrand said, "Land trusts and the communities they serve have been faced with unprecedented challenges over the past few months. The Commission's core values have always been integrity, accountability and service. In these times those values are even more important than ever to ensure that land trusts feel supported and to maintain clear lines of communication. It is inspiring to listen and learn of conservation stories that continue in spite of or even as a result of COVID-19. Resiliency and community trust in permanence—which accreditation strives to assure—are standing strong through this testing moment."

The Commission is excited to expand the number of land trusts committed to excellence with the opportunity for land trusts to apply as first-time applicants in 2021. There are approximately 20 first-time application slots available and registration for the lottery for a slot is open until August 31 at 5 p.m. EST on the Commission's website. We are pleased to announce that during this decision round, Mountains Restoration Trust (California) achieved first-time accreditation.

The 47 land trusts achieving renewed accreditation now include Ashby Land Trust (Massachusetts), Athens Land Trust (Georgia), Bangor Land Trust (Maine), Black Canyon Regional Land Trust (Colorado), Blue Mountain Land Trust (Washington), Boothbay Region Land Trust (Maine), Cape Elizabeth Land Trust (Maine), Catawba Lands Conservancy (North Carolina), Central Savannah River Land Trust

(Georgia), Coastal Mountains Land Trust (Maine), Colchester Land Trust (Connecticut), Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust (Colorado), Colorado West Land Trust (Colorado), Feather River Land Trust (California), Forest Society of Maine (Maine), Freshwater Land Trust (Alabama), Georges River Land Trust (Maine), Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy (Michigan), Great Peninsula Conservancy (Washington), Greensboro Land Trust (Vermont), Hawaiian Islands Land Trust (Hawaii), Jefferson Land Trust (Washington), Lake Champlain Land Trust (Vermont), Lake Forest Open Lands Association and its affiliate, Lake Forest Land Foundation (Illinois), Land Trust for Santa Barbara County (California), Land Trust for Tennessee (Tennessee), Land Trust of Bucks County (Pennsylvania), Legacy Land Conservancy (Michigan), Lyme Land Conservation Trust (Connecticut), Minnesota Land Trust (Minnesota), Monadnock Conservancy (New Hampshire), New Mexico Land Conservancy (New Mexico), Northern California Regional Land Trust (California), Northwest Arkansas Land Trust (Arkansas), Peninsula Open Space Trust (California), Rensselaer Land Trust (New York), Salem Land Trust (Connecticut), Saratoga P.L.A.N. (New York), Skagit Land Trust (Washington), St. Simons Land Trust (Georgia), Tall Pines Conservancy (Wisconsin), Thousand Islands Land Trust (New York), Utah Open Lands (Utah), Warren Land Trust (Connecticut), Westchester Land Trust (New York), Wilderness Land Trust (Washington), Willistown Conservation Trust (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. More information about the Commission and the full list of accredited land trusts is available at www.landtrustaccreditation.org.

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 at www.landtrustalliance.org.

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