



Excellence · Trust · Permanence

The Commission awards the accreditation seal to land conservation organizations that meet national standards for excellence, uphold the public trust and ensure that conservation efforts are permanent.

The Accreditation Seal

A mark of distinction in land conservation

About the Seal

The accreditation seal recognizes land conservation organizations that meet national standards for excellence, uphold the public trust and ensure that conservation efforts are permanent. The Land Trust Accreditation Commission began awarding the seal – shown in the bar above – to accredited land trusts in 2008.

The Commission was established in 2006 as an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance. It is governed by a volunteer board of diverse land conservation and nonprofit management experts from around the country. The Commission conducts an extensive review of an applicant's policies and programs before making a determination to award accreditation and the right to display the trademarked seal. The Commission tested the voluntary accreditation program in 2007 and began operations in 2008. There are now more than 301 accredited land trusts across the United States.

The number of land trusts displaying the seal is growing over time as the program accommodates all eligible organizations and as land trusts make the significant commitment necessary to prepare and apply for accreditation. The accreditation seal is becoming a recognizable mark of distinction in land conservation.

“The Forest Society of Maine (FSM) is a stronger and more focused organization as a result of our participation in the accreditation program. The seal of accreditation provides people with a strengthened confidence in FSM and in the land trust community overall.”
Alan Hutchinson, Executive Director

Excellence

Accredited land trusts meet national quality standards for protecting important natural places and working lands forever. These land trusts demonstrate their commitment to excellence by adopting *Land Trust Standards and Practices*, the ethical and technical guidelines for the responsible operation of a land trust, and meeting the accreditation requirements drawn from them.

Trust

Nonprofit organizations, including land trusts, are increasingly called on to demonstrate their accountability to the public. Accredited land trusts have voluntarily submitted their organizations to an external, independent review of their practices. As a result, accreditation provides the public with the assurance that the land trust displaying the accreditation seal meets established standards for organizational quality and permanent land conservation.

Permanence

Land trusts help conserve land that is essential to our health and well-being. When land trusts agree to protect land for the benefit of the public, in most cases they do so by promising that the protection is forever. The accreditation program verifies that the land trust has the policies and programs in place to keep this promise, either by caring for the land itself or transferring the land to an entity that can.

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