

Your Investment in Accreditation Matters

Your investment in accreditation strengthens the land trust movement

- Shows your land trust's commitment to sound finances, ethical conduct, responsible governance and lasting stewardship
- Connects your land trust to a select network of land trusts committed to excellence
- Builds partner and donor confidence in the land trust community

"Our land trust is glad to be a part of the accredited land trust community. We are all stronger together, aligned in our approach, and able to relate to each other better knowing we speak the same language of best practices."

Joe Rising, Communications Coordinator, The Prairie Enthusiasts, Wisconsin

"When the movement was young, the systems were invented on the fly. There's been a natural progression over time: develop, promote, then require Standards and Practices. It's part of the maturation of the movement."

Foundation Executive



Your investment in accreditation keeps you on the leading edge

- Strengthens your land trust
- Engages your board and staff
- Ensures your land trust stays current with best practices
- Better positions your land trust to defend and steward its land

"Accreditation is both a roadmap for how to do things right, and an affirmation that we're working at the leading edge of land conservation."

Steve Cook, General Counsel, Columbia Land Trust, Washington

"The process itself will make your organization stronger, better, and more focused. Be bold and never look back!"

Jill Bays, President, Transition Habitat Conservancy, California



Accredited Land Trusts

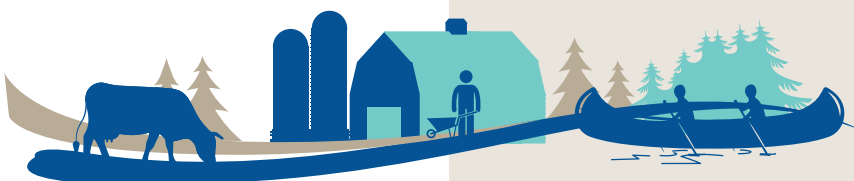
Better positioned to protect, defend and steward land

8X more money set aside for stewardship and defense*

The Impact of Land Trust Accreditation

In 2003 the Land Trust Census revealed the land trust community was unprepared to meet its promise of perpetuity. Only 16% of land trusts had conservation defense funds and many did not annually monitor their land and easements. In 2004 Congress became concerned, leading the Land Trust Alliance to create the Land Trust Accreditation Commission in 2006.

Today, the network of more than 400 accredited land trusts is made up of strong, respected leaders in their communities with the resources to forever steward the conservation lands entrusted to them.





**Your investment
in accreditation
pays you back**

- Save more land
- Raise more money
- Attract more volunteers
- Qualify for valuable discounts and benefits

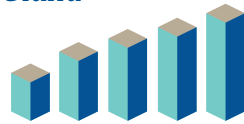


"Our acres conserved headed sky high after we were accredited. This speaks to the virtues of accreditation."

Bob Stokes, President, Galveston Bay Foundation, Texas

Save more land

5X
more land protected*



**Accredited
Land Trusts**

Raise more money

55%
more financial
supporters*



double
their budgets*

Attract more volunteers

3X
more volunteers*



*As compared with eligible not-yet-accredited land trusts. Data is based on the Land Trust Alliance's 2005, 2010, and 2015 Land Trust Census.

"'In perpetuity' is a weighty responsibility. Staying true to the accreditation standards gives peace of mind that we can deliver on that promise. Accreditation is not an end point; it is a continuous learning process for our staff and board of directors, and lets our conservation easement landowners, supporters, and the public know that we hold ourselves to the highest standards."

Cathy Dombi, Executive Director, Southern Oregon Land Conservancy, Oregon

**Earn extended
accreditation term**

7 years
upon third renewal



Contact us for more information on partnering with the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, the impact of accreditation and the process.

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**LAND TRUST ACCREDITATION
COMMISSION**



An independent program of the Land Trust Alliance

2020 Land Trust Accreditation Fees

Accreditation fees are structured to provide land trusts of all sizes the opportunity to participate in the accreditation program, a program that builds strong land trusts, fosters public trust in land conservation and helps ensure the permanence of land conservation. Your investment in accreditation strengthens the land trust movement, keeps your land trust on the leading edge and pays you back by helping you raise more money, attract more volunteers and qualify for valuable discounts and benefits.

There is a registration fee and an application fee. The fees are nonrefundable and nontransferable.

- The \$850 registration fee is due at registration.
- The application fee (the base fee plus any additional fees, as described below) is invoiced after the pre-application is submitted and is due on the application due date.

2020 Application Fee Schedule

<i>Applicant Total Annual Expenses⁽¹⁾</i>	<i>2020 Application Base Fee for Five-Year Term⁽²⁾⁽³⁾</i>
\$0 - \$25,000	\$1,130
\$25,001 - \$50,000	\$2,010
\$50,001 - \$100,000	\$2,840
\$100,001 - \$250,000	\$4,550
\$250,001 - \$500,000	\$6,670
\$500,001 - \$750,000	\$8,200
\$750,001 - \$1,000,000	\$10,000
\$1,000,001 - \$2,500,000	\$11,340
\$2,500,001 - \$5,000,000	\$12,500
\$5,000,001 - \$10,000,000	\$13,960
\$10,000,001 - \$25,000,000	\$17,600
\$25,000,001 - \$50,000,000	\$23,460
\$50,000,001 - \$100,000,000	\$32,840
\$100,000,001 - \$200,000,000	\$46,920
\$200,000,001 - \$350,000,000	\$68,040
\$350,000,001 - \$500,000,000	\$87,980
>500,000,001	\$117,200

(1) Applicant's total expenses as reported on the "Total Expenses" line from page 1 of the most recent Form 990 or Form 990-EZ submitted at the time of pre-application. If the "Total Expenses" line includes capital cost(s) for fee property or conservation easement purchase(s), contact the Commission to discuss a possible fee adjustment.

(2) Exclusive of the \$850 registration fee and does not include any additional fees; see below for more information.

(3) Quasi-governmental organizations that do not file a Form 990 should contact the Commission for a fee determination.

Additional Fees

Please review the additional fees below and contact the Commission if you need more information.

- If an organization operates with multiple corporations (such as a supporting organization, related corporation, LLC, etc.), additional application materials are required. For more information, see Requirements for Land Trusts with Multiple Corporate Structures or Corporate Combinations. In addition to the standard fee for the primary organization, there is a multiple corporation fee for each related entity.
 - o Basic Level (for each related entity): \$500, not to exceed \$2,500
 - o Intermediate Level (for each related entity): the higher of \$2,500 or a 25% discount on the total application fee that applies to the related entity
- The application "base fee" is for members of the Land Trust Alliance. Nonmembers pay an additional 20%.

Frequently Asked Questions

How many hours will it take our land trust to apply for or renew our accreditation?

People often ask this question, and the answer is: it depends.

- Land trusts that consistently implement *Land Trust Standards and Practices* and with good recordkeeping practices typically take less time to apply or renew than land trusts that do not.
- Land trusts with many employees operating across many programs are likely to require more time to collect information than land trusts that have a few staff in one office.
- Land trusts applying for first-time accreditation need to collect and provide more documentation than land trusts that are renewing.

As you can see, it is impossible to give guidance specific to your land trust. However, we do have aggregate data from previous applicants that may help with your planning.

- The first-time application process averaged 555 hours from registration to accreditation. *(Based on an older paper-based process; data will be updated in 2021 to reflect new online application system.)*
- The renewal application process averaged 300 hours from registration to accreditation.

What additional costs should our land trust plan and budget for?

Some applicants require paid help to organize and scan documents; other land trusts need to secure high-speed Internet for more efficient uploads to the online application. First-time and renewal materials are submitted electronically; there are no application printing/copying/shipping costs.

How will accreditation benefit my land trust?

In our 2018 impact evaluation accredited land trusts report they are stronger, more engaged organizations because they applied for and achieved accreditation. More specifically, accreditation fees buy land trusts:

- A thorough, external evaluation of relevant policies, procedures and documentation
- Detailed, tailored written feedback that can lead to more effective land conservation and help ensure perpetual obligations to land and easements can be met.

Your accredited land trust also receives promotional material for use online and in print to let your partners know of your demonstrated/continued commitment to conservation excellence.

During your accredited term the Commission continues to engage your land trust through periodic check-ins to ensure that you are ready when it is time to renew, and our staff is always on stand-by to answer any questions that you have during the accredited term. The Commission also works on your behalf to market and protect the integrity of the accreditation seal, and works with the Land Trust Alliance to promote accredited land trusts.

What are other, more concrete benefits of accreditation?

Many accredited land trusts receive cost-savings or time-savings from land trust partners, including:

- Terrafirma, which provides a valuable annual discount to enrolled accredited land trusts
- US Army Corps of Engineers, which prioritizes accredited land trust partners (varies by region)
- States like Colorado, which offers an expedited certification process for accredited land trusts

More examples can be found in the Benefits of Accreditation fact sheet.

Do accreditation fees cover the cost of operating the land trust accreditation program?

Accreditation fees do not cover all Commission expenses. The Commission relies on the commitment of volunteer commissioners who collectively donate about 3,000 hours each year reviewing applications to keep costs affordable for applicants. The Commission also relies on interest from a modest endowment established by the Land Trust Alliance. These contributions subsidize the difference between accreditation fees and the actual cost per applicant (at application and over the accredited term) while ensuring the accreditation program's success.

How can we budget and plan for our land trust's accreditation fee in future years?

Accreditation fees are posted annually. An inflation rate of 3% should be used for planning purposes when applying or renewing sometime beyond the current fee schedule. Land trusts preparing for third renewal (fourth application) should budget for a seven-year-term fee pro-rated to the corresponding five-year-term fee.

More questions?

Contact the Commission at info@landtrustaccreditation.org or 518-587-3143.

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