

BY Jennifer Brady-Connor

Land Trust   
 Accreditation Commission  
 An Independent program of the Land Trust Alliance

## Good News Travels Fast – BUT YOU HAVE TO SHARE IT FIRST!

**A**chieving accreditation should prompt an announcement to the world: “We did it! We are an accredited land trust, and that means something!” Yet almost 30% of accredited land trusts do not mention their achievement anywhere on their website—one of the easiest and most obvious ways to build awareness of your accredited status and why it matters.

Promoting your accredited status can go hand-in-hand with promoting your land trust. For instance, within moments of getting the go-ahead, Palouse Land Trust (ID) announced its accreditation in a press release and secured a copy of the accreditation seal to put in its newsletter. “Palouse Land Trust’s accredited status demonstrates our commitment to permanent land conservation that benefits the entire community,” says Executive Director Amy Trujillo.

Looking for some creative ideas to inform current and prospective donors of your achievement? Bayou Land Conservancy (TX) has the accreditation award ceremony pennant and its certificate of accreditation prominently displayed on its office wall so that it is the first thing a potential donor sees walking into the office. Heritage Conservancy (PA) promotes its accredited status in many


ways, including its automated telephone greeting as follows: “Welcome to Heritage Conservancy, a not-for-profit accredited conservation organization.” Bedminster Conservancy (PA) placed the accreditation seal prominently on its newsletter nameplate. Estes Valley Land Trust (CO) placed the accreditation seal on its easement monitoring reports. All of these methods remind donors, volunteers, staff and board members of the high standards to which your land trust is committed.

Here is a checklist of four easy things you can do right after reading this article:

1. Update your land trust’s automated telephone greeting to add the simple yet powerful statement “an accredited land trust.”
2. Add a copy of the accreditation seal (with a link to more information) to your staff’s email signatures.
3. Ask your website designer to add the accreditation seal to your home page and

link it to your press release announcing your accreditation.

4. Log into GuideStar and add the following statement to your land trust’s description: “Our land trust was awarded accreditation in [year] and is one of over 300 land trusts from across the country that have been awarded accreditation since the fall of 2008. Accredited land trusts are authorized to display a seal indicating to the public that they meet national standards for excellence, uphold the public trust and ensure that conservation efforts are permanent. The seal is a mark of distinction in land conservation.”

In 2016 we will be working with accredited land trusts to identify new promotional materials. If you have any ideas that you would like to share, please contact me at 518-587-3143 or [jbconnor@landtrustaccreditation.org](mailto:jbconnor@landtrustaccreditation.org). 



While renovating all of its preserve signage, the Land Trust of North Alabama is taking the opportunity to add the accreditation seal (see lower right of photo).

LAND TRUST OF NORTH ALABAMA