



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

About the Seal

The accreditation seal will recognize 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 will award the seal – shown in the bar above – to accredited land trusts starting 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 will conduct 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 is testing the voluntary accreditation program in 2007 and will begin operations in 2008.

"Our land trust is eager to earn the accreditation seal when it becomes available so that we can visibly demonstrate our commitment to high standards and permanent land protection."

Natasha Grigg, Boxford Open Land Trust (MA)

The number of land trusts displaying the seal is expected to grow 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 Commission anticipates that most interested land trusts will complete the accreditation process by 2012 and that over time the accreditation seal will become a recognizable mark of distinction in land conservation.

Excellence

Accredited land trusts will meet national quality standards for protecting important natural places and working lands forever. These land trusts will 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. Many organizations have already started preparing for accreditation by adopting the standards and refining their implementation of the practices.

Trust

Nonprofit organizations, including land trusts, are increasingly called on to demonstrate their accountability to the public. Accredited land trusts will have voluntarily submitted their organizations to an external, independent review of their practices. As a result, accreditation will provide 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 will verify 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.

04/07