

ACTING LOCALLY

By MELISSA KALVESTRAND

↑ Oregon Agricultural Trust received accreditation for the first time in 2025.

Sir Patrick Geddes first conceptualized “think globally, act locally” in his 1915 book, “Cities in Evolution.” He was a planner, a conservationist and the modern-day pioneer of city and town planning. His approach was to work incrementally on an issue, starting small and growing slowly. For example, he would analyze a city and focus on a few things to change, like removing the most dilapidated houses and re-purposing the space as a park.

That “act local” philosophy is at the core of the work for each of the 12 land trusts that achieved first-time accreditation since last Rally.

A local impact isn't always measured in acres.

- **Brooklyn Queens Land Trust (NY)** owns 35 community gardens in 20 different neighborhoods. Many gardens were once vacant, trash-filled lots and are now thriving public spaces that are hubs for gardening, learning, arts and culture.
- **Casey Trees (DC)** works to create a greener, healthier city by restoring, enhancing and protecting the tree canopy in the nation's capital. It has planted more than 60,000 trees and is 92% of its way toward its goal of having the tree canopy cover 40% of the city by 2032.

Local is about connecting people to land.

- **Teatown Lake Reservation (NY)** is both a nature preserve and an environmental education center. Each year, its programs engage 20,000 children and adults, and its 15 miles of trails attract 15,000 hikers. It was recently awarded \$500,000 in state funding to transform its 1,000 acres into an accessible, sustainable and inclusive space.
- **Ever Green Team (VA)** has a Veterans and Youth Outreach Program. It takes military veterans fishing, hunting and camping to connect them with the healing properties of the outdoors and inspires the next generation of conservationists with outdoor adventures.
- **American River Conservancy (CA)** and its partners developed a 25-mile trail network along the South Fork American River. Its trailhead map gives helpful direction tips, a brief property description, a difficulty rating and accessibility information.
- **Kingston Land Trust's (NY)** “land for all and all for land”

mission translates to a wide variety of community-focused programs, including a quarterly Spanish immersion conversation at Mexican and Central American restaurants to discuss local food and land trust initiatives.

Local means protecting special local places.

- **Nature Collective's (CA)** 1,000-acre San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve offers over 9 miles of hiking trails and protects a range of habitats—including coastal strand, salt marsh and riparian woodland—which are critical to over 1,000 plant and animal species.
- **Grand Prairie Friends (IL)** owns more than 60 acres of critically endangered tallgrass prairie, including two sites with the highest conservation value of remnant prairie remaining in Illinois.
- **Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation (MO)** was instrumental in developing a 1,300-acre conservation bank in Northern Missouri to protect and restore habitat for endangered Indiana and northern long-eared bats.

Local is about land that keeps a community fed.

- **Oregon Agricultural Trust (OR)** was awarded \$9.2 million to preserve farmland with oak habitat, reintroduce traditional burning and provide Tribal members access for harvest and ceremony.
- **Litchfield Land Trust (CT)** created a community garden on one of its preserves in partnership with a community center. The property has 40 garden plots, along with running water and a storage shed to support those gardening efforts.

Local is about healthy waters.

- **Cumberland River Compact (TN)** works to address the root causes of water pollution, both urban and rural. It has de-paved portions of properties, planted trees, removed dams, restored streams and their buffers—all while engaging the community in these efforts.

We celebrate these 12 organizations that are acting locally as part of the larger land trust community that is working together to build a bigger global impact. ☺

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CELEBRATING ACCREDITATION

Accreditation is not a one and done thing. It is a continuous commitment to conservation excellence and doing the hard work, day in and day out, to meet the promise of perpetuity. At Rally, we recognized 83 renewed land trusts, including land trusts that have been renewed for the third time. These land trusts are based in 29 states and one territory, and all together protect over 3.5 million acres.

- American Chestnut Land Trust (MD) ♦
- Aspen Valley Land Trust (CO) ♦
- Bitter Root Land Trust (MT) ♦
- Block Island Conservancy (RI) ♦
- Brandywine Conservancy & Museum of Art (PA) ♦
- Branford Land Trust (CT)
- California Farmland Trust (CA) ♦
- Capital Region Land Conservancy (VA)
- Capitol Land Trust (WA) ♦
- Catskill Center for Conservation and Development (NY)
- Chikaming Open Lands (MI) ♦
- Colorado Open Lands (CO) ♦
- Conserving Carolina (NC) ♦
- Countryside Conservancy (PA) ♦
- Deschutes Land Trust (OR) ♦
- Eagle Valley Land Trust (CO) ♦
- East Haddam Land Trust (CT)
- Eastern Shore Land Conservancy (MD) ♦
- Elkhorn Slough Foundation (CA) ♦
- Essex Land Trust (CT)
- Estes Valley Land Trust (CO) ♦
- Five Valleys Land Trust (MT) ♦
- French Creek Valley Conservancy (PA) ♦
- Frenchman Bay Conservancy (ME) ♦
- Friends of the Columbia Gorge and its affiliate, Friends of the Columbia Gorge Land Trust (OR)
- Gallatin Valley Land Trust (MT) ♦
- Gates Mills Land Conservancy (OH) ♦
- Georgia-Alabama Land Trust (GA) ♦
- Granby Land Trust (CT) ♦
- Greenbelt Land Trust (OR) ♦
- Harding Land Trust (NJ) ♦
- Heritage Conservancy (PA) ♦
- Housatonic Valley Association (CT) ♦
- Hudson Highlands Land Trust (NY) ♦
- Ice Age Trail Alliance (WI) ♦
- Kansas Land Trust (KS) ♦
- Kennebec Estuary Land Trust (ME) ♦
- Kestrel Land Trust (MA) ♦
- Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County (CA) ♦
- Land Trust of Napa County (CA) ♦
- Land Trust of Santa Cruz County (CA) ♦
- Land Trust of Virginia (VA) ♦
- Lookout Mountain Conservancy (TN) ♦
- Louisville & Jefferson County Environmental Trust (KY) ♦
- Lowell Parks and Conservation Trust (MA) ♦
- Lummi Island Heritage Trust (WA) ♦
- Maine Farmland Trust (ME)
- Michigan Nature Association (MI) ♦
- Monmouth Conservation Foundation (NJ) ♦
- Nebraska Land Trust (NE) ♦
- Nisqually Land Trust and its affiliate, Nisqually Community Forest (WA) ♦
- Norfolk Land Trust (CT) ♦
- North Branch Land Trust (PA) ♦
- North Shore Land Alliance (NY) ♦
- Northern Virginia Conservation Trust (VA) ♦
- Northern Waters Land Trust (MN)
- Northwoods Land Trust (WI) ♦
- Ozaukee Washington Land Trust (WI) ♦
- Peconic Land Trust and its affiliate, South Fork Land Foundation (NY)
- Placer Land Trust (CA) ♦
- Rondout-Esopus Land Conservancy (NY) ♦
- Sagebrush Steppe Land Trust (ID) ♦
- Save the Redwoods League (CA) ♦
- Scenic Hudson and its affiliates, Scenic Hudson Land Trust and Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail (NY) ♦
- Scenic Rivers Land Trust (MD)
- Sequoia Riverlands Trust (CA) ♦
- Shenandoah Valley Conservancy (VA)
- Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests (NH) ♦
- Solano Land Trust (CA) ♦
- Sonoma Land Trust (CA) ♦
- Tall Timbers Research Station & Land Conservancy (FL) ♦
- The Conservation Foundation (IL)
- The Land Conservancy of McHenry County (IL)
- Tiverton Land Trust (RI) ♦
- Upstate Forever (SC) ♦
- Ventura Land Trust (CA)
- Vital Ground Foundation (MT) ♦
- Wareham Land Trust (MA) ♦
- Washington Farmland Trust (WA) ♦
- Western Reserve Land Conservancy and its affiliate, Natural Areas Land Conservancy (OH)
- Westmoreland Conservancy (PA) ♦
- Wild Rivers Land Trust (OR)
- Wyndham Land Trust (CT)

♦ Denotes second renewal
♦ Denotes third renewal



↑ Members of Teatown Lake Reservation celebrate first-time accreditation at Rally 2025.

LAND TRUST ACCREDITATION COMMISSION

An independent program of the Land Trust Alliance

landtrustaccreditation.org