



Hunterdon Land Trust

Protecting the places you love

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Hunterdon Land Trust Earns National Recognition From Land Trust Accreditation Commission

RARITAN TWP. – The Hunterdon Land Trust has achieved national accreditation from the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance.

"It's a tremendous honor to receive national accreditation, a testament to the Hunterdon Land Trust's exceptional efforts to protect the places we all love in Hunterdon County," said Patricia Ruby, executive director of the Hunterdon Land Trust. "As we celebrate this mark of distinction, along with the county's 300th anniversary, we're proud to play an integral role in preserving our rich rural heritage for our children and our children's children."

The Hunterdon Land Trust was incorporated as a nonprofit organization in 1996, and has protected more than 7,500 acres of farmlands, fields and forests toward its goal of preserving 10,000 acres by 2020. The Land Trust's headquarters is at the Dvoor Farm, a preserved 40-acre tract that includes a 1798 historic farm house and several 19th-century barns.

The Hunterdon Land Trust was awarded accreditation this August, and is one of only six land trusts from New Jersey to earn 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.

“This round of accreditation decisions represents another significant milestone for the accreditation program; the 280 accredited land trusts account for over half of the 20,645,165 acres currently owned in fee or protected by a conservation easement held by a land trust,” said Commission Executive Director Tammara Van Ryn. “Accreditation provides the public with an assurance that, at the time of accreditation, land trusts meet high standards for quality and that the results of their conservation work are permanent.”

Each accredited land trust submitted extensive documentation and underwent a rigorous review. “Through accreditation, land trusts conduct important planning and make their operations more efficient and strategic,” said Van Ryn. “Accredited organizations have engaged and trained citizen conservation leaders and improved systems for ensuring that their conservation work is permanent.”

According to the Land Trust Alliance, conserving land helps ensure clean air and drinking water; safe, healthy food; scenic landscapes and views; recreational places; and habitat for the diversity of life on earth. In addition to health and food benefits, conserving land increases property values near greenbelts, saves tax dollars by encouraging more efficient development, and reduces the need for expensive water filtration facilities. Across the country, local citizens and communities have come together to form more than 1,700 land trusts to save the places they love. Community leaders in land trusts throughout the country have worked with willing landowners to save more than 47 million acres of farms, forests, parks and places people care about, including land transferred to public agencies and protected via other means. Strong, well-managed land trusts provide local communities with effective champions and caretakers of their critical land resources, and safeguard the land through the generations.

"By earning accreditation, we have demonstrated our commitment to meeting national standards of excellence, and that our organization is worthy of public trust," said Ron Monaco, president of the Hunterdon Land Trust's Board of Trustees. "I want to thank the staff, volunteers and trustees who worked so hard to help us achieve this honor."

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