

Creating an Ecologically Functional Landscape in the Upper Mississippi River Valley

LTA MW Regional Conference

April 28, 2007

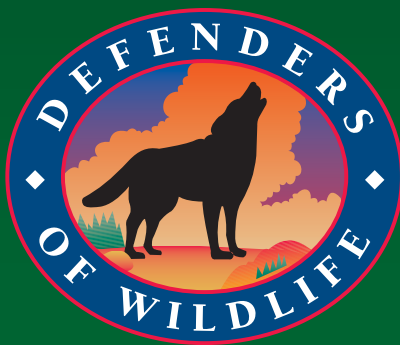
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Living Lands:

Helping Land Trusts Conserve Biodiversity



Living Lands Mission

To support and increase the capacity of the land trust community to conserve biodiversity on private lands through financial and technical assistance.

Living Lands Project: Why Now?

- Standards 8, 11 and 12
- IRS and taxpayers need conservation donations to be worthy of a federal tax benefit
- Land trusts need to document “conservation purposes” in easement language
- Funders want strategic planning
- New State Wildlife Action Plans

Living Lands: Survey

- Purpose: Determine the current extent of local land trust work that contributes to biodiversity conservation
- Interviews with LTA staff, land trusts, conservation organizations
- Web survey, January 2006:
 - Sent to approx. 800 land trusts
 - 135 responded (18%)
 - 28 states

Survey Results

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- Total response: 135 land trusts
 - Mission includes habitat: 97%
 - Habitat is primary focus: 63%
 - Protect agricultural lands: 71%
 - Want to increase capacity for biodiversity conservation: 89%

Survey Responses

- Major barriers:
 - Limited stewardship / monitoring funding
 - Limited staff capacity
 - Limited staff expertise
 - Not a local community priority
 - Uninterested landowners

Survey Responses

- Assistance or training needs:
 - Conservation planning
 - Habitat restoration and management
 - Monitoring
 - Identifying funding sources

Living Lands Project

- Land Trust Alliance regional conferences and Rally (2006, 2007, 2008)
- Written resources for land trusts:
www.defenders.org/livinglands
- Case studies
- Small grants for biodiversity pilot projects

Pilot Projects

- \$59,300 awarded to 7 land trusts
 - Teton Regional Land Trust, ID
 - Nisqually Land Trust, WA
 - Washtenaw Land Trust, MI
 - Sudbury Valley Trustees, MA
 - Greenbelt Land Trust, OR
 - Eastern Sierra Land Trust, CA
 - Taos Land Trust, NM

Living Lands Contact Info

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