

FOR RELEASE: August 26, 2014
Lowell Parks & Conservation Trust
978-934-0030

For more information, contact:
Contact: Jane Calvin, jcalvin@lowelllandtrust.org



Lowell Parks & Conservation Trust Earns National Recognition
Accreditation Awarded by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission



[LOWELL, MA] – The Lowell Parks & Conservation Trust has achieved land trust accreditation from the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance.

“The Lowell Parks & Conservation Trust’s accredited status demonstrates our commitment to permanent land conservation that benefits the entire community,” says Mark Romanowsky, President. “Our land trust is a stronger organization today having gone through the rigorous accreditation program.”

The Lowell Parks & Conservation Trust (LP&CT) was founded in 1990. As one of the few urban land trusts in the country, LP&CT has a unique mission and its impact can be visibly seen throughout the landscape of Lowell, including the Edwards Street soccer fields, Hawk Valley Farm, the Concord River Greenway Park, and the Spalding House. LP&CT also owns smaller parcels throughout the city, such as Jollene Dubner Park that offer an oasis in our dense neighborhoods. “In the spirit of Margaret Mead, a small number of committed people can make incredible things happen. And begin to change, if not the world, our small piece of it for the better,” said Christine Cole, LP&CT Board Member.

The Lowell Parks & Conservation Trust was awarded accreditation this August and is one of only 280 land trusts from across the country that has 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.

“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 over 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.

“The accreditation seal is a testament to our organization’s commitment to conservation in Lowell for generations to come. Having met the standards of accreditation signifies that our organization upholds a level of excellence in community conservation, organizational management, and leadership,” said Jane Calvin, Executive Director.

~ ~ ~

About the Lowell Parks & Conservation Trust

The Lowell Parks & Conservation Trust (LP&CT) is a private, non-profit land trust located in Lowell, Massachusetts. LP&CT was founded in 1990 by residents with a vision to protect the natural resources upon which the city of Lowell was built. LP&CT provides conservation leadership and programs which focus on four major areas: land protection, stewardship, environmental education, and special places.

www.lowelllandtrust.org

LP&CT has a dedicated [board of directors](#), a small [staff](#), and over 300 [volunteers](#) who assist us in meeting our mission and stewarding our properties. Annually, we offer over 40 programs to people of all ages, including after-school programming for urban youth, natural history programs to historic preservation initiatives, park stewardship, and tree planting projects. Check out our [calendar of events](#) for upcoming programs!

About the Land Trust Accreditation Commission

The Land Trust Accreditation Commission, based in Saratoga Springs, N.Y., awards the accreditation seal to community institutions that meet national quality standards for protecting important natural places and working lands forever. The Commission, established in 2006 as an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance, is governed by a volunteer board of diverse land conservation and nonprofit management experts from around the country. See a complete list of all six recently accredited land trusts online at <http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org/newsroom/press-releases>. More information on the accreditation program is available on the Commission’s website, www.landtrustaccreditation.org.

About The Land Trust Alliance

The Land Trust Alliance, of which the Lowell Parks & Conservation Trust is a member, is a national conservation group that works to save the places people love by strengthening conservation throughout America. It works to increase the pace and quality of conservation by advocating favorable tax policies, training land trusts in best practices and working to ensure the permanence of conservation in the face of continuing threats. The Alliance publishes *Land Trust Standards and Practices* and provides financial and administrative support to the Commission. It has established an endowment to help ensure the success of the accreditation program and keep it affordable for land trusts of all sizes to participate in accreditation. More information can be found at www.landtrustalliance.org.