

## LAND TRUST EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JOINS NATIONAL ACCREDITATION COMMISSION

(Saratoga Springs, NY)--Scott Dickerson, Executive Director of Coastal Mountains Land Trust, has been elected to serve on the national Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance created to ensure the quality of work and accountability of land conservation organizations. The Commission was established in 2006 and has awarded accreditation to more than 100 land trusts. Coastal Mountains Land Trust was accredited in the inaugural round of applications, announced in 2008.

Fifteen representatives of professional staff and members of boards of directors from land conservation organizations distributed throughout the United States serve on the Commission, which has two principal roles: to set policy and procedures for the accreditation process, and to participate with the Commission's staff in the review of applicants for accreditation. The Commission awards accreditation to organizations that meet national quality standards for protecting important natural places and working lands forever. More information is available at [www.landtrustaccreditation.org](http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org).

"The accreditation seal lets the public know that the accredited land trust has undergone an extensive, external review of the governance and management of its organization and the systems and policies it uses to protect land," said Commission Executive Director Tammara Van Ryn.

The accreditation process is done through a detailed review of 26 "indicator practices," a focused subset of the Land Trust Standards and Practices established by the Land Trust Alliance Board of Directors. They were selected to indicate a land trust's ability to operate in an ethical, legal and technically sound manner and ensure the long-term protection of land in the public interest.

Preparing for accreditation and the application process affords land trusts the opportunity to review and implement policies that will help streamline their operations and lead to more effective land conservation. Among the ways Maine land trusts are preparing for accreditation is by participation in the Maine Land Trust Excellence Program, provided through a partnership of the Land Trust Alliance and Maine Coast Heritage Trust and delivered by the Maine Land Trust Network. Fifteen land trusts are currently participating in this program, and five more are expected to enroll for 2011.

"Whether it's the park down the street, the farm that raises our food, or a preserve in the mountains, land is a crucial foundation for our well-being as individuals and as a community," said Dickerson. "Accreditation recognizes that approved land trusts have the capability to sustain protection of the natural, scenic, and productive lands they're conserving. It's an honor to help advance land conservation as a member of the Accreditation Commission."

For more information, please contact: Laura DiBetta, Program Manager, Land Trust Accreditation Commission, [www.landtrustaccreditation.org](http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org) or (518) 587-3143.