



Attestation of Land Trust Membership Principles

The mission of Gathering Waters: Wisconsin's Alliance for Land Trusts is to help land trusts, landowners, and communities protect the places that make Wisconsin special. To fulfill our mission, we work to build a strong and cohesive land trust community. Earning and maintaining accreditation by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission OR regularly attesting to the following principles is a requirement of membership in Gathering Waters and an important part of operating a sound and successful nonprofit land conservation organization.

_____, [insert name of land trust] (the "Land Trust") has reviewed the Benefits and Elements of Membership, and the Land Trust understands and agrees to Gathering Waters' right to deny or revoke the membership of the Land Trust at any time.

As consideration for membership in Gathering Waters, the Land Trust board of directors does hereby attest to the following:

- ✓ A commitment to the *Statement of Wisconsin Land Trust Ethics*, developed by the Land Trust Council.
- ✓ A commitment to implement the 2017 revised Land Trust Standards and Practices.
- ✓ Compliance with all federal, state, and local law.
- ✓ A pledge to the use of sound financial practices including the development and implementation of effective internal controls, the use of a board-approved annual budget, and regular financial reporting to the board of directors.
- ✓ If Land Trust holds conservation easements:
 - Participation in the TerraFirma conservation defense program or demonstration of a commitment to fund conservation easement defense (i.e., an adequate reserve fund set aside to monitor and enforce easements, and/or a policy requiring that adequate funds be set aside for each additional easement the land trust takes on and a policy for holding/investing internal funds).
 - Additionally, the land trust must have a baseline documentation report for each easement it holds or a board-resolved plan to complete baseline reports in a timely manner, and a written policy faithfully followed by the land trust to monitor each easement annually.

Date of Board Approval

Please be aware that Gathering Waters is relying on the Land Trust to truthfully and accurately make this attestation. Gathering Waters is not able to fully verify the accuracy of the attestation, nor necessarily examine the records or files of every land trust member. Therefore, third parties seeking to engage the Land Trust in a business or other relationship are advised to do their own analysis based on the terms of the proposed relationship.

Statement of Wisconsin Land Trust Ethics

We, as members of Wisconsin's land trust community, dedicate ourselves to the protection of local, regional, and statewide natural resources that contribute to the ecological, social, and economic well-being of our communities. Our goals are established, and our actions are taken with a long-term vision for resource conservation. As a private, nonprofit organization, we have an obligation to provide a public benefit and therefore strive to avoid any conflict of interest or provide any private benefit to any of our board members, members, or other individuals.

We pledge to conduct our land protection and organizational activities under the highest professional standards and in accordance with the Land Trust Standards and Practices (revised 2017). We acknowledge the trust placed upon us by our donors, landowner partners, and the public by being fiscally responsible, by always considering our long-term responsibility to the lands we protect, and by building a sustainable, capable land trust organization. In addition, we pledge to foster open and productive relationships with landowners, our fellow land trusts, and the public.

We strive to undertake only those actions that enhance the reputation and credibility of the land trust community. When appropriate, we work cooperatively with other land trusts, government agencies, private individuals, and conservation organizations to accomplish high-quality, lasting conservation of important natural resources.