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## What does advocacy mean to your land trust?

**Does your land trust use Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program grants, Farm Bill easement programs, or other public funding? Have some of your landowners been encouraged to donate conservation easements because of the enhanced federal tax incentive?**

- State and federal programs are essential for supporting the work of land trusts.
- The future of long-standing public conservation programs, like Wisconsin's Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program, is never guaranteed and must not be taken for granted.
- You and your land trust can have a meaningful impact, especially when working together with the broader land trust community.
- Even if your land trust hasn't benefited directly from these programs, your voice is important.

**Have you told your elected officials how important public conservation programs are to your community, their district? Do these officials know how your land trust helps to create healthy and vibrant local communities?**

- Your land trust communicates directly with your most significant donors, and elected officials are no less important. Advocating for conservation funding should be considered along with your other fundraising efforts that help you achieve your mission.
- Tours, community events, and board meetings are all great venues to include elected officials.

**Doesn't Gathering Waters take care of public policy advocacy in Madison on behalf of land trusts?**

- Yes, Gathering Waters exists to support your land trust by sharing up-to-date information and strategies and to work with you to build relationships with your elected officials.
- However, building relationships with elected officials is most effective when done at the local level. Elected officials are most responsive to their constituents. With some 50 land trusts working across Wisconsin, our community has a strong presence in nearly every legislative district throughout the state.

## **Where can I learn more and how can I get involved?**

For more information about advocacy and how to get involved, please contact Chris Danou, Government Relations Director, at (608) 251-9131 ext. 14 or [chris@gatheringwaters.org](mailto:chris@gatheringwaters.org), and visit Gathering Waters' website at [www.gatheringwaters.org/conservation-policy](http://www.gatheringwaters.org/conservation-policy).