

PECONIC LAND TRUST



Volunteer Handbook



Welcome!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- I. **Welcome to the Peconic Land Trust!**
 - A. A Letter from the President
 - B. History and Mission of the Peconic Land Trust
 - C. Core Message
 - D. Mapping the Future
 - E. Organizational Policies
 - F. Frequently Asked Questions

- II. **Volunteer Information**
 - A. The Volunteer Program
 - B. Volunteer Bill of Rights
 - C. Volunteer Agreement and Release Form
 - D. Youth Volunteer Agreement and Release Form

- III. **Quick Facts and Useful Information**
 - A. “Elevator Speech”
 - B. “Cocktail Party Speech”
 - C. Talking Points
 - D. 5 Focus Points of the Trust
 - E. The Land Trust Alliance Standards and Practices

I.

Welcome to the Peconic Land Trust
Celebrating 40 years!



Welcome from the President

Many hands make light work! With your help as a volunteer, the Peconic Land Trust will protect more working farms and natural lands for generations to come. I hope that you will find the Volunteer Handbook to be helpful and informative about the Trust, its work, and the role that you will play as a volunteer. It has been designed to provide you with the basics necessary for you to excel in this important role. Certainly, let us know if you have any questions. We are committed to providing you with a volunteer experience that will be productive and fulfilling. I am so pleased that you share our passion and are willing to provide your time, talents, and dedication to the Trust.

Thanks again for your willingness to lend a hand.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John v. H. Halsey". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

John v. H. Halsey
President

Our volunteers say:

I volunteer...

For the beauty of the earth

For the giving and the getting (of education)

To preserve the beauty

To preserve the land for people

Because it's fun

What a great excuse for being unavailable to care for my 2-year old grandson!

To save what's left

It's just a good thing to do!

To preserve land, contribute to the community and have fun

I'm still trying to figure that out

Great day for the earth!

Because I believe in the Trust and its mission

Great causes, great people

Because my wife makes me do it!

For my soul

For whatever reason YOU volunteer, we hope you'll join us!



Mission Statement:

**The Peconic Land Trust conserves
Long Island's working farms, natural lands, and heritage
for our communities now and in the future.**

The Peconic Land Trust was incorporated under Section 402 of the Not-for-Profit Corporation Law of New York State on August 1, 1983. The Trust is recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a public charity as defined under Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Since its incorporation, the Trust has assisted landowners, communities, and local government with the protection of nearly 14,000 acres of land on Long Island.

The Peconic Land Trust:

- Assists farmers and other landowners in the identification and implementation of alternatives to outright development through planning.
- Acquires land, easements, and development rights for conservation purposes through donations and purchases.
- Manages land and monitors and enforces conservation restrictions on protected property through exemplary stewardship services.
- Builds connections between people, communities, and the land through education and outreach programs.
- Articulates positions on public policy issues that promote conservation consistent with our mission and core values.



“I always leave my volunteer work feeling that I contributed something and that we're helping preserve the North Fork as well as helping people learn about the environment.” --Deb Wetzel

Peconic Land Trust Core Message

Values

- **Value our Resources**
Value our communities' diverse history, agricultural and maritime heritage, character, and traditional ways of life ~ Value our working and natural lands, community assets including trails and gardens, watershed areas, wildlife habitats and scenic vistas ~ Value our role and responsibilities as stewards of the land on behalf of our communities ~ Value and conserve all resources in our everyday work ~ Value the importance of connecting people to the land through outreach and education.
- **Value our Relationships**
Be fair, respectful and just to all within our diverse communities ~ Balance the rights of the individual and the interest of the public ~ Work with landowners, recognizing their personal goals, circumstances, and connection to the land ~ Listen to all concerns and issues ~ Collaborate with institutions, groups, and individuals to achieve mutual goals ~ Promote an organizational culture that respects the professional and personal lives of our staff, board and volunteers.
- **Value our Standards and Practices**
Use proven techniques as well as explore and develop new methods to conserve land and our resources ~ View individual projects in the broader context of our communities ~ Propose conservation and stewardship options based on a thorough understanding of the land ~ Work from a problem-solving perspective with innovation and creativity ~ Act ethically, lawfully, and in a fiscally sound manner as professionals and as an organization.

What makes Peconic Land Trust unique?

Peconic Land Trust:

- is a national land trust leader, and an accredited member of the Land Trust Alliance.
- provides creative solutions to conservation through planning and stewardship.
- has protected more working farms on Long Island than any other conservation organization in New York State.
- respects both the rights of landowners and the interests of the community at large.
- has secured millions of dollars in state and federal funds for land preservation.
- owns a restored, historic mariculture facility, which provides oyster, clam, and scallop seeds for our local bays (Shellfisher Preserve, Southold).
- owns and operates a 5-acre public garden that serves as a cultural and educational resource for our communities (Bridge Gardens, Bridgehampton).
- owns and operates community farms that provide new farmers with opportunities to begin their own farming operation, and offers the community a variety of ways to connect with local agriculture, including one of the longest running CSA farms in the United States (Quail Hill Farm, Amagansett; Agricultural Center at Charnews Farm, Southold).
- implements innovative techniques in land stewardship.

Why Should You Care?

Peconic Land Trust's conservation work benefits you!

- safe drinking water
- clean and productive bays
- fresh food sourced from local working farms
- wildlife habitats
- scenic beauty
- miles of recreational walking trails
- educates lawmakers to promote land conservation
- promotes the region's multibillion dollar agriculture and tourism economies
- leverages limited public acquisition dollars with private funds and grants
- provides opportunities for continued enjoyment of this special place for generations to come!

14,000 acres protected and still counting....



“Even helping for 1 hour, I feel that what the Trust does to help preserve our land is worth it. So here I am again, trying my best to help you guys.” –Terry Stevens, volunteer



Mapping the Future

Sense of Place: Conserving and Stewarding Long Island's Natural, Agricultural, and Cultural Resources

Food, Farms, and Farmers: Advancing Agricultural Viability and Access to Healthy Food

Land and People: Connecting and Growing a Diverse Conservation Community

Built to Last: Ensuring a Strong and Enduring Organization



Organizational Policies

Safety, Injuries and Reporting Accidents

Employee and volunteer safety is of utmost concern to the Trust. Every employee and volunteer is cautioned to properly use equipment, work carefully, use common sense, follow all prescribed safety procedures and operating instructions, and keep equipment well maintained. Any accident, injury or illness should be immediately reported to a supervisor. An accident report form must be completed as soon after the accident as possible, and submitted to the Trust staff member present, or to Irene Sierra, V.P of Human Resources, immediately thereafter. Copies of this form are available in the "hike box" at the activity, or from Robin Harris, our Senior Office Manager.

Non-Discrimination, Harassment, Offensive Behavior

Offensive Behavior Policy Statement

It is the Trust's policy to provide a work environment that is free from discrimination, harassment and offensive and degrading remarks and conduct. Offensive behavior, including harassment, on Trust premises or at any related functions or facilities will not be tolerated. Any employee or volunteer who is found to have acted in violation of this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, which may include termination, suspension, demotion, transfer, reprimand, mandatory education, or written warning.

Complaint Procedure

Every employee and volunteer is responsible for creating an atmosphere free of discrimination and harassment, sexual or otherwise, and is responsible for respecting the rights of co-workers. If an employee or volunteer experiences any job-related harassment based on sex, race, or another factor, or believes he/she has been treated in an unlawful, discriminatory manner, their objections should be stated to the offending person. If the objectionable conduct continues to persist, the employee or volunteer should discuss the matter with his/her supervisor or promptly report the incident to the Vice President, who will investigate the matter and take appropriate action.

All problems will be handled promptly. In addition, special privacy safeguards will be applied in handling harassment complaints, under which the privacy of the charging party and the person accused of harassment will be held in confidence to the extent possible. The Trust will retain as confidential all documentation of allegations and investigations.

The Trust will take appropriate corrective action against the offending employee or volunteer, including disciplinary action up to and including termination, when justified, to remedy any violation of this policy. This procedure should not be construed as preventing, limiting, or delaying the Trust from taking appropriate disciplinary action against any individual, up to and including termination, in circumstances where the Trust believes such action appropriate.

No employee or volunteer is exempt from compliance with this policy. Employees and volunteers are also encouraged to report harassment and/or reprisal by clients, vendors and any other non-employees. The Trust will not tolerate harassment against its employees and volunteers in connection with their employment, even if the harasser is not an employee.

The Trust prohibits any form of retaliation against any employee or volunteer for filing a legitimate bona fide complaint under this policy, or for assisting in a complaint investigation. However, if, after investigating any complaint of harassment or unlawful discrimination, the Trust determines that the employee or volunteer has provided false information regarding the complaint, or has brought the complaint with malicious intent, disciplinary action may be taken against the individual who filed the complaint or who gave false information.

Substance Free Workplace

The Peconic Land Trust maintains a smoke-free environment. Pursuant to the New York State Clean Air Act, the Trust has prohibited smoking inside its facilities. Any employee or volunteer violating this policy will be liable for any related fine and will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

It is the Trust's desire to provide a drug-free, healthy, and safe workplace. To promote this goal, employees and volunteers are required to report to work in appropriate mental and physical condition to perform their jobs in a satisfactory and effective manner.

While on the Peconic Land Trust premises and while conducting business-related activities off the Trust's premises, no employee or volunteer may use, possess, distribute, sell or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. However, limited alcohol consumption is permissible at business-related social events where alcohol is provided. The legal use of prescribed drugs is permitted on the job only if it does not impair an individual's ability to perform the essential functions of the job effectively and in a safe manner and does not endanger other individuals in the workplace.

PECONIC LAND TRUST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is a land trust?

Land trusts are not-for-profit organizations that protect land by working with landowners, and often work in cooperation with municipalities through a variety of methods, including donations, purchases, conservation easements, leases, and land exchanges. Land trusts have been active in the United States since the 19th century, with nearly 1,800 land trusts operating in the United States. There are over 90 right here in New York State, and land trusts across the country have been responsible for assisting in the preservation of about 61 million acres from Maine to California. Collectively, land trusts represent the fastest-growing conservation movement in the United States, and many land trusts are operated solely by volunteers! There are over 100,000 volunteers helping land trusts across the United States. Volunteers play a key role in all land trusts, often assisting staff in the conservation and management of many acres of natural lands, woodlands, beaches, and marshes.

The Peconic Land Trust is proud to be an accredited member of The Land Trust Alliance (www.lta.org), a national organization that promotes voluntary land conservation and strengthens the land trust movement by providing leadership, information, skills and resources to its members.

Who benefits from land conservation?

By protecting our working farms and natural lands, everyone benefits. Conservation allows the farmland owner to continue farming, and landowners to protect the important resources of their lands. The business community benefits because land conservation has a positive impact on local property values, encourages primary and second homeownership in the community; helps build and promote tourism and creates meaningful recreational activities – all while preserving the distinct character of each community.

What kind of land does the Trust conserve?

The Trust's focus is on conserving working farmland, natural lands, wildlife habitats, view sheds, wetlands, woodlands, and watersheds across Long Island that help protect our supplies of local produce and food products, fresh drinking water, and recreational opportunities for residents and visitors (e.g., hiking trails, beaches, etc.). Property adjacent to these areas may also be of prime importance as buffer areas that help to maintain the conservation value of adjacent lands.

How is Peconic Land Trust Funded?

Approximately 80% of the Trust's budget comes from charitable donations and grant funds, 5% is service income from planning and stewardship services provided to clients, and the balance of 15% is made up from a variety of cooperative farm rental income.

The Peconic Land Trust **DOES NOT** collect or distribute the monies raised through the Community Preservation Fund Tax (also referred to as the 2% land transfer tax), a common misperception. The CPF tax is a voter-approved public program and funds are collected by Suffolk County at real estate closings and then redistributed to the five East End towns. The distribution of funds is based on the location of the property from which the tax is acquired. The Towns use funds collected by the tax for their conservation work. While the Trust often works with local municipalities to facilitate land conservation purchase transactions, the only funds the Trust receives is in conjunction with actual services provided (e.g., stewardship programs and services) or for sale of development rights on land owned by the Trust. **Please help us spread the word about this by educating your friends and neighbors about this misconception.**

Does the Trust work with local municipalities?

The Trust works with villages, towns, Suffolk County and New York State to assist in developing and implementing conservation plans for working farmland, natural lands, wetlands, and beaches.

Who are the people involved with Peconic Land Trust?

The Trust's staff is comprised of professionals with skills and expertise in protecting working farms and natural lands, managing the land owned by the Trust, and creating events and activities that bring the public closer to our natural resources. Members of the volunteer Board of Directors have backgrounds in planning, finance, business, farming, real estate, and management. Trust volunteers with a vast array of experience and skill work on committees, assist in planning, create fundraising events, and lead education programs.

Is perpetual protection of land guaranteed?

Yes. Conservation easements held by us are monitored annually by our stewardship team. This program is supported, in part, through contributions from each donor. This fund assures that there will be income to meet our stewardship responsibilities in perpetuity. If for some reason the Trust did cease operation, which is highly unlikely, we have provided for the transfers of the lands and easements that we hold to an appropriate non-profit conservation organization.

What about public access on conserved land?

For conserved land that is owned by a private landowner, access to that land by the public is determined by the landowner. On some of these privately held lands, the Trust can arrange for educational visits such as nature walks; additionally, the Trust owns land which features public trails.



II.

Volunteer Information

The Peconic Land Trust Volunteer Program

In 2005, the Board of the Peconic Land Trust adopted strategic goals that, among other things, made a commitment to build connections between people, communities, and the land. From this decision, the outreach and volunteer programs were developed and nurtured. The Volunteer Program links residents of the community who are interested in supporting the Trust with opportunities to assist with education and outreach programs, land stewardship, special events and office work.

All potential and new volunteers are asked to complete a **volunteer application** and to attend our **volunteer orientation program**. Once their application has been accepted, new volunteers are asked to read the Peconic Land Trust core values and organizational policies and **sign a volunteer agreement and liability and photo release form**. (All are included in this handbook.) Please ask if you have any questions about these policies – we will be happy to discuss them with you.

Orientations are usually scheduled in the Spring and provide an opportunity to learn more about the work of the Trust, receive information about available volunteer opportunities, learn how to participate safely and effectively in your volunteer role, learn what to expect as a Trust volunteer, and what the Trust expects of you. If you are unable to participate in an orientation program, you may be partnered with a staff member or existing volunteer to help guide you through the process of becoming a volunteer. **Communications with our volunteers are mainly through email**, and our Senior Manager of Outreach, Kathy Kennedy, regularly publishes a “call to volunteers” e-newsletter giving information about activities that need your help. You can volunteer simply by emailing back to KKennedy@PeconicLandTrust.org. **To ensure that you receive these emails, please make sure that the Peconic Land Trust is considered a “safe sender” in your in-box.**

Volunteering with the Peconic Land Trust is fun and rewarding! Get to know your fellow volunteers and Trust staff – they can all be valuable resources for you – and plan to join us at our events and programs!



Volunteer Bill of Rights

As a Peconic Land Trust volunteer, you have the right to expect:

- A clear description of the work you are required to do.
- A volunteer handbook for guidance.
- Orientation, training, and supervision to meet the needs and responsibilities of every assignment or task.
- Task assignments appropriate to each volunteer's skill-level, physical ability, interests, and training.
- Respect and appreciation from Trust staff and fellow volunteers.
- Our sincere thanks for contributing to the land conservation goals of Peconic Land Trust.

The Peconic Land Trust expects that you will:

- Fill out a Volunteer Application and carefully read and sign the Volunteer Release Form and return both to the Trust.
- Abide by the policies of Peconic Land Trust.
- Ask for help when needed.
- Maintain the confidentiality of privileged information relative to the Peconic Land Trust, landowners, staff, and other volunteers.
- Sign up for tasks in advance and arrive on time at an event or program.
- Offer constructive suggestions to the appropriate staff member for improvements to Trust events, programs, etc.
- Be cheerful and welcoming.
- Serve as Trust ambassadors in support of land conservation.
- Have fun!

PECONIC LAND TRUST



Volunteer Agreement and Release Form

Policies Agreement

Policies Agreement

I have read and agree to abide by the organizational policies established by the Peconic Land Trust, as outlined in the Volunteer Handbook. I have completed the required training and have been made aware of the assigned duties. I also agree that any and all information shared with me or that I may obtain about landowners, donors, employees and fellow volunteers of the Peconic Land Trust is confidential and shall not be divulged by me. I will not copy, transcribe, record, or memorize confidential information in any manner, nor disclose or use such information for any purpose other than for the limited purpose of providing the assigned volunteer services to Peconic Land Trust. It is my understanding that volunteer status may be revoked if these policies are violated. I also acknowledge that my role is as a volunteer, and as such, I will receive no financial reimbursement for services rendered.

Release Form

I, _____, desire to perform services as a volunteer and engage in the activities related to being a volunteer for the Peconic Land Trust with the understanding that the performance of such activities may involve potential risks. I expressly assume the risk of injury or harm from my activities as a volunteer. I understand that I am free to refuse participation in or to refuse to continue with any activities if I feel my personal safety is in jeopardy. I agree to promptly notify Peconic Land Trust staff of any hazardous situation I encounter.

I hereby release, forever discharge, and agree to hold harmless Peconic Land Trust, its officers, directors, agents, and employees of and from any and all

liability, claims, and/or demands, of whatever nature, that arise, or may hereafter arise, from or in connection with my performance of volunteer services for Peconic Land Trust. I understand that this release discharges Peconic Land Trust from any liability or claim that I may have against Peconic Land Trust including, but not limited to, liability for any injury, illness, death, or property damage that may result from my volunteer services.

I further understand that Peconic Land Trust does not assume any responsibility for or obligation to provide me with financial or other assistance, including but not limited to, medical, health, or disability benefits or insurance of any nature, or Worker's Compensation, in the event of injury, illness, death, or property damage.

Photo Release

I give permission for photographs, images, video or audio recordings of me or my likeness or voice while volunteering to be duplicated and used by Peconic Land Trust for educational and/or promotional purposes.

Signature

Date

Print Name

PECONIC LAND TRUST



Youth Volunteer Agreement and Release Form (Parental Consent)

Policies Agreement

I have read and agree that my child will abide by the organizational policies established by the Peconic Land Trust, as outlined in the Volunteer Handbook. I confirm that my child has completed the required training and has been made aware of the assigned duties. We understand that any and all information shared with my child or that may be obtained about landowners, donors, employees and fellow volunteers of the Peconic Land Trust is confidential and shall not be divulged. We also understand that confidential information may not be copied, transcribed, recorded, or memorized in any manner, nor disclosed or used for any purpose other than for the limited purpose of providing the assigned volunteer services to Peconic Land Trust. We understand that volunteer status may be revoked if these policies are violated. I also acknowledge that my child's role is as a volunteer, and as such, no financial reimbursement will be received for services rendered.

Release Form

I, _____ agree that my child,
_____ can perform voluntary services for the Peconic Land Trust with the understanding that potential risk may be involved. I expressly assume the risk of injury or harm to my child from activities as a volunteer. I understand that my child is free to refuse participation in or to refuse to continue with any activities if he/she feels their personal safety is in jeopardy. My child agrees to notify Peconic Land Trust staff of any hazardous situation encountered. I hereby release and agree to hold harmless Peconic Land Trust, its officers, directors, and employees of and from any and all liability arising from or in connection with my child's volunteer services to Peconic Land Trust including liability for injury, illness, death or property damage.

Further I understand that Peconic Land Trust does not assume any responsibility for or obligation to provide me with financial or other assistance, including but not limited to medical, health or disability benefits or insurance of any nature in the event of injury, illness, death or damage to property.

Photo Release

I give permission for photographs, images, video, or audio recordings of my child or any likeness or voice while volunteering to be duplicated and used by Peconic Land Trust for educational and/or promotional purposes.

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Date

Print Name

Relationship to Child

Emergency Contact Numbers

III.

Quick Facts and Useful Information

Peconic Land Trust 30-second Elevator Speech

Shortened:

Since 1983, the Peconic Land Trust has worked with landowners, municipalities, partners, and communities to conserve nearly 14,000 acres of Long Island's working farms and natural lands. A non-profit, the Trust raises funds primarily through donations from individuals & foundations – **and does not collect or distribute the 2% real estate transfer tax (Community Preservation Fund)**. Supporting local agriculture and conserving natural lands is the priority and working respectfully with landowners defines our work.

Longer:

The Peconic Land Trust is a non-profit land conservation organization, conserving Long Island's working farms, natural lands, and heritage for our communities now and in the future. Founded in 1983, the Trust has protected nearly 14,000 acres of land across Long Island.

Supporting local agriculture and conserving natural lands is the priority, and working respectfully with landowners defines the work.

Our main source of funding is through charitable donations from individuals, businesses, and foundations – people just like you. **The Trust does not collect or distribute the proceeds of the 2% real estate transfer tax funds (Peconic Bay Region Community Preservation Fund or CPF)**. This is a voter-approved fund, and money collected at real estate closings goes to the Town where the property was purchased and is used by the Town to conserve land and water resources.

We work with people to develop conservation plans for their property. We accept donations of land to create a preserve, gifts of conservation easements, as well as acquire land of conservation value through purchase. We also partner with Villages, Towns, NY State, and the Federal government on conservation projects.

Our stewardship staff oversees land we own (preserves) or manage on behalf of landowners (e.g., easements), including farmland leases, restores wetlands, and provides public access by creating trails. For easements we hold, the Trust monitors and enforces the conservation values of the land, forever.

We provide over 60 educational programs annually to connect people with nature; and advocate on the local, state, and federal levels for legislation and programs in support of conservation.

2 minute “Cocktail Party” Speech

The Peconic Land Trust is a non-profit organization conserving Long Island’s working farms, natural lands, and heritage for our communities now and in the future. Founded in 1983, we’ve worked with landowners to protect nearly 14,000 acres of land, including farmland, woodland, wetlands and beachfront throughout Long Island, and we own or manage close over 4000 acres of land.

Our main source of funding is through charitable donations from individuals, businesses, and foundations. The Trust does not collect or distribute the proceeds of the 2% real estate transfer tax funds (Peconic Region Community Preservation Fund or CPF). The CPF is a voter-approved, public program managed by each of the five East End Towns and is used by each Town to fund the protection of farmland, open space, and community character. The Trust works cooperatively with the Towns on conservation projects, and often brings private funding to complete a project.

Trust planning department staff work closely with landowners, listening to their goals for the future uses of their land and helping them create a plan in keeping with these goals. We accept gifts of land (preserves) or conservation easements, and work with property owners to help them create limited development plans as part of a larger conservation plan for their property.

Trust stewardship staff manage the land we own through our stewardship division, including clearing invasive species, leasing land to farmers, managing restoration of wetlands, and providing public access with trails, among other activities.

Our Outreach and marketing team plans over 60 educational programs each year to connect people with nature and help them develop an appreciation for land conservation. These include trail walks, horticultural workshops, beach explorations, bird watching, kayaking, “meet the farmer” experiences, lectures, and other family-friendly programs. In addition, there are several fundraising events planned that help support the work of the Trust.

The Trust also works closely with our local, state, and national legislators and staff to advocate and advance land conservation – issues of primary concern are the federal and state estate tax (which is often the reason why farmland and open space is sold for development) and access to affordable farmland for both existing and new farmers.

Supporting local agriculture and conserving natural lands is our priority, and working respectfully with landowners defines our work. As long as there is land on Long Island to conserve and manage, we will continue our efforts to preserve the natural beauty of Long Island.

Peconic Land Trust: Talking Points

- Founded **in 1983** by Southampton native John v.H. Halsey and a group of local residents.
- Is a **non-profit** organization conserving land across Long Island in collaboration with our municipal partners and has conserved nearly 14,000 acres since 1983.
- Five areas of concentration: **Planning, Acquisition, Stewardship, Education, and Public Policy.**
- Staff works patiently and respectfully with landowners, communities, and municipalities to offer alternatives to development.
- Conserves **working farms and natural lands** through donation or purchase.
- Main office is in Southampton, NY.
- Stewardship Centers:
 - **Quail Hill Farm** (Amagansett),
 - **Bridge Gardens** (Bridgehampton),
 - **Shellfisher Preserve** (Southold),
 - **North Fork Stewardship Center** (Cutchogue),
 - **Agricultural Center at Charnews Farm** (Southold)
- The Trust's **Farms for the Future Initiative** provides access to affordable farmland through lease and sale of conserved farmland.
- In addition to activities at the **Stewardship Centers** and at the over 90 preserves the Trust owns, Trust stewardship staff provide services to landowners and municipalities – including habitat restoration, invasive species removal, trail maintenance, farmland leases and support, and are responsible for the monitoring of over 100 easements representing over 2850 acres of privately held conservation easements.
- **Lobbies** for legislation that promotes land conservation at all levels of government.
- Provides **educational and recreational** programs that connect people to the land – over 60 programs every year.
- Is primarily funded by **private donations** from individuals, corporations and organizations. The Trust does **NOT** collect or distribute the **Peconic Bay Region Community Preservation Fund** (CPF; aka, 2% tax, Peconic Land Tax). The CPF is a voter-approved public program managed by each of the five East End Towns for the protection of farmland, open space, and community character.
- Over 3000 people support the Trust every year, 80% of whom are individuals and families.
- Is an accredited member of the **Land Trust Alliance.**
- To learn more about the Trust, visit the website – www.peconiclandtrust.org.

The Peconic Land Trust's work centers on five areas:

1. **Planning:** Work with landowners to determine appropriate conservation plans that reflect individual circumstances & goals.
2. **Acquisition:** Alone, or in partnership with municipalities or other conservation partners, acquire land or development rights that provide for land protection in perpetuity.
3. **Stewardship:** Provide for the continued integrity of conserved land through innovative management techniques.
4. **Education:** Provide the community with programs that connect people to the land and foster a conservation ethic. Provide continuous professional development for our staff to maintain the organization's standing within the community.
5. **Public Policy:** Work with public officials to secure legislation that supports conservation goals.

Peconic Land Trust Strategic Goals:

- Conserve our local lands, water, and community character for the benefit of all.
- Support working farms and the viability of agriculture as it evolves over time.
- Care for our land and water in ways that sustain, restore, and defend all that has been, and will be, protected.
- Build connections between our diverse community and our agricultural, natural, and historic resources.
- Advocate, articulate, and influence public policy that impacts land conservation, water quality, and agriculture.
- Encourage and promote a dynamic organization, innovative yet true to its core values, to meet the challenges and opportunities of the future.
- Assure the permanence of our conservation mission for future generations by maintaining and growing a strong financial foundation for conservation.



Land Trust Alliance Standards and Practices

The Land Trust Alliance, a nation-wide association of local and regional land trusts, has established “Standards and Practices” for all land trust members. The Peconic Land Trust has operated in accordance with these standards since 1989 and adopted on June 20, 2005, an updated statement of standards and practices as a guide to responsible and effective action as a non-profit conservation organization. This updated statement was made a part of our operating manual in accordance with the following twelve standards:

Standard 1: Mission

The land trust has a clear mission that serves the public interest, and all programs support that mission.

Standard 2: Compliance with Laws

The land trust fulfills its legal requirements as a nonprofit tax-exempt organization and complies with all laws.

Standard 3: Board Accountability

The land trust board acts ethically in conducting the affairs of the organization and carries out the board’s legal and financial responsibilities as required by law.

Standard 4: Conflicts of Interest

The land trust has policies and procedures to avoid or manage real or perceived conflicts of interest.

Standard 5: Fundraising

The land trust conducts fundraising activities in an ethical and responsible manner.

Standard 6: Financial and Asset Management

The land trust manages its finances and assets in a responsible and accountable way.

Standard 7: Volunteers, Staff and Consultants

The land trust has volunteers, staff and/or consultants with appropriate skills and in sufficient numbers to carry out its programs.

Standard 8: Evaluating and Selecting Conservation Projects

The land trust carefully evaluates and selects its conservation projects.

Standard 9: Ensuring Sound Transactions

The land trust works diligently to see that every land and easement transaction is legally, ethically and technically sound.

Standard 10: Tax Benefits

The land trust works diligently to see that every charitable gift of land or easements meets federal and state tax law requirements.

Standard 11: Conservation Easement Stewardship

The land trust has a program of responsible stewardship for its easements.

Standard 12: Fee Land Stewardship

The land trust has a program of responsible stewardship for the land it holds in fee for conservation purposes.

