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## **Kentucky Natural Lands Trust Earns National Recognition**

### *Accreditation Promotes Public Trust, Ensures Permanence*

**Berea, KY** February 24, 2016 – Kentucky Natural Lands Trust, a statewide land trust that is committed to preserving the states diminishing natural places, protecting its rich biodiversity and ensuring a future that will continue to inspire new generations of environmental stewards, today announced it has achieved accreditation – a mark of honor in land conservation. The Land Trust Accreditation Commission awarded accreditation, signifying its confidence that KNLT lands will be protected forever.

Accredited land trusts across the country have permanently conserved more than 15 million acres of farms, forests and natural areas that are vital to healthy, vibrant communities.

"This is a giant step in the maturing and growth of KNLT and hopefully this will benefit us in many ways in the future." ~ Marc Evans, KNLT Board Chair

Kentucky Natural Lands Trust was among 37 land trusts across the United States to achieve accreditation or to have accreditation renewed in February. KNLT joins the 342 land trusts that demonstrate their commitment to professional excellence through accreditation, helping to maintain the public's trust in their work.

"It is exciting to recognize Kentucky Natural Lands Trust with this distinction," said Tammara Van Ryn, executive director of the Commission. "Together, accredited land trusts stand united behind strong national standards ensuring the places people love will be conserved forever. In all, over 75 percent of private lands conserved by land trusts are now held by an accredited land trust."

Each accredited land trusts meets extensive documentation requirements and undergoes a comprehensive review as part of its accreditation application. The process is rigorous and strengthens land trusts with systems that help landowners and communities achieve their goals. More information about land trust accreditation can be found at [www.landtrustaccreditation.org](http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org).

The Commission is an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance, a national land conservation organization working to save the places people need and love by strengthening land conservation across America. More information about the many benefits of land conservation is available at [www.landtrustalliance.org](http://www.landtrustalliance.org).

### **About Kentucky Natural Lands Trust**

Kentucky Natural Lands Trust was established in 1995 when a state inventory identified Blanton Forest as one of the most important natural areas in Kentucky and funds were urgently needed to protect it. A group of longtime friends and some of Kentucky's top conservationists joined forces to form KNLT and launch the campaign to raise funds for preservation of Blanton Forest, the largest old-growth forest remaining in the state.

Their efforts have expanded into a variety of conservation projects across the state and currently include the Pine Mountain Wildlands Corridor, the largest landscape level project ever undertaken in the state. Through partnerships with government agencies, nonprofits, corporations and private individuals we have protected thousands of acres of wildlands. For more, visit [www.KNLT.org](http://www.KNLT.org)

### **About the Land Trust Accreditation Commission**

The Land Trust Accreditation Commission inspires excellence, promotes public trust and ensures permanence in the conservation of open lands by recognizing organizations that meet rigorous quality standards and strive for continuous improvement. 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. For more, visit [www.landtrustaccreditation.org](http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org).

### **About the Land Trust Alliance**

Founded in 1982, the Land Trust Alliance is a national land conservation organization that works to save the places people love by strengthening land conservation across America. The Alliance represents more than 1,100 member land trusts supported by more than 100,000 volunteers and 5 million members nationwide. The Alliance is based in Washington, D.C. and operates several regional offices. More information about the Alliance is available at [www.landtrustalliance.org](http://www.landtrustalliance.org).

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