

Future generations will thank us for protecting more of Canada Community Land Trusts protect some of Canada's most important natural places

For Immediate Use

February 27, 2018 -- Throughout Canada, critical conservation work is being done on local and regional scales by the country's land trusts. As community-driven, non-profit conservation organizations, land trusts work to protect important natural areas for the benefit of all by holding land in trust for future generations. Support by the federal government through the Natural Areas Conservation Program is an essential factor in land trusts' ability to conduct their work and create protected natural areas in communities across the country.

Working with private landowners, land trusts protect critical ecosystem services in heavily populated regions of the country where traditional public land conservation approaches are either prohibitively expensive or impractical. These places are in southern Canada where most species at risk live and where habitat is at the greatest risk of conversion or outright destruction. By harnessing innovative partnerships with landowners and working with dedicated community volunteers, land trusts are able to establish conservation areas that protect critical habitat and create corridors between parks and other blocks of public and private land. This extension of connectivity and expansion of functional habitats is also critical to supporting Canada's climate change resiliency.

A federal commitment to support private land conservation will accelerate the protection of biodiversity and vibrant natural areas from coast to coast. Canada's community land trusts have already protected over 250,000 acres (101,000 hectares) of some of Canada's most ecologically significant land, including habitat for over 90 federally-listed species at risk. With sufficient government support, land trusts are poised to nearly double this amount within the next five years, protecting a potential 200,000 additional acres (81,000 hectares) of critical habitat.

"Land trusts across the country loudly applaud the Government of Canada's commitment to nature and biodiversity conservation in Budget 2018. Canada is one of few remaining places on our planet with significant, intact natural areas, many of which are on private land in close proximity to urban centres. Through community-based private land conservation, land trusts are uniquely positioned to leverage the government's investment to help slow or reverse species declines, protect watersheds, and mitigate the effects of climate change." ~ ***Susan Walmer, Canadian Land Trusts Working Committee***

About

Canadian Land Trusts Working Committee is an ad hoc working group with representation from regional and community land trusts from the provinces of British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, Québec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, and 3 provincial associations (Réseau de milieux naturels protégés, the Ontario Land Trust Alliance and Land Trust Alliance of British Columbia) formed to provide a unified the voice for sector in current discussions with the Federal Government around conservation programs and funding.

Media Contacts

Western Canada:
Justin Thompson, Executive Director
South Alberta Land Trust Society
justin@salts.land
403-819-1633 cell; 403-652-9998

Ontario and Eastern Canada:
Susan Walmer, Executive Director
Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust
swalmer@oakridgesmoraine.org
416-435-5939 cell; 905-853-3171 x32