

Seeking to preserve, protect and enhance land in perpetuity for the public benefit



Tom Henshaw

Agricultural Expert Joins Trust Board

Mud-caked farm boots and scholarly excellence define Tom Henshaw

By Linda Habig, Trustee

"I have a tremendous appreciation for the human need for contact with sustained natural environments. The Trust is an organization and a cause that I believe in, and I am also a big proponent of community involvement."

Tom Henshaw brings a wealth of educational and career expertise in areas of critical relevance to the Trust's mission and initiatives. Tom is a doctoral candidate in rural sociology at The Ohio State University, and the current Denison University

Homestead Coordinator. His career in agriculture started as an agriculture extension volunteer with the Peace Corps in Paraguay. He has also worked as an organic vegetable producer and a U.S. Customs agriculture inspector.

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Accreditation – Scaling the Mountain Top

By Lyn Boone, Trustee

The Board of Licking Land Trust has taken up mountain-climbing! Well, not literally. At its meeting of May 21st, Board members took a deep breath and voted unanimously to scale the Mount Everest of the land trust world – to apply for national accreditation, a credential offered by the Land Trust Alliance (LTA) and its accrediting agency, the Land Trust Accreditation Commission.

Anyone who has ever witnessed the accreditation process for a university or a hospital will have some idea of the momentous nature of the project. The seal of LTA accreditation is the highest recognition of quality that a land conservation organization like the Trust can achieve, and the rigorous review, inspection, and critique that it must undergo leaves no

Goal: Accreditation!

Major project categories and status

Project	July 2013 Status
Complete LTA-mandated Organizational Assessment	Complete
Review LTA Accreditation Requirements	Complete
Draft, Review & Adopt Policies/Procedures	50% Complete
Document Adherence to Policies/Procedures	25% Complete
Raise Legal Defense Funds through Grants/other	60% Complete
Raise Stewardship Funds/Develop Funding Plan	30% Complete
Register with LTA for Accreditation Process	Complete
Receive LTA Assignment of Time Slot for Accreditation	Complete
Complete Pre-Application for Accreditation (due 7/15/2014)	70% Complete
File Final Comprehensive Application (due 10/09/2014)	10% Complete
Achieve LTA Accreditation!! (ideally mid to late 2015)	THE GOAL!

stone unturned. Only a few more than 200 of the nation's 1,700 land trusts have been awarded this credential. Unlike hospitals and universities, however, many land trusts operate very effectively for years without seeking accreditation, and there's no requirement that they ever pursue this goal. But now, the Board feels, the time is right for the Trust to "go for the summit."

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Consolidated Township Easement Is a Win Win

By Candi Moore, Trustee

Toward the end of last year, the Licking Land Trust and the Granville Township Trustees collaborated on a conservation project, resulting in solid benefits for both organizations and their constituents. Together, they completed an effort to amend, restate and consolidate three of the conservation easements held by the Trust on Township property.

Over the years, the Trust and Granville Township have partnered on a number of projects and easements to the point where the Trust held conservation easements on four Township-owned parcels. Each parcel necessitated a separate annual monitoring visit and report along with certain levels of required financial support for Land Trust Alliance accreditation purposes.

In recent years, the Township has been working with various community groups and the Ohio Department of Transportation to fund and build a bridge over Raccoon Creek from the bike path to the Township's Raccoon Creek Park. While the conservation easements permitted footbridges, along with related abutments, paths and trails, the Ohio Department of Transportation wanted further clarifying language regarding construction and work along the banks for the footbridge in order to provide financial support for the project.

For a number of months, representatives of the Trust and the Township worked together to merge three of the easements along Raccoon Creek into one conservation agreement. The Trust and the Township wanted to ensure that the protections in each separate easement were carried over into the combined easement while adding clarifying language to the permitted footbridge provisions that would satisfy the Ohio Department of Transportation.

The end result was an Amended, Restated and Consolidated Conservation Easement Agreement which allows the Trust to inspect, monitor and financially support the three properties as a single easement, and allows the Township to obtain Ohio Department of Transportation funding for a Raccoon Creek footbridge.



Raccoon Creek

Members *Enjoy the Land and Help the Trust*

The Trust welcomes all member volunteers to assist with the annual inspections of conserved Trust properties. Come along with a Trustee to hike, view, enjoy and inspect one or more of our properties this summer or fall. We'd love to have you, and you'd be making a significant contribution to the work of the Trust. To volunteer, or for more information, contact Wendy Bittel, Office Administrator: lickinglandtrust@windstream.net

Tom studied international business at DePauw University and has a M.S. in agro-ecology from the University of Florida. Deeply interested in community agriculture, Tom is a board member of 6th Street and Growing Community Gardens.

Reflecting on his appointment to the Board, Tom said, “Land trusts are one piece of a complicated puzzle needed to protect us from ourselves. Resource exploitation and housing development are necessary realities of modern life, yet too frequently they occur in an economic vacuum that fails to account for potential social and ecological problems until the problems become wide spread.” He added that, locally, the exurban quality of Licking County adds a degree of pressure to identify and maintain lands at a high risk of development.

Tom looks forward to helping the Trust understand and work with the challenges of agriculture and community development, and the struggle that families with land in an exurban county face in making economic decisions about the future of their property. He also expects to contribute to the Trust’s work in education and outreach, and collaboration with potential property and easement donors.

Born and raised in Chillicothe, Tom and his wife Erin moved to Licking County four years ago where they purchased a small piece of property and an old farm house in Granville Township. Both Tom and Erin have farms in their family backgrounds, with deep-rooted ties to the land.

Welcome, Tom! We’re delighted to have you join us!

Coming Soon to a Forest Near You

By Doug Spieles, Board Chair

By now, you’ve probably heard that the ash trees of central Ohio are doomed. The culprit is a small green beetle: the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB). The EAB was accidentally introduced to North America from its native Asia in the 1990s, and it is rapidly munching its way through the ash trees of the Midwest. While it is possible to save an ash tree with insecticides that are injected into the tree trunk or into the surrounding soil, the cost and individual attention required restrict treatment to only the most treasured residential and urban trees. For the most part, the ash trees of our forests will be gone in five to ten years.

We have seen something like this before. A fungus called chestnut blight ravaged the once-dominant chestnut tree in the early twentieth century, as Dutch elm disease (another fungus) did the same to elm trees. The wooly adelgid is currently killing hemlock trees in the eastern US, while the gypsy moth eats its way through the oaks. The latest threat is the Asian long-horned beetle, which, though it is currently isolated in one small population in south central Ohio, is truly scary, as it infests maple, birch, poplars, willows, and more. In all cases, it seems that the introduction of a pathogen or predator to a new habitat—one in which it has no natural enemies—is a recipe for invasion, and invasion often means loss of another native tree species.



What is the role of a land trust in the face of these invasions? One thing we can’t do is save each tree on the conserved land we protect. We simply don’t have the manpower or funds, and for some of the pests noted above it wouldn’t matter if we did, for there is no known remedy. What a land trust can do is protect land that supports a wide diversity of species in order to maximize the biological response to the invasion. While we don’t exactly know what the post-ash forest will look like, we do know that maximizing conserved land will provide the most candidate replacement species in the most environments. By protecting as many different environments as we can, we hope to provide some ecological resilience to our region. And resilience will certainly be needed, for the next bug is probably on the way.

After all, the Trust has been headed in that direction for quite a while. About seven years ago, the Board started drafting and refining the organization's policies and procedures, with a long-term eye on making the leap. The Land Trust Accreditation Commission requires that an applicant organization demonstrate a multi-year history not only of qualifying policies, but also real-world operations that meet prescribed standards in a dozen or so areas – everything from legal and ethical practices to specific methods of record-keeping, documentation, financial review, and stewardship of properties under easement or ownership.

But that's only the beginning. When a land trust applies for the process, it must first meet a set of preliminary qualifications. It is then assigned by lottery to an accreditation time-slot; the Trust was informed in June that its date will be late 2014. Then it begins work on the pre-application, after which it will be asked to submit a longer, formal application and to participate in either telephone conference calls or a site visit from the accrediting agency. All of this can take up to two years. Beyond the investment in time and effort by Board members, the Trust will need to pay some \$2,300 in fees to undergo the process.

All thirteen of the Trust's Board members are responsible for the accreditation effort, although the work is organized and directed by the Trust's accreditation committee, headed by Vice-Chair Mike Mickelson.

Feedback, please!

As the Trust pursues accreditation with the Land Trust Alliance, it seeks input and comment from YOU, the Trust's constituency, beneficiaries and membership. If you'd like to comment on the Trust's goal of becoming accredited, kindly email or mail your thoughts to the Trust's website address or office..

Joining him on the committee are current Chairman Doug Spieles, Board members Linda Habig and Lyn Boone, and staff member Wendy Bittel.

It's an arduous process, one that most land trusts aspire to but far fewer pursue. But accreditation is the mark of a truly distinguished land trust, one that measures up to national standards of integrity and performance – and one that will continue to do so in perpetuity. The Licking Land Trust Board is confident that the climb to the top is worth the effort. We'll keep you informed throughout the process, and thank you – in advance – for your support along the way.

Business Members and Organizations Support Conservation

The Trust welcomes and thanks our business members. Their products and services help farmers, landowners, and organizations maintain, preserve, and improve the great outdoors.

Aqua Doc Lake & Pond Management Co.
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Granville Township

INT Information Systems, Inc.
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Licking County Soil and Water
Conservation District
River Road Coffeehouse
Spring Meadow Fencing Company

Save the Date!

Licking Land Trust Events - Not to Miss!

Exhibit at the Hartford Fair, Natural Resources Pavilion
(hartfordfair.com) August 3 - 10

Annual Meeting & Potluck Dinner, Bryn Du Mansion
(lickinglandtrust.org) November 7

Regional Events - Land and Conservation Focused

OEFFA Farm Tours (oeffa.org)
Northridge Farm, Johnstown July 21 - 1:00 pm
David Brandt Farm, Carroll August 27 - 6-8:00 pm

Dawes Arboretum (dawesarb.org)
Bat Walk July 19 - 9-11:00 pm
Insect Sounds August 24 - 7:30-9:30 pm

OSU Extension – Master Gardeners
(licking.osu.edu/events/its-a-garden-party)
Garden Party, Demonstration Garden July 20 - 10:00 am – 1:00 pm

Spring at Spring Valley: 30 Trust Members and 19 Flower Species

By Nancy Shepherd, Trust member

What a great way to spend one of the first glorious spring days after a prolonged winter! Thirty members and friends of the Trust met at the Spring Valley Nature Preserve on April 14th to enjoy the Trust's "Spring Wildflower Walk".

A good-natured competition immediately developed to determine which of the two groups could locate and identify more flower species along the stream, verdant trails, and sun-dappled open spaces of the Spring Valley Preserve. By the end of the walk, one group had identified 19 different species, while the other group claimed to have found more.

But everyone "won" this competition, since all were rewarded with the sight, fragrance, and identification of the exquisite flower treasures of Spring Valley. The Preserve has a trove of trout lilies so it was a great place to see that spring plant. Other highlights included lesser celandine, Dutchman's breeches, blood root, spring beauty, rue anemone, squirrel corn, cut-leaved toothwort, skunk cabbage, marsh marigold, and bittercress. Many were pleased to see the plant species known as harbinger-of-spring, with its delicate, tiny white flowers.



Harbinger-of-spring

The participants divided into two groups, led by Dr. Andy McCall, Professor of Biology at Denison University, and Dr. Doug Spieles, the Trust's Board Chair and Professor/Director of Environmental Studies at Denison.

As in most successful flower hikes, there was one found that no one could identify. A new species? Maybe it could be named "lickinglandtrustium".

Notice: Please do not pick flowers at Spring Valley. Please leave them for others to see and for the plants to reproduce so all visitors can enjoy them again next year.



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The mission of the Licking Land Trust is the preservation and permanent protection of central Ohio green spaces – wetlands, woods, farmlands, riparian corridors, and scenic vistas – and education about the importance of green spaces and their conservation, all for the public benefit.

Join The Licking Land Trust

**Renew your membership, join, or contribute
online at www.lickinglandtrust.org**



**Donate
securely
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form with your check to:
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