Risk Assessment & Management

Session 5 – Practicing Assessment
November 15, 2021
Governance

- Corporate laws and compliance
- Board fiduciary responsibilities
  - Duty of Care
  - Duty of Loyalty
  - Duty of Obedience
- Board makeup and capacity
- Board functioning
- Personnel – Employees, contractors, and volunteers
Finance and Financial Management

- Having adequate finances to cover ongoing operating expenses
- Having reserves to cover perpetual expense needs
- Dealing with money-in, money-out – internal controls
Land Transactions

• Finding opportunities for protection
• Deciding which properties to protect and how
• Ensuring sound and durable transactions
• Following tax and nonprofit laws and making sure one’s donors are aware of tax laws and regulations
Stewardship

• Caring for properties and upholding conservation easements
• Management interventions such as
  • treating/removing invasive plants
  • Associated herbicide use
  • Conducting forestry
  • Interfering with beavers
  • Inviting public use (trails, picnicking, paving, multiuse, buildings)
• Addressing threats including those from encroachments, trespass, and other violations
Programs

Working with volunteers

Welcoming different groups including children, seniors, people with disabilities

Allowing for increased public use including bikes or motorized equipment, hunting.
POLL #1

Which areas present the greatest risk for your organization?

A. Governance
B. Finance
C. Land Protection
D. Stewardship
E. Accountability
F. Fundraising
G. People
H. Property
I. Reputation
J. Safety
Using the Risk Assessment Tool

1. Mission statement
2. Team
3. Risk tolerance in the areas of risk (averse, cautious, moderate, or flexible)
4. Philosophy statement
5. Goals

“Our land trust aspires to operate in a way that protects the health, safety and security of visitors, staff members and volunteers, while lifting up the organization’s mission and safeguarding assets needed for mission-critical programs and activities.”

“Our land trust embraces reasonable risk taking to achieve its ambitious mission. The organization endeavors to manage its risk in order to free up resources for mission-critical activities without taking risks that lead to mission-impairing losses or damages public confidence.”
Using the Risk Assessment Tool

6. Appraise – Choose the areas you wish to focus on and identify risks and risk management strategies

7. Select an Activity
   • Easement acquisition
   • Easement stewardship
   • Educational programs
   • Fee land acquisition
   • Fee land management
   • Governancy
   • Operations
   • Political Advocacy
   • Public Events
   • Technical Assistance

8. Select and describe an area within that activity

9. Describe risks and prospective strategies, as well as needs to implement strategies

10. Position that risk on a heat map
Let’s check it out!
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
Thank you for your participation!
Applying for consultant support

• Fill out and submit in Google Forms
• Applications will be open to any land trust that has participated in all five training sessions
• Continued training for your assessment team (3 person minimum)
• Includes 10 hours of individual meeting with consultant
  • Consultant compiles recommendations and work plan that prioritizes short- and long-term activities
  • Following 8 hours’ 1:1 assessment, land trust assessment team has an additional 2 hours to meet with consultant to discuss implementation
• Participants will receive over $1,500 worth of consultant support
• Offered at a reduced cost: $300/member; $500/non-member
Application Timeline

Applications open
November 1, 2021

Applications due
November 30, 2021

Applicants notified
Mid Dec. 2021

Risk Assessment Timeline

Agreement and payment due
First week of January 2022

Assessments begin
Mid January 2022

Assessments finalized
End of March 2022
Application Questions

• Organizational questions
  • Name, year of establishment, description of land protection efforts
  • Structure (e.g., staffed or all-volunteer), number of directors on board

• Participation in training

• Assessment team – names and roles of members

• Preparedness to begin this work in January 2022

• Commitment to continue this work