

Welcome to

Stewardship Best Practices
(101 Series)

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What is a Land Trust?

• Land Trust Alliance definition:

- Community-based, non-profit organization that actively works to permanently conserve land.

Every Land Trust is as unique as the community it serves

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•HOW do we do this?

THROUGH STEWARDSHIP!

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What is “Stewardship”?

Wikipedia’s **history of the term**

- Stewardship was originally made up of the tasks of a domestic [steward](#), from [stig](#) (house, hall) and [weard](#) (ward, guard, guardian, keeper). Stewardship in the beginning referred to the household servant’s duties for bringing food and drink to the castle’s dining hall. Stewardship responsibilities were eventually expanded to include the domestic, service and management needs of the entire household.
- Commercial stewardship tends to the domestic and service requirements of passengers on ships, trains, airplanes or guests in restaurants. This concept of stewardship continues to be referenced within these specific categories.
- Stewardship is now generally recognized as the acceptance or assignment of responsibility to shepherd and safeguard the valuables of others.

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What is “Stewardship”?

Wikipedia’s summary:

We are nature’s Housekeepers!

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Stewardship [definition](#)

• Miriam Webster:

- 1 - the office, duties, and obligations of a [steward](#)
- 2 - the conducting, supervising, or managing of something, *especially* : the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one’s care - “*stewardship* of natural resources”

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Stewardship definition

- Miriam Webster:
 - ~~1~~ - the office, duties, and obligations of a steward
 - ~~2~~ - the conducting, supervising, or managing of something, *especially* - the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care - "*stewardship of natural resources*"

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Land Trust Stewardship

The planning and management of natural resources.



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Great!

• *But how do we do this?*



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Planning and Managing

- There is no play-book
- Every Land Trust is unique
- Every property is unique

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Types of Properties

- Fee
 - Owned outright by the Land Trust
 - Managed how the Land Trust feel is most appropriate
 - Usually not protected by conservation restrictions

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Types of Properties

- Conservation Easement
 - Not owned by the land trust
 - Private landowners
 - Has a legally binding document "Grant of Conservation Restriction" attached to the warranty deed.
 - Land Trust are the "guardians" of the Conservation Easement and help the private landowner understand and abide by the rights and restrictions.

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Management Tips! – Fee Properties

- Follow LTA guidelines for developing a management plan
- You have one year from acquisition to write this plan
- Use this plan to help you steward the property!

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Management Tips! – Easement Properties

- Well outlined parameters of what is being conserved on that property
 - o Written in the Conservation Restriction document, part of required documentation at closing – this is an LTA requirement
- Baseline Documentation – also an LTA requirement
 - o Tells you what condition the property is in when the Conservation Easement was placed on the property.
 - o This is the **ultimate legal reference** to determine if the property is being managed appropriately.
 - o Also a mandatory document required at closing.

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Management Tips!

- LTA requires a documented visit on each property once per calendar year.
- If you use aerial imaging for some of your properties, you must have feet on the ground at least every 5 years.

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HOT TIP!

- Develop a **solid and simple system** for volunteers, staff or board members to conduct visits and file reports.
- You can use these reports to make yourself an Action Items playbook for the next Stewardship Year.

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ANNUAL MONITORING REPORTS - 2021					
Fee/Easement	Property Name	Date of Visit	Were Issues Noted	Is Follow up Required	NOTES
Fee	Apple Park	11/1/23	N	---	
Fee	Beltis Preserve	11/2/23	Y	Yes	Steward noted that the sign at the front of the preserve has fallen off the posts and is sitting on the ground. At the moment it is resting against the posts so visitors can still find the preserve, but it is not secured to the posts and is at risk of being stolen.
Easement	Charles Easement	11/3/23	N	---	
Easement	David Easement	11/4/23	Y	Yes	The landowner would like someone to contact him about trees that he would like to take down within the easement area. He feels that they are a threat to his house and property.
Fee	Evanson Creek	11/6/23	N	---	
Easement	Forbin Easement	11/6/23	Y	Yes	The new landowners would like to meet with someone from the land trust to learn more about their easement and how to be good stewards of their property.
Easement	Garrett Easement	11/7/23	N	---	
Fee	Harry's Hollow	11/8/23	Y	No	The steward reported trash in the parking lot upon their arrival for the site visit which they then removed. There is already a sign at the preserve that asks visitors to "carry out what you carry in."
Fee	Into the Woods Preserve	11/9/23	N	---	
Fee	Johnson Family Farm	11/10/23	Y	Yes	This is one of our farmed fields which is managed by a local farm. The steward reported that the farmers would like a "no parking" sign to be placed in front of the Farm gate so they can come and go without concern of access.

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ANNUAL MONITORING REPORTS - 2022					
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Fee	Beltis Preserve	11/2/23	Y	Yes	Steward noted that the sign at the front of the preserve has fallen off the posts and is sitting on the ground. At the moment it is resting against the posts so visitors can still find the preserve, but it is not secured to the posts and is at risk of being stolen.
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Easement	David Easement	11/4/23	Y	Yes	The landowner would like someone to contact him about trees that he would like to take down within the easement area. He feels that they are a threat to his house and property.
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Fee	Brians Preserve	11/2/23	Y	Yes	Steward noted that the sign at the front of the preserve has fallen off the posts and is sitting on the ground. At the moment it is resting against the posts so visitors can still find the preserve, but it is not secured to the posts and is at risk of being stolen.
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2024 STEWARDSHIP ACTION LIST						
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Fee	Brians Preserve	11/2/23	Y	Yes	Steward noted that the sign at the front of the preserve has fallen off the posts and is sitting on the ground. At the moment it is resting against the posts so visitors can still find the preserve, but it is not secured to the posts and is at risk of being stolen.	
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Look at that!

Your Own Playbook.

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