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Land Trust Alliance Members Help Mitigate Wildfires

Organizations Mix Preventative Work with Recovery Assistance

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Aug. 27, 2015) – The Land Trust Alliance, a national land conservation organization working to save the places people love by strengthening land conservation across America, and its members are mitigating the threat and destruction of wildfires across the United States through proven practices and new resources.

Some land trusts – including Chelan-Douglas Land Trust (Wenatchee, Wash.), Methow Conservancy (Winthrop, Wash.) and Okanogan Land Trust (Okanogan, Wash.) – saw properties burn this year and are helping their communities recover. Others, such as organizations in Oregon and Colorado, are taking proactive steps to curb the destructive threat that wildfires pose.

“Land trusts, working in cooperation with their neighbors and other local allies, are doing their part to mitigate the heartbreaking losses and destruction that wildfires bring,” said Shannon Meyer, the Alliance’s Western conservation manager. “These best practices inspire us all to ask what more we can do to prepare and protect our communities from natural disasters.”

Tactics the Alliance and its members are using include:

- **Providing community assistance to prepare properties and facilitate recovery.** This is exemplified through the work of Methow Conservancy and the comprehensive and actionable Wild Fire Preparation, Recovery & Restoration Information it offers. These materials are available online at www.methowconservancy.org/fire.html.
- **Leading by example in forest-thinning practices.** Deschutes Land Trust (Bend, Ore.) has alleviated fire danger by thinning and mowing its Metolius Preserve and Whychus Canyon Preserve. The organization’s approach to variable density thinning has become a model for the U.S. Forest Service.
- **Forming partnerships to address forest health.** The Chelan-Douglas Land Trust developed a unique partnership with local governments to create market-based incentives to encourage forest thinning, watershed health and wildlife resiliency.

- **Analyzing conservation easements** – the documents used to permanently set aside land – to facilitate proper preparation for natural disasters such as wildfires. The Colorado Cattlemen’s Agricultural Land Trust (Arvada, Colo.) recently completed a report titled *Planning for Natural Disasters: Conservation Easement Drafting & Case Studies*.
- **Offering resources that guide and inspire land trusts facing the threat of wildfire.** The Alliance published in June its digital *Conservation in a Changing Climate* resource center, which addresses wildfires. Additionally, the Alliance is facilitating discussions about climate change and wildfires at its annual meeting, Rally 2015: The National Land Conservation Conference. To view *Conservation in a Changing Climate*, visit climatechange.lta.org; for more information about the conference, visit alliancerally.org.

Alliance representatives and spokespeople from many of these organizations are available on request for interviews. Note that Methow Conservancy may not be immediately available to respond to media inquiries due to an active wildfire in its region.

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 need and 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.

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