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Together, conserving the places you love

Land Trust Alliance - Updates

Jen Plowden

New England Senior Program Manager

Land Trust Alliance

Advancing Conservation Excellence

Organizational Assessments & Implementation Grants

Comprehensive Package

- Application period: April 14 – May 16, 2025
- Tailored organizational assessment and list of priority action items
- Become eligible for a $10,000 Implementation Grant
- Participate in quarterly coaching calls
- Learn more about the program here.

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MassLand MASSACHUSETTS LAND TRUST COALITION

Advancing Conservation Excellence

Organizational Assessments & Implementation Grants

Four types of assessments

- Organizational capacity assessments
- Terrafirma eligibility assessments
- Requirements manual assessments
- *Land Trust Standards and Practices* assessments

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Advancing Conservation Excellence

Organizational Assessments & Implementation Grants

Virtual Information Session

Wednesday, April 9, 2025

1:00 pm – 2:00 pm

Click here to register.

Comprehensive Package

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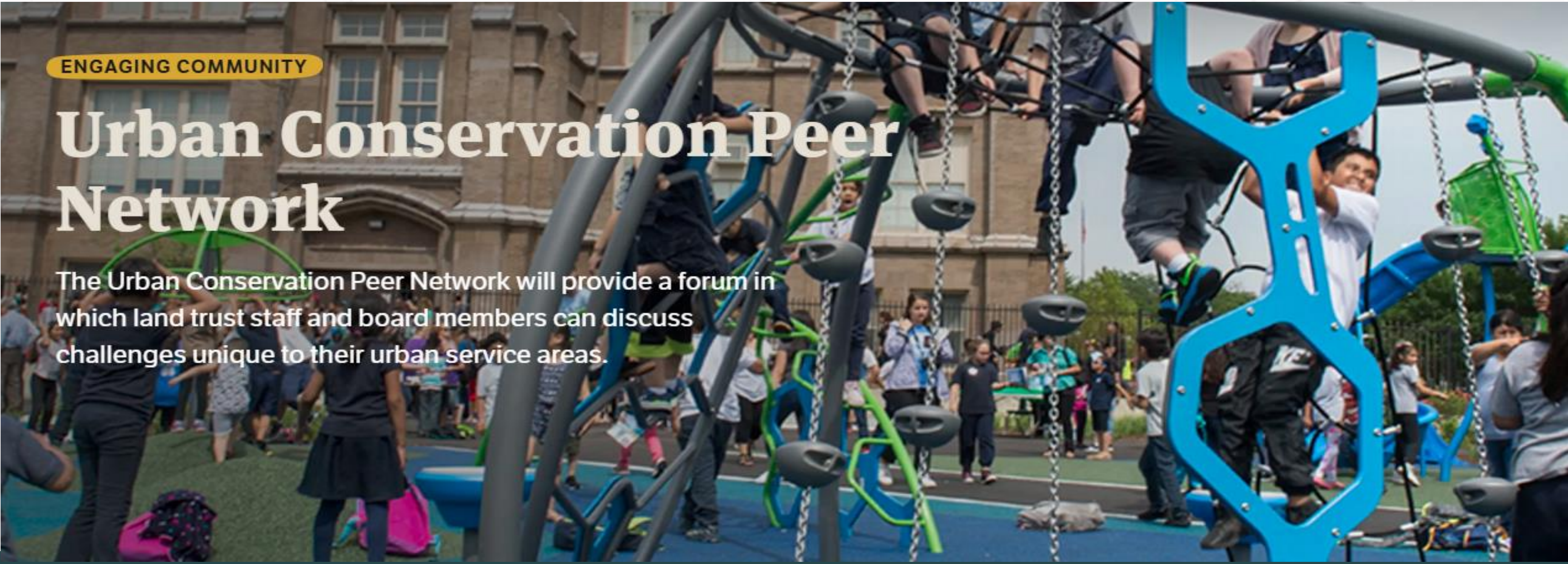
Acquisition and Stewardship Peer Group

- Expand your knowledge and skills and to find a place for support — sharing your successes and seeking solutions to your challenges.
- Training, network building, and roundtable discussions.
- Begins in **May 2025** and runs for **18 months**.
- **Advanced Practitioner Group**: If you have 8+ years of experience and one of your professional development goals for this year is to share your expertise and establish yourself as a leader.
- Learn more and apply here.

Urban Conservation Peer Network

- Learn more and apply here.



EASTERN DIVISION LAND TRUSTS

New Executive Directors Peer Group

Land trust executive directors address a distinctive array of elements related to their organizations' operations. Yet, rarely does previous work experience fully prepare executives to address risk management, strategic planning, community engagement, staff management, fundraising, financial management, organizational sustainability, partnership building, diversity, equity and inclusion, and managing boards, not to mention real estate knowledge and stewardship!

- Learn more and apply here.

New Practical Pointer

After Disaster Strikes: A Catastrophic Event Insurance To-Do List

This Pointer provides practical guidance for how to pursue and preserve insurance recovery for losses following damage; destruction and loss to real and personal property; and land trust business operation interruption following a catastrophic weather event.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Practical Pointer

After Disaster Strikes: A Catastrophic Event Insurance To-Do List

Catastrophic weather events, such as fires, floods, hurricanes, tornadoes, extreme heat, earthquakes, mud slides and other devastation, cause emotional and physical disruption, sometimes extreme. This Pointer provides practical guidance for how to pursue and preserve insurance recovery for losses following damage, destruction and loss to real and personal property and land trust business operation interruption. This guidance is applicable to land trusts, conservation landowners and for a widespread catastrophe, your community.

Each insurance policy provides specific coverage and will differ in claim documentation, submission and processing requirements. Careful attention and diligence will ensure that you maximize the potential chances and amounts of coverage under each policy. Catastrophic events may also result in changes to normal processes and deadlines so pay careful attention to timing.

Locating relevant policies

Locate or obtain a complete copy of each insurance policy or policies that may provide coverage.

- The law in most states generally requires your insurer to provide you with a copy of your policy free of charge. It is important to request full copies of policies, not just abbreviated summaries of policies (especially if the policy was renewed from a previous year). It is helpful in advance to find any documentation you may have, such as emails or bank records, that can provide the name of your insurer and your policy number(s).
- Make sure not only to include your property insurance policies in your search, but also to locate copies of policies for automobiles, other motor vehicles (boats, trailers, etc.), and other policies you may have for equipment that was damaged or destroyed.
- Review your policy and the declarations pages for the policy. Your land trust's attorney/law firm, insurance agent, or insurance broker can assist you with reviewing and understanding your policy. If possible, ask your agent or broker to confirm:
  - What and how much coverage you have, including any cost sharing, relevant coverage limitations and exclusions;
  - How to report your claim (and if your agent or broker can report the claim for you or help you report);
  - If there is potential for multiple policies to provide coverage, then be prepared to provide the insurer with any information about those other policy(ies) and claim-related information in order to coordinate and expedite claims;
- Deadlines relevant to the policy (e.g., proof of loss submission, statute of limitations for filing suit, deadline for commencing reconstruction, etc.), and your ability to request the

DISCLAIMER: The Land Trust Alliance designed this material to provide accurate, authoritative information about the subject matter covered with the understanding that the Alliance is not engaged in rendering legal, accounting or other professional counsel. If a land trust or individual requires legal advice or other expert assistance, they should seek the services of competent professionals. The Alliance is solely responsible for the content of this series.

DOCUMENT / PDF

Best Practices When Engaging Appraisers

- [Download PDF here]

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Field Services

Best Practices When Engaging Appraisers

Accurate and timely appraisals by qualified professionals are a key component of land conservation transactions. Unfortunately, the Alliance has been hearing that some conservation deals are at risk due to a shortage of appraisers who are qualified and interested in conducting timely valuation of conservation transactions. This is particularly true for complicated transactions involving federal funding where an appraisal must meet the Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisition (referred to as the "Yellow Book" standards) and is subject to an appraisal review process.

The Alliance is interested in this issue nationally and currently has funding to actively engage in efforts to increase the number of qualified appraisers in New England and the South Atlantic states. Given that conservation appraisals differ significantly from general residential and commercial appraisals, with distinct processes and considerations, we are also interested in helping the land trust community prepare to engage an appraiser. Our goal is to ensure appraisers have the tools and context necessary to effectively handle conservation transactions. In turn, land trusts can save time, money and frustration by clearly communicating the scope of work and timelines.

When a land trust is purchasing a fee simply or partial interest in real estate, Practice 9H of *Land Trust Standards and Practices* provides guidance on obtaining appraisals or, in limited circumstances, "letters of opinion" from qualified real estate professionals. Specifically, "When buying land, conservation easements or other real property interests, [a land trust must] obtain an independent appraisal by a qualified appraiser in advance of closing to support the purchase price."

This checklist has been developed to guide land trust practitioners on how to engage with appraisers on conservation projects and provide the essential information to ensure a successful interaction.

Thank you to the Maine Land Trust Network for the original guidance document that served as a foundation for this checklist.

A Checklist for Working with Real Estate Appraisers

This checklist is intended to be used when a land trust is anticipating the purchase of a property interest (fee simple or conservation easement) and is hiring an appraiser to substantiate the value. It can be helpful when developing a written agreement with an appraiser so there are no surprises.

- *Identify client and intended users:* Because the land trust is hiring an appraiser to substantiate value for its own acquisition, the land trust should be listed as the client. In addition to the client, are there other intended users that the land trust may want the appraiser to include, such as a bank, partner organization, attorney or acquisition funder.
- *Investigate title:* Prepare or hire a title company to prepare a title report so you can provide the appraiser with the identity of the property owner, a property description, and any title issues such as rights of way, covenants, encumbrances, or liens. The title report should also identify adjacent parcel owners (with a particular focus on any adjacent parcels owned by the owner or related

Best Practices for Working with Appraisers: A Panel Discussion

- Best Practices for Working with Appraisers: A Panel Discussion
- **April 8 from 12:00–1:15 PM** REGISTER HERE.
- Designed for land trust staff and board members involved in land protection, this session will feature insights from experienced land protection practitioners, Alliance staff, and seasoned appraisers. Strengthen your understanding of the how to develop effective relationships with appraisers and improve your conservation outcomes. This event is co-hosted by the Land Trust Alliance, **Connecticut Land Conservation Council**, and the **Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition**.

Land Trust Alliance Job Board

landtrustalliance.org/job-board

Submit a job here.

- Summer Land Steward, Buzzards Bay Coalition
- Conservation Ecology and Mapping Fellowship, Essex County Greenbelt Association
- Seasonal Trail Crew & Stewardship and Trails Intern, Berkshire Natural Resources Council
- Development Officer, Steep Rock Association
- Vice President of Conservation Programs, Northeast Wilderness Trust
- Stewardship Assistant, Monadnock Conservancy
- Executive Director, Housatonic Valley Association
- Project Manager & Associate Director of Land Protection, Maine Coast Heritage Trust
- **And many more!**

WEBINAR FEATURED

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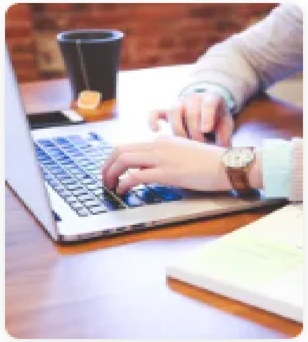
2025 Webinar Pass

SOURCE
Land Trust Alliance



ABOUT THIS WEBINAR

With an Alliance webinar pass, your entire organization will receive access to 30 webinars for staff and board members at all experience levels.

The webinar pass provides flexible, efficient and effective instruction.

- **Professional development:** You can send four attendees to every live webinar.
- **Learning for all:** Recordings are available until Dec. 31, 2026 to all members of your organization — including board members!
- **Expert instructors:** We hand-pick leading experts to teach each webinar.
- **Easy access:** Watch wherever and whenever you like — at home, in the office or in the field.
- **New format this year:** We are offering pre-recorded webinars to help you learn as you go. These webinars include enhanced guidance and resources to support moving forward on important projects.
- **An ongoing journey:** Webinars are available year-round so you can continue learning and growing with your colleagues. It doesn't matter when you buy the pass — your organization receives access to recorded webinars that already happened this year, and you will be able to register for all upcoming webinars.

BUY

Alliance members: $700.00
Non-members: $1,300.00

LOG IN TO BUY
— or —
CREATE FREE ACCOUNT

QUESTIONS?
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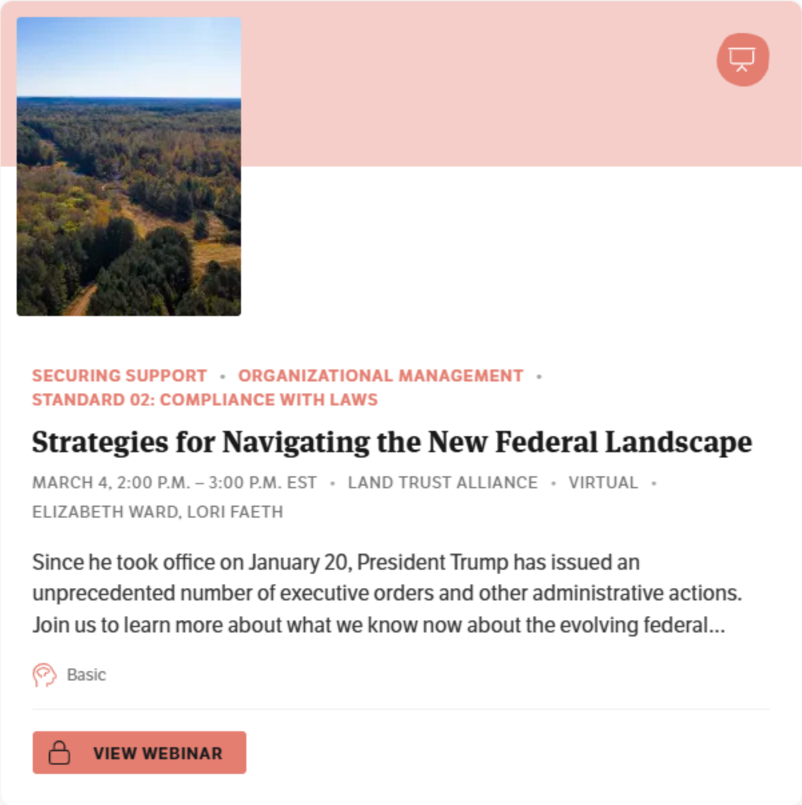
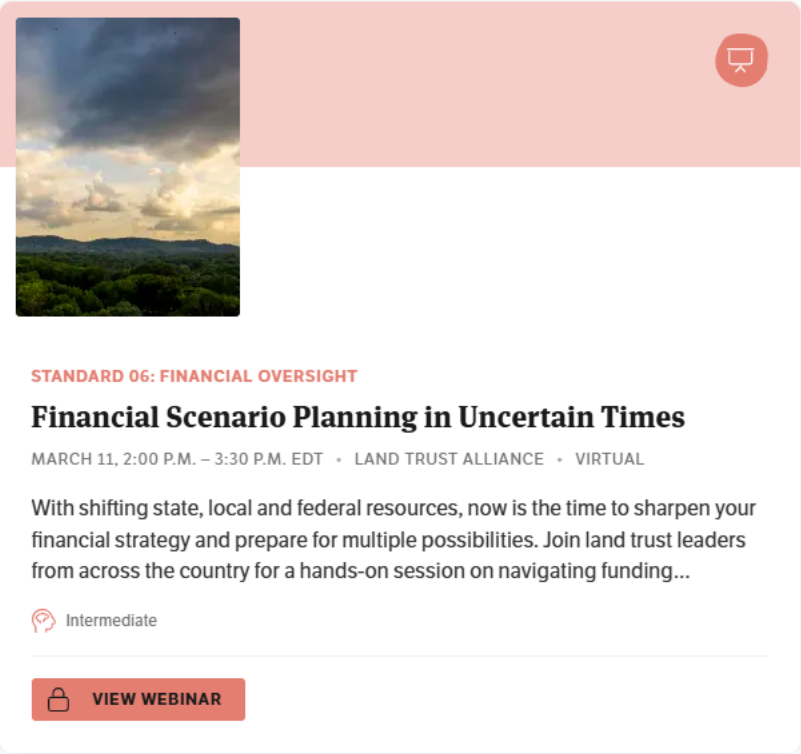
New Federal Landscape Webinar

- On March 4, Senior Government Relations Director **Lori Faeth** and Vice President of Communications **Elizabeth Ward** held the first in a series of New Federal Landscape webinars sessions.
- The recording and presentation deck are available as on the [Resource Center]() (complimentary for members).



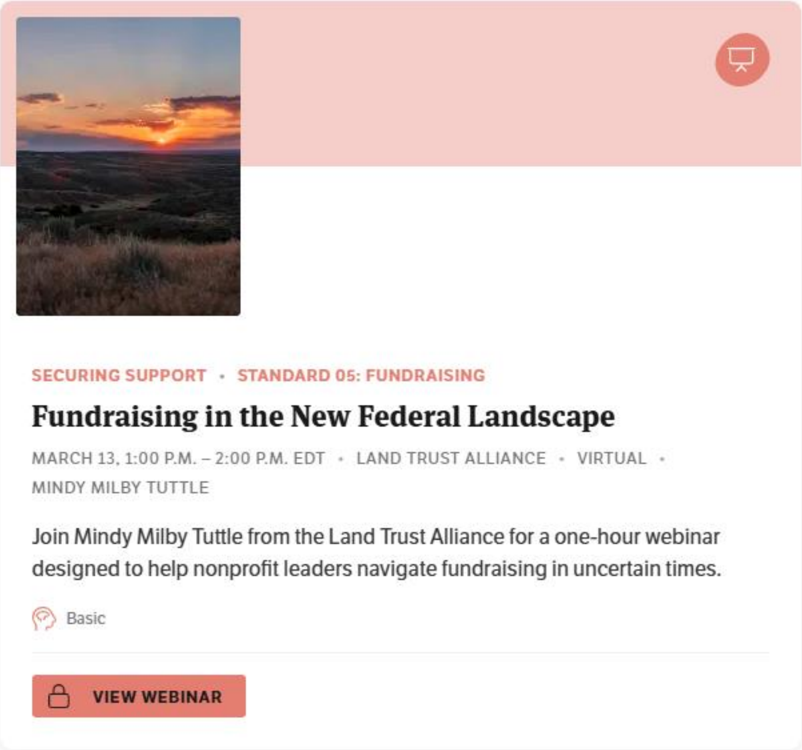
Financial Scenario Planning in Uncertain Times

- **March 11, 2:00-3:00pm**
- Fast, effective financial modeling to test different funding scenarios.
- Managing the domino effect — how cuts in one program impact others and core operations.
- Maximizing cash flow tools to stay ahead of shortfalls.
- Smart credit and debt strategies to keep your organization moving forward.
- More information here.



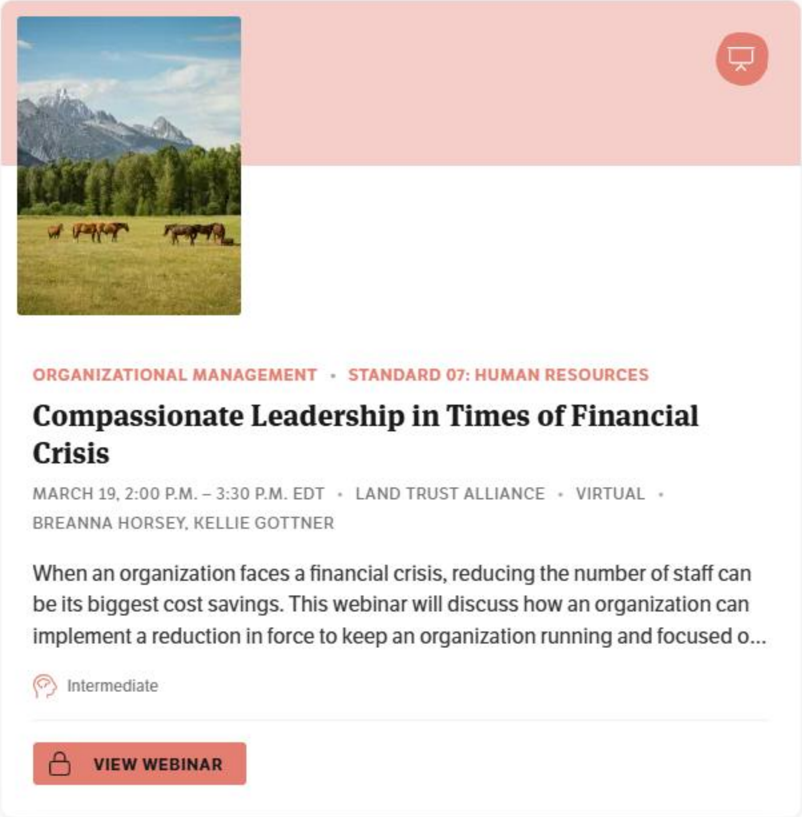
Fundraising in the New Federal Landscape

- **March 13, 1:00-2:00 pm.**
- With shifting federal funding, evolving donor expectations and economic unpredictability, land trusts must adapt to stay resilient.
- Learn how to navigate fundraising in uncertain times with practical strategies to diversify revenue, strengthen donor relationships and leverage technology to sustain and grow your fundraising efforts.
- More information here.



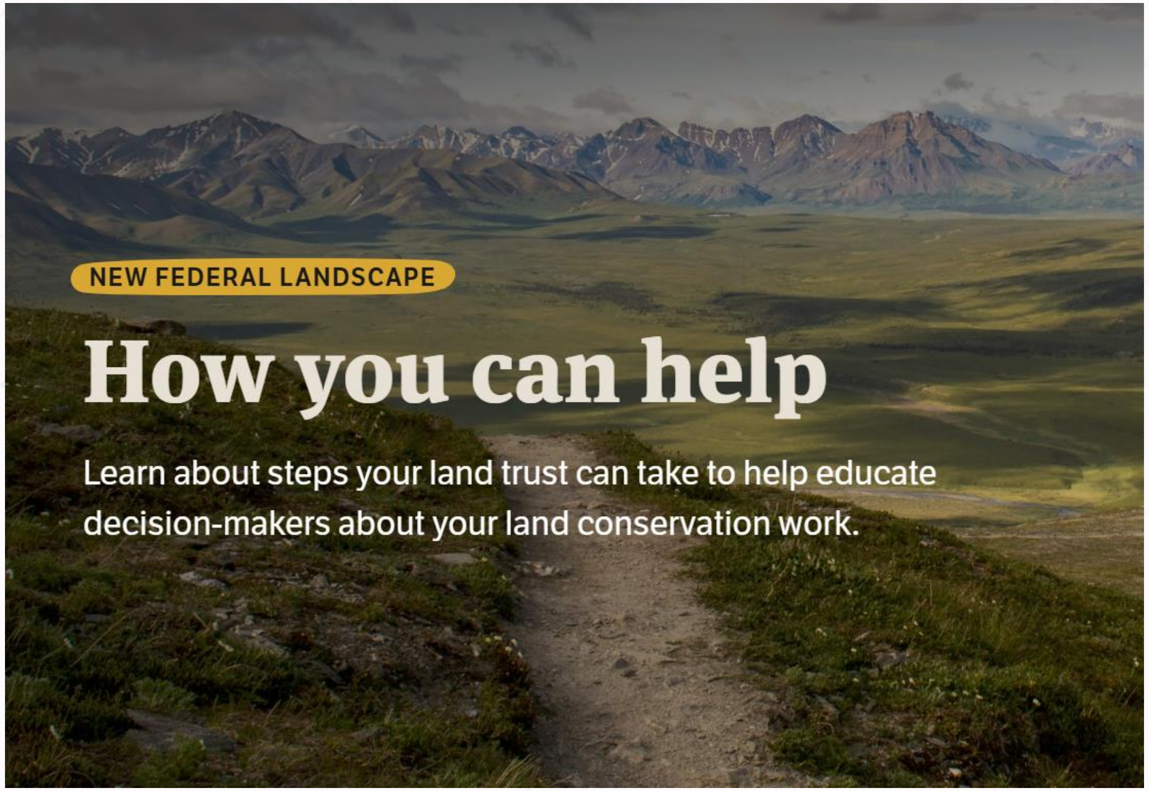
Compassionate Leadership in Times of Financial Crisis

- **March 19, 2:00-3:30 pm.**
- How to plan for and implement an ethical reduction in force.
- How to keep focused on your mission while supporting remaining staff after a reduction in force .
- How to communicate internally and externally about staff reductions.
- More information here.



How you can help

- Share your story
- Reach out to your local and state government, members of Congress and Trump administration contacts (Find info for your members of Congress here.)
- Become an Advocacy Ambassador
- Join us at Advocacy Days in Washington, D.C., May 5-8. (Travel stipends are available, with a focus on key districts and first-time participants. Apply here.)
- Learn more and share your story here.



Thank you!

We’d love to connect. Please reach out!

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