



Peer-to-Peer Mentoring Program Application

Peer-to-peer Mentoring Program Description

The Land Trust Alliance and its partners—Gathering Waters Conservancy (Land Trust Excellence and Advancement Program of LEAP) and Heart of the Lakes Center for Land Conservation Policy (Advancing Conservancy Excellence or ACE)—are pleased to provide a Peer-to-Peer Mentoring program to encourage Michigan and Wisconsin’s land trust and conservancy professionals and board members to connect, learn, share information and resources, support, and mentor each other.

The program is designed to cast a wider net within the land trust community. Creating and maintaining a cohesive, connected land conservancy professional and volunteer corps will strengthen the conservation community in both states. The goal is to not only provide peer mentoring in the short-term, but to cultivate a culture of peer mentoring that continues over the long-term.

We are initiating a Peer-to-Peer Mentoring program to connect people of like interests, experience levels, and job responsibilities. Through this program we will identify and match like peers, support visits to each other’s locations, and arrange times to connect groups of peers on subjects of mutual interest. Stipends to offset travel-associated costs will be available to participating peers.

The Land Trust Alliance, Gathering Waters, and Heart of the Lakes invite all staff and board members to apply for participation in the Peer-to-Peer Mentoring Program. The program is dependent on full cooperation and participation, so please read the requirements and expectations carefully before applying.

How Does It Work?

For every individual accepted in to the Peer-to-Peer Program, we will pay up to \$250 for out-of-pocket costs to visit peers at other land trusts. Applicable travel costs include rental car, gas, hotel, and meals (or alternatively, mileage at the federal rate if the round-trip is less than 120 miles).

- The LEAP and ACE programs will assist participants in identifying both the areas of need that each person would like to learn about and the areas of knowledge where an individual can mentor others.
- Once the peers are identified, we will provide contact information to peers so that individuals can arrange their site visits to other peers. The arrangements are up to the individuals.

- The ACE/LEAP programs can arrange regular or ad-hoc conference calls for peer groups, if desired.
- In addition, we will convene in-person group learning opportunities.

ACE and LEAP will provide the structure, and the peers make their own arrangements. *One key to the success of the program is that peers are willing and able to both teach and learn.* Always wanted to see how a land trust that you've admired from afar works? Now's the time!

For example, let's say we receive applications from 15 people who work on stewardship of land trust lands. Let's then say that Joe wants to learn about determining and marking boundaries and notes that Judy from a land trust across the state in Wisconsin has listed that as an area of strength. Joe would talk with Judy about scheduling a day long visit to her land trust, including office time and field time. Judy would love to learn more about determining stewardship costs for conservation easement transactions and notes that Tim in Michigan has listed that as an area where he'd be willing to mentor someone. Judy would call Tim and arrange to visit his land trust, review their forms, and learn about funding stewardship. And so on.

We recognize that \$250 will not cover the complete costs of travel for everyone, so we have made accommodations for land trusts in remote areas, or those traveling far distances (for example, between states), to pay more if a two-night stay or ferry fees are required. This is dependent upon funding availability and prior approval by the program.

What Are My Responsibilities?

- 1. Visit a peer to learn (one visit will be reimbursed and must take place by June 30, 2013)**
- 2. Be willing to host peers at your land trust to teach**
- 3. Attendance at in-person peer gatherings is optional**

Once accepted in to the program, each participant will sign an agreement. This agreement will outline the responsibilities of each participant and the responsibilities of the Land Trust Alliance, Heart of the Lakes, and Gathering Waters. This is a self-directed program and each participant relies on their colleagues to be fully engaged in the effort.

Every Peer-to-Peer Mentoring Program participant is expected to host other peers. Specific subject matters will vary from situation to situation, but the expectation is that each peer has expertise to share with our colleagues. If multiple people want to learn from the same person, joint meetings can be coordinated in order to aid in efficient learning. No one participant will be required to host peers more than three times during 2012.

If you agree to be part of the program, you will make one trip to another land trust to learn from your peers (you may make more, but only one will be reimbursed). These visits must take place between April 1, 2012 and June 30, 2012. The arrangements for the visits are to be made by the participants in consultation with one another. Determining subject matter, making travel plans, arranging site visits, and providing learning opportunities are the responsibility of the peer mentors. Once you have completed your trip, you will provide a brief report to the Peer-to-Peer Mentoring Program of where and when you made your visit, who participated, and what was discussed.

Who are My Peers / What are the Qualifications?

The program application is open to any staff or board member of any land conservancy or land trust in Wisconsin or Michigan. The program is intended to match peers of similar skill levels, and is intended as a sharing opportunity to learn from one another and teach one another.

We have separated the application in to categories of specialty:

- Staff Leadership (i.e., executive directors, associate directors, and CEOs)
- Board Members
- Board Treasurers
- Stewardship
- Land Protection
- Membership/Fundraising
- Outreach/Communications/Education
- Administrative or Program Support

Please note: each category requires at least five peer participants, so we may not be able to accommodate every category listed above (for example if only two board members apply, we will not be able to have a board member peer group – we need a minimum of five for a “critical mass”).

Qualifications:

- Associated with a 501(c)3 non-profit land trust in Michigan or Wisconsin
- Organizational membership in at least one: Land Trust Alliance, Gathering Waters, or Heart of the Lakes
- At least one year of service with a land trust
- Desire to learn from colleagues
- Expertise to share with colleagues
- Ability to travel to at least one location between March 1 and October 31, 2012
- Willingness to host peers at your land trust

Selection Criteria:

There are a limited number of spots available under this program, so the application process is competitive. The Peer-to-Peer Mentoring Program will make the following considerations when choosing participants:

- Number of applicants per land trust
- Experience level and responsibilities
 - Because this program is intended to match peers of similar skill levels, we will need to take experience level into consideration.*
- Willingness and commitment to fully participate in the program.
- Each category will require a minimum of five peer participants.

Program Timeline:

The estimated schedule for program components is as follows:

Program Applications:	Extended to February 29, 2012
Application review:	Early March, 2012
Applicants notified:	Mid-March, 2012
Commitment signed:	Early April, 2012
Program Begins:	April 1, 2012
Program Completion:	June 30, 2013

Application Process

1) Application forms may be downloaded from [Gathering Waters Conservancy](#), [Heart of the Lakes](#), or the [Land Trust Alliance Website Midwest Section](#), or requested from [MaryKay O'Donnell](#), [Kate Zurlo-Cuva](#), or [Julie Stoneman](#).

2) Applications are due by **February 29, 2012** and should be submitted electronically. Send applications to MaryKay O'Donnell at mkodonnell@lta.org, Kate Zurlo-Cuva at kate@gatheringwaters.org, **AND** Julie Stoneman at julie@heartofthelakes.org .

Please do not mail hard copies.

3) Applicants will receive notification of the acceptance into the program by April 1, 2012

4) Applicants will be contacted to discuss details of the agreement to participate in the program. Agreements will be drafted and signed by April 6, 2012

5) Contact information for peers will be shared with applicants (now participants). Peers should begin scheduling site visits with one another at that time (Spring 2012).

6) Questions during the application process should be directed to MaryKay O'Donnell (269-352-7032) or in Wisconsin to Kate Zurlo-Cuva (608-251-9131, ext. 12) or in Michigan to Julie Stoneman (517-230-9225, extension 16).



Peer-to-Peer Mentoring Program Application 2012

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Date: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____

Land Trust: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Peer Position:

_____ Executive Director/Associate Director/CEO

_____ Board Member

_____ Board Treasurer

_____ Stewardship

_____ Land Protection

_____ Administrative or Program Support

_____ Membership/Fundraising

_____ Communications/Outreach/Education

Are you an employee or a board member? _____

How many years have you worked in conservation? _____

How many years have been with your land trust? _____

How experienced would you rate yourself?

_____ Beginning

_____ Intermediate

_____ Advanced

Other Comments?

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

What general areas of learning are you interested in for this peer-to-peer experience?

Do you have specific subject matters that you hope to be mentored in?

Do you have certain areas of expertise to offer peers?

Can you conclude one trip by June 30, 2013?

Are you willing to host peers at your land trust?

Please add additional comments or information here.