

# PECONIC LAND TRUST



## PECONIC LAND TRUST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **What is a land trust?**

Land trusts are not-for-profit organizations that protect land by working with landowners, and sometimes in cooperation with municipalities through a variety of methods, including gifts, purchases, conservation easements, leases, exchanges. Land trusts have been active in the United States since the 19th century, with over 1,500 land trusts operating in the United States, responsible for assisting in the preservation of over two million acres from Maine to California. Collectively, land trusts represent the fastest-growing conservation movement in the United States.

The Peconic Land Trust is a proud member of The Land Trust Alliance ([www.lta.org](http://www.lta.org)), a national organization that promotes voluntary land conservation and strengthens the land trust movement by providing leadership, information, skills and resources to its members.

### **Who benefits from land conservation?**

By protecting our working farms and natural lands, everyone benefits. Conservation allows the farmland owner to continue farming, and landowners to protect the important resources of their lands. The business community benefits because land conservation has a positive impact on local property values, encourages primary and second homeownership in the community; helps build and promote tourism and creates meaningful recreational activities – all while preserving the distinct character of each community.

### **What kind of land does the Peconic Land Trust conserve?**

The Trust's focus is on conserving working farmland, natural lands, wildlife habitats, viewsheds, wetlands, woodlands, and watersheds that help provide our supplies of local produce and food products, fresh drinking water, and recreational opportunities for local residents and visitors (e.g., hiking trails). Property adjacent to these areas may also be of prime importance as buffer areas that help to maintain the conservation value of adjacent lands.

### **How is the Peconic Land Trust Funded?**

Approximately 60% of the Trust's budget comes from charitable donations while the remaining 40% is fee income from planning and stewardship services provided to clients.

A common misperception, however, is that the Peconic Land Trust is the recipient of the monies raised through the Community Preservation Tax (also referred to as the 2% land transfer tax). This is NOT the case. The CPF tax is collected by Suffolk County and then redistributed to the five East End towns, the distribution of which is based on the location of the property from which the tax is acquired. While the Trust often works with local municipalities to facilitate land conservation purchase transactions, the only funds the Trust receives is in conjunction with actual services provided (e.g., stewardship programs).

**Does the Peconic Land Trust work with local municipalities?**

The Trust works with villages, towns and Suffolk County to assist in developing and implementing protection programs for working farmland and natural lands.

**Who are the people who are involved with the Peconic Land Trust?**

The Trust staff is comprised of professionals with skills and expertise in protecting working farms and natural lands. Representing communities throughout Eastern Long Island, members of the Board of Directors have backgrounds in planning, finance, business, farming, real estate and management. In addition, Trust volunteers with a vast array of experience and skill work on committees and assist in planning and conducting events.

**Is perpetual protection of land guaranteed?**

Yes. Through the Trust's Stewardship Program, conservation easements held by us are monitored annually. This program is supported, in part, through contributions from each donor. This fund assures that there will be income to meet our stewardship responsibilities in perpetuity. If for some reason the Trust did cease operation, which is highly unlikely, we have provided for the transfers of the lands and easements that we hold to an appropriate non-profit conservation organization.

**What about public access on conserved land?**

For protected land that is owned by a private landowner, access to that land by the public is determined by the landowner. On some of these privately held lands, the Trust is able to arrange for educational visits such as nature hikes, additionally, the Trust does own a number of public trail systems on Long Island.

For more information, visit our website at [www.PeconicLandTrust.org](http://www.PeconicLandTrust.org).