

# WHY PURSUE Accreditation?

**S**teve Rosenberg, executive director of the accredited Scenic Hudson Land Trust, Inc., was asked to speak at Rally 2009 in Portland, Oregon. Here, in an excerpt of his speech, he mixes a little fun with a serious topic.

When I ask people from land trusts if they're considering applying for accreditation, I hear:

"Yes...but it will take a lot of time."

"Yes...but there are no guarantees of success."

"Yes...but we're just not sure we can afford it."

"Yes...but it's just not the right time."

All thoughtful points.


But, I also haven't talked to anyone who's done it who didn't say:

"We did it. We're glad we did, and we hope other land trusts will, too."

This may seem a little off the point, but: Did you follow the whole David Letterman mess? Now, had Letterman adhered to standards and practices, he might not have gotten into such hot water! So with this in mind, I'd like to share with you—

BY Steve Rosenberg

## The Top 10 Reasons TO GO THROUGH THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS NOW!

- 10.** Landowners—perhaps your most important constituency—will view your organization as having what it takes to get the deal done. And you will get more deals.
- 9.** The accreditation seal looks great on your website, letterhead and newsletter.
- 8.** In challenging times like these, *why wouldn't* you take advantage of every opportunity to give your organization that extra edge?
- 7.** Everyone on your board and staff will learn a tremendous amount, not just about best practices, but about the people and history of your own organization—a real morale boost to everyone involved.
- 6.** Accreditation will give you greater confidence that you are ensuring permanence, because the policies and practices it represents will become a thread that runs through everything you do.
- 5.** When the new conservation defense insurance program starts, you will automatically qualify and get a discounted price on coverage.
- 4.** Funders like to hear that you're accredited. There may come a time when the question isn't whether you *are* accredited, but instead, *why aren't* you accredited.
- 3.** The more of us that are accredited, the easier it will be for the land conservation community to demonstrate to the Senate Finance Committee and the IRS that we run a tight ship.
- 2.** You will feel great satisfaction when total strangers come up to you at Rally to sincerely congratulate you.
- 1.** Larry Kueter, chair of the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, will teach you the secret accredited land trust handshake when you come up to accept your certificate! 



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