



# CONSERVATION IN THE LAKELANDS

SERVING EIGHT COUNTIES IN THE WESTERN PIEDMONT OF SOUTH CAROLINA

► SPRING 2018

## USLT Earns National Recognition, Shows Commitment to Public Trust and Conservation

Americans strongly support saving the open spaces they love. Since 2000, the Upper Savannah Land Trust has been doing just that for the people of the Western Piedmont of South Carolina. Now USLT announced it has achieved national recognition – joining a network of 398 accredited land trusts across the nation that have demonstrated their commitment to professional excellence and to maintaining the public’s trust in their work.

“Accreditation demonstrates USLT’s commitment to permanent land conservation in The Lakelands region,” said USLT President Rossie Corwon. “We are a stronger organization for having gone through the rigorous accreditation program. Our strength means working farms and forests, waterways, open spaces and special places will be protected forever, making this an even greater place for us and our children.”

USLT had to provide extensive documentation and undergo a comprehensive review as part of its accreditation application. The Land Trust Accreditation Commission awarded accreditation, signifying its confidence that USLT’s lands will be protected forever. Almost 20 million acres of farms, forests and natural areas vital to healthy communities are now permanently conserved by an accredited land trust.

Since its inception in 2000, USLT has



grown from the first 33-acre tract to conserving 47,562 acres. And this has been done with a limited budget. Corwon stated that this has been possible by the commitment

of our board, staff and membership.

The USLT board, staff and consultant spent 470 hours assessing the organization, making necessary changes to policies and procedures and completing the accreditation application. A total of \$22,838 was spent on the effort. Much of the cost was paid for with a \$7,500 grant from the Land Trust Alliance and a \$9,000 donation from USLT supporters for accreditation expenses.

“It is exciting to recognize the Upper Savannah Land Trust with this distinction,” said Tammara Van Ryn, executive director of the Commission. “Accredited land trusts are united behind strong ethical standards ensuring the places people love will be conserved forever. Accreditation recognizes USLT has demonstrated sound finances, ethical conduct, responsible governance, and lasting stewardship.”

USLT is one of 1,363 land trusts across the United States according to the most recent National Land Trust Census, released December 1, 2016 by the Land Trust Alliance. This comprehensive report

Accreditation continued on page 4

### UPPER SAVANNAH LAND TRUST

The mission of the Upper Savannah Land Trust is to encourage and support conservation of natural and scenic lands, farms, forests, waterways, and open spaces in our eight-county area: **Abbeville, Anderson, Edgefield, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Newberry, and Saluda** Counties.

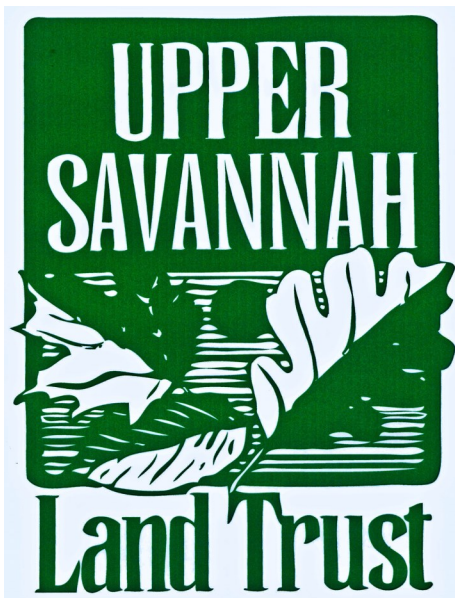
The Upper Savannah Land Trust is a 501 (c) (3) membership organization. Contributions are tax deductible.

### Inside this Issue:

President’s Desk	2
Board Membership	2
USLT Annual Report	3
Peggy Adams Award	3
Parks Mill Open House	4
Donor Listing	5
Longleaf Assistance	6

**Conservation  
in the Lakelands**

Volume 12, Issue 1



**430 Helix Road  
Greenwood, SC 29646**

#### **USLT Officers and Board 2018-19**

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Wallace Wood

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Vacant, Vice-President  
Rick Green, Secretary  
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## **From the President's Desk . . .**

Dear Members,

A banner year for the Upper Savannah Land Trust! We announced and celebrated our accreditation at the annual meeting, after receiving notification in February that this major USLT goal had formally been reached. Please read details in the newsletter to appreciate more about this milestone!

We now have 47,572 acres under easement protection. Our stewardship fund (earmarked for easement protection) is fully funded, one of our requirements as an accredited Land Trust.

However, we still and always are concerned about funding the operation side of the Land Trust, and will be focusing on fundraising this coming year, with some fun events in the works.

Statewide, we have been introduced to a newly founded organization, Palmetto Green, that has set for itself the task of partnering the development

world and the conservation world in South Carolina to identify tracts of land that are best fits for these distinct purposes, in an attempt to plan for smart growth and development, and protect valuable resources.

A recent article in The NY Times Magazine, "Can Dirt Save the Earth" introduced the concept of "carbon farming," and discussed regenerative agriculture. I am not writing to incite any feuds over climate change, but the article discusses land management practices and new research developing science-based carbon farming practices. Interesting, if controversial, reading.

All of this is more evidence to support the significance of conservation easements. Many thanks for your continuing support of the Land Trust.

Sincerely,  
Rossie Corwon



**Fourteen conservation easements totaling 5,454 acres were donated in 2017 by six landowners. Donors from left and counties where land is located were: Mark Parrish (Saluda), Ray Amick (Newberry) and Stephen Davis representing Eden Hall LP (Greenwood). Not pictured: Jill Warner (Greenwood), David and Deborah Brett representing Fynimex LLC (Abbeville) and Robert Pollard representing Pollard Land Company LLC (McCormick).**



# Membership Donors Supporting USLT Conservation Efforts in 2017

## Membership Donors

We gratefully acknowledge the support of these donors in 2017.

### Savannah/Saluda Society, \$3,000 or more

Davis Family Foundation, Inc.  
L.B. and Margaret Adams Jr.  
Wallace and Susan Wood

### Foundation, \$1,500 - \$2,999

Mike and Rossie Corwon

### Guardian, \$1,000 - \$1,499

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Walter Craig Stuckey  
Stan and Mary Todd  
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### Friend, \$50 - \$99

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### Easement Donors Paying Fees

Eden Hall LP  
Fynimex LLC  
Pollard Land Company  
Red Bud LLC  
Ray and Betty Amick  
Joseph L. and Emily W. Boyle  
Mark Parrish  
Johnny and Debra Simpson  
Hamp and Jill Warner

**THANK YOU TO ALL DONORS!!**

**Jimmy Burton, Executive Director of the Burton Center in Greenwood, stands in front of a pond that was constructed at the Center to provide recreation and educational opportunities for the residents. The Burton Center had funds to build a pond but needed technical assistance to complete it. USLT chose this as a community project and provided help. Jimmy Sanders, board member and retired USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) conservationist, took the lead. He secured Bob Bowie, a retired conservationist with NRCS that has a pond building consulting business, to assist with design and survey work. Henry Black of Saluda was chosen as contractor to build the pond, which is filling with water from wells on the property.**





## USLT Honors Rick Green



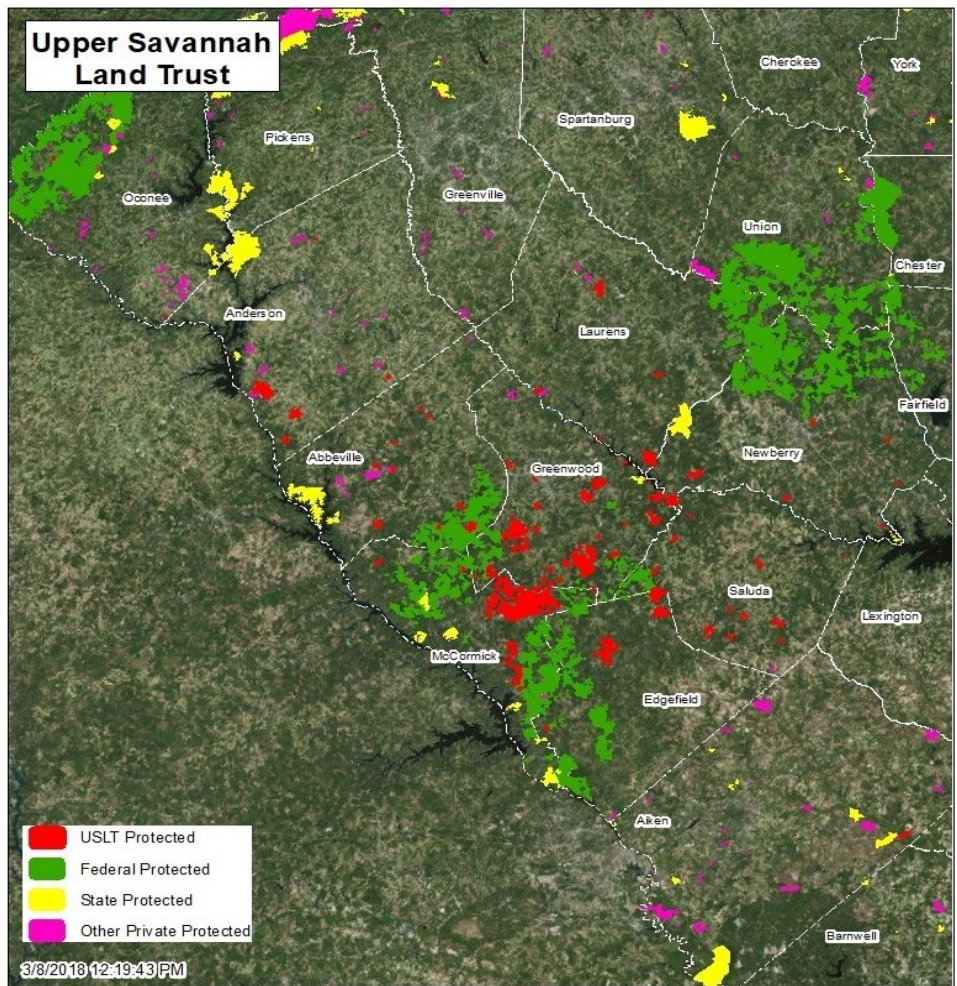
Rick Green, a founding member of the USLT 18 years ago, was recognized for his years of leadership with the Peggy Adams Conservation Award at the 2018 land trust annual meeting.

The award is presented annually to a person who has made an outstanding contribution to further the mission of the USLT.

Land Trust Board member Frank Wideman said Green's leadership was especially critical in the early stages of the USLT's development. Green, who is Government Services Director at the Upper Savannah Council of Governments, has served as USLT's secretary for all 18 years.

"Because he is so unassuming and his work is so well done, he has often been unrecognized and unrewarded," Wideman said. "He has helped provide (office) space, taken countless minutes, written numerous reports, and overseen an endless number of meetings."

Green was appreciative of the award, saying to those attending the annual meeting, "This has been truly a group effort with a lot of people over the past 18 years. It is hard to believe we are where we are today (from 33 acres in 2000 to 47,562 acres in 2018)."



The Upper Savannah Land Trust continues positive growth in terms of the number of acres conserved. In 2017, the USLT added 5,457 acres in new easements to its list of conserved lands in the Upstate. The map and the table below show the 114 easements totaling 47,562 acres held by the USLT as of December 31, 2017. Thompson Forest Consultants LLC provided map.

CONSERVATION EASEMENTS AND ACRES BY COUNTY 2017		
County	Number of Easements	Acres
Abbeville	8	1,943
Aiken	1	342
Anderson	7	2,731
Edgefield	6	4,524
Greenwood	40	14,284
Laurens	7	2,587
McCormick	15	15,887
Newberry	12	2,280
Oconee	2	126
Saluda	16	2,858
<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>47,562</b>

# Accreditation

Continued from front page

also shows that accredited land trusts have made significant achievements.

Accredited land trusts have steadily grown and now steward almost 80 percent of conservation lands and easements held by all land trusts, have protected five times more land from 2010 to 2015 than land trusts that were not yet accredited, and also have stronger systems and more resources to steward and defend their conservation lands forever.

As a result, the public's trust in land conservation has increased helping to win support for federal, state and local conservation funding measures.

A complete list of accredited land trusts and more information about the process and benefits are detailed at [www.landtrustaccreditation.org](http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org).

## About the Land Trust Accreditation Commission

The Land Trust Accreditation Commission inspires excellence, promotes public trust and ensures permanence in the conservation of open lands by recognizing organizations that meet rigorous quality standards and strive for continuous improvement. The Commission, established in 2006 as an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance, is governed by a volunteer board of diverse land conservation and nonprofit management experts.

## 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 1,000 member land trusts supported by more than 200,000 volunteers and 4.6 million members nationwide. The Alliance is based in Washington, D.C., and operates several regional offices.

The Alliance's leadership serves the entire land trust community — our work in the nation's capital represents the policy priorities of land conservationists from every state; our education programs improve and empower land trusts from Maine to Alaska; and our comprehensive vision for the future of land conservation includes new partners, new programs and new priorities. Connect with us online at [www.landtrustalliance.org](http://www.landtrustalliance.org).

## Expectations for Improvement

The USLT's goals are to ensure that every existing and future signed baseline documentation report is a distinct document, clearly identified and segregated from other project files, that represents the condition of the property at a specific time; retain an original and a duplicate of the entire distinct baseline report; and implement a fundraising plan for the organization.



**USLT Board member Jimmy Sanders is hard at work selling gun giveaway tickets during USLT's annual meeting March 22, 2018. Brad Thompson, Sr. was the winner of the Stevens Model 555 over/under 20 gauge shotgun which was donated by Hunters Headquarters of Greenwood. USLT made \$1,780 from tickets sales.**

## Spider Lily Site Open House Set

The South Carolina Native Plant Society is planning a second Open House event at the Parks Mill spider lily site for the weekend of May 19-20, 2018.

Members of the SC Native Plant Society and other environmental organizations, as well as the general public, will be able to visit the historic grist mill site and view the lilies in their full glory. Native Plant Society members will be present to serve as guides and to answer questions during the hours of 10 a.m.—noon and 1 to 3 p.m. on both Saturday and Sunday. There will be brief presentations on lily preservation and on-going efforts to stabilize the historic mill facility.

If you and your group would like to visit during this Open House, contact Bill Stringer at [catboyz@nctv.com](mailto:catboyz@nctv.com), or (864) 979-3169. As there is very limited parking at the site, we ask that visitor groups indicate which of the four time slots they prefer, and that very rigorous car-pooling practices be observed. Off-site parking will be in downtown Plum Branch, with a shuttle vehicle to transport you to and from the Parks Mill site. To request a shuttle, call (864) 979-3169.

For more information and driving directions, visit our web site [www.scuslt.com](http://www.scuslt.com).



## Longleaf Alliance Offers Assistance in Upper Savannah River Watershed

The Longleaf Alliance (LLA) works to ensure a sustainable future for the longleaf pine ecosystem through partnerships, landowner assistance, and education and outreach. In 2013, the LLA helped to establish the SoLo-ACE Longleaf Partnership to support longleaf restoration in 11 counties along the Savannah River, including Edgefield and McCormick counties.

LLA provides technical and financial assistance to support landowners with land management in addition to state and federal incentive programs. Cost-share for landowners includes planting, restoring, and managing longleaf pine (planting, burning, and midstory control) and managing for key wildlife including Red-cockaded woodpeckers and gopher tortoises. LLA also funds landowners with longleaf, or interested in restoring longleaf, with due diligence costs associated with a conservation easement.

To learn more, contact Lisa Lord at (843) 909-2343, [lisa@longleafalliance.org](mailto:lisa@longleafalliance.org) or Bob Franklin at (843) 893-7775, [bobby@longleafalliance.org](mailto:bobby@longleafalliance.org). More information can also be found at [longleafalliance.org](http://longleafalliance.org).

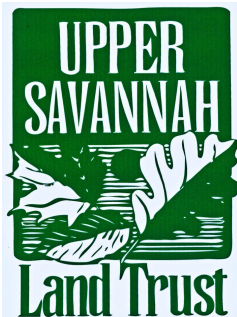
If you are interested in a conservation easement on an existing longleaf stand or interested in establishing one and doing an easement, contact Wallace Wood at (864) 993-5012 or [info@scuslt.com](mailto:info@scuslt.com).

**Conservation  
easements conserve  
vital lands while  
easing tax burdens  
on donors**

### We Need Your Support

Please consider a tax-deductible donation to the USLT in one of our membership categories. Form may be downloaded from our web site or you may donate through PayPal.

Friend (\$50 – \$99)      Family (\$100 – \$249)      Patron (\$250 – \$499)  
Sponsor (\$500 – \$999)      Guardian (\$1,000 – \$1,499)  
Savannah/Saluda Society (\$3,000 or more)



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