

Report on Rally 2014: The National Land Conservation Conference Providence, RI: Sept 18 - 20, 2014

Nearly 2,000 conservationists from across the country (and seven other countries) met in Providence, Rhode Island, for the Land Trust Alliance's Rally 2014: The National Land Conservation Conference. Each year Rally brings together a dynamic network of land conservation professionals and volunteers seeking to share wisdom on the challenges and best practices in conservation. This year was no exception, with three incredible days filled with learning, networking and inspiration.

With more than 100 workshops, 16 seminars, 10 field trips and countless networking opportunities, Rally-goers experienced firsthand the energy and inspiration that happens when so many people with the same vision join together to strengthen their work. Given the amount of expertise at Rally, the Alliance was very pleased to welcome over 33% of participants for their first-ever Rally experience. Through the generosity of supporters and sponsors like you, the Alliance awarded more than \$90,000 in scholarships to 162 land trust staff, board members and volunteers like Denise, who said this about her experience:

Rally was an amazing benefit for our land trust. I was truly inspired by every aspect of the conference. Being my first Rally, I was not sure what to expect. As the workshops at Rally continued, I felt like a sponge, soaking in everything and feeling a great sense of camaraderie and satisfaction that I was right where I belonged. I am very grateful for [the Alliance] to host Rally, and for this scholarship. To me, Rally was life changing. I cannot express to you enough the effect it had on me, which will only highlight and benefit the work I do at KHLT.

-Denise Jantz, Kachemak Heritage Land Trust (AK)

The crowd was given a warm welcome by Alliance President Rand Wentworth, speaking about the land trust movement's accomplishments and how the actions we take today will drive conservation for decades to come. He shared stories about the progress made towards the Alliance's three strategic goals.

- To **increase the pace of land conservation**, land trusts are lobbying Congress, securing funding in the Farm Bill, working to pass state ballot measures and gaining ground to make permanent the conservation easement tax incentive.
- To **improve the quality of land conservation**, the Alliance is training leaders, mentoring organizations, targeting investments in land trust growth and helping to prepare for perpetuity, with 280 accredited land trusts holding 75% of conserved land.
- To **ensure the permanence of land conservation**, over 450 land trust member-owners insured over 22,000 properties with Terrafirma, defending conservation by winning precedent-setting cases and shaping conservation law for the next century.

Rand charted a vision for the future, saying, "We dream big here. This work will leverage \$9 billion in new conservation funding and protect 10 million acres over the next five years: securing a national network of parks, greenways and farms so that every child will grow up within 10 minutes of contact with nature."

Rally 2014 provided key tools for land trusts to build their skills in every area of their work:

- More than 100 workshops designed for practitioners with all levels of experience.
- 16 in-depth seminars drew 807 participants earning high marks (average 4.4 out of 5).
- 10 field trips with 343 participants shined a spotlight on efforts to save land for open space, recreation and agriculture in Rhode Island and Massachusetts.
- 43 exhibit booths showcased businesses, government agencies and educational institutions that support the land conservation movement.
- 96 accredited land trusts crossed the Rally stage, cheered on enthusiastically by cowbells and waving pennants, celebrating together the achievements of the land trust community.
- 28 international attendees from Chile, Canada, Argentina, Spain, Germany, Australia and South Africa brought incredible breadth and diversity to Rally.
- 277 Rally faculty provided invaluable training to the land trust community.

Jean Hocker, former Alliance president and winner of the 2014 Kingsbury Browne Conservation Leadership Award, spoke about her tenure with the land trust community: “I know that folks connected with land trusts are special—smart, dedicated, hard-working, results-oriented. Over the decades, I’ve seen land trusts build on Kingsbury Browne’s vision to become a sophisticated force for conserving and stewarding irreplaceable land resources.” We like to evaluate the success of Rally by the benefit it provides to attendees. They shared these testimonials with us:

One of the benefits of attending Rally is that you get to see such a broad range of what land trusts are doing in terms of their organizational structures, missions and operations. It’s very exciting to see where these organizations have taken their programs. When you don’t have this interaction it’s easy to confine your vision inside the box of your own day to day operations—Rally opens up whole new paradigms of possibilities. Also, you have the opportunity to hear other peoples’ “war stories” on stewardship, nonprofit operation, easement drafting, project financing, etc. Valuable information is exchanged at Rally that can help us all to avoid repeating others mistakes and keep current with the land protection rules and regulations that we must consider every day.

-Richard Johnston, Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust (NY)

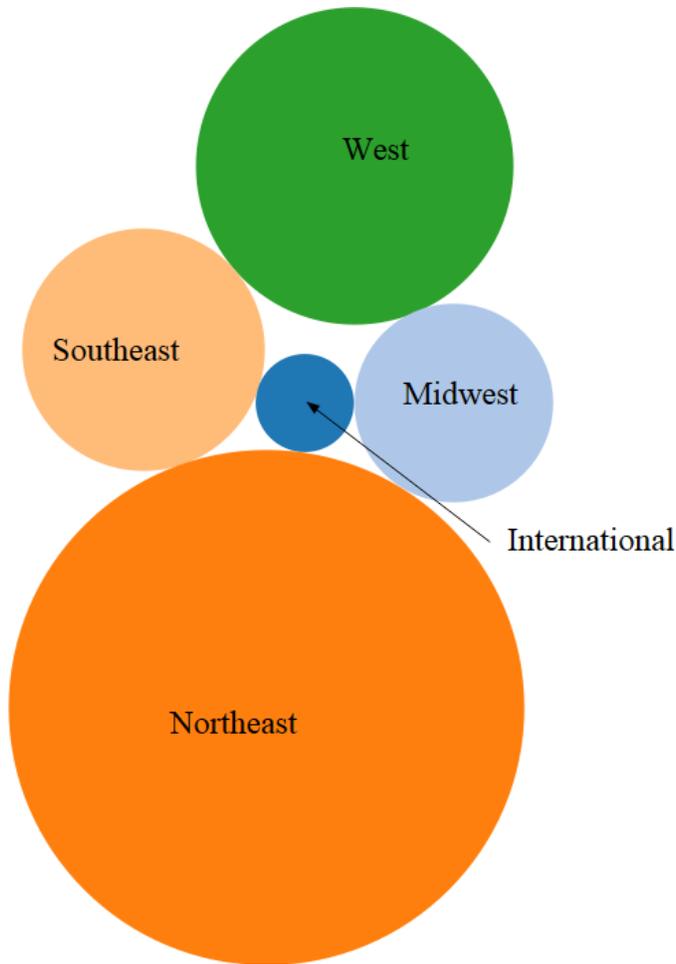
Although I have worked for our regional land trust for almost two years, Rally 2014 was my first opportunity to meet land trust leaders from regions outside New England, and to gain a feel for the breadth and depth of the land conservation movement... I would like to express appreciation for the scholarship that helped make it possible for me to attend my first Rally, and to let the donors to this program know how valuable their generous support is in inspiring, empowering and teaching new land trust leaders so that we can be effective in our land conservation work.

Monica Green, Kestrel Land Trust (MA)

The Land Trust Alliance thanks all of our sponsors for their generous support of Rally, which educates and motivates thousands of conservationists each year, helping them strengthen the work of land trusts across the country. We hope you will join us for Rally 2015, taking place October 8 - 10, 2015 in Sacramento, California. Together, we can help people keep the land and communities they love whole and healthy for future generations.

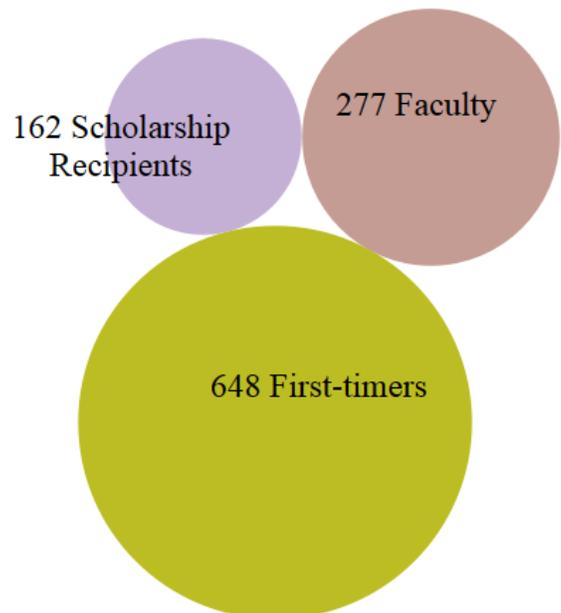
Rally 2014: Quick Facts and Quotes

**Rally Statistics:
1,921 Rally-goers
By Region**



The extraordinary networking opportunity for attending conservation groups and land trust organizations was incomparable—I even met up with friends whom I had not seen in over two decades! The workshops, seminars and conferences were informative, pertinent and covered the important spectrum of philosophy/ethics to “boots on the ground” how-to details essential for the day-to-day running of land trusts.
-Bruce Rinker, Valley Conservation Council (VA)

Groups:



Overheard During Rally

The image shows a screenshot of four tweets from a rally. The first tweet is from Maggi Mac (@justmaggimac) with 10 retweets and 4 favorites. The second is from FreshwaterLandTrust (@fwlt) with 3 retweets and 2 favorites. The third is from Jes Siart (@Jes_Siart) with 1 retweet and 1 favorite. The fourth is from Sean Robertson (@SeanLTA) with 1 retweet and 1 favorite. Each tweet includes a profile picture, name, handle, and a 'Follow' button. The tweets are arranged vertically with interaction bars below each one.

Maggi Mac @justmaggimac
'No one marched on Washington b/c of a pie chart'- @GoodmanCenter. Stories, not data = king for conservation success @Italliance #rally14

FreshwaterLandTrust @fwlt
Thank you @Italliance for #Rally14! We enjoyed learning from the best leaders in conservation. Excited to take these lessons home to Alabama

Jes Siart @Jes_Siart
After three days at #Rally14 I am thoroughly inspired AND thoroughly tired! Thanks @Italliance for an amazing and informative experience!

Sean Robertson @SeanLTA
Thank you @SenJackReed & @SenWhitehouse for speaking at #Rally14 and for all you do to support #landconservation.

Senator Jack Reed, Sheldon Whitehouse and Land Trust Alliance

*For me and for a couple other newer employees who do not come from a land trust background, Rally benefited our organization by giving us an overview of the issues faced by land trusts all across the country and the tools and strategies used to accomplish our work. As a result of this “land trust immersion” program, we are better prepared to carry out our organization’s work and to communicate our work to others. Besides serving as a primer for newer staff, Rally gave our organization fresh ideas and concrete information to improve our work back [home].
-Kate Conley, Columbia Land Trust (WA)*