

CSC Project Synopsis -- 2010

Project Title: Legislative and Policy Initiatives in Support of Land Conservation and Stewardship

Goals: To influence legislation and shape policy discussions with state agencies and within the General Assembly in order to support land conservation and strengthen programs and laws to promote stewardship of protected lands in Rhode Island now, and for the future.

Brief Description: The Rhode Island Land Trust Council (RILTC) plays an important role, representing over 40 land trusts and the interests of the land conservation community, on legislative matters passing through the State House that impact land conservation. RILTC identifies needed changes to the law to strengthen the “permanence” of protected lands and pursue state funding to continue conservation efforts. RILTC also pursues legislation that safeguards conservation lands and fosters sound stewardship and defends against legislative proposals that threaten or undermine the status of conservation lands. This agenda requires consistent attention and expertise and covers a variety of issues that address high priority needs of land trusts and conservation organizations as they seek to effectively protect, manage and steward conserved lands.

RILTC has initiated a partnership with Land Trust Alliance (LTA), a national group, to coordinate state policy work related to land conservation in northeastern states. Working with LTA’s Director of Conservation Defense, the RILTC is assisting in developing priorities and a strategy for pursuing state policies/legislation that address issues being encountered by land trusts with their land conservation and stewardship activities. This partnership helps Rhode Island to coordinate land conservation stewardship work with other northeastern states and to be more proactive with Rhode Island’s stewardship and land protection policy initiatives.

CSC funding is needed to support the vigilant and effective work of the RILTC on legislative and state policy efforts.

Deliverables:

1. Text of legislation introduced in 2010 and names of lead sponsors.
2. List of legislation monitored and influenced
3. Testimony submitted for legislation
4. Update on state policy collaboration with LTA
5. Report on legislative outcomes 2010

Timetable and Benchmarks:

2009	November	Identify policy priorities for 2010 legislative session
2010	January	Sponsors for legislation recruited
	February	Legislation researched and drafted
	March	Legislation introduced
	Jan. – June	Monitor legislation introduced and build grass roots response to any proposed legislation detrimental to the state's land conservation efforts. Build grass roots support for viable legislation that supports land conservation efforts. Represent land trust community at Statehouse hearings as appropriate.
2010	January	Issue check for \$18,200 to the RILTC with a clear statement that this funding should support staff and operating costs for the RILTC to continue its work shaping the legislative agenda for the land conservation community in Rhode Island, and collaborating with LTA on effective state policy strategies to address current threats and needs confronting land trusts and other non-profit conservation organizations who hold and manage conserved lands.

Budget:

<u>Amount</u>	<u>Purpose</u>
\$18,200	Support for state policy initiatives led by the Rhode Island Land Trust Council

Payment will be made to TSNE- RI Land Trust Council at:

Mr. Rupert Friday
The Rhode Island Land Trust Council
PO Box 633
Saunderstown, RI 02874

Project oversight will be done by Rupert Friday, Director of the Rhode Island Land Trust Council.