Keepers & Chuckers
Organizing Land Records to Assure Permanent Protection for Your Land

Rebecca Washburn, Northeast Conservation Manager
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KEEPERS & CHUCKERS

INSPIRATION
Be inspired to protect the great work of your land trust.

TOOLS
Learn about tools to help ensure success.

ACTION
Leave with a jump start on your records and steps to help you take action.

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GOOD RECORD MANAGEMENT

• LEGAL DEFENSE
• DAILY OPERATIONS
• HISTORIC RECORD
• LEGAL OBLIGATIONS
• PUBLIC REPUTATION
EXAMPLES OF RECORDS

- Legal Agreements
- Appraisals
- Financial Records
- Donor Acknowledgement
- Tax Documents
- BDRs/Management Plans
- Monitoring Reports
- Maps/Surveys

CRITICAL RECORDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sustainable Document</th>
<th>Original Required</th>
<th>Electronic Alternative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legal agreements, deeds, contracts, plans, permits, etc.</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit investigation (such as correspondence with the potential lender)</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax liens, judgments, or evidence of title investigation</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appraisal (or summary appraisal if full appraisal is not available and used to substantiate fire purchase price or property value)</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial data for projects where the timber was sold as a marketable forest product</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservancy documents if establishing rights</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent record of project activities</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial data for projects where the timber was sold as a marketable forest product</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RECORDS STORAGE

- Fireproof cabinet/safe
- Separate location
- Electronic storage
- Make duplicates
### RECORDS POLICY & PROCEDURES

**PHILOSOPHY**
- Land Trust Culture
- Age and Maturity of Organization
- Size (all volunteer/Staff) & Budget
- Financial Complexity
- Portfolio of Conserved Land

**CREATION & COLLECTION**

- Key Documents
- Drafts/Notes
- Signatures
- Originals/Copies
- Paper/Electronic/Both

**RETENTION & STORAGE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Retention Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land Trust Documents</td>
<td>70 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee Meeting Notes</td>
<td>70 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Records</td>
<td>70 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislative Documents</td>
<td>70 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personnel Records</td>
<td>70 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RESPONSIBILITY**

- Records Manager
- Land Trust Officers
- Staff Members

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**RECORD RETENTION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Record Type</th>
<th>Minimum Retention Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual Reports</td>
<td>7 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Statements</td>
<td>7 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minutes of Meetings</td>
<td>7 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting Notes</td>
<td>2 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**RETENTION & STORAGE**

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RECORDS POLICY & PROCEDURES

PHILOSOPHY

• Organizing
• Location
• Permanent Protection
• Accessibility

CREATION & COLLECTION

• Designated staff/volunteers
• Create templates & procedures
• Clear assignments of responsibility

RETENTION & STORAGE

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

• Land Trust Alliance Learning Center
• Standards and Practices Curriculum Guides
• Nonprofit Law and Recordkeeping, Volume II
• Acquiring Land and Conservation Easements
• Managing Conservation Easements in Perpetuity
• IRS Publication 4221-PC
What about all of those boxes in my closet?