



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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# Kiawah Conservancy Earns National Recognition

## *Strong Commitment to Public Trust and Conservation Excellence*

**Kiawah Island, South Carolina** (February 22, 2017) – At a time of political change, one thing is clear and consistent: Americans strongly support saving the spaces they love. Since 1997, the Kiawah Conservancy has been doing just that for the Lowcountry. Today, the Kiawah Conservancy announced it has achieved the national recognition of Land Trust Accreditation – joining a network of only 372 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 the Kiawah Conservancy’s commitment to permanent land conservation” said Kevin Cox, Chairman of the Kiawah Conservancy’s Board of Trustees “We are a stronger organization for having gone through the rigorous accreditation program. The lands we preserve will be protected forever, ensuring the natural habitats, wildlife, and beauty of these special places remain for the enjoyment of generations to come.”

The Kiawah Conservancy 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 the Kiawah Conservancy’s lands will be protected forever.

“It is exciting to recognize the Kiawah Conservancy 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 that the Kiawah Conservancy has demonstrated sound finances, ethical conduct, responsible governance, and lasting stewardship.”

The Kiawah Conservancy 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 also shows that accredited land trusts have made significant achievements.

- Accredited land trusts protected five times more land from 2010 to 2015 than land trusts that were not yet accredited.
- Accredited land trusts 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 Kiawah Conservancy**

Founded in 1997 by Island residents through a grassroots movement, the Kiawah Conservancy is dedicated to preserving the natural habitats of Kiawah Island. To date the Conservancy has preserved 35 properties that total over 348 acres of pristine barrier island habitat. The Conservancy benefits Kiawah Island and surrounding communities by:

- Providing a long-term vision and plan for land and habitat protection
- Encouraging and assisting with the enhancement and restoration of natural habitat in developed areas
- Sponsoring critical wildlife and habitat research programs
- Fostering conservation education throughout the local community

The Conservancy envisions all citizens of and visitors to this area enjoying the natural habitat, wildlife, and unique beauty of Kiawah Island for generations to come. Visit us online at [www.kiawahconservancy.org](http://www.kiawahconservancy.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. For more, visit [www.landtrustaccreditation.org](http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org).

### **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. Based in Washington, D.C., and with several regional offices, the Alliance represents about 1,000 member land trusts nationwide.

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).