

# National Recognition

## Accreditation Awarded by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission

The Weeks Bay Foundation Board of Directors is proud to report that the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an independent program of the



Larry Kueter, chairman of the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, Walter Ernest, and Tammara Van Ryn

Land Trust Alliance, has awarded *Accredited Status* to the Weeks Bay Foundation.

“Accredited land trusts meet national quality standards for protecting important natural places and working lands forever,” said Commission Executive Director **Tammara Van Ryn**. “The accreditation seal lets the public know that the accredited land trust has undergone an extensive, external review of the governance and management of its organization and the systems and policies it uses to protect land.”

“The Weeks Bay Foundation’s accredited status demonstrates our commitment to permanent land conservation,” said **Walter C. Ernest, IV**, Executive Director. “Our land trust is a stronger organization today having gone through the rigorous accreditation program.”

The Weeks Bay Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization founded in 1990 and operates as a land trust in the coastal counties of Baldwin and Mobile in Alabama. The Foundation is also the support organization for the Weeks Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve. The Foundation currently owns 104 acres of coastal wetland property and has worked with the Reserve on all of the Reserve’s land acquisition activities. The Foundation also has the ability to hold conservation easements.

“Land owners wishing to donate property or conservation easements can be assured that the Weeks Bay Foundation meets the highest standards for documenting transactions and for providing stewardship for lands in our care,” said **Dr. Ellis Allen**, Foundation Board Chairman.

The Foundation was awarded accreditation this September along with other land trusts from across the country. The Foundation is one of

just 78 other land trusts that have been awarded accreditation nationally since the fall of 2008 and is one of only two land trusts accredited in Alabama.



Rand Wentworth, President of the Land Trust Alliance, congratulates Walter Ernest

Accredited land trusts are able to display a seal indicating to the public that they meet national standards for excellence, uphold the public trust, and ensure that conservation efforts are permanent. The seal is a mark of distinction in land conservation.

“We are proud to display the accreditation seal. The seal demonstrates the Weeks Bay Foundation’s commitment to perpetually protect ecologically-sensitive lands in coastal Alabama,” said the Foundation’s executive director.

The Land Trust Accreditation Commission, based in Saratoga Springs, New York, awards the accreditation seal to community institutions that meet national quality standards for protecting important natural places and working lands forever. The Commission, an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance established in 2006, is governed by a volunteer board of diverse land conservation and nonprofit management experts from around the country. The Alliance, of which the Foundation is a member, is a national conservation group based in Washington, D.C., that works to save the places people love by strengthening conservation throughout America.