

# Building Trust

STATE TRUST LANDS:  
Fiduciary Duty in the Changing West

## Spring 2011

Building Trust is an information clearinghouse designed to assist western state trust land managers in enhancing the value of the trust for its beneficiaries by broadening the range of land-use information, tools, and policy options available to managers and diverse stakeholders for the long-term sustainable management of state trust lands. **Please forward to interested colleagues.**

### Washington State's Commitment to Eco-Friendly State Trust Land Management



Commissioner of Public Lands, Peter Goldmark, recently joined with members of the legislature to introduce the Community Forest Trust bill, SB5272, HB1421. This bill would provide a means to protect working forests that are at the greatest risk of conversion while still providing returns to the trust beneficiaries. Land would be transferred to the Community Forest Trust and a management plan would be

developed for it. The Common School Construction Account would be reimbursed for value of timber not harvested on the land while a portion of the funds would be used to buy replacement lands managed for future income for the Common School account. Visit the department's [website](#) for updates on the bill's status. Read the [High Country News blog](#), and [Bellingham Herald article](#) about the bill.

The [Forest Biomass Initiative](#) that passed in March 2010 will move to its second phase. Success of two of four biomass pilot programs, a heat and power plant and a wood oil production plant, has led to creation of a bill that will establish a bio-aviation facility to aid in cleaning up emissions from the ever growing industry. Additionally, the bio-aviation bill will kick start the development of a woody biomass supply chain. Goldmark stated that Washington State University, Boeing, and state agencies and businesses support the bill. He pointed out the ample market in the aviation industry and added that Washington has a bright future in the biomass fuel industry and can serve as a model for other states. [Read more.](#)

[Revenues generated](#) from wind power projects on state trust land exceeded \$1 million in 2010 for the first time since the Department of Natural Resources began leasing lands for wind power in 2004. The 11 projects operate 108 turbines on state trust land and produce potentially 191 megawatts of energy. The current output prevents over 250,000 tons of carbon dioxide emissions, when compared to the same output of energy from natural gas power plants. That CO<sub>2</sub> emission reduction is even higher when compared to a less clean alternative like coal. Goldmark is encouraged by the advances in production and proud that state trust lands can continue to assist in finding solutions for clean energy.

### Keeping Western Trust Lands Beautiful and Accessible



Across the west state trust land agencies and stakeholders alike are working to maintain public access to lands valued by recreational enthusiasts of all varieties while helping to ensure the long-term sustainability and beauty of those lands. Whitefish Legacy Partners were awarded the "Citizen of Year" honor for their efforts in shaping the future of 13,000 acres of

state trust land in Whitefish, Montana for the benefit of the community and the trust beneficiaries. The first leg of the Whitefish Trail was completed in 2010 and more recently [WLP received a \\$500,000 Recreational Trails Program](#) matching grant from the state.

In Utah, School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration (SITLA) met with success collaborating with county representatives, State and Federal agencies, recreational user groups, and local property owners to devise a travel management plan for 27,500 acres of school trust lands. The trust land in the La Sal Mountains required better stewardship and mitigation of resource damage due to irresponsible off-highway vehicle usage. The plan eliminates redundant and dead end roads, creates looping trail system, reduces impact on wildlife, and accounts for sustainability of trails all while keeping the trails open to full size, ATV, and single track vehicles.



### Across the West

#### Montana:

Montana House Bill 409 would cost Montana's Education Trust \$3 to \$4 million. [Read more.](#)

#### Utah:

Secretarial Order 3310 could result in loss to the Utah Permanent School Fund. [Read more.](#)

#### New Mexico:

Are energy producers paying sufficient royalties to the State Land Office and their beneficiaries? [Read more.](#)

### Recent Publications



The report, *Ecosystems Services and Markets*, from the Oregon Sustainability Board was finalized in December 2010. The report is designed to educate the Oregon Legislative Assembly on ecosystems services and offer recommendations to create a successful ecosystem marketplace in Oregon. Link to the report [here.](#)

Sonoran Institute recently completed a working paper on infrastructure investment for [Lincoln Institute of Land Policy](#). *Building a Framework for Sustainable Development* addresses the current constitutional and statutory authority limitations the Arizona State Land Department faces in siting key infrastructure on state trust lands. Several options are evaluated for enhancing those authorities with tools that would provide flexibility to incentivize infrastructure investment. These tools would create additional value for the beneficiaries of the trust and facilitate more sustainable development patterns in Arizona. Download the working paper [here.](#)

Additionally, SITLA was able to sell 161 acres of trust land to The Nature Conservancy (TNC) to add to their St. George White Dome Nature Preserve. This move allows TNC to preserve endangered plant and animal habitat and maintains the asset values of the trust beneficiaries. Read more in [SITLA's 2010 Annual Report](#).

Organizations joined efforts in Arizona to clean up state trust lands near an oft enjoyed trail. Soroptimist International of Gold Canyon and Footprints Matter to Us enlisted the aid of local Peralta Elementary school to rid 3,000 acres of state trust lands surrounding the Peralta Trail of 45 tons of litter. The youngsters learned the importance of conservation and the idea of leaving only footprints when they enjoy the environment. [Read](#) the news article.

## WSLCA Conference



Join the Western States Land Commissioners Association in Rapid City, South Dakota July 10-14, 2011 for the annual summer conference. Visit the [website](#) for conference registration and details.

**PHOTO CREDITS:** Washington Blanchard Forest photo - WA DNR; Whitefish Trail photo - Whitefish Legacy Partners; Utah dwarf bear claw photo - NormaLee McMichael.

**NEWS FROM THE FIELD:** If your office has trust land management information and tools in asset management, collaborative planning, real estate development, and/or conservation use which you would like to share, please [send us an email](#) . Attach a news release, documents, and photos.

## Quick Links

[State Trust Lands Project](#)

[Lincoln Institute of Land Policy](#)

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## Building Trust

Building Trust is a quarterly e-newsletter published by Western Lands and Communities, a Joint Venture of the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy and Sonoran Institute.

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Contact: Susan Culp, Project Manager  
(602) 393-4310 x 310  
[sculp@sonoraninstitute.org](mailto:sculp@sonoraninstitute.org)  
[www.westernlandsandcommunities.org](http://www.westernlandsandcommunities.org)

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