



— THE LANDSCAPE —

2025 IMPACT REPORT

Conserving Our Agricultural, Historical, and
Natural Resources



Board of Directors

FONTENELLE NATURE ASSOCIATION

Michelle Foss
Tyler Irvine

LOWER PLATTE NORTH NRD

Bob Heimann
Tom McKnight (Secretary)
Bill Saeger

LOWER PLATTE SOUTH NRD

Will Inselman
Larry Ruth

NEBRASKA AUDUBON SOCIETY

Joe Francis (Chair)
Glenn Pollock
Ross Scott

NEBRASKA CATTLEMEN

Tim Kalkowski
Todd McWha

NEBRASKA GAME AND PARKS COMMISSION

Jeff Fields
Jim Swenson

NEBRASKA STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Trisha Nelson (Treasurer)
Dave Williams

NEBRASKA WILDLIFE FEDERATION

Dave Koukol
Kimberly Stuhr

NIOBRARA COUNCIL

Jason Appelt
Kalli Kieborz

PAPIO-MISSOURI RIVER NRD

Austen Hill
John Winkler

AT-LARGE MEMBERS

Ty Cox
Matt Darling
Dean Fedde
Ryan Gibson
Jennifer Pospichal
Carl Simmons (Vice Chair)
Sarah Sortum
Brent Steffen
Terry Waite
Taylor Wohlers

Staff

JACOB ALISHOUSE

Executive Director

HANNAH SIDEL

Development & Communications Director

HARLEIGH MORGAN

Stewardship Coordinator



note from the Executive Director

This year, the Nebraska Land Trust (NLT) crossed a historic threshold: 50,000 acres permanently conserved.

When NLT began in 2001, the idea of protecting fifty thousand acres of Nebraska's most iconic landscapes, from the Pine Ridge escarpments to the tallgrass prairies of the Platte Valley, felt like a distant aspiration. Today, it stands as a reality built on legacy, community, and trust.

But when I reflect on this milestone, I don't think about the number. I think about the view.

The view from a fifth-generation rancher's porch, knowing the pastures his grandparents tended will never be divided or developed. The view across habitat where mule deer and wild turkey still thrive because the land remains whole. And I think about the view forward toward a Nebraska that values its open spaces and agricultural heritage.

This milestone was achieved through over 50 voluntary conservation easements and reflects the vision of our landowners and the generosity of everyone who believes in protecting Nebraska's landscapes. To the families who welcomed us to their kitchen tables and trusted us with their most valuable asset (their land), thank you. You are the true conservationists. Your decision to protect your property ensures that Nebraska's agricultural backbone remains strong and that our natural heritage endures for generations.

It took more than two decades to reach 50,000 acres. Yet urgency is rising. As land prices climb and development pressure spreads across rural Nebraska, the window to save these special places is narrowing. That is why we are setting a bold new goal: to conserve the next 50,000 acres in the next 10 years.

We are increasing our capacity and accelerating our work to meet the rising interest in conservation easements. Fifty thousand acres is not a finish line. It is proof that Nebraskans care deeply about the landscapes that sustain us.

Thank you for your trust and support. I am grateful for all we have accomplished together, and I look forward with optimism to the decades ahead. Here's to the next 50,000 acres.

The signature of Jacob Alishouse, written in blue ink.

Jacob Alishouse
Executive Director



Hamaker Ranch

Dawes & Sioux Counties

Nebraska Land Trust is excited to partner with the Hamaker Family to conserve their ranch in Dawes and Sioux Counties. We are grateful to continue our work in the Pine Ridge, which continues to be one of our focus areas.



We had a wonderful opportunity to work again with the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, who has supported multiple easement projects in Nebraska.

“Conserving critical habitat for elk and other big game drives our mission at RMEF, and we’re happy to work with the Nebraska Land Trust, NRCS and stewardship-minded landowners to ensure elk have a place to thrive in the Pine Ridge region,” said Jennifer Doherty, RMEF managing director of mission operations. “Continued conservation of unfragmented ranches is essential to the future of elk and other wildlife in the Pine Ridge ecosystem.”

This Easement was made possible by the following funders:

- The Hamaker Family
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation

Community and Conservation

On October 7th, we hosted our second reception at the Happy Hollow Club in Omaha, once again bringing together landowners, donors, and key conservation partners. This year was more than an opportunity to connect with our friends. We were able to celebrate our 50,000 acre conservation milestone with those who helped make this achievement possible. A special thanks to Tim McCoy, Director of the Nebraska Game & Parks Commission for his engaging speech and continued partnership with Nebraska Land Trust.



NLT Annual Meeting



Each June, Nebraska Land Trust's Board of Directors gathers in a different corner of the state for our second-quarter board meeting. This tradition allows us to experience Nebraska's diverse landscapes firsthand, tour new and existing conservation easement projects, and deepen our connection to the land and the landowners we support. This year, we were excited to host our annual meeting in Niobrara.



During our time there, we toured two active easement projects, enjoyed a guided bird walk at Niobrara State Park, and learned about the cedar management work underway in the park. We also gained valuable insight through a presentation on ranch transition planning by one of our board members. These experiences would not have been possible without the generosity, expertise, and hospitality of the following:

The Graham Family
Tim & Danay Kalkowski

Nebraska Game & Parks Commission
Gary & Laura Marshall

Nebraska Land Trust Achieves Conservation Milestone

With the closing of the Hamaker Ranch easement in Sioux and Dawes counties, Nebraska Land Trust has now conserved over 50,000 acres across the state.

But what does this achievement really mean for Nebraska? To NLT, it's much more than a number — it's an example of the power of partnership, shared vision, and long-term commitment to the land, our rural heritage, and our communities.

We can step back and consider what those acres represent — six generations of names etched into canyon walls near Chimney Rock, the history of the Northern Cheyenne, farmland that helps feed our communities, and native prairie in the Sandhills. We see not just land protected, but Nebraska's rural heritage and natural beauty conserved for the next generation and beyond.

Conserved



How can I be part of the next 50,000?

Currently, NLT is working on 11 active easement projects totaling over 15,000 acres. For us, this means we continue to work with landowners across Nebraska pursuing land easement projects that have lasting benefits to native wildlife, scenic beauty, water quality, and their rural communities. We are proud to be part of the legacy of land that will remain protected long after our time, giving everyone who lives in or visits our great state the chance to know, enjoy, and value the landscapes that make Nebraska unique. To all of our partners, donors, board members, and friends - thank you! Your support made this achievement possible. Want to be part of the next 50,000? Here's how you can help:

Donate

There are many ways to support land conservation through Nebraska Land Trust. Learn more at: nelandtrust.org/support

Subscribe

You'll receive updates on conservation projects, stories from landowners, and upcoming events. Join our email list at: nelandtrust.org/subscribe





Stewardship Report

By: Harleigh Morgan | Stewardship Coordinator

December marked the end of my second annual monitoring season, which went smoothly as far as I can tell. With this being my second year of monitoring, I was able to relax a bit more in the places I visit each year. It was great to catch up with landowners I had met last year and get to know a few I had yet to meet. I looked at each property with fresh eyes — and new ones with a birds-eye view now that I have my drone pilot's license.

Have you ever been somewhere new and, with all the fresh input and focus on the task at hand, you missed some of the finer details? Then, when you return, you see things you didn't notice before? That's what my monitoring visits felt like this year. I could take in more details of the land than before, notice patterns in the plant growth, and my birds-eye view gave a completely different perspective from what I see on the ground. All of this offers a much more rounded view of the properties than last year. Hopefully, this trend continues yearly as I rediscover the beauty of each place year after year.

As I wandered through some of these landscapes, I thought back to those who may have lived on or traveled through this area long before us. How long ago did someone first call this home? What did it look like then? Did it have fewer trees, taller grasses, a different meander to the creek? Could you see smoke in the valley from a campfire, or dust on the horizon from a bison herd? What did people think when they saw the land? Did they see a home, a future, beauty; did they have history in that place? Was it choice or circumstance that they ended up there?

These are thoughts I have when I see these places. The people come and go. There are those that leave lasting markers to say they were here; others preserve it the way they found it; and some leave nature to its own devices. They are all stewards of the land in their own way. But one thing is for sure, the properties I visit have a permanent point in their history created by landowners who chose to conserve the land and its resources for future Nebraskans' benefit. I enjoy my time spent with the current stewards of the land — listening to their stories, the joys and hardships of the past year, and the beauty they experience on the land.





A Shared Commitment to the Land

By: Hannah Sidel | Development & Communications Director

One of the things I love most about my role at NLT is how many different directions it takes me in a single year. At the heart of it, my job is to match people who want to give with opportunities to make a real impact through their philanthropy. No two days look quite the same, and that variety has given me a front-row seat to the incredible people and moments that make land conservation in Nebraska possible.

This year, I had the privilege of planning our fall reception, where I had the pleasure of meeting many of our donors, partners, and new friends. At Tower Square in downtown Lincoln during Give to Lincoln Day, I watched people both young and old gleefully assemble native seed packets at our booth. Some seeds were destined for friends or neighbors gardens, while others were to be planted in the packet-maker's backyard. I visited several conservation easement properties across the state, which sometimes involved riding in the back of a pickup while filming landowners herding cows and fixing fences. I also learned about a remarkable Sandhills woman who left Nebraska Land Trust in her will. She was someone who didn't know our staff personally, yet felt confident entrusting her legacy to our work. And each year I design this very publication, which is one of my favorite projects. It allows me to reflect on all that has happened over the past year.

I'm not a farmer or a rancher. I'm not a social media guru or a graphic designer. I'm not a wildlife biologist or a range ecologist. In fact, I'm fairly certain my ecology professor from UNL would faint if he knew just how abysmal my plant identification skills are now. But I do know this: it takes a village to make conservation happen in our state. Just as my job has many facets, so does land conservation. It's made possible by many people working together. Especially during this time of year, I'm reminded how special it is to witness the partnerships and collaboration that define Nebraska's conservation community. I'm deeply thankful for our current donors and partners — and excited to meet the many of you I have yet to know.

As we wrap up this remarkable year and celebrate our 50,000-acre milestone, I'm filled with gratitude and excitement for what lies ahead — and for all the potential that 2026 holds.



You can be a Partner in Permanence!

Nebraska Land Trust (NLT) supporters are partners in achieving permanence for agricultural, historical and natural resources. Whether it is an annual donation that supports ongoing projects or an Endowment Gift that supports future projects, please consider the NLT in your charitable giving. For more information, contact Hannah Sidel at hsidel@nelandtrust.org or call 402-438-5263.

We are grateful for the following partners who helped to create permanence for land in a changing world during the past 12 months:

Foundations

Claire M. Hubbard Foundation
J.A. Woollam Foundation
Julie Morsman Schroeder Foundation
Lincoln Community Foundation
Sterns Charitable Foundation

Stewards (\$1,000+)

Bill Brush
Ty and Teresa Cox
John and Jane Ellsworth
Judy and Jeff Greenwald
Gregory and Teri Grupp
Doug and Brenda Hummel
Hod and Willa Kosman
Mike and Denise Linder
Thomas and Evelyn McKnight
Todd and Laura McWha
Ron and Judy Parks
Jennifer and Bill Pospichal
Neal and Deb Ratzlaff
Nancy Roberts
Dave and Tracy Sands
Carol Schmid and Gerald Toll
Dave and Sue Van Horn
John and Nancy Webster
Gail and Michael Yanney

Sustainers (\$500 to \$999)

Jacob and Sara Alishouse
Doug and Kris Pauley
Sara and Gary Radil
Larry and Pat Ruth
Ron Stock
Lyle and Joyce Vannier
Katie and Walker Zulkoski

Friends (\$100 to \$499)

Warren and Sue Arganbright
David Bagby
Britton and Barbara Bailey
Lynne and Jack Baldwin
Mark Brodkey
Ron and Karen Case
Jim and Jeanette Commers
Douglas and Misty Cook
Jim and Laura Devine
Gregg Foote
Christina Foust
Joe and Jane Francis
Jeffrey Frede
Marlea and Barry Gruver
Donna Gustafson
John Hannah
Austen Hill
Shirley Johannes
Glenn and Elaine Johnson
Timothy Keelan
Linda Hillegass and Jim McKee
John and Vicki Miles
Virginia Miller
Jerry and Mary Ann Petr
Glenn Pollock
Kris and Tom Powers
Greg and Linda Prorok
Dan and Nancy Schulz
Kathleen and Duane Schwery
Ross and Bess Scott
Lawrence and Diane Shackman
Christopher St. Pierre and Melanie Gibson
Jim and Linda Swenson
Leslie and David Tien
Nichole Turgeon
Mark Van Roojen
Anne Vidaver

Businesses and Organizations

Cornhusker Bank
FNBO
Lower Platte North Natural Resources District
Lower Platte South Natural Resources District
Natural Resource Conservation Service
Nebraska Game and Parks Commission
Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District
Pinnacle Bank
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
Stock Seed Farms
The Nature Conservancy

Conservation Easement and/or Stewardship Fund Donors

The Hamaker Family

Legacy Donors

Marilyn McNabb
Jennifer and Bill Pospichal



Scan the QR Code to download our planned giving guide!



THE LEGACY OF PROTECTED LAND
There are many ways to leave a legacy. But a legacy of protected land can be one of the most enduring legacies. As population and human impacts on the environment grow, the value of this legacy grows with time. For landowners, a conservation easement can legally protect these resources while being strong enough to allow for other activities on the land, such as private land stewardship and preservation. In a sense, conservation easements represent the most basic of property rights – the right to determine the future of one's land.

The Nebraska Land Trust uses voluntary land protection agreements known as conservation easements which allow landowners to leave a permanent legacy of protected

wildlife habitat, scenic views, clean water, and a working agriculture on their

land. These easements legally protect these resources while being strong enough to allow for

other activities on the land, such as private land stewardship and preservation. In a

sense, conservation easements represent the most basic of property rights – the right to

determine the future of one's land.

The Nebraska Land Trust uses voluntary land protection agreements known as

conservation easements which allow landowners to leave a permanent legacy of protected

wildlife habitat, scenic views, clean water, and a working agriculture on their

land. These easements legally protect these resources while being strong enough to allow for

other activities on the land, such as private land stewardship and preservation. In a

sense, conservation easements represent the most basic of property rights – the right to

determine the future of one's land.



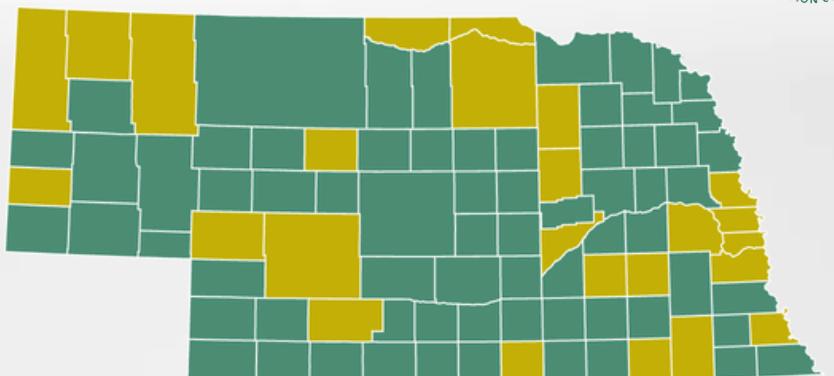
3201 Pioneers Blvd. Suite 107
Lincoln, NE 68502



SNAPSHOTS OF SUCCESS

**51,254
ACRES**

Conserved
for
future
generations



51 FAMILIES

25 COUNTIES

Join our email list for exclusive updates from
Nebraska Land Trust. To subscribe, visit:

nelandtrust.org

