



2018-2019 Advocacy Agenda

Bayou Land Conservancy (BLC) advocates for public policies that benefit and encourage private land conservation in the region we serve (north Harris and Montgomery Counties, TX), as well as support the conservation of our state and country's land and water resources. BLC will seek to engage in the following policy matters, including federal congressional advocacy, advocacy related to the Texas Legislature and advocacy with local policymakers.

BLC recognizes that in order for our advocacy efforts to truly be successful, we must work in partnership with our land trust colleagues across the country, state and region. BLC will engage elected officials and other stakeholders to:

- 1.** Support federal policies and programs that will provide expanded opportunities for land trust participation in land and water conservation programs, increased funding and other financial incentives for land conservation, and improved durability of conservation tools and tax incentives.
 - a. Work with the Land Trust Alliance and other land trust groups across the nation to retain and protect the permanent, enhanced federal tax incentive for the donation of conservation easements (ex: IRS Notice 2017-10);
 - b. Work to improve or enhance federal funding levels for land trust accessible conservation programs, including any conservation easement purchase programs (ex. USDA-NRCS: Ag Conservation Easement Program) or other related conservation programs.
- 2.** Support state level policies and programs that maintain or enhance opportunities for land trusts to engage in land conservation, or that offer funding or other financial incentives for land conservation. Address policy and legislative issues that have broad, statewide implications and seek to undermine or threaten land trust activities or conservation easements.
 - a. Support legislation that regulates activities that impact water quality, including aggregate mining.
 - b. Support the establishment or use of additional state funds or resources toward conservation of land and water in Texas; (ex: Clean Water State Revolving Fund)
 - c. Support increased funding of the Texas Farm & Ranchland Conservation Program to the maximum amount practicable.
 - d. Work with other land trusts to collectively address issues and threats directly related to conservation easements or other land trust activities (examples: conservation easement

condemnation threats; threats to sanctity or legal enforcement of conservation easements, etc.).

e. Evaluate opportunities and concerns related to legislation or policy at the Texas Legislature.

i. Track issues during each legislative session that are related to land conservation, conservation easements, conservation funding, and other related matters at the state level.

ii. Identify, track and respond to emerging issues that may affect land trusts and their work.

f. Work to build relationships with key members of the Texas legislature and their staff.

3. Support local policies and programs that promote the conservation of land, promote green infrastructure, and support improvements in water quality.

a. Work to build relationships with local (county & city) elected officials, water authorities, municipal utility districts and appointed policy makers.

4. Develop broad coalitions and partnerships with organizations and individuals who share an interest in private, voluntary land conservation and will seek opportunities to cultivate strong relationships with key officials, as well as among like-minded organizations in our region and state.