

We Speak For The **TREES**

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The Northwest Arkansas Land Trust

By Alfred Einert

The Northwest Arkansas Land Trust is a not-for-profit organization, established in 2004, that works to protect and preserve land of agricultural, ecological, scenic, historic or recreational significance in Benton, Carroll, Madison, and Washington Counties in Northwest Arkansas. NWALT is dedicated to the conservation and responsible use of land. It can assist landowners wanting to preserve their land and protect it from development in filing for a permanent conservation easement that results in general benefits to current and future citizens of Northwest Arkansas. The Trust intends to provide a vehicle for landowners to ensure that land is maintained and used for specific purposes in perpetuity. In some cases, the land can be donated to the NWALT and the staff will monitor it so it remains as the landowner intended. Landowners can preserve a single feature on their land, define limitations on its development or conserve an entire landscape. In order to achieve its primary purpose, the NWALT promotes community awareness of issues surrounding land use options and the existence of the land trust as a way to hold conservation easements. The Trust engages in fundraising, encourages volunteerism and partnerships with landowners to provide permanent protection of land through voluntary conservation easements, purchase of development rights and land donations.

The population of Northwest Arkansas is growing rapidly because of the natural beauty of the area, the abundance of clean water and other resources, the availability of employment and high quality of life. The four county area is being developed at an amazing rate. The NWALT recognizes an immediate and urgent need to ensure that rapid development does not destroy the reasons people are moving to the region. The Trust seeks to work with landowners, businesses and developers in maintaining a healthy balance of productive landscapes and open spaces along with residential and commercial development. NWALT can be contacted at P.O. Box 489, Bentonville, AR 72712, (479) 246-6745, or www.nwalandtrust.org.

