



OLTA Statement on Indigenous Conservation and Engagement

Through all its work Ontario Land Trust Alliance acknowledges and is grateful to all the original stewards of the land. For many thousands of years, Indigenous Peoples have inhabited, cared for and used these lands and waters, applying original instructions, Indigenous knowledge systems and laws. Ontario Land Trust Alliance also acknowledges those Indigenous Peoples, and other peoples who currently live, work, play and learn on the lands around us.

We believe that, as a community, we need to learn about, engage and uphold our role within treaties, settler's responsibilities, and natural law in order to honour our ongoing commitment to meaningful reconciliation with all Indigenous Peoples on whose treaty and ancestral territories we live and work. We are mindful of broken covenants and the need to reconcile with all our relations.

OLTA is committed to providing an ethical space, valuing differences, and learning how to foster equity, diversity, and inclusion in all of its work.

Ethical space can be explained as a place where traditional oral practices and western written practices are paralleled, leveraging the strengths of the respective processes to co-create a safe place to design, develop, validate and work together in harmony, bridging the gap between cultures and activating meaningful reconciliation.

There are three main areas that OLTA is focussing on to advance our Indigenous conservation partnerships:

- Working with Indigenous people and institutions to develop training for OLTA and land trusts that provides a foundation, focused on increasing knowledge of Indigenous histories, past experiences, and contemporary values, culture and protocols.
- Connecting and learning from Indigenous advisors to ensure our strategic direction and operational activities are aligned with Indigenous community priorities and encourage our conservation partners to do the same.
- Using our knowledge and experience to support Indigenous communities interested in exploring the land trust model to advance reconciliation through land conservation.