



Wilson's Warbler
photo © George Matz

Wings over Western Waters

Executive Director Marie McCarty participated in the Land Trust Alliance's Excellence in Leadership program in 2010 along with twenty other executive directors in the West. At that time she didn't know that KHLT and the Land Trust of the Upper Arkansas, based in Salida, Colorado, would be working in close partnership on a landscape scale project to preserve bird habitat.

After a series of intensive leadership trainings, Andrew Mackie, Executive Director of Land Trust of the Upper Arkansas (LTUA) and Marie discussed how land trusts in the West could collaborate with bird conservation organizations to have a significant impact on whole life conservation of birds. From these conversations, *Wings over Western Waters* developed.

Kachemak Heritage Land Trust received grant funds from the Pacific Coast Joint Venture and LTUA received planning grants from the Intermountain West Joint Venture. The Joint Ventures are geographically based partnerships designed to carry out

bird conservation goals. With these funds, KHLT and LTUA planned a meeting in Salt Lake City the day after the national land conservation conference. This meeting brought together land trusts from Alaska, Colorado, California, Idaho, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming along with representatives of both Joint Ventures, Partners in Flight, Audubon, and the Land Trust Alliance.

The project's goal is to "help local land trusts with the science and planning needed to identify key species and habitats for protection, to form useful partnerships with bird conservation organizations, to contribute towards large-scale conservation initiatives, and to bring in 'big' funding to help local land trusts complete projects," said Andrew Mackie.

This project is in its infancy, but is a part of KHLT's increased collaborative work intended to leverage the work of others to provide a larger conservation impact in the Western U.S. ✧