ABSTRACT

THESIS: Influence of demographic variables on the likelihood of management plans for land trust properties.

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DATE: July 2009

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Conservation in the nonprofit land trust community is primarily through fee-simple ownership or conservation easement with the management plan becoming more common. Data were obtained from the 2005 Land Trust Alliance National Land Trust Survey. Of 1,667 land trusts, 972 reported at least one fee-owned, and 946 reported at least one conservation easement property. The overall guiding hypothesis was that demographic variables affect the probability of having a management plan in place. Demographic variables included: 1) number of employees, 2) age of organizations, 3) size of protected areas, and 4) geographic region. In logistic regression for fee-owned properties, full-time employees increased the probability of having management plans, whereas, part-time employees decreased the probability, p=0.001 and p=0.004. For conservation easements, region was of significance. In general, logistic regression and Chi-square analysis indicated that land trusts with one or more employees have greater ability to carry out their conservation mission and that regions of the U.S. vary in likelihood of having management plans.