



LAND
STEWARDSHIP
PROJECT

Membership Update

Help Reinforce LSP's Roots of Resilience

By Megan Smith

This year has brought unparalleled challenges. Hundreds of thousands of people have been lost to COVID-19, millions have lost their jobs, we had to hold on tight to our democracy as we waited for our votes to be counted, and we've had to adapt to social distancing, remote school, and Zoom gatherings. The list could go on.

Yet in the face of all of this, Land Stewardship Project members remind me of how resilient we are when we work together and care for each other.

This issue of the *Land Stewardship Letter* is full of stories of how members come together to carry out this work. They are working to build the kind of healthy soil that makes our farms more resilient while having a significant positive impact on our water and climate. LSP members create more vibrant rural communities that include

and serve everyone across race, gender, or class. They're organizing to make sure that everyone has access to quality, affordable healthcare, especially important during a pandemic that is pushing rural hospitals to the brink. For many members, all of this work is urgent and only possible through LSP's grassroots efforts.

The financial support of LSP members makes this organizing possible and helps LSP become more resilient as an organization. Contributions from members are put right to work where they are needed most.

As we start the new year, I want to ask you to take a moment and make a contribution to LSP.

That could mean starting a new monthly pledge or adding \$10 or \$15 a month to your current pledge. It could mean doubling your annual membership renewal gift this year. It could mean making a special gift of \$25, \$75, \$250, or \$1,000.

It could mean making a gift of stock or adding LSP to your planned giving.

Whatever gift you choose to make, know that it will make a difference. I want to wish you all a healthy and safe 2021 and thank you for your support of LSP. ☐

Megan Smith, LSP's interim director of advancement, can be reached at megans@landstewardshipproject.org or 612-722-6377.



LSP members show us how resilient we are when we work together and care for each other. (LSP Photo)

A Couple Ways to Support the Land Stewardship Project in 2021

Give the Gift of Stewardship

Gift memberships are a great way to introduce friends and family to the Land Stewardship Project while supporting the organization. When you purchase a gift membership, LSP will send the recipient a special card along with an introductory membership packet. **Contact LSP membership assistant Elizabeth Makarewicz at emakarewicz@landstewardshipproject.org to give a gift membership, or visit our website at www.landstewardshipproject.org/donate.**

This Tax Season

For those who have contributed to tax-deferred 401(k)s and IRAs (Individual Retirement Accounts), income tax is due on that money when you take withdrawals in retirement. Annual withdrawals from these retirement accounts are often required after age 70½, and the penalty for skipping a required minimum distribution is 50% of the amount that should have been withdrawn. However, if you are in the position of not needing your distribution for living expenses and are

interested in supporting the Land Stewardship Project, you can avoid income tax on your required withdrawal by donating that money directly to LSP. If you are over 70½ and have an IRA that requires a minimum distribution, ask your IRA broker or tax planner how your retirement account can be used to help grow LSP's work and reduce your tax bill.

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act was signed into law this past March to address the current health and financial crisis. Provisions in the act may help you with your charitable giving, including a new \$300 charitable deduction for taxpayers who do not itemize deductions. If you do itemize, the act increases the amount you can deduct for a cash gift in 2020 from 60% of adjusted gross income (AGI) to 100% of AGI.

For more information, contact Josh Journey-Heinz, LSP's membership and major gifts officer, at 612-722-6377 or jjourney-heinz@landstewardshipproject.org.