



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF  
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS  
NEW YORK

148 West 37th Street, 13th Floor  
New York, NY 10018-6909  
212.269.2984  
www.aslany.org

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## LaGasse Medal Nominations

### *Non-Landscape Architect Category*

c/o Carolyn Mitchell

636 Eye Street, NW

Washington, DC 20001-3736

Re: Nomination of William Rogers for LaGasse Medal

Dear Executive Committee and Board of Trustees,

It is with great enthusiasm that I nominate the president and CEO of the Trust for Public Land, William Rogers, for his long-term contributions to the preservation of natural resources and creation of public landscapes. He has led this organization on a nation-wide mission towards preserving land and providing public open space across the country, impacting thousands of acres and people over his tenure. This unprecedented level and scale of impact is very much deserving of recognition.

Will Rogers has been with the Trust for Public Land organization since 1991, first as the director of California, Hawaii, and Nevada operations and as CEO beginning in 1998. Under his leadership, the organization has preserved 2.26 million acres of open space and worked on 287 parks and playgrounds. While quantifying the number of people reached through this scale of work may be near impossible to estimate, suffice to say his work has had extraordinary reach and impact. The work of The Trust for Public Land has far reaches within the landscape architecture, land conservation and park worlds, given the depth and diversity of the organization.

Responding to the needs of a specific place and community, the organizations role can include acquiring land for conservation and public access, advocating for new public open space and park funding through ballot measures, fundraising and managing the

design and construction of public parks. By providing this suite of services and drawing from a national network of expertise, the organization has a significant impact on a national scale.

During the past 16 years of Will's tenure as president, the organization has increasingly focused on urban work. For the 80 percent of Americans who live in or near a city, neighborhood parks offer the closest connection to nature. Yet, today there is only 1 park for every 3,000 urban Americans. Will's vision for the organization is to provide for this unmet need across our country, with a focus on benefits today as well as the future. When children growing up in cities are not given the chance to experience nature, they are much less likely to grow up as environmental stewards. Central to The Trust for Public Land's dual focus on park work in cities and rural lands is the understanding that both are crucial, and the public is more likely to support conservation when they can enjoy nature in their own backyard. Driven by this understanding, the Trust for Public Land has provided access and education across the country.

In addition to work on the ground, Will directed the organization's creation of ParkScore, a statistical vehicle to measure the success of the nation's largest cities in providing close-to-home parks. The ParkScore standard has quickly been accepted as the most accurate and rigorous urban park measurement standard among cities, and it encourages them to keep up the good work or look for ways to improve. This program grew out of Rogers's creation of the 10-minute walk to a park goal, one of the primary agendas of his organization. Beyond access, park quality and performance are emphasized throughout the organization, with programs focused on creative placemaking, fitness zones and green infrastructure gaining national prominence.

There are many examples of how the nation-wide goals come to fruition. In New York City, The Trust for Public Land has helped design and build more than 176 playgrounds in New York City public schools since 1996. Barren asphalt lots have been transformed into vibrant playgrounds with safe and durable play equipment, athletic facilities, gardens, and opportunities for environmental education, many of which were selected based on a lack of park space in the neighborhood. The program includes a three-month participatory design process with landscape architect teams,

involving students, parents, school staff, and neighbors to create playgrounds that communities care about—and that meet each neighborhood's unique needs. More recently, through a partnership with the Department of Environmental Protection, playgrounds are equipped with green infrastructure elements—such as rain gardens, porous paving material, and specially selected plantings—that reduce excess stormwater and sewer overflows that pollute New York City's rivers and harbor. By partnering with New York City, more than 150 acres of additional playground space serving 380,000 children and their families have been created.

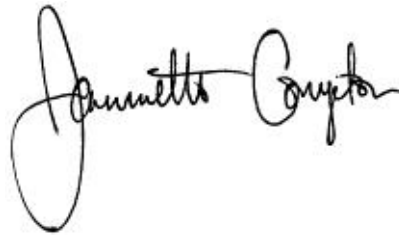
While I have seen most of his work first-hand in New York, Will has led the organization in a number of high-profile and successful urban conservation efforts elsewhere in the nation. For example, in 2010, The Trust for Public Land stepped in and protected the land behind the world-famous Hollywood Sign in Los Angeles, garnering world-wide attention on the need to protect inholdings in urban conservation landscapes.

Denver's New Freedom Park serves as an excellent example of the ethos of Will's vision for parks, reflecting the needs and interests of the neighborhood by having the park designed and maintained with the help of the local community. Through this process, TPL worked closely with Denver Parks and Recreation, the Colorado Health Foundation, local nonprofit and business partners, and, most importantly, residents to transform a vacant lot into the community-named New Freedom Park, a place where families can grow fresh food, children can play safely, and neighbors can gather. Its success, recognized with a Frontier Parks Award from the City Parks Alliance, is inspiring work in Denver and across the country. These are just a few examples of how Will's vision for the Trust for Public Land has been executed across the country.

Prior to joining The Trust for Public Land, Will managed urban projects for a Chicago-based real estate development company, managing both new construction and the rehabilitation of vacant industrial buildings for commercial, office, and residential use. Before becoming a developer and then an "undeveloper," he was a commercial beekeeper, founding and managing a commercial honey production company in Bogotá, Colombia.

Today, Will is a nationally recognized advocate for land conservation and has given major addresses or interviews to the Urban Land Institute, the National Smart Growth Conference, the National Brownfields Conference, and Talk of the Nation, among others. The work of the Trust for Public Land under his tenure has been celebrated across the country, including several feature articles in Landscape Architecture Magazine. In the February 2014 issue of LAM alone, research by TPL's Center for City Park Excellence on the challenge of creating parks in the Bay Area as well as community engagement and design work in LA's green alleys are covered, demonstrating the wide range of work under his guidance. His long and impactful career has culminated in many preserved landscapes across the country, making him an ideal candidate for the La Gasse Medal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Nette Compton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "N" and a distinct "Compton" ending.

Nette Compton, ASLA  
ASLA New York Chapter President



March 5, 2014

Dear Executive Committee and Board of Trustees:

It is an honor to recommend Will Rogers for the LaGasse Medal of the American Society of Landscape Architects. I have known Will for ten years and his leadership and vision have inspired me from the very beginning. What strikes me the most in recommending Will is how he combines a personal grace that makes our visits so pleasurable, with a compelling vision for how our nation can have a rational future.

Conservation and landscape architecture are practices that have changed dramatically in the past decade due to rapid evolution in GIS platforms and collaboration. In my experience, it is a rare leader who can embrace this kind of rapid technological change while at the same time staying true to the roots and foundations of a national conservation vision. Since I first met him in 2003, Will has navigated this path forward for TPL better than any other organization I know. In part this is due to the support and inspiration he provides to what has to be the most effective conservation GIS team (for its size) in the country, led by Breece Robertson. Esri recently had the distinct honor of selecting TPL to be our conservation partner for a new national online system of Landscape Planning. This selection was primarily due to Breece's and Will's achievements, ability and collaborative excellence. Will's effectiveness as a leader is also due to the clarity and forcefulness of his "ParkScore" vision for universal access to parks, reflecting an understanding of the importance of making conservation relevant and important to every citizen no matter where they live. Will's effectiveness is also due to his success in universally raising the bar for how urban and regional planning, or Geodesign, should be done. The TPL "Greenprint" process was the first and still dominant process for fully integrating and honoring, in a GIS technology platform, the concerns, desires and values of a local community in a conservation plan. As any conservation group can tell you, without the embrace and endorsement of the local community, any plan is futile.

I'm sure other writers will enumerate well the large numbers of acres Will and his team have saved and the millions of people they have affected. As a world leader in the technology arena what I most wish to express in recommending Will is his effectiveness in innovating new practices in conservation and then turning them into substantial achievements on the ground and among local communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jack Dangermond". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Jack Dangermond

# WORKSHOP

KEN SMITH LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

March 4, 2014

LaGasse Medal Nominations (Non-Landscape Architect Category)  
c/o Carolyn Mitchell  
636 Eye Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20001-3736

Dear Executive Committee and Board of Trustees,

It is my pleasure to write in support of Will Rogers' nomination for the ASLA LaGrasse Medal. I am familiar with his work from my experience working with the Trust for Public Land as a client for the Santa Fe Railyard Park and Plaza, 2002-2008. The Railyard Park was one of the first land acquisition projects that TPL took beyond their traditional role of land conservation and resource protection toward a new role of sponsoring and funding urban open space development and park programming through their Parks For People program.

I know that Will Rogers plays an important leadership role in recognizing the significance of having access to open space resources close to where people live in urban areas. This has been a transformational role for the Trust for Public Land and Will's leadership had made a positive impact on the lives of urban residents including many under privileged inner city youth who often do not have access to rural open space, farms, ranches or forests. Will has played a significant role in pioneering the Trust's policy position of promoting the social, environmental, economic and health benefits of urban open space.

Yours,



Ken Smith  
FASLA



Jonathan Rose Companies

33 Katonah Avenue  
Katonah, NY 10536  
Tel 914.232.1396  
Fax 914.232.1398  
www.rosecompanies.com

March 4, 2014

LaGasse Medal Nominations  
Non-Landscape Architect Category  
c/o Carolyn Mitchell  
636 Eye Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20001-3736

Re: Nomination of William Rogers for LaGasse Medal

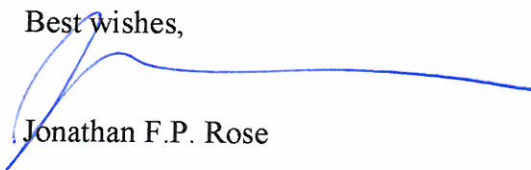
Dear Executive Committee and Board of Trustees,

I am very pleased to nominate Will Rogers for the LaGasse Medal of the American Society of Landscape Architects. I have known Will and his work with The Trust for Public Land for more than two decades, and his contributions to the field of land preservation, especially in urban centers, have been extensive and highly impactful.

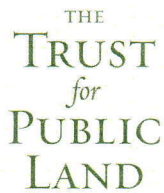
Since its founding in 1973, The Trust for Public Land has worked in cities across the country, including New York, where our program began in 1978. With Will as the leader of the organization, the importance and drive for the organization's urban work was increasingly emphasized and expanded. This can be seen in the almost 200 schoolyard to playground transformations that The Trust for Public Land has executed in New York City, as well as new parks, gardens, and waterfront visions in all five boroughs. This type of work is crucial to the success and livability of cities across America, and Will has played a major role in providing the drive, talent and resources to promote urban parks and open space.

Will's work with The Trust for Public Land is unique, in that it merges the ecosystem emphasis of typical land conservation with the need for open space in cities, for people. In combining these two goals, the end result is far more powerful, providing opportunities for people to coexist and appreciate the natural world right in their neighborhood, where it is most needed. Given his long term commitment towards this goal, I nominate him for this much deserved award.

Best wishes,



Jonathan F.P. Rose



Page Knudsen Cowles  
Chair  
Board of Directors

101 Montgomery Street  
Suite 900  
San Francisco, CA  
94104  
P. 415-800-5197  
F. 612-359-9498  
[www.tpl.org](http://www.tpl.org)

March 6, 2014

LaGasse Medal Nominations  
*Non-Landscape Architect Category*  
c/o Carolyn Mitchell  
636 Eye Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20001-3736

Re: Nomination of William Rogers for LaGasse Medal

Dear Executive Committee and Board of Trustees,

I am delighted to nominate Will Rogers for the LaGasse Medal of the American Society of Landscape Architects. As Chair of The Trust for Public Land's National Board, I have seen first-hand the impact of Will's leadership in projects and programs across the country, from the inner city to the wilderness.

Will's vision has included a strong focus on new ideas that challenge and expand the American land conservation movement. From emphasizing the importance of working in cities to advocating for natural lands conservation that mitigates the risks of climate change, he has pushed the Trust for Public Land to the forefront of innovation in the arena of public open space. His accomplishments have included complex, community-oriented urban park creation and restoration, as well as significant landscape-scale conservation. With dedication to *conserving land for people* as a core value, this approach is unique among land conservation groups.

As the award criteria mention, this honor recognizes notable contributions to the management and conservancy of natural resources and public landscapes. Will Rogers is a candidate of profound reach and depth in this field of endeavor and I whole-heartedly nominate him for this award.

Sincerely,

Page Knudsen Cowles  
Chair, National Board of Directors  
The Trust for Public Land



March 5, 2014

LaGasse Medal Nominations  
*Non-Landscape Architect Category*  
c/o Carolyn Mitchell  
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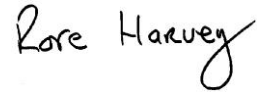
It is my pleasure to nominate Will Rogers for the LaGasse Medal of the American Society of Landscape Architects. Over the 27 years that I served with The Trust for Public Land, during which I worked on urban parkland development, I saw the impact of Wills work directly both within the mid-Atlantic region and nationwide.

Since Will has taken a leadership role with The Trust for Public, its focus on urban parks and conservation has flourished. He deeply believes in the importance of the connection of parks and people particularly in underserved urban communities. He believes these resources are critical to the health of both people and nature, and Will has acted on this knowledge throughout his work.

Will has cajoled, pushed, and inspired the senior management within the organization to expand The Trust for Public Land's focus into cities and worked tirelessly to find the necessary resources to fuel this effort to design and build parks and special places in our nation's inner cities. He started with huge support for the New York City, Newark, and Baltimore community garden, playground and park programs when they were risky, when there was no money and before anyone fully appreciated the importance of these special places. He then moved forward to San Francisco, Houston, Boston, Santa Fe.....and convinced the organization that urban park design and build (not just land acquisition) was the future of The Trust for Public Land. From operations, to structure, to funding, Will has been dedicated to ensuring the success of this work, as he understands how critical it is.

Given Will's long-term involvement in both the expansion of urban public open space as well as large scale land conservation, he is uniquely qualified for this award, covering all aspects of an ideal candidate. I have seen his work, as well as the communities who benefit from it, over decades. Will Rogers is very much in keeping with the spirit of this award, and receives my whole-hearted endorsement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rose Harvey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping "R" and "H".

Rose Harvey

