



**Tallgrass Land Conservation, LLC
Statement of Qualifications
2017**

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Tallgrass Land Conservation Mission

Tallgrass Land Conservation (TLC) works with various stakeholders and regulators to identify and restore wetlands. TLC seeks to partner with landowners interested in benefitting ecologically and financially through establishing wetland banks.

Experience

TLC developed its first wetland bank in Afton, WI in 2012 and is now working to develop a portfolio of banks throughout the Midwest.

Wetland mitigation banking is a multi-year, multi-faceted venture, that is highly regulated by the US Army Corps of Engineers and not just anyone can undertake. TLC's success is due to its understanding of the complex wetland banking process, as well as having strong relationships with regulators, wetland consultants, hydrologists and restoration ecologists, alike.

About Bass Creek Wetland Mitigation Bank

Tallgrass designed, permitted, constructed and managed a wetland mitigation bank on a 102-acre floodplain property in the Town of Rock in central Rock County, Wisconsin.

Located within the Rock River Basin, the predominant land use in this area is agriculture, and on the most productive land in the state. The results of such productive agricultural land, however, were drained and altered wetlands, stream channelization, groundwater contamination, and increased runoff that carries soil, nutrients and pesticides in the surface waters. A large portion of the historical pre-European wetlands of this area have been destroyed by agricultural, urban and transport development. The Rock River Basin is designated as having the second most contaminated groundwater in the state, due in large to pesticides and nitrogen from agriculture.

Photo at Bass Creek Wetland Mitigation Bank



Soils at the Bass Creek Mitigation Bank site are principally Otter Silt Clay Loam, derived from fluvial hydric soils occurring amongst historically forested and wet prairie community types. Tallgrass removed invasive plants and planted wetland plants and trees to restore the native floodplain forest, wet shrub land, and wet prairie-emergent plant communities that historically existed at the confluence of the Rock River and Bass Creek.

The scope of this project also includes ten-year management compliance monitoring, weed control and prescribed burning. The Bank site will improve wildlife habitat and diversity, increase plant diversity, and provide passive recreational opportunities.

About New Wetland Banks

Tallgrass is currently working to design and permit a wetland mitigation bank on a 54-acre property outside Sun Prairie, in Dane County, Wisconsin. Construction is expected to begin in 2017 and the site will be maintained until 2022. This historically sedge meadow and wet mesic wetland site functions to filter water from surrounding properties, including a highway, farm fields and a large industrial park, before it discharges into the Koshkonong and Door Creek watersheds. Construction will include the installation of berms to retain water on-site longer, the removal of invasive and planting of native plant species.

Key Members of the Tallgrass Team

Peter Layton is the CEO of The Tallgrass Group, the parent company of various corporations specializing in different aspects of ecological restoration. In 2008, Mr. Layton established Tallgrass Land Conservation for the purpose of creating wetland mitigation banks. He is also one of the founding partners of Blackthorne Capital Management and is the owner of Warhawk Fund. Mr. Layton serves as the Chairman of the BOX Exchange Group, LLC and is a partner of Efficient Capital Management.

Mr. Layton was a partner at both The Hull Group and Goldman Sachs & Co. from where he retired in 2005. Currently, Mr. Layton is the President of Chicago Wilderness Trust, a Board member of Enactus, a member of Efficient Capital Management Advisory Committee, a member of the College Visiting Committee at the University of Chicago, and a member of the Nicholas School Board of Visitors at Duke University. Mr. Layton graduated from the University of Chicago with an AB in economics and an MBA in finance.

Mitch Kasper joined the Tallgrass team in 2015 to promote business development and property acquisition efforts. Mr. Kasper has been investing in agricultural assets since 2003. Through the years, he has built a strong national network of agribusiness professionals, including brokers, operators, lawyers, and accountants. After many one-off farm transactions, Mr. Kasper established Midwest Ag Investors in 2009 and National Ag Investors in 2012. Combined, these funds owned farmland valued at over \$12M. Mr. Kasper has contributed his thoughts on agri-business to many national publications including WSJ-Market Watch, Crain's Chicago Business, and The Wharton School at The University of Pennsylvania. From 1991 to 1999, he worked at The Hull Group as a derivatives trader, where he was a partner. In 1999, The Hull Group was acquired by Goldman Sachs. Mitch worked in the Equity Division of Goldman Sachs until 2003. He served as Chairman of the Chicago Board Options Exchange Index Committee which regulated the most active products on the exchange. From 2005-2008, Mr. Kasper served on the Quest Academy Board of Trustees, a school dedicated to educating gifted children. Mr. Kasper has a bachelor's degree from the University of Illinois and a master's degree from the University of Chicago.

Tracy Thompson specializes in developing support systems for start-up ventures and has been part of the Tallgrass family since 2004 with the launch of Tallgrass Restoration, a leading provider of ecological restoration services. At Tallgrass Restoration she developed and implemented comprehensive client service and business development systems which effectively positioned the company to take advantage of growth opportunities. With a lifetime in nature's classroom and formal education in both Business Administration and the Culinary Arts, Ms. Thompson's focus is building collaboration among teams in order to positively affect the environment through sustainable land preservation and food production practices. In her role today as Director of Operations with Tallgrass Land Conservation, she builds upon prior natural area preservation experience with a focus on wetland mitigation banking. Additionally, as a small-scale sustainable farmer, she practices and locally educates others about natural and sustainable methods for growing vegetables and livestock. Ms. Thompson has contributed her thoughts about healthcare coverage issues on small-business in Crain's Chicago Business as well as farm to table concepts in the Janesville Gazette. She holds a BS in Business Administration from DeVry University, Chicago and a Culinary degree from Kendall College, Chicago.

Strategic Partnership

Tallgrass Land Conservation, LLC (TLC) contracts with sister-company Tallgrass Restoration, LLC (TGR) for restoration work whenever possible. TGR is an

established leader in ecological restoration solutions throughout the Midwest since 2004, earning numerous awards including 11 US EPA & Chicago Wilderness Conservation Native Landscaping Awards. Together they work to recapture the beauty, value and function of land and water resources.

Ron Adams, president of Tallgrass Restoration, LLC since 2009, first became interested in restoration while helping to restore Mr. Layton's 100-acre prairie in Milton, Wisconsin. It was from this experience he was inspired to join the Tallgrass team. Mr. Adams has a very hands-on management style and personally ensures a very high quality of restoration. Prior to joining Tallgrass, Mr. Adams worked as Director of Operations at Vibro/Dynamics and American National Can. He sits on the Board and the Executive Committee of the The Management Association of Illinois and is affiliated with numerous conservation organizations, such as Chicago Wilderness Corporate Council, Citizens for Conservation, and Open Lands. Mr. Adams holds a BS degree in Business Administration from the University of Indiana.