

Acquisition Mechanisms: Conservation Easements

Kari Stiles



Cascade Land Conservancy
<http://www.cascadeland.org/>

Cascade Land Conservancy Small-Scale Conservation Easements:

Baker Woods Urban Preserve:

1.5 acres of forested habitat

Chickadee Hill: 1.25 acres in Issaquah

Lake WA Blvd Urban Preserve: .33 acres

Maple Creek Urban Preserve:

15 Easements on over 4 acres

Christiansen Creek: Vashon Island -

maintained as wooded area to protect one of the island's highest quality watersheds

Medina Urban Preserve: 3 easements on 8 acres of adjoining lakefront properties

Mercer Island Urban Preserve:

4.21 acres of forested habitat

Park Hill Issaquah: 13.6 acres of forested habitat

Richmond Beach: 5-acre wooded parcel next to public park

Sammamish Plateau: 21.6 acres of forested habitat



Homewaters Project - Thornton Creek
<http://www.homewatersproject.org/>

Land Trusts:

The Land Trust

www.lta.org/conserve/options.htm

The Nature Conservancy

<http://nature.org/aboutus/howwework/conservationmethods/>

The Pacific Forest Trust

<http://www.pacificforest.org/>

Trust for Public Land

<http://www.tpl.org/>

Local Players:

Cascade Land Conservancy

<http://www.cascadeland.org/>

Purchase/Donation of Development Rights Through Conservation Easements

A conservation easement is a legal agreement between a landowner and a land trust or government agency that permanently limits uses of the land in order to protect its conservation values, either natural or man-made. It usually limits commercial or residential development in order to protect native habitat, agricultural landscapes and activity, open space or historic resources. The land is frequently donated by the landowner but can also be sold to a Land Trust or government agency. The land owner maintains all rights associated with the parcel of land aside from those stipulated in the agreement.

Restrictions:

The owner gives up some development and land use rights.

Future owners are also bound to the terms of the easement.

It is the responsibility of the land trust or government agency to make sure the easement's terms are followed.

Benefits:

Flexible Use: Every conservation easement has different terms that relate specifically to each unique piece of property. Easements might range from protecting and preserving critical native habitat to preserving farmland and active farming.

Flexible Scope: Public access is not required.

The entire property does not have to be included. The easement can address portions of the property.

Economic: If the land is donated, easements often qualify as tax-deductible charitable donations. By reducing the land's development potential, easements often reduce property taxes and estate taxes.

Resources:

The Conservation Easement Stewardship Guide: Designing, Monitoring and Enforcing Easements (Brenda Lind)

Protecting the Land: Conservation Easements Past, Present, and Future (Edited by Julie Ann Gustanski and Roderick H. Squires, (2000). Island Press)

Protecting Surface Water Quality with Conservation Easements (Brenda Lind, Yolanka Wulff, J.D. (2004)

The Conservation Easement Handbook (Elizabeth Byers and Karin Marchetti Ponte)

Ohio State University Fact Sheet
ohioline.osu.edu/cd-fact/1261.html