



California

**Department of
Conservation**

Division Name

Department of Conservation: Easement Programs, Minimum Deed Terms and Connection of Easements to Williamson Act Contracts

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Benefits to the Landowner



Agricultural Conservation Programs

- Agricultural Land Mitigation Program
- California Farmland Conservancy Program
- Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program

Information Services

- Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program
- Williamson Act

Capacity Programs

- Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program
- Resource Conservation District Assistance Program
- Watershed Coordinators Program

- Agreement between a land owner and local government for property tax reduction in return for a promise not to develop property
- Agreement is typically for a 10 year period
- Allows for compatible uses

What is an Agricultural Conservation Easement



- Are voluntary, legally recorded deed restrictions on properties used for agricultural production
- Maintain land in private ownership and are the result of a transaction between the landowner and a local land trust or other local organization
- Values the development rights and then extinguishes those rights
- Allow for continued agricultural uses
- Prohibit practices that would damage or interfere with the agricultural use of land
- Remain even when the land changes ownership

Agricultural Conservation Easement Programs



California Farmland Conservancy Program (CFCP)

- ✓ Protects California's best farmland for the future
- ✓ **59,000 acres** have been permanently protected
- ✓ \$86 million has been funded
- ✓ \$8 million available in 19/20

Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program (SALCP)

- ✓ Preserves farmland to reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with development
- ✓ Funded by the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund and administered by DLRP on behalf of the Strategic Growth Council
- ✓ **90,000 acres** are in process of being permanently protected
- ✓ \$124 million in funding to date
- ✓ 60 easements

Agricultural Land Mitigation Program (ALMP)

- ✓ Offsets the loss of farmland from the construction of state projects
- ✓ **1,352 acres** have been permanently protected
- ✓ \$49.5 million in funding to date (current solicitation \$22 million)
- ✓ 7 projects funded in 6 counties

Benefits to the Landowner

- Receive income from the land value while maintaining ownership
- Generational succession and family legacy on the land
- On farm repairs and capital improvements or pay off loans
- Tax and estate planning benefits



Benefits to the Community

- Creates stability for regional agricultural industries and food systems
- Provides open space buffers between communities
- Ensures locally produced food and fiber
- Provide habitat conservation, climate change adoption and resilience
- Can mitigate for lost farmland when done in conjunction with the local planning process



Division of Land Resource Protection Funding Role



Grant funding to help land trusts acquire conservation easements on properties at risk of nonagricultural use.

- Grants are up to up to 75% of appraised conservation easement value
- Compatible with other local, state and federal conservation funding sources
- Department Deed Terms are driven by funding source but generally prohibit restrictions on agricultural use
- A portion of the grant can be used to fund project development costs such as surveys, clearing title, and appraisal costs
- Receive annual reports from the easement holder

Permitted Activities



- Production, processing and marketing of agricultural crops, products and livestock and construction and use of farm support structures and conveyances
- The construction, maintenance, repair, or replacement of single-family residences and farmworker housing reserved in the easement
- The construction, reconstruction or use of renewable energy facilities to generate energy for the agricultural and residential needs
- The restoration, enhancement, maintenance, protection, and conservation of natural resources



THANK YOU

Questions?

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