



Steps to Donating Conservation Fee Title Land

1. **Phone or Videoconference Consultation:** The Preservation Trust's conservation program staff conducts a phone or videoconference consultation with the landowner(s) to discuss the landowner's goals and intent to protect the property. To help inform the discussion, please provide staff the Tax Parcel Number(s) associated with the potential project area in advance of the consultation. After the consultation, staff will send the landowner an inquiry packet of information for the landowner to review and consider.
2. **Follow-up Phone or Videoconference Consultation:** The landowner and staff will reconnect to answer any questions and discuss potential next steps. If the proposed project warrants further evaluation, conservation staff will coordinate with the landowner and the Preservation Trust's stewardship staff to schedule a site visit.
3. **Initial Site Visit:** The Preservation Trust's conservation and stewardship staff meets with the landowner to discuss her/his/they goals and interests in protecting her/his/they property. The site visit also provides the Preservation Trust with an opportunity to learn more about the conservation values of the property, as well as describe our approach to partner with landowners to help conserve their land.
4. **Evaluation of the Potential Project:** The Preservation Trust's conservation and stewardship staff evaluates the project to ensure it protects significant conservation values and meets the mission of the organization. This is the point where staff decides to move the project forward for board consideration, or they determine that the proposed project does not fully meet the criteria of the conservation plan. If the latter occurs, the landowner may consider donating the property to the Preservation Trust as a non-conservation property. Non-conservation properties may be sold to generate funds to further the mission of the Preservation Trust.
5. **Statement of Donor Intent:** If the landowner and the Preservation Trust wish to proceed, the Director of Philanthropy coordinates with the landowner to review and sign a Real Estate Gift Statement of Donor Intent.
6. **Preliminary Project Approval:** The Preservation Trust's board approval process is a two-step approach, with Preliminary Approval and then Final Board Approval required later in the process. The fee title donation proposal is evaluated by the Conservation and Acquisitions Committee and then Board of Directors to ensure that the project meets the organization's mission and that the Preservation Trust has the capacity to

complete the project and accept its stewardship responsibilities. This also is an opportunity for board members to provide feedback on the project and recommend any adjustments to the project structure.

7. Independent Tax and Legal Advice: The Preservation Trust strongly encourages landowners to seek independent legal counsel and tax advice. This is particularly important for landowners who choose to pursue federal tax benefits for the donation of their land to understand whether the donation qualifies for federal tax benefits and, if so, how that donation is valued. Consulting legal and tax professionals can help improve the likelihood that the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) accepts the claim of a federal income tax deduction for your donation to the Preservation Trust. Please refer to our Fee Title Donation Information – Federal Tax Benefit Considerations for more details.
8. Title Research: The Preservation Trust assesses a preliminary title commitment to ensure it is able to accept the donation of land with the current exceptions on the title of the property.
9. Final Project Approval: The Conservation and Acquisitions Committee and then Board of Directors determines if the organization should accept the donation of land. If approved, the project progresses to closing.
10. Interim Land Management Plan: The Preservation Trust's stewardship staff compiles an Interim Land Management Plan for the property that documents the important conservation values, any improvements on the property, relevant conditions for the Preservation Trust's stewardship staff to monitor, and general management guidelines for the property. Staff will write the Interim Land Management Plan within the first year of the Preservation Trust's ownership. Staff will compile a Final Land Management Plan within three years thereafter.
11. Closing: Conservation program staff works with the Preservation Trust's legal counsel and the title company to craft the necessary closing documents. The landowner and the Preservation Trust sign the original warranty deed and other closing documents at a local title company or remotely. The warranty deed requires original, notarized signatures and then is recorded. The Preservation Trust purchases title insurance for its interest.
12. Stewardship Contribution: A Stewardship Contribution is required for every property that the Preservation Trust accepts under its ownership. The donation is deposited into a stewardship fund and is restricted to uses related to long-term monitoring and enforcement of conservation easements and properties that the Preservation Trust holds. Please refer to The Preservation Trust's Stewardship Fund document for more details.

13. Appraisal and Potential Tax Deduction: Valuation of the tax-deductible gift is a matter to be handled between the landowner and her/his/they appraiser and tax advisor. The Preservation Trust is not involved in determining the value of the charitable donation for tax purposes. The Internal Revenue Code requires a qualified appraisal for gifts of property valued at more than \$5,000. If a landowner chooses to pursue federal tax benefits for the fee title donation, the landowner will need to obtain a qualified appraisal in accordance with Treasury Department Regulations. The Preservation Trust recommends that landowners use a qualified appraiser who follows the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice. Please refer to our Fee Title Donation Information – Federal Tax Benefit Considerations for more details.

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