



ABOUT

ClearWater is a locally-formed, nationally-accredited land trust organization that has been serving the region since 1980.

The mission of ClearWater Conservancy is to conserve and restore our natural resources through land conservation, water resources stewardship, and environmental outreach across central Pennsylvania

ClearWater's Land Protection Program seeks to balance the rapid growth of central Pennsylvania with the conservation of important ecological, cultural, and historic places.

We work with landowners and land managers to determine appropriate voluntary conservation methods, including management recommendations, conservation easements, and land acquisition.

CONTACT US

We look forward to hearing from you!
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CONSERVATION EASEMENTS



WHAT IS A CONSERVATION EASEMENT?

A conservation easement is a voluntary agreement between a landowner and a land trust that legally and permanently protects important land while it stays in private ownership.

NOT A ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL APPROACH...

Each conservation easement is individually tailored to meet conservation objectives and the needs of the landowner.

A conservation easement can be designed to accomplish specific objectives, such as to protect water quality or wildlife habitat.

Conservation easements do not mean that properties are opened up to public access unless specified in the easement.

Conservation easements benefit communities and future generations by permanently protecting farmlands, forests, streams, and wildlife.

WHY CONSIDER A CONSERVATION EASEMENT?

There are many long-term benefits of conserving your land with a conservation easement, including:

Protecting Your Land Forever

Conservation easements permanently protect the property's resources. If the land is sold, the terms of the easement agreement remain in effect for each successive owner.

Flexibility

The landowner and ClearWater Conservancy work together to determine which restricted and permitted land uses best accommodate the needs of both parties.

Keeping Your Property in Private Ownership

Landowners are free to use their property just as they did before the easement agreement, so long as the use is consistent with the conditions of the easement.

Tax Benefits

Donating a conservation easement in perpetuity may provide federal income tax, estate tax, and potentially other tax benefits.

WHAT ARE THE FINANCIAL BENEFITS OF AN EASEMENT?

Most conservation easements are donated by owners who wish to protect the land they love from inappropriate development. In certain narrow circumstances, easements are purchased at a bargain price or fair market value. Donations and bargain sales that meet IRS requirements can result in federal tax benefits.

Landowners should discuss potential income, property and estate tax benefits with financial advisors and estate planners.

To qualify for these tax benefits, the conservation easement must meet certain required IRS standards that an Accredited Land Trust like ClearWater can help you achieve.

Once a conservation easement is finalized, the landowner continues to manage their property for the long term and determine their own best practices. At the same time, a land trust such as ClearWater stewards the property through annual monitoring visits and ensures the easement terms are honored.