



CORVUSCENTRE
for Conservation Policy

Conservation Easements in Alberta: Perceptions and Practices

Results of a Survey of Alberta Land
Conservation Organizations

Prepared by Guy Greenaway | August 2026

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Suggested citation: Greenaway, G. (2026). *Conservation Easements in Alberta – Perceptions and Practices: Results of a Survey of Alberta Land Conservation Organizations*. Corvus Centre for Conservation Policy. <https://www.corvus.ca/projects/conservation-easements-in-ab-practices-and-perceptions>

ISBN: 000-0-0000000-0-0

The research undertaken, and the development and distribution of this report, were made possible through the generous support of

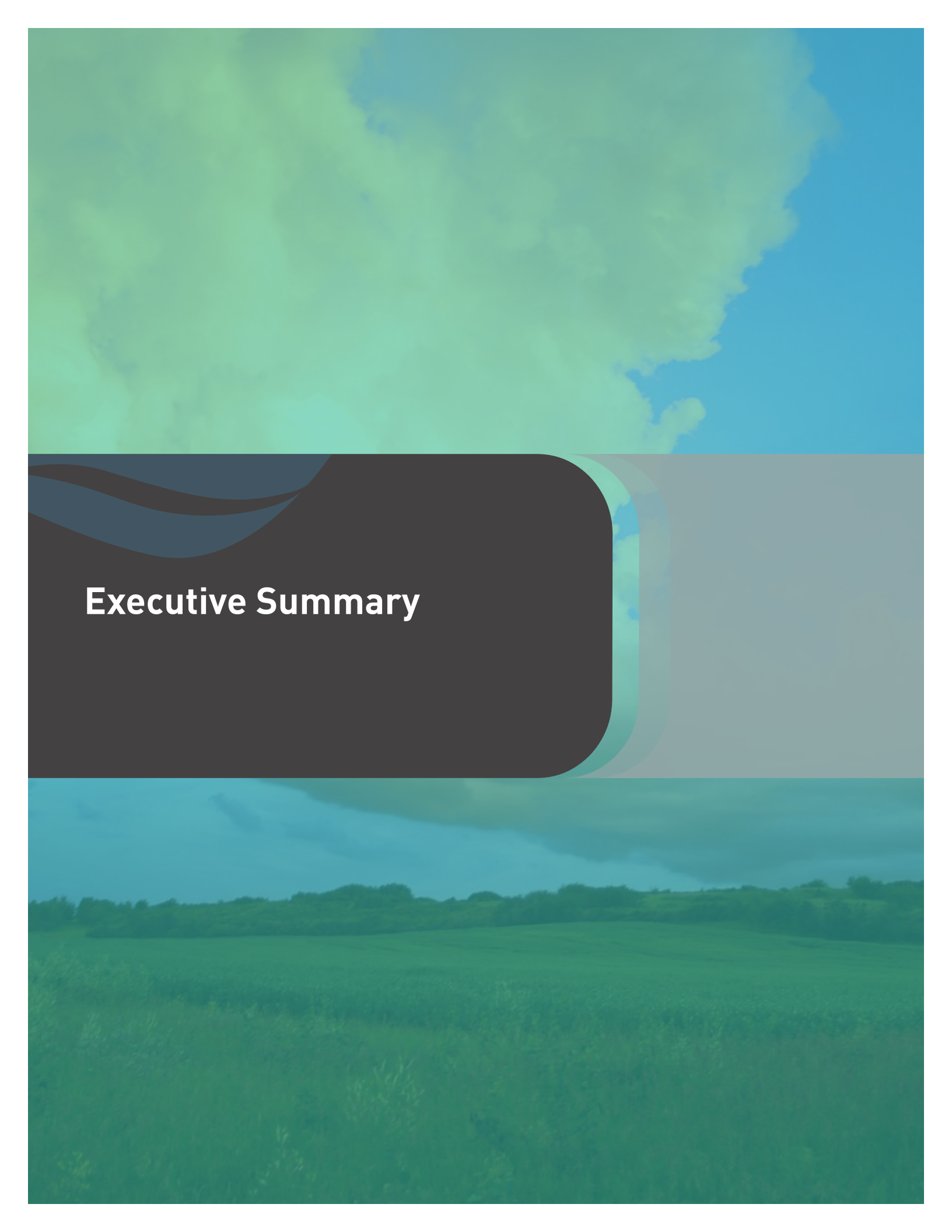


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Executive Summary

Executive Summary

There have been several characterizations of Alberta landowner attitudes toward conservation easements.

Landowners granting conservation easements represent a small proportion of the total, so research tends towards non-easement-grantors, focuses on barriers, and provides copious data on why people who do not grant conservation easements do not grant conservation easements. While valid, this is an inadequate basis for policy decisions. Similarly, research has tended to ignore land trust perspectives, yet they collectively can speak to all instances of landowners seeking to grant a conservation easement.

The Corvus Centre surveyed all of Alberta's land trusts in order to get a data-based perspective on the perceptions of and demand for conservation easements in Alberta. This was also an opportunity to get a better sense of other practical conservation easement dynamics, such as costs, funding sources, terms, and conservation values.

The data collected has been provided under the categories of General, Agreement Dynamics, Agriculture, Financial, Demand, and Landowner Perceptions.

An analysis of the data reveals 14 emergent themes:

- Ecological/environmental purposes predominate
- Demand for perpetual conservation easements is very strong, funding not keeping pace
- Government of Alberta priorities will push adoption of temporary easements
- Barriers to participation led by 'understanding' issues
- Industrial activity consideration is inconsistent
- EcoGift benefits promoted but liabilities unmanaged
- Agricultural producers are critical
- Funding for conservation easements relies heavily on government
- Funding for land trust operations relies heavily on private sources
- Securement costs are significant
- Long-term financial planning is improving
- Basis for compensation calculations is robust
- Charitable tax receipts are critical
- Landowner conservation values are paramount

With all the (understandable) focus on incenting landowners to engage in private land conservation, there is a tendency to forget that they cannot do so alone; good stewardship is in their hands, but enduring protection of those parcels requires working with a qualified land conservation organization or government.

With all the (understandable) focus on incenting landowners to engage in private land conservation, there is a tendency to forget that they cannot do so alone; good stewardship is in their hands, but enduring protection of those parcels requires working with a qualified land conservation organization or government.

Land trusts are neither ubiquitous in their geographic spread nor unlimited in their resources. However, what they are capable of doing, and what they are willing to do, is the primary determinant of where the arc of private land conservation will go.

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CHAPTER 1:
Introduction

Introduction

Of late, there have been several characterizations of Alberta landowner attitudes toward, and demand for, conservation easements¹. These have come from municipalities, provincial agencies, producer associations, and land trusts², some based on anecdotal evidence, but many based on 'general' landowner surveys.

This is understandable. A good survey seeks to maximize its 'N' – i.e., the total number of respondents – so as to increase the statistical validity. However, while

1 In this document, the term Conservation Easement is used to refer to legislatively-enabled private-property easements and covenants that apply positive and/or negative requirements on the owner of a property in favour of protecting the identified conservation values of a property. Canadian provincial and territorial law enabling this tool may refer to these as Conservation Easements, Conservation Covenants, and/or Conservation Agreements.

2 Dance, Matt, and Shelagh Pyper. 2023. *Grassland Carbon Opportunities: Interest, understanding and participation in grassland conservation and carbon programs on the Canadian Prairies*. Prepared by Fuse Consulting Ltd. for the Nature Conservancy of Canada;

Alberta Beef Producers. 2024. *New policy focuses on private land conservation*. <https://abpdaily.com/checking-in-with-abp/alberta-beef-producers-new-policy-focuses-on-private-land-conservation/>

Greenaway, Guy. *RMA Motion to Limit Conservation Easements: Analytical Brief Regarding Rural Municipalities of Alberta Resolution to Limit Conservation Easements*. Corvus Centre for Conservation Policy. <https://www.corvus.ca/projects/rma-motion-to-limit-conservation-easements>

Alberta Wilderness Association. 2025. *Alberta's changed conservation easements program will be a challenge to long-term land and biodiversity protection*. <https://www.albertawilderness.ca/statement-albertas-changed-conservation-easements-program-will-be-a-challenge-to-long-term-land-and-biodiversity-protection/>

there are now conservation easements on hundreds of thousands of acres in Alberta, those landowners granting them still represent a small proportion of the total landowners who could; as such surveys are broad. As well, in the interest of improving 'uptake', the focus is often on barriers. Thus we have copious data on why people would not enter into a conservation easement (all legitimate reasons) from people who don't grant conservation easements.

This is a valid but weak basis for policy decisions. Yet these data are routinely cited as indicators of 'demand' and as a basis for 'improvements' in the conservation easement tool and granting process.

The curious part of this exercise is that landowners wishing to grant a conservation easement on their property can only do so by working with a "qualified organization", which for the most part means a land trust, of which there are relatively few in Alberta. There is rarely any research or consultation focused on these groups, yet they collectively can speak to virtually every single instance of a landowner seeking to grant a conservation easement.

The research summarized in this report was undertaken to try to address this dilemma. The Corvus Centre surveyed all of Alberta's land trusts in order to get a data-based perspective on the perceptions of, and demand for, conservation easements in Alberta. This was also an opportunity to get a better sense of other practical conservation easement dynamics, such as costs, funding sources, terms, and conservation values.



CHAPTER 2:
Methods

Methods

Data for this research were gathered via a web-delivered survey (see the survey questions in [Appendix: Survey Instrument](#)).

In advance, all active nature conservation land trusts operating in the province were contacted, asked to participate, and asked to provide a single contact person. All agreed and participated, meaning 100% of land trust conservation easement activity was covered. The land trust⁷ organizations surveyed were:

- Alberta Conservation Association
- Alberta Farmland Trust
- Crooked Creek Conservancy Society of Athabasca
- Ducks Unlimited Canada (Alberta)
- Edmonton and Area Land Trust
- Foothills Land Trust
- Legacy Land Trust Society
- Nature Conservancy of Canada (Alberta)
- Southern Alberta Land Trust Society
- Western Sky Land Trust

The survey was delivered using QuestionPro online survey software with follow-up phone calls as needed, and executed between September and December of 2025. The survey's 38 questions gathered information on general land securement, conservation easement agreements, demand, compensation, funding, landowner attitudes, timelines, and costs.

⁷ 'Land trust' is a generic term for not-for-profit, registered charities with a mandate to conserve biodiversity (or other values) on privately held lands. These may be local, regional, provincial, or national, and may use the phrase 'land trust' or 'conservancy' or neither in their name. Most land trusts focus on biodiversity conservation, but many focus on agricultural, Indigenous culture, recreation, scenery, etc., or even a mix of these. This document uses the term 'land trust' to refer to all such organizations.



CHAPTER 3:
Findings

Findings

The findings of the survey are described below, under the following headings:

- General
- Agreement Dynamics
- Agriculture
- Financial
- Demand
- Perceptions

General

Lands conserved

The total acres conserved by Alberta’s land trusts was reported as 1,502,694 acres³ / 608,119 hectares. Of those, land trusts reported 623,085 acres / 252,154 hectares were secured using conservation easements, approximately 41.5%.

Looking just at Alberta’s local and regional land trusts⁴, however, the percentage of acres secured by conservation easements ranged (by organization) from 86% to 100%. Looking at total acres conserved by these organizations, 98.3% were secured with conservation easements.

	Acres	Hectares	Percent
Total Land Conserved	1,502,694	608,119	100%
Conservation Easements	623,085	252,154	41.5%
Conservation Easements (Local/Regional land trusts)			98.3%

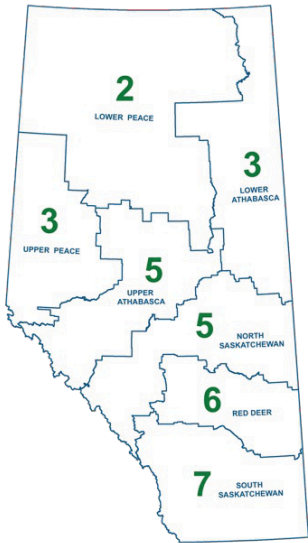
Land Use Planning Region

3 “Why are numbers reported in acres as well as hectares?” Alberta was surveyed on in the late 1800s using the Dominion Land Survey, which divided the province into one-square-mile sections, equalling 640 acres. This continues to be the case despite Canada’s switch to the metric system a century later, meaning most large-land transactions are conducted first in acres, then converted to hectares.

4 ‘Local and regional land trusts’ refers to the subset of Canadian land trusts that focus on a local area or a certain portion or ‘region’ of a province. These represent the vast majority of land trusts, but a small minority of conserved acres.

Private land conservation activity by land trusts is unsurprisingly focused in the southeastern part of the province, as that is where the privately-held parcels are concentrated. The South Saskatchewan land use planning region is the focus of the most Alberta land trusts (7), while the Lower Peace land use planning region is the focus of only two of Alberta’s land trusts.

Land Use Planning Region	No. of Land Trusts Active in the Region
South Saskatchewan	7
Red Deer	6
North Saskatchewan	5
Upper Athabasca	5
Lower Athabasca	3
Upper Peace	3
Lower Peace	2



Conservation Goals

Land trusts were asked to identify which values were the focus on their land conservation efforts. Recognizing that most if not all land trusts see multiple values associated with their conserved properties, respondents were asked to identify which conservation

foci were 'primary' for their conservation easements and which were 'secondary.'

Ecological/environmental conservation was by far the most-often-cited primary focus. The 'species-at-risk' subset was primary for 60% with 20% indicating it was not a focus at all. No land trust listed recreation and public access as a primary goal, but 60% listed it as a secondary goal, and 40% indicated it was not a goal.

Weighting for the acres each organization has in conservation easements, this results in 99.8% of Alberta conservation easements having 'ecological/environmental' as a primary purpose.

	Primary	Secondary	N/A
Ecological/Environmental	90%	0%	10%
Species-At-Risk	60%	20%	20%
Agricultural	40%	50%	10%
Historical/Cultural	10%	70%	20%
Scenic/Aesthetic	10%	60%	30%
Recreational/Public Access	0%	60%	40%
Other	0%	10%	90%

Agreement Dynamics

The actual conservation easement agreement follows a relatively standard structure for land trusts across the continent, but the details can vary dramatically.

Terms

Land trusts were asked to look to their current conservation easement portfolio and report the terms (duration of the agreement). Every land trust reported that all of their current conservation easements were 'perpetual', meaning there is no set time limit on the term. None reported any temporary easement term.

Term	Percent
0 - 30 Years	0%
30 - 50 Years	0%
50 - 99 Years	0%
>100 Years	0%
Perpetual	100%

Land trusts were then asked to indicated which temporary conservation easement terms they might consider. Approximately 20-30% indicated they would not consider any agreement term that was temporary. Approximately 10-20% indicated they would accept terms under 100 years. No land trust indicated they would not accept perpetual easements.

	Yes	No	Maybe
0 - 30 Years	10%	20%	70%
30 - 50 Years	10%	30%	60%
50 - 99 Years	20%	30%	50%
>100 Years	40%	20%	40%
Perpetual	90%	0%	10%

Ecological/environmental conservation was by far the most-often-cited primary focus .. 99.8% of Alberta conservation easements [have] ecological/environmental' as a primary purpose

Industrial Activity

Respondent land trusts were asked about three specific aspects of industrial activity with relation to their conservation easement agreements. These were industrial scale renewable infrastructure, carbon trading rights, and sub-surface mineral rights.

Renewables

Survey respondents were asked how they would characterize their agreements with respect to industrial scale renewable infrastructure. Only 13% indicated their agreements do not speak to industrial-scale renewables. Approximately a 1/3 indicated the easement would prevent such applications. Approximately 13% said the agreement would require any application receive the land trust's approval.

Statement	Percent
Refuse projects that have industrial scale renewable infrastructure	33%
Require that landowner seek land trust approval if approached regarding industrial scale renewable infrastructure	20%
Do not speak to industrial scale renewable infrastructure	13%
Require that the land owner involve the land trust in any agreement negotiations regarding industrial scale renewable infrastructure	13%
Other	13%
Require the land trust be proportionally compensated from any land renewable infrastructure placement agreements	7%

Carbon trading rights

Survey respondents were asked if/how their agreements dealt with existing or potential carbon credit rights. Eighty percent (80%) indicated their agreements are silent on carbon trading rights. The remaining 20% said they explicitly left all carbon trading rights in the hands of the landowner.

Statement	Percent
Do not speak to carbon trading rights	80%
Leave carbon trading rights entirely up to the landowner	20%
Retain carbon trading rights for the land trust	0%
Share carbon trading rights with the landowner	0%
We do not hold conservation easements	0%
Other	0%

Sub-surface mineral rights

Survey respondents were asked if/how they their agreements dealt with existing or potential exploitation of sub-surface rights. A small but significant minority (13%) indicated their agreements are silent on the issue. None outright refuse projects in this circumstance. Almost 2/3rds require the landowner to involve the land trust in any proposed exploitation of subsurface rights. And only 13% said their agreements deal with compensation and shared revenues.

Statement	Percent
Require that landowner seek land trust approval if approached by subsurface mineral rights holder	80%
Require that the landowner involve the land trust in any land access agreement negotiations	20%
Do not speak to sub-surface mineral rights	0%
Require the land trust be proportionally compensated from any land access agreements	0%
Other	0%
Refuse projects that have unexploited subsurface mineral rights	0%

(for a more detailed consideration of conservation easements and subsurface rights, see the Corvus Centre's report, [Underlying Concern: Assessing and Mitigating Subsurface Mineral Risk Under Privately-Conserved Properties](#).)

EcoGifts

The federal government's [Ecological Gifts Program](#) (or EcoGifts) provides tremendous benefits for donors, including the ability to apply a donation receipt against another 5 years' income, forgiveness of accumulated capital gains taxes, and guarantee of the appraisal value. However, there is significant liability for land trusts.

Prevalence

Collectively, organizational responses indicated that approximately 76% of the fee-simple acres conserved (543,399 ac / 219,905 ha) and 69% of conservation easement acres (431,755 ac / 174,725 ha) were certified by the EcoGifts program.

	Acres	Hectares	% of Total
Fee simple acres	543,399	219,905	76%
Conservation easement acres	431,755	174,725	69%

Change in Use protections

Land trust respondents were asked how their organization mitigated the liability associated with the 'Change in Use' provisions under the EcoGifts program⁵. Twenty percent (20%) indicated they have a clause in their agreements that transfers liability to the landowner, 40% indicated they make no consideration of this. The 'other' option was chosen by 40%, with one indicating they simply do not accept EcoGifts, and the others just indicating they follow the EcoGift rules, likely suggesting they have no consideration of the 'Change in Use' clause in our agreements.

Statement	Percent
Clause in the conservation easement agreement transferring liability to the landowner if the 'Change in Use' tax is levied against the land trust	20%
Notice in the agreement that landowner will be sued if the 'Change in Use' tax is levied against the land trust	0%
No consideration of the Change in Use clause in our agreements	40%
Other	40%

⁵ The Income Tax Act gives the EcoGifts program the ability to levy a tax (equal to 50% of the value of the gifted conservation easement) on a land trust if there is a 'change in use' not approved by the government. No tax is levied on the landowner.

Timelines

Timelines for the completion of a conservation easement negotiation can vary, but are typically not 'short'. Respondents were asked to characterize that timeline in the three ways: a 'normal' timeline, a 'max' timeline, and factors causing expansions of the timeline.

'Normal' timeline

The majority of land trust respondents (80%) indicated that a normal length of time for a conservation easement was between 2 and 3 years. Twenty percent (20%) of land trust respondents indicated that 'normal' was less than one year.

Negotiation Timeline	Percent
0 - 1 Years	20%
2 - 3 Years	80%
3 - 5 Years	0%
More Than 5 Years	0%

Longest timelines

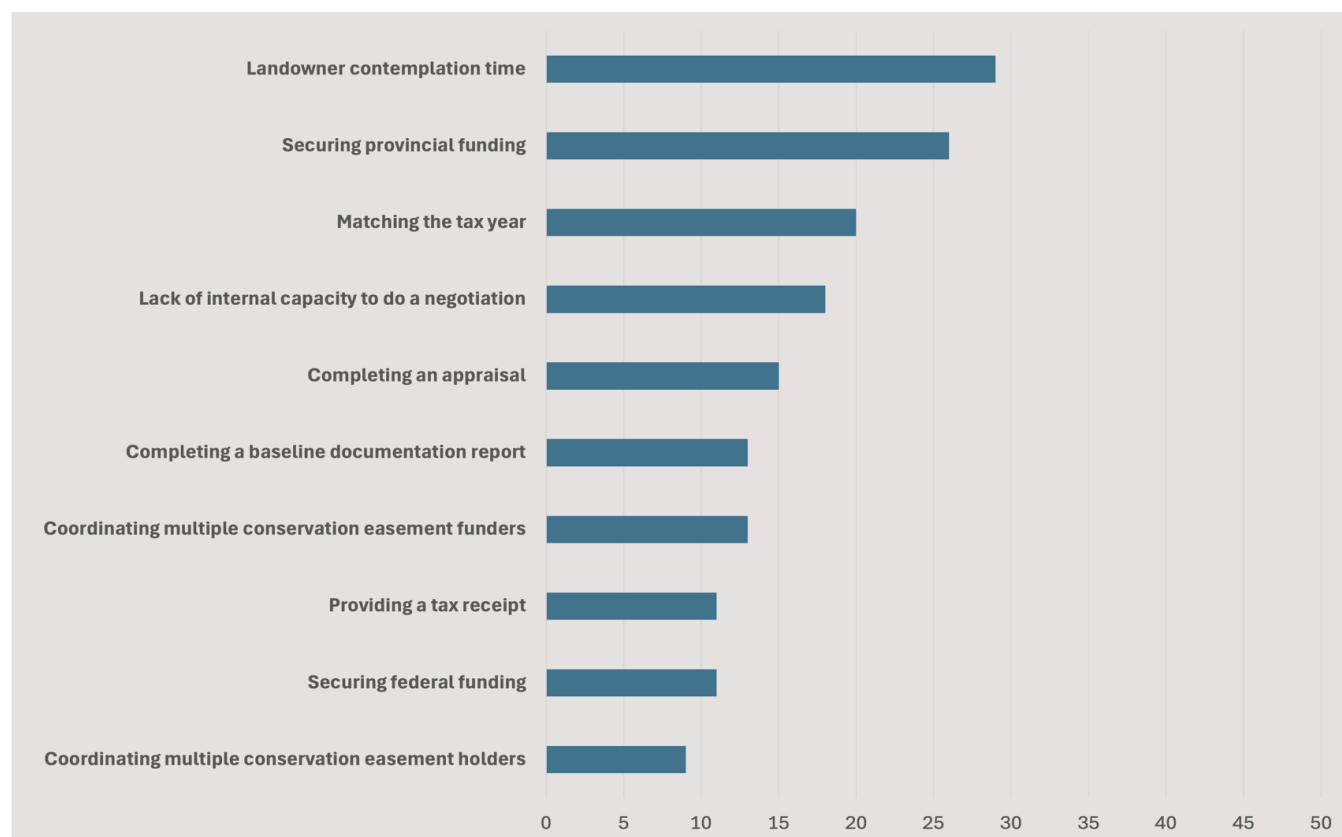
When asked to complete the statement, "For our organization, conservation easements have taken as many as [X] years to complete," the median answer was 3 years. The answers ranged from 1 to 5 years with a single outlier of 20 years.

Timeline expansion factors

Respondents were provided a series of factors that could expand the timeline for conservation easement negotiation beyond 'normal', and asked to rank how much of a factor each was. A summary score was created by assigning -1 to each 'Not a factor' and multiplying each rank by the number of replies (5 points for each top level impact ranking, 1 point for each low impact ranking, etc.).

To facilitate comparison, a simple ranking system was used, assigning scaled points for each answer – 1 point for 'low impact', 5 points for 'high impact', etc. (see *graph and table, next page*).

Statement	Low Impact				High Impact	Not a Factor	Score
	1	2	3	4	5		
Landowner contemplation time	10%	20%	10%	30%	20%	10%	29
Securing provincial funding	10%	10%	10%	30%	20%	20%	26
Matching the tax year	20%	30%	30%	10%	0%	10%	20
Lack of internal capacity to do a negotiation	30%	40%	10%	0%	10%	10%	18
Completing an appraisal	50%	30%	0%	0%	10%	10%	15
Completing a baseline documentation report	50%	30%	10%	0%	0%	10%	13
Coordinating multiple conservation easement funders	20%	20%	20%	10%	0%	30%	13
Providing a tax receipt	60%	10%	0%	0%	10%	20%	11
Securing federal funding	10%	20%	20%	10%	0%	40%	11
Coordinating multiple conservation easement holders	20%	10%	30%	0%	0%	40%	9



The most significant factors were the time a landowner might need to spend considering the agreement, and delays related to securing provincial funding or matching the tax year. After that came the internal factor of capacity, and the external factor of the appraisal, and the completion of a baseline report (often weather affected).

Actually providing the tax receipt had little impact on timelines. Securing federal funding and coordinating multiple easement holders scored low because they were less likely to even be part of the agreement.

Other factors added by land trust respondents were:

- Loss of provincial funding for perpetual conservation easements
- Dealing with banks to postpone or discharge mortgages.
- Removing strange encumbrances from the title that need to be removed before registering the conservation easement.
- Other family members/children questioning the conservation easement and needing more time to decide if they provide their support to proceed.
- Availability of legal advisor and professional surveyor and survey registration time
- Delays at Land Titles Office

Agriculture

Acres With Agricultural Operations

Land trusts respondents were asked to indicate the proportion of conservation easement acres which contained active agricultural operations (working lands). Of the 623,085 acres under conservation easement, land trusts estimated 511,304 were active agricultural operations, accounting for 82.1% of all easement acres.

When considering only the local and regional land trusts, 92.2% of conservation easement acres had active agricultural operations.

Agricultural Producers Granting Conservation Easements

Respondents were also asked what proportion of those granting conservation easements on their land were agricultural producers. The proportions ranged from 0% to 100%, with an average of 59.5% and a median of 72.5%.



Financial

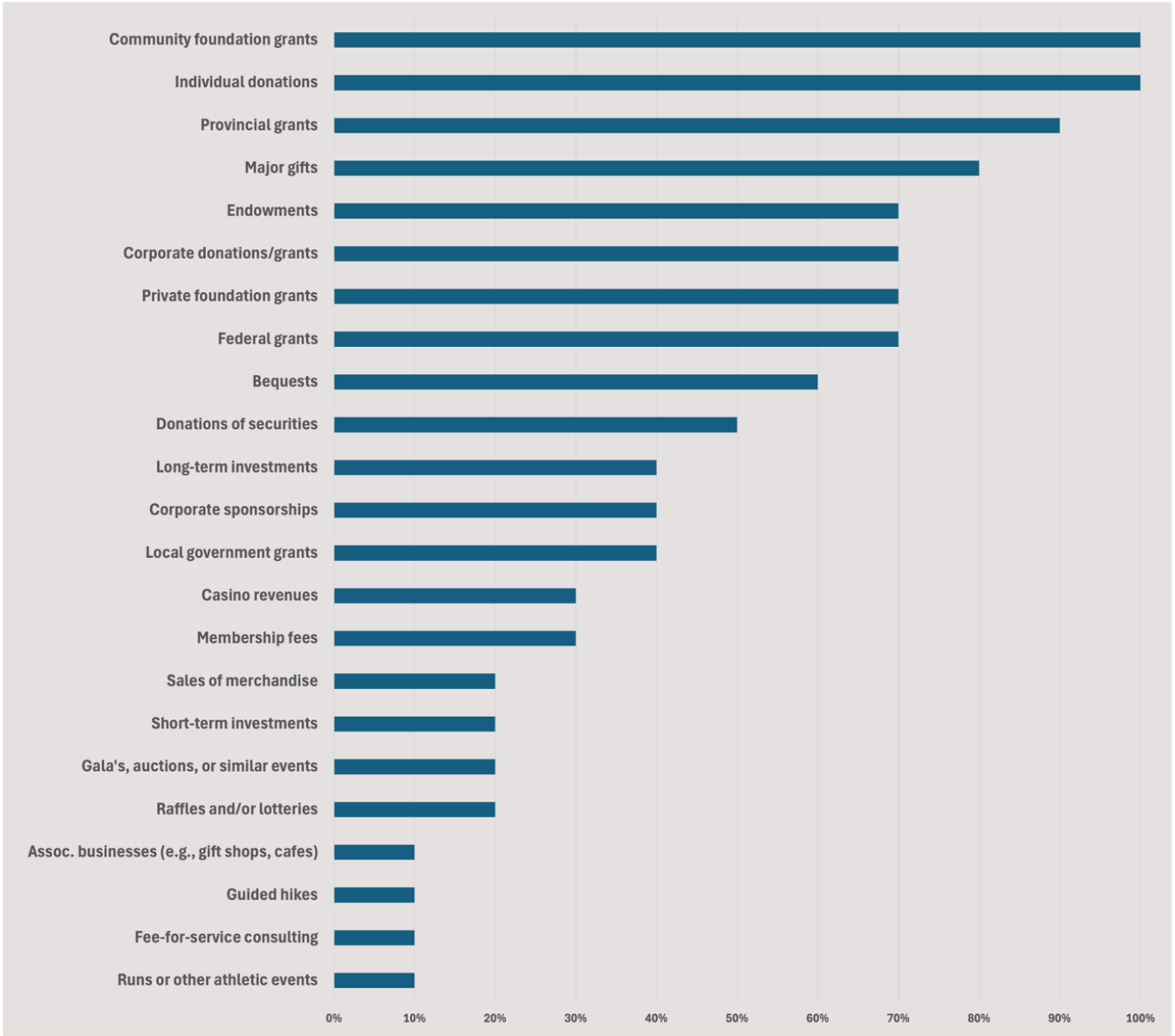
Funding mechanisms

Land trust respondents were asked which revenue-generation mechanisms they used. A wide array of mechanisms are employed. All respondents indicated they relied on "community foundation grants" and "individual donations," with

Other common sources included: Provincial grants (90% of respondents), Major gifts (80%), Federal grants (70%), Private foundation grants (70%), Corporate donations/grants (70%), Endowments (70%), and Bequests (60%).

The mechanisms used by none of the land trusts included: Crowdfunding, Access fees to properties, Contracts for government service delivery, Speakers fees, Paid webinars, Training, and Facility rentals.

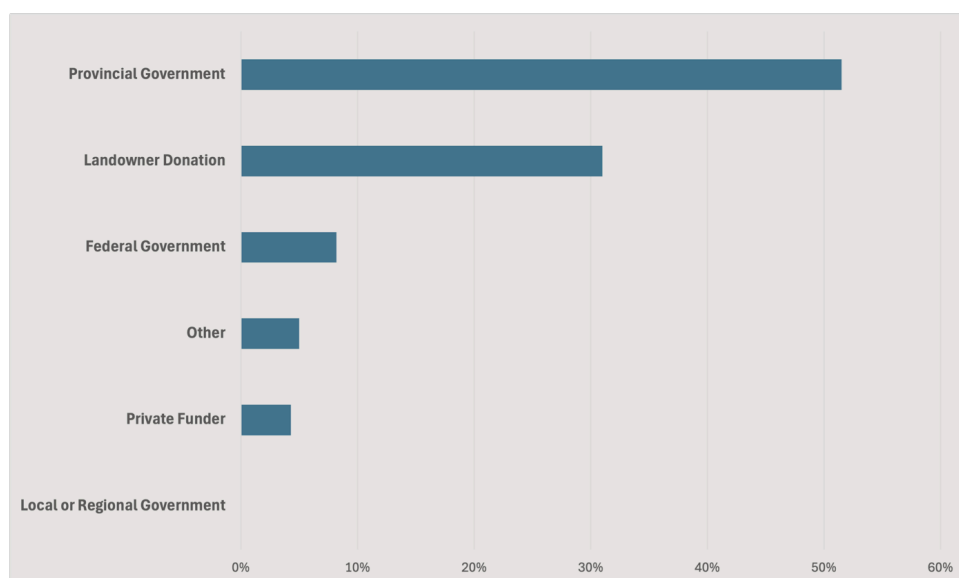
Respondents were also asked if their organization had a paying membership base. Half indicated they did, and half did not (the split was similar for local / regional land trusts and provincial / national land trusts). The dynamics of what constitutes a paying membership based may have confounded results, as when respondents asked about revenue-generation mechanisms (see above), only 30% identified membership dues.



Conservation easement funding sources

To understand the funding specifically for conservation easement projects, respondents were asked to estimate the proportion of funding for their conservation easement projects from the following sources over the last three years.

By far the largest sources were the provincial government (52%) and donations from the landowner (31%). Note that this is 'cash', and does not include the value of an official donation receipt for the conservation easement. Federal government funds accounted for 8.2%.



Costs

The data reported here on 'securement' and 'stewardship' costs come with a caveat, as there were mistakes made with the survey design. First, there were no clear definitions given as to what constituted securement and stewardship costs. The categories below each question provided an indication of what was meant, but created confusion.

'Securement' costs are expenses associated with acquiring a conservation easement or fee-simple property, outside of any payment to the landowner (they are now sometimes referred to using the business vernacular of 'closing costs'). Some respondents took 'securement' costs to include the payments to landowners.

Likewise, in the private land conservation sector 'stewardship' costs have traditionally referred to the on-going costs of keeping a secured property in its conserved state. However, more recently, the term has also come to refer to conservation upgrades to the property or property management in support of the conservation values. This would then include (for example) cost-shared off-stream watering infrastructure, improved fencing types and locations, reseeding tame pasture to native grasses, or restoration of wetlands.

To address these issues, the author has looked for cases where other survey feedback can be used to identify when different assumptions were used by

respondents, and in other cases simply omitted reporting of data when discrepancies were obvious.

Securement costs

Land trust respondents were asked to estimate their 'average' cost of securing a conservation easement, using either a total amount or an estimated proportion of the total project cost. In this case, the total amount data proved unusable for the reasons noted above.

The average proportion of project costs spent on securement was 22%, with a median 14%. The results for just the local and regional land trusts were much the same at 19% and 14% respectively.

Average	22%
Median	14%
Avg (Local/Regional Land Trusts)	19%
Median (Local/Regional Land Trusts)	14%

Respondents were asked to consider an 'average' conservation easement project, and estimate the proportion of the cost attributable to the following elements. By far the largest expense is the 'stewardship endowment'⁶. The large amount of 'other' was later determined to most often represent contracts for specified services.

⁶ A 'stewardship endowment' generally refers to any long-term investments (whether a true endowment or not) whose annual returns are devoted to the costs of managing a secured property.

	Average	Median
Stewardship Endowment	39%	37%
Other	28%	18%
Staff Time	18%	15%
Baseline Report	8%	6%
Appraisal	4%	4%
Legal Defence Fund	4%	0%

It is worth noting that only one of the respondents had a dedicated legal defence fund. It can be presumed that the others have either rolled 'legal defence' into 'stewardship endowment', or simply cover legal costs as they arise through other mechanisms.

Stewardship costs

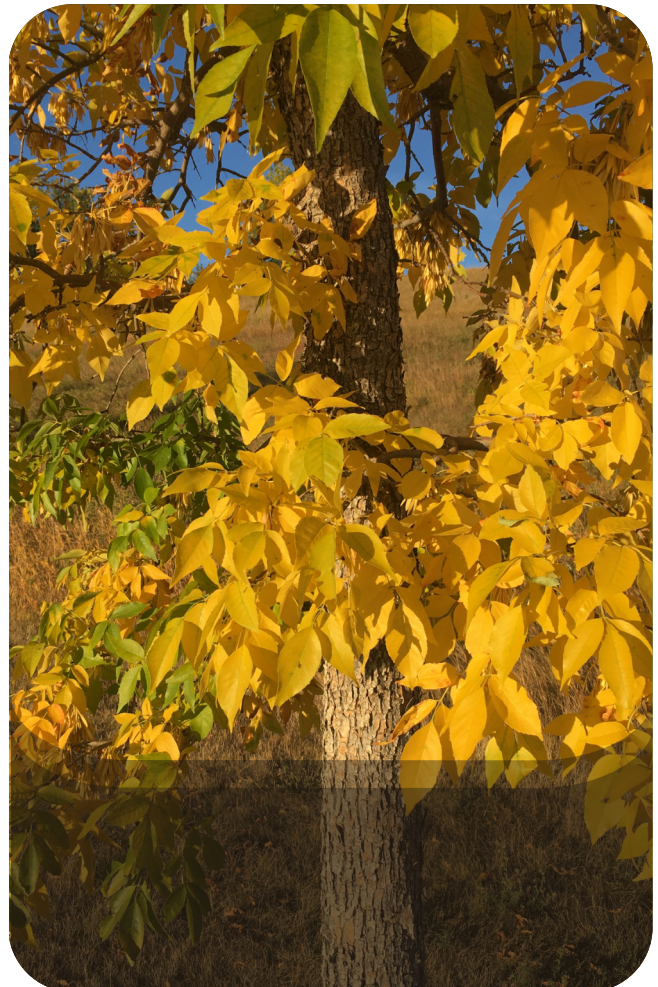
Respondents were asked to consider their overall expenditures on 'stewardship', and estimate the proportion dedicated to each of the following elements. Unsurprisingly 'staff time' was by far the largest proportion of costs, as this is a personnel-intensive task.

	Average	Median
Staff Time	66%	80%
Other	14%	0%
Legal Defence Fund	10%	0%
Remote Surveillance	6%	0%
Mapping/Imagery	4%	2%

To dig slightly further into the cost picture, respondents were asked to look only at those 'staff time' costs and apportion them to the following elements.

	Average	Median
Monitoring	49%	50%
Write Up and Reporting	26%	30%
Landowner Comms	22%	15%
Enforcement	3%	0%

Again unsurprisingly, monitoring is the largest stewardship cost, as it is central to the task. These numbers were also very consistent between provincial/national land trusts and local/regional land trusts.



Compensation

Valuation methods

Respondents were asked to indicate how they determined the amount of compensation they would provide landowners in exchange for granting a conservation easement. All land trusts who provide tax receipts indicated they use a 'qualified third-party appraiser.' Of the 50% who indicated they provide some amount of cash payment, the answers were more varied.

	Cash Payments	Tax Receipts
Qualified Third-Party Appraiser	20%	90%
Internal Reality Team	0%	0%
Use set price determined by Funder	0%	0%
Use set percentage of CE value	10%	0%
Other	20%	0%
N/A	50%	10%

'Other' mechanisms in the 'cash payment' determination column included paying a negotiated percentage of FMV, or providing recompense on a case-by-case basis for legal/tax advice.

Compensation methods

Land trusts provide compensation for conservation easements via a tax receipt for the value, a cash payment, or a combination. Respondents were asked to provide an estimate of what proportion each of these three methods makes up for their organization.

All land trusts

By far, the most common mechanism identified by land trusts was the use of a tax receipt for compensation.

	Tax Receipt alone	Cash Payment alone	Combination
Average	65%	11%	25%
Median	95%	0%	0%

Local / regional land trusts

When looking at local and regional land trusts specifically, the reliance on tax receipted compensation increases.

	Tax Receipt alone	Cash Payment alone	Combination
Average	74%	0%	26%
Median	100%	0%	0%

To get a better picture of how this plays out across the landscape, the percentages were applied to the number of acres of conservation easements each organization had to derive percentages that were independent of organization – i.e., what percent of the acres of conservation easements were compensated in the three ways.

	Tax Receipt alone	Cash Payment alone	Combination
All Land Trusts	32%	18%	251%
Local and Regional Land Trusts	44%	0%	56%

Two points are worth noting. First a 'payment' without an accompanying 'tax receipt' does not mean the payment was for the full appraised value of the conservation easement. In fact this can often be a set payment calculation (e.g., 20% of the land value).

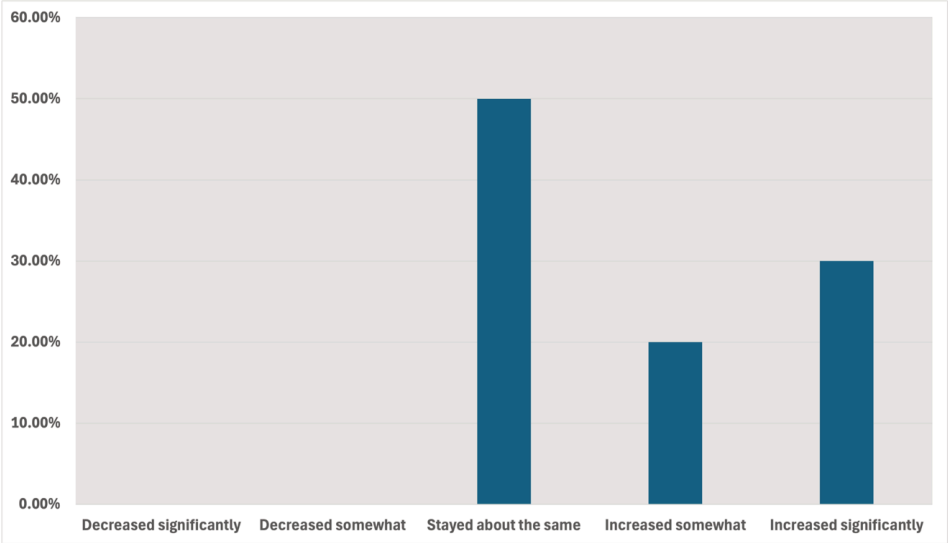
Second, half of the responding organizations provide only a tax receipt as compensation for a conservation easement.

By far, the most common mechanism identified by land trusts was the use of a tax receipt for compensation.

Demand

Demand trends

Land trust respondents were asked to think back over the previous 5 years, and estimate how demand for perpetual conservation easements had changed (or not). Half (50%) indicated it had remained unchanged, while the other half indicated demand had increased somewhat (20%) or significantly (30%).



Demand vs Funding

To get a sense of how the demand for perpetual conservation easements might be affected by available funding, respondents were asked to consider the previous 5 years, and characterize demand for perpetual conservation easements relative to funding. Half indicated that demand exceeded funding either significantly (30%) or somewhat (20%). Forty percent (40%) felt they were matched. Only 10% felt available funding exceeded demand somewhat, and none felt it exceeded demand significantly.

Statement	Proportion
Exceeded available funding significantly	30%
Exceeded available funding somewhat	20%
Matched available funding	40%
Lagged behind available funding somewhat	10%
Lagged behind available funding significantly	0%



Landowner Perceptions

In an effort to focus questions about landowner perceptions and barriers to those landowners who actually seek out perpetual conservation easements, land trust respondents were asked to consider their landowner partners, and comment on decision factors, restriction palatability, and potential barriers to participation.

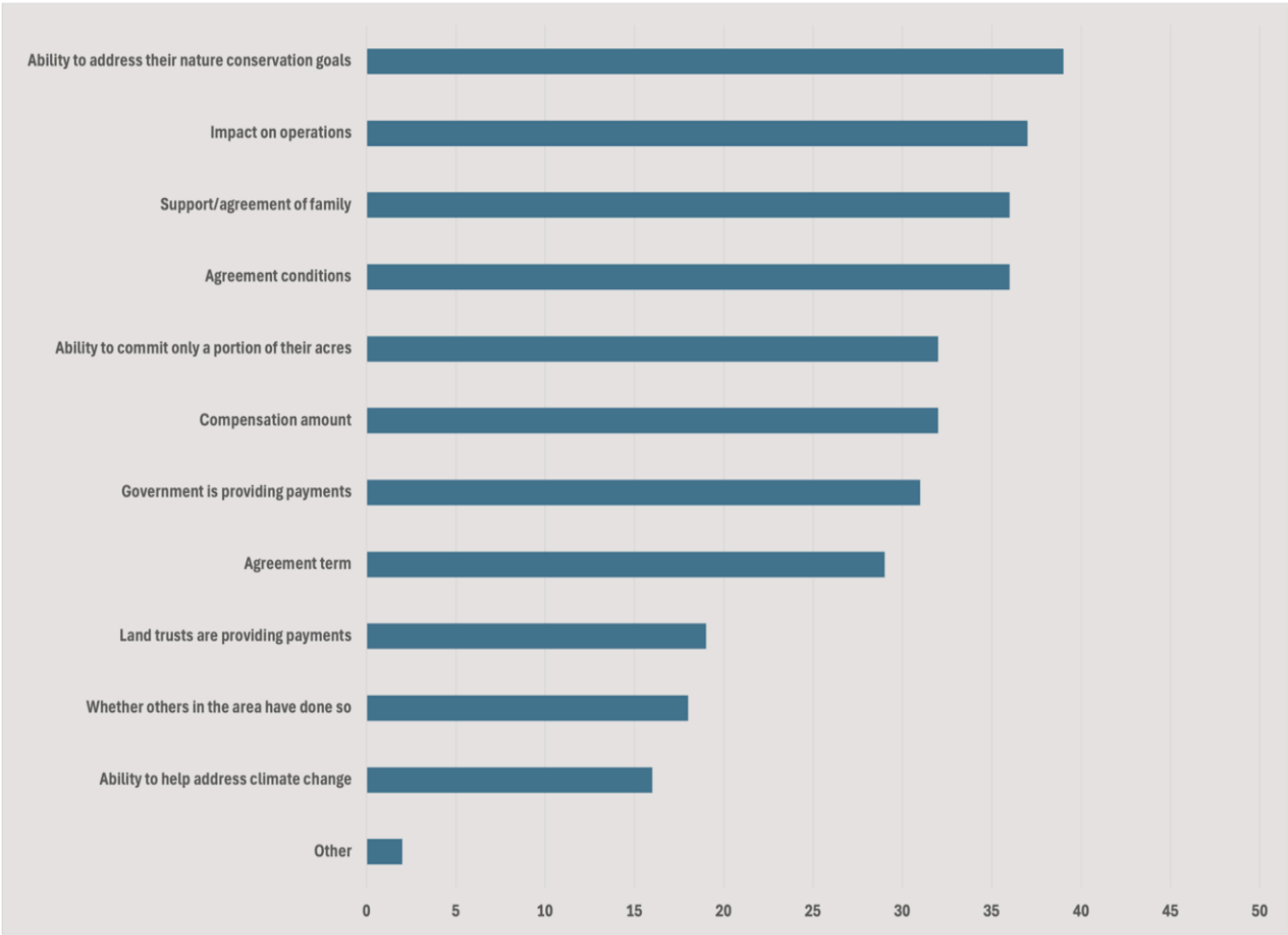
Landowner decision factors

To get a picture of the decision factors landowners represent to land trusts, respondents were asked, "Thinking of your landowner partners collectively, how significant would the following factors be in their decision to participate in a program requiring a long-

term commitment to leave land in a natural state?"

Respondents were asked to rate each from 'low significance' to 'high significance'. To facilitate comparison, a simple ranking system was used, assigning 1 point for low answers, 5 points for high answers, and removing one point for 'N/A' answers.

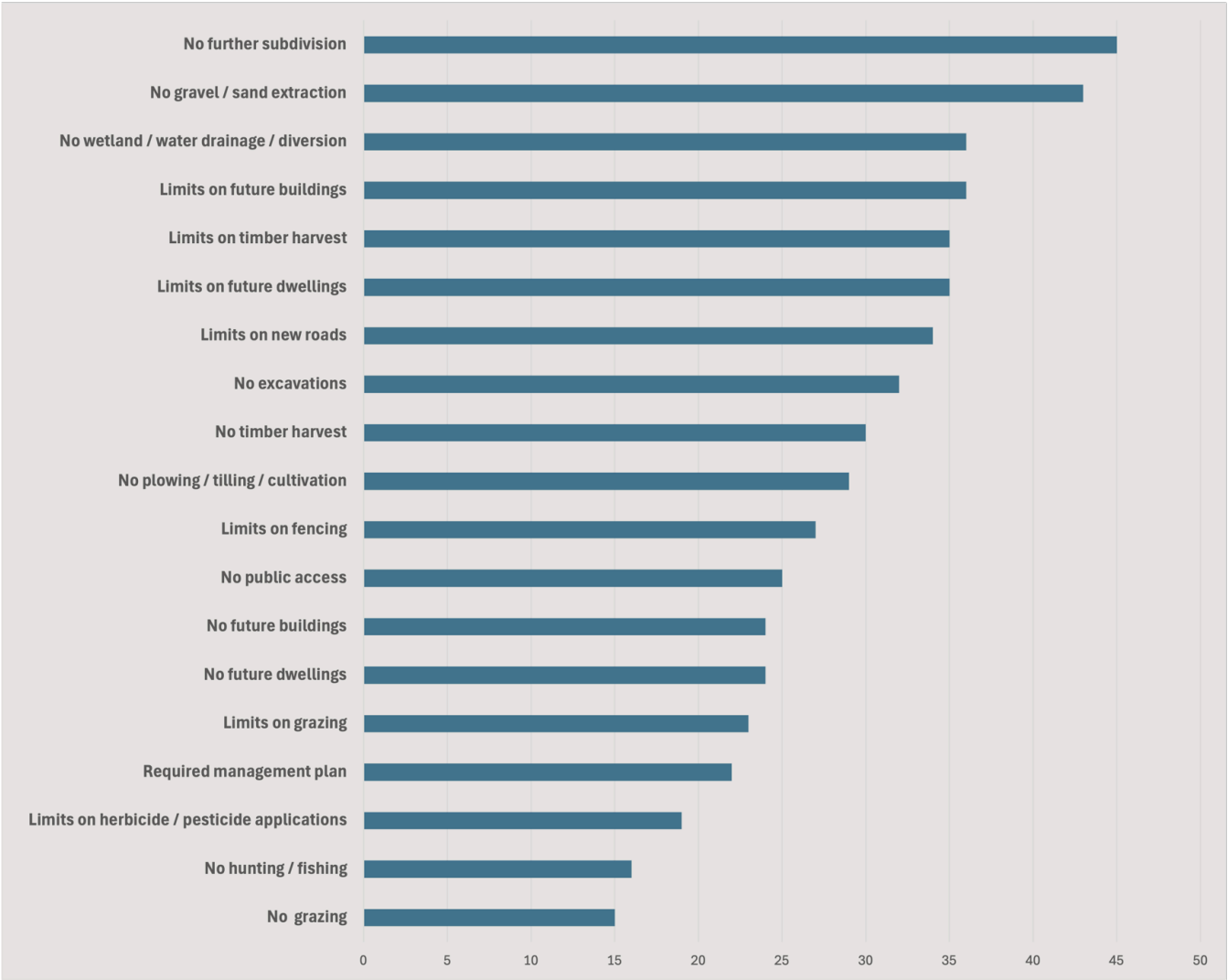
Desire to support their conservation goals topped the list, followed by the impact on operations, views of family, and conditions of the agreement. Compensation amount was in the middle of the list, as was whether the government provided the payments and the term of the agreement. Still significant, but at the bottom of these rankings, were whether land trusts provided the payments, whether their neighbours had easements, and the contribution to addressing climate change.



Restriction palatability

Like many big decisions, for conservation easements the devil is in the details. Each conservation easement has the same structure, but different restrictions. To better understand which potential restrictions caused the most heartburn, respondents were asked which conservation easement restrictions / prescriptions were most palatable to their landowner partners collectively. A simple ranking system was used, assigning 1 point for low answers, 5 points for high answers, an removing one point for 'N/A' answers.

The most palatable restrictions were prevention of future subdivision, and prevention of gravel/sand extraction. Other highly palatable restrictions were on wetland/water drainage/diversion, future buildings, roads, excavations, timber harvest, and cultivation. Lower on the list were outright bans on buildings and dwellings, limits on fencing and grazing, limits on chemical applications, and management plan requirements. At the bottom of the list were bans on grazing, and hunting/fishing.



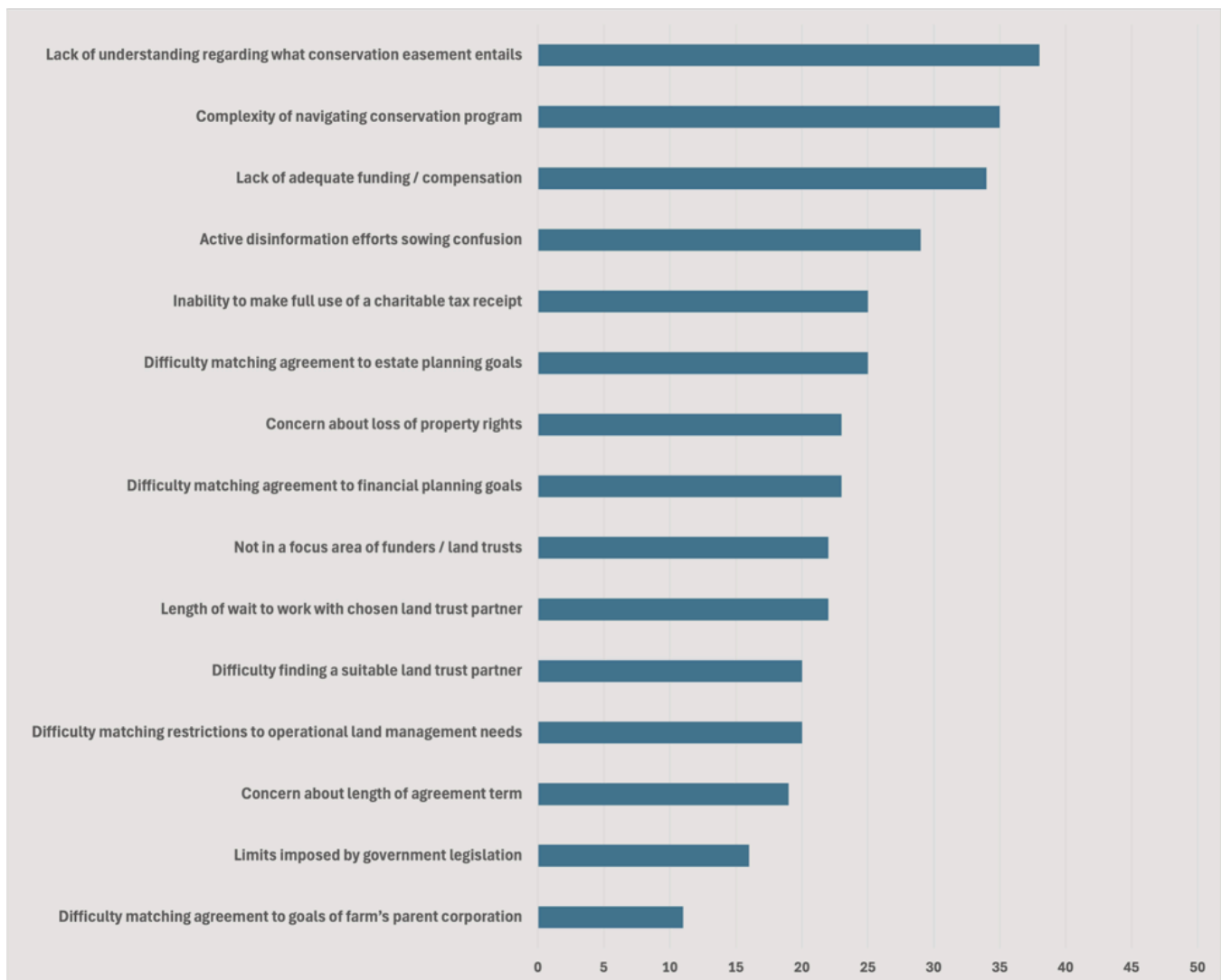
Landowner barriers

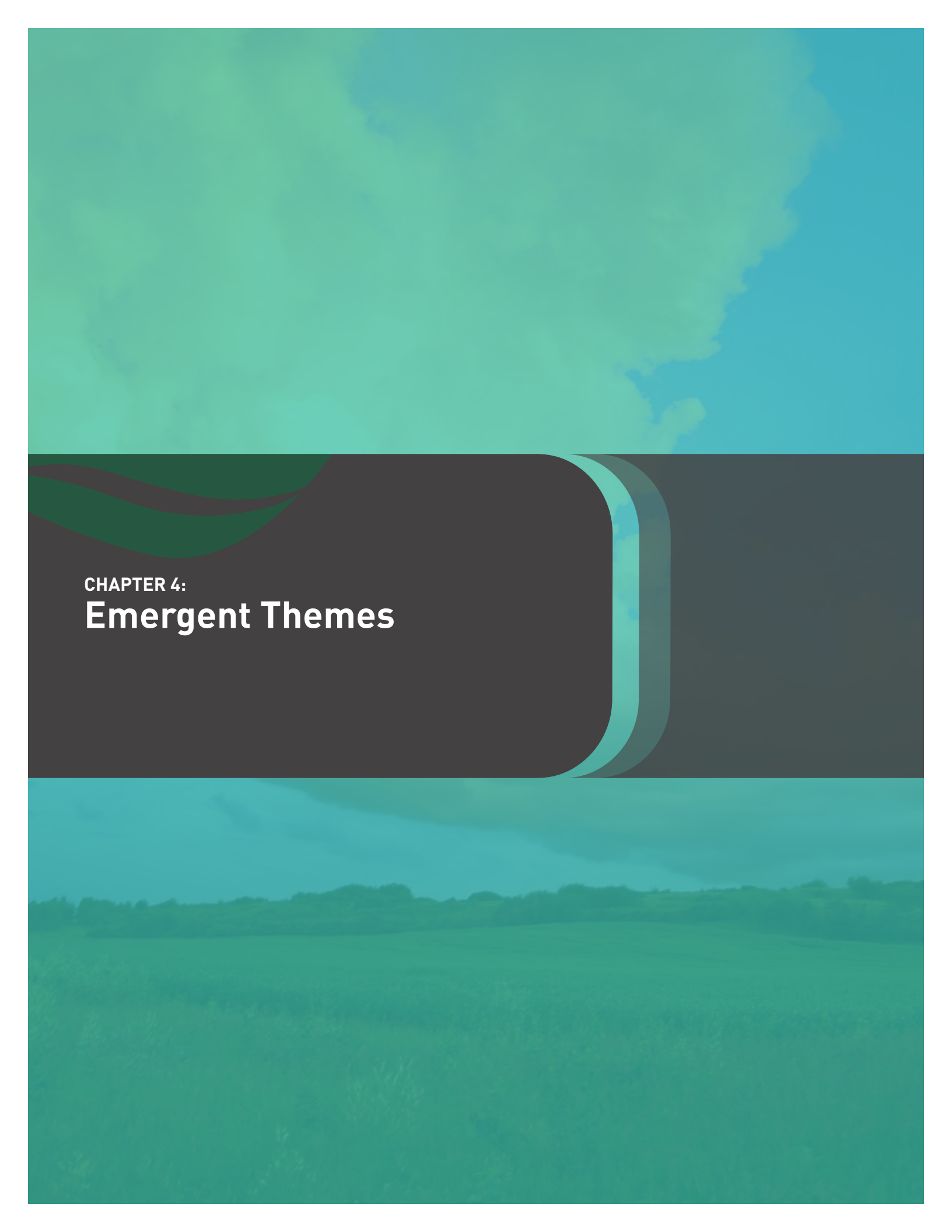
To understand what might be the barriers to entering into a conservation easement, respondents were asked how significant the following barriers were for their landowner partners when seeking to enter into a conservation easement agreement?

The identified barriers were relatively closely clustered in importance. However, the top barriers related to understanding (low awareness, misinformation, and program complexity), and ensuring the compensation was adequate. The high-middle barriers related to misunderstandings about tax receipt use, concern about property rights, and integration with financial

planning. The low-middle barriers related to the land trust relationship in terms of not being in a land trust's focus area, wait times to work with chosen land trust, and the restrictions in a given land trust's easement. At the bottom of the list were concerns about the length of the term, limits imposed by the legislation, and worries about matching farm corporation goals.

Other barriers raised by land trust respondents included agreement when multiple title holders, mismatched desires within the landowner's family, and the Government of Alberta no longer financially supporting perpetual conservation easements.





CHAPTER 4:

Emergent Themes

Emergent Themes

This research was designed to provide information that is more or less self-evident, seeking to provide an evidence-based foundation for private land conservation policy in Alberta; simple questions, simple calculations.

However, there are some emergent themes that bear mention. Some of these come simply from emphasizing an obvious results. Others come from combing multiple data results, or putting these into context by adding some background information.

Here are fourteen (14) emergent themes worth considering.

1

Ecological/environmental purposes predominate

There is no question that the 'environmental/ecological' purposes predominate. They outstrip all others as a primary theme. Agriculture is a distant runner-up; culture, scenery, and recreation all have prominence only as secondary purposes.

The reason from this might seem obvious – conservation easements in Alberta can only be used for conserving the environment, scenery, and/or agricultural land. However, agricultural lands and producers predominate, and the highest landowner decision fact is 'addressing nature conservation goals.'

2

Demand for perpetual conservation easements is very strong, funding not keeping pace

All conservation easements to date were reported as having perpetual terms. Fifty percent (50%) of respondents indicated that demand had remained unchanged, while the other half indicated demand had increased somewhat (20%) or increased significantly (30%). None reported a decrease of any kind in the demand for perpetual conservation easements.

At the same time 50% of respondents indicated that demand exceeded available funding either significantly (30%) or somewhat (20%).

3

Government of Alberta priorities will push adoption of temporary easements

Land trust respondents reported all of their existing conservation easements were perpetual, yet the majority would now consider terms as limited as '0 – 30 years.' What happened?

As this research commenced, the Government of Alberta announced they were cancelling a program begun in 2011 to fund perpetual conservation easements, and now only fund temporary easements. Data from this research shows that demand for perpetual easements in Alberta is very strong, and that land trusts have traditionally expressed no interest in them. However, this research also finds that 52% of funding for the acquisition of conservation easements in previous years had come from the provincial government.

It is possible that the number of temporary easements will rise in the coming years, despite the unrealized demand for perpetual conservation on the part of land trusts and landowners. However, temporary conservation easements are not believed to be eligible for a tax receipt, as a donation that you get back later is generally not a donation. As noted below, charitable tax receipts factor largely (see *Charitable tax receipts are critical*). This circumstance may well lead to a decrease in acres, or an increase in the importance of federal funding.

4

Barriers to participation led by 'understanding' issues

While there are a number of barriers to participation identified in this research (and the broader research), the top-most factors stand-out as they all relate to information. Three of the top four are:

- 'Lack of understanding regarding what conservation easement entails'
- 'Complexity of navigating conservation program'
- 'Active disinformation efforts sowing confusion'

Even the fifth one – 'Inability to make full use of a charitable tax receipt' – is largely a function of misunderstanding, as landowners are generally surprised when presented with the variety of ways other 'land rich, cash poor' landowners have used tax receipts.

5

Industrial activity consideration is inconsistent

Because conservation easements are placed on private lands, they may be subject to requests for involvement in the activities of industrial players in the area. The responses to the questions related to this dynamic show a mixed bag of readiness on the part of land trusts.

More specifically, 'industrial-scale renewables are a mixed bag, with one third of respondents indicating they would refuse properties with such infrastructure, but 13% saying their agreements don't speak to the issue at all. Regarding carbon rights, 80% of respondents said agreements have no mention of them. And as for applications to access subsurface rights, 63% said they require the landowner involve the land trust, but 13% don't speak to this issue at all.

6

EcoGift benefits promoted but liabilities unmanaged

Alberta land trusts make good use of the Ecological Gift certification program (which provides advanced tax benefits). Respondents reported that 69% of conservation easement acres are EcoGifted (76% of the fee-simple acres).

However, at least 40% (possibly as high as 70%) have no consideration of the 'change in use' liability in their agreements. Twenty percent (20%) explicitly transfer the liability to the landowner.

7

Agricultural producers are critical

Alberta's enabling legislation for conservation easements allows them to be used for the conservation of the environment, scenic values, or agricultural lands. However, the environmental and scenic purposes have been in place since 1996, while the agricultural lands purpose was added only in 2009. That would presumably account for a difference, but environmental easements had only a 13-year head start, while easements for agricultural lands had been possible for 17 years at the time of this research.

The results of this research underscore the importance of agricultural lands and agricultural producers for 'environmental' conservation easements. An 'environmental' conservation easement is agnostic to the existing land use, concerned only with whether there is high ecological value, and whether land use restrictions can be put in place to retain those.

This research found 99.8% of conservation easement acres in Alberta have 'ecological/environmental' as a primary purpose, yet 82.1% were on active agricultural operations, and 59.5% (average) to 72.5% (median) of grantees were agricultural producers. This shows the outsized importance of both agricultural lands and agricultural landowner partners.

8

Funding for conservation easements relies heavily on government

When looking just at the conservation easement project (not the organization's operations), 52% of that funding came from the provincial government and 8.2% from the federal government. The provincial-government-induced push to accept temporary easements (described above) is a good example of the dangers in this kind of over-dependence on a single source.

9

Funding for land trust operations relies heavily on private sources

In contrast to easement acquisition dollars, funding to support the land trust organization comes from a much broader array of sources (including donations, foundations, corporations), local governments, and long-term investments).

This has to be caveated with the reality that a significant portion of this monies are realized as a result of the conservation easement funding transactions – i.e., though the money accruing to the land trust is a small portion of the total money gathered to acquire the easement, it is nevertheless available only as part of that acquisition.

10

Securement costs are significant

'Securement costs' or 'closing costs' are the dollars needed to acquire a conservation easement above and beyond the compensation paid to the landowner (e.g., staff time, stewardship endowment, appraisals, baseline reporting). These were reported to be between 14% and 22% of the entire project cost. Critical to this calculation is the fact that land trusts face these costs even in the case of a fully-donated conservation easement.

It is a mark of the maturation of the sector that the 'stewardship endowment' makes up 37-39% of the securement costs, as this is what underwrites a sincere commitment to conserve the property over the long term.

11

Long-term financial planning is improving

Funding a land trust over the long term is a never-ending battle. However, Alberta land trusts as a sector appear to be undertaking important steps to address this dilemma. Of the 30 different revenue-generation mechanisms put forward, the sector was using 23 of them, which is good news both in terms of the number and the diversity.

More importantly 70% indicated they had endowments, 40% had other long-term investments, 80% had received major gifts, and 60% had received bequests.

Temporary easements will add to long-term financial uncertainty as future managers of the organization will need to determine how to pay for the re-conservation of erstwhile conserved properties.

12

Basis for compensation calculations is robust

Recently, in the United States, a scandal arose around the valuation of conservation easements (colloquially known as the 'syndicate scandal') where values were being falsely inflated. The responses in this research indicate the Alberta land trust sector is well-insulated against this possibility.

First, land trusts' landowner partners are (currently) significantly motivated by conservation goals versus monetary expediency. Second, compensation values for 90% of organizations are set using qualified real estate appraisers (for tax receipt, cash, and combined transactions), with the other 10% using a set percentage of the land value. Third, 69% of conservation easement acres have been certified as Ecological Gifts, which requires a panel review of appraisals.

13

Charitable tax receipts are critical

There is a common refrain amongst some land conservation professionals and landowners that charitable tax receipts are not useful for 'land rich, cash poor' property owners. Without diving into the misconceptions around the use of tax receipts for financial, estate, and succession planning, the data gathered for this research indicate tax receipts are critical.

The calculation of the percent of conservation easements acres compensated in the three ways (tax receipt, payment, combination) showed 83% of conservation easement grant acres were compensated via a tax receipt (32%) or a tax receipt as part of the

combination (51%). As well, half of the responding organizations only provide tax receipts as compensation for the a conservation easement.

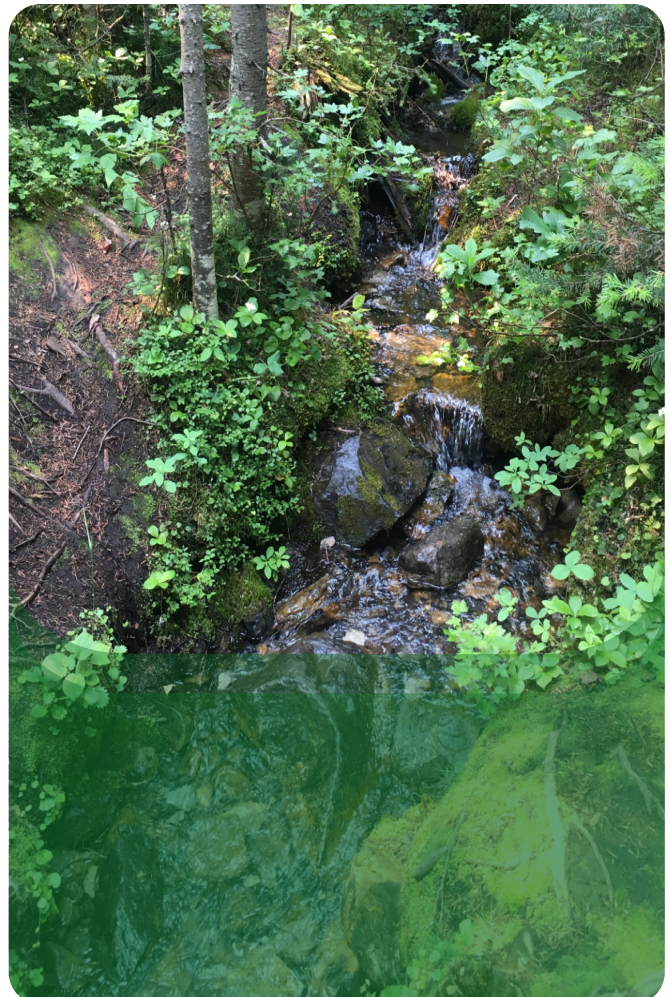
14

Landowner conservation values are paramount

When surveying all Alberta landowners about land conservation programs, the compensation question may figure highly. But when considering the landowners who actually work with land trusts, that's not the case.

'Compensation amount' is still very important (everyone has financial realities), but the *'ability to address their nature conservation goals'* was the top rated landowner decision factor, followed by *'impact on operations'*, *'support/agreement of family'*, conservation easement *'agreement conditions'*, and the *'ability to commit only a portion of their acres.'*

Only then did 'compensation amount' appear on the list. After two more items came *'agreement term.'*



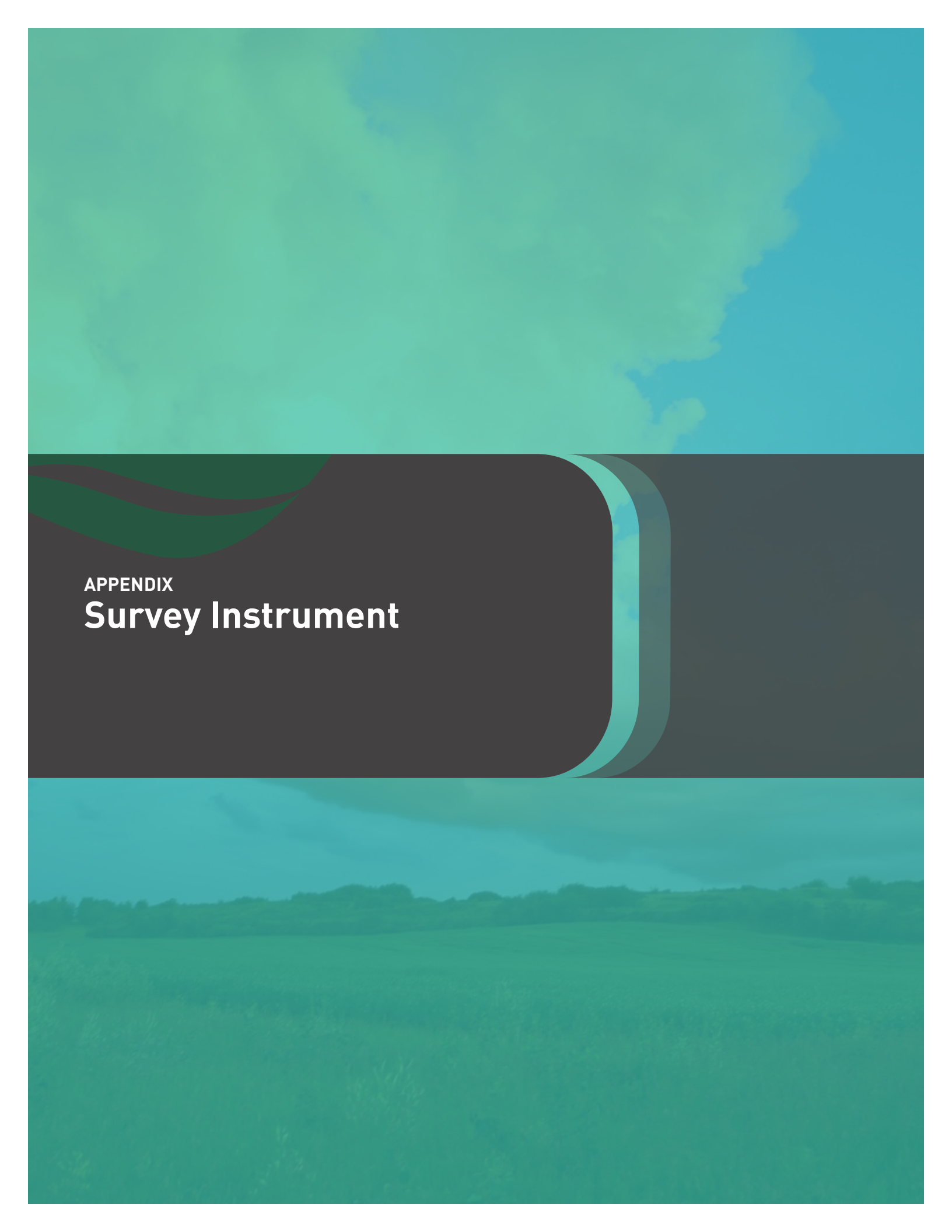
CHAPTER 5:
Conclusion

Conclusion

With all the (understandable) focus on incenting landowners to engage in private land conservation, there is a tendency to forget that they cannot do so – at least not alone. Simply promising yourself that you will not convert or develop your biodiverse land does not constitute conservation. Private land becomes conserved when a private land owner finds a qualified land conservation organization or government agency to work with. That qualified entity is the only one that can put the 'conservation' in private land conservation.

Land trusts are neither ubiquitous in their geographic spread nor unlimited in their resources. What they are capable of doing, and what they are willing to do, is the primary determinant of where the arc of private land conservation will go. Any assessment of available funding or landowner willingness must always be footnoted by this.





APPENDIX

Survey Instrument

Conservation Easement Practices and Perceptions Survey Instrument

Hello:

The **Corvus Centre for Conservation Policy**, a charitable research organization, is working to better understand conservation easement use by land trusts and conservancies in Alberta.

Our goal is to better inform efforts to understand, assess, and promote private land conservation activity in Alberta and across Canada. Understanding the current activity, opportunities, and pinch points with regard to negotiating conservation easements is vital to that effort.

We are asking that you take 20-30 minutes to provide us information regarding your organization's conservation easement efforts. *Data specific to your organization will not be shared.* All reports will only represent data collectively (i.e., in aggregated form).

If you would like to receive a copy of the results of this research, enter your email address at the end of the survey and we will send you those when they are complete.

If you have questions about the survey, please contact Glen Ansorger at glen@corvus.ca.

Thank you very much for your time and support. Please begin the survey now by clicking on the **Start** button below.

About Your Organization

With these questions, we are seeking to ensure we have data for all Alberta land trusts.

*Again, **data specific to your organization will not be shared.** All data will be represented collectively (in aggregated form)*

1. Name of your land trust /conservancy

2. Which land use planning regions does your organization operate in?

- Lower Peace
- Upper Peace
- Upper Athabasca
- Lower Athabasca
- North Saskatchewan
- Red Deer
- South Saskatchewan



3. Does your organization have a paying membership base?

- Yes
- No

4. Which revenue-generation mechanisms does (or has) your organization use(d)?

- Individual donations
- Donations of securities
- Membership fees
- Major gifts
- Bequests
- Crowdfunding
- Federal grants
- Provincial grants
- Local government grants

- Private foundation grants
- Community foundation grants
- Casino revenues
- Corporate sponsorships
- Corporate donations/grants
- Raffles and/or lotteries
- Runs or other athletic events
- Gala's, auctions, or similar events
- Short-term investments
- Long-term investments
- Endowments
- Fee-for-service consulting
- Sales of merchandise
- Access fees to properties
- Guided hikes
- Contracts for government service delivery
- Associated businesses (e.g., gift shops, cafes)
- Speakers fees, paid webinars
- Training
- Facility rentals
- Other _____

5. Who should we contact if we have follow-up questions? (Name and email address)

Conservation Land Securement

Here we are seeking to understand the land securement tools you use

6. What are the total acres conserved through land securement by your organization to date?

7. Please estimate the proportion of acres conserved through land securement by your organization using the following approaches:

- Fee-simple acquisition _____ %
- Conservation easement _____ %
- Other _____ %

Conservation Easement Agreements

Here we are seeking to understand the approach behind your conservation easement projects.

8. Which 'conservation values' do you highlight in your conservation easements?

	Primary	Secondary	N/A
Ecological/Environmental	☐	☐	☐
Species-at-risk	☐	☐	☐
Agricultural	☐	☐	☐
Historical/Cultural	☐	☐	☐
Scenic/Aesthetic	☐	☐	☐
Recreational/Public Access	☐	☐	☐
Other	☐	☐	☐

9. With regard to carbon trading rights for parcels subject to conservation easements, how would you characterize your agreements?

- Do not speak to carbon trading rights
- Retain carbon trading rights for the land trust
- Leave carbon trading rights entirely to the landowner
- Share carbon trading rights with the land owner
- We do not hold conservation easements
- Other _____

10. With regard to sub-surface mineral rights under parcels subject to conservation easements, how would you characterize your agreements?

- Do not speak to sub-surface mineral rights
- Refuse projects that have unexploited subsurface mineral rights
- Require that landowner seek land trust approval if approached by subsurface mineral rights holder
- Require that the landowner involve the land trust in any land access agreement negotiations
- Require the land trust be proportionally compensated from any land access agreements
- Other _____

11. With regard to industrial scale renewable infrastructure (e.g., wind farms and solar farms) on parcels subject to conservation easements, how would you characterize your agreements?

- Do not speak to industrial scale renewable infrastructure
- Refuse projects that have industrial scale renewable infrastructure
- Require that landowner seek land trust approval if approached regarding industrial scale renewable infrastructure
- Require that the landowner involve the land trust in any agreement negotiations regarding industrial scale renewable infrastructure
- Require the land trust be proportionally compensated from any land renewable infrastructure placement agreements

- Other _____

12. With regard to industrial scale renewable infrastructure (e.g., wind farms and solar farms) on parcels subject to conservation easements, how would you characterize your agreements?

- Do not speak to industrial scale renewable infrastructure
- Refuse projects that have industrial scale renewable infrastructure
- Require that landowner seek land trust approval if approached regarding industrial scale renewable infrastructure
- Require that the landowner involve the land trust in any agreement negotiations regarding industrial scale renewable infrastructure
- Require the land trust be proportionally compensated from any land renewable infrastructure placement agreements
- Other _____

13. Over the last three years, what proportion of your conservation easement projects were certified as Gifts of Ecologically Sensitive Property (EcoGifts)?

- EcoGift proportion. _____%

(NB: If an EcoGift-certified property is subject to a 'change in use' that not approved in advance by ECCC, the Income Tax Act allows the federal government to levy a tax against a land trust equal to 50% of the value of the gift.)

14. How does your organization mitigate the liability associated with the "Change in Use" under the EcoGifts program?

- Clause in the conservation easement agreement transferring liability to the landowner if the "Change in Use" tax is levied against the land trust
- Notice in the agreement that landowner will be sued if the "Change in Use" tax is levied against the land trust
- No consideration of the Change in Use clause in our agreements
- Other _____

Demand For Conservation easements

Here we are seeking to understand the demand you are seeing for conservation easements.

15. How would you characterize the demand for perpetual conservation easements your organization has seen over the past five years?

- Decreased significantly
- Decreased somewhat
- Stayed about the same
- Increased somewhat
- Increased significantly

16. How would you characterize demand for perpetual conservation easements relative to available funding over the past five years?

- Exceeded available funding significantly
- Exceeded available funding somewhat
- Matched available funding
- Lagged behind available funding somewhat
- Lagged behind available funding significantly

17. How many landowners have approached you about a temporary conservation easement (a term other than perpetual) in the last 3 years?

Compensation For Conservation easements

Here we are seeking to understand how your landowner partners are compensated for their conservation activities.

18. For the last five years, please estimate the proportion (%) of conserved acres you compensated in the following ways:

- Cash (entirely) _____ %
- Tax receipt (entirely) _____ %
- Combination _____ %

19. For cash payments, how do you determine the compensation amount?

- Qualified third-party appraiser
- Internal reality team
- Use set price determined by funder
- Use set percentage of CE value
- Other _____
- N/A

20. For tax receipts, how do you determine the compensation amount?

- Qualified third-party appraiser
- Internal reality team
- Other _____
- N/A

Funding for conservation easement projects

Here we are seeking to understand the nature of the funding you direct to your conservation easement projects.

21. Please estimate the proportion of funding for your conservation easement projects from the following sources over the last three years.

- Federal Government _____ %
- Provincial Government _____ %
- Private Funder _____ %
- Landowner Donation _____ %
- Local or Regional Government _____ %
- Other _____ %

22. Please estimate the proportion (%) of acres your organization has secured with the following term/duration:

- 0 - 30 years _____ %
- 30 - 50 years _____ %
- 50 - 99 years _____ %
- >100 years _____ %
- Perpetual _____ %

23. What conservation easement duration would your organization be willing to consider?

	Yes	No	Maybe
0 - 30 years	☐	☐	☐
30 - 50 years	☐	☐	☐
50 - 99 years	☐	☐	☐
>100 years	☐	☐	☐
Perpetual	☐	☐	☐

Landowner Partners

Here we are seeking to understand the perspectives, motivations, and barriers for your landowner partners with regard to granting a conservation easement.

24. What proportion of the landowners who have granted conservation easements to you are agricultural producers?

- _____ %

25. What proportion of the acres on which you have conservation easements have active agricultural operations?

- _____ %

26. Thinking of your landowner partners collectively, how significant would the following factors be in their decision to participate in a program requiring a long-term commitment to leave land in a natural state?

	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Compensation amount	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Agreement term	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Agreement conditions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Whether others in the area have done so	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Government is providing payments	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Land trusts are providing payments	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Impact on operations	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Support/agreement of family	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Ability to commit only a portion of their acres	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ability to help address climate change	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ability to address their nature conservation goals	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

27. Thinking of your landowner partners collectively, which conservation easement restrictions / prescriptions are most palatable?

	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
No further subdivision	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
No future dwellings	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Limits on future dwellings	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
No future buildings	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Limits on future buildings	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
No plowing / tilling / cultivation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
No wetland / water drainage / diversion	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
No public access	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
No hunting / fishing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
No timber harvest	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Limits on timber harvest	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Limits on fencing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
No excavations	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
No gravel / sand extraction	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
No grazing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Limits on grazing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Limits on herbicide / pesticide applications	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Limits on new roads	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Required management plan	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

28. Thinking of your landowner partners collectively, how significant are the following barriers to entering into in a conservation easement agreement?

	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Lack of understanding regarding what conservation easement entails	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Complexity of navigating conservation program	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Active disinformation efforts sowing confusion	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lack of adequate funding / compensation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Difficulty matching restrictions to operational land management needs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Difficulty matching agreement to estate planning goals	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Difficulty matching agreement to financial planning goals	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Difficulty matching agreement to goals of farm's parent corporation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Limits imposed by government legislation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Inability to make full use of a charitable tax receipt	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Difficulty finding a suitable land trust partner	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Length of wait to work with chosen land trust partner	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Concern about length of agreement term	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Not in a focus area of funders / land trusts	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Concern about loss of property rights	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

29. Are there other barriers we missed?

-

Timelines for securing a conservation easement

Here we are seeking to understand the factors affecting the length of time needed to complete a conservation easement project.

30. For your organization, how would you characterize a ‘normal’ timeline for a conservation easement from initiation to completion?

- 0 - 1 years
- 2 - 3 years
- 3 - 5 years
- More than 5 years

31. Please fill in the X in this sentence: “For our organization, conservation easements have taken as many as [X] years to complete.”

-

32. Which factors have the greatest impact on unwanted extensions of a conservation easement project timeline?

	1	2	3	4	5	This is not a factor
Landowner contemplation time	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Coordinating multiple conservation easement holders	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Coordinating multiple conservation easement funders	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Securing federal funding	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Securing provincial funding	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Matching the tax year	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Completing a baseline documentation report	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Providing a tax receipt	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Completing an appraisal	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lack of internal capacity to do a negotiation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

33. Are there other factors we missed?

-

Costs of securing a conservation easement

Costs of securing a conservation easement can vary drastically. Here we are trying to get a sense of the relative cost burden – regardless of the dollar value – that each of these components represents.

34. Please estimate the proportion each of the following contributes to your organization's securement costs on an 'average' conservation easement project.

- Appraisal _____ %
- Staff time _____ %
- Stewardship endowment _____ %
- Legal defence fund _____ %
- Baseline Documentation Report _____ %
- Other _____ %

35. Please estimate your 'average' cost of securing a conservation easement, using either of the following methods:

- Cost per project
\$ _____
- Percent of project value
_____ %

Costs of stewarding a conservation easement

Similar to above, costs of stewarding conservation easements can vary drastically. Here we are trying to get a sense of the relative cost burden – regardless of the dollar value – that each of these components represents.

36. Please estimate the proportion of your organization's overall stewardship costs each of the following represents.

- Staff time _____ %
- Mapping / imagery _____ %
- Remote surveillance _____ %
- Legal defence fund _____ %
- Other _____ %

37. If applicable please estimate the proportion each of the following contributes to costs for staff time in regards to stewardship costs.

- Monitoring _____ %
- Enforcement _____ %
- Landowner communication _____ %
- Write up and reporting _____ %

38. Please estimate your 'average' cost of securing a conservation easement, using either of the following methods:

- Set cost per project
\$ _____
- % of project value
_____ %

Thank you!

Your time completing this survey is greatly appreciated, and will contribute to improved private land conservation in Alberta!

- Name
- Email Address



CORVUSCENTRE
for Conservation Policy

Applying Research for Conservation Solutions

The Corvus Centre for Conservation Policy is a not-for-profit, charitable organization based in Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

Our mission is to ensure nature conservation is advanced through evidence-based land use, resource management, and financial decision making.

We pursue our mission through applied research, program facilitation, and knowledge mobilization.

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