

THE LAND TRUST FOR TENNESSEE
LandTrustTN.org | @LandTrustTN
(615) 244-LAND | Stewardship@LandTrustTN.org
PO Box 41027, Nashville, TN 37204



Photos: Stephen Alvarez



LANDOWNER RESOURCE GUIDE

LAND MANAGEMENT RESOURCES

Below are a few groups who may be able to help you achieve your land management goals and requirements.

FARMS & AGRICULTURE:

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

Provides technical conservation and financial assistance to farmers and forest landowners, including conservation plans and assistance implementing best management practices.
nrcs.usda.gov

University of Tennessee Extension

Provides educational programs and information about agriculture, natural resources, and the food system.
extension.tennessee.edu

Tennessee Agricultural Enhancement Program

Know as TAEP, this cost-share program can help you maximize farm profits, adapt to changing markets, improve operational safety, and increase farm efficiency.
tn.gov/agriculture/farms

Tennessee Association of Conservation Districts

Provides resources to conserve and enhance the natural resources of Tennessee through education, leadership, and advocacy.
tnacd.org

Tennessee Century Farm Program

This program recognizes families who have owned and farmed the same land for at least 100 years.
tncenturyfarm.org

Soil Health

The Soil Health Institute is a non-profit that exists to safeguard and enhance the vitality and productivity of soil through scientific research and advancement.
soilhealthinstitute.org

TIMBER MANAGEMENT PLAN / FORESTRY:

Tennessee Division of Forestry (TDOF)

This State division includes professional foresters across Tennessee who provide technical assistance and work with landowners to develop forest management plans.
tn.gov/agriculture/forests

UGA Center for Invasive Species and Ecosystem Health

Provides information on invasive species removal, forestry, and agriculture.
bugwood.org

WILDLIFE HABITAT RESOURCES:

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

Provides technical conservation and financial assistance to farmers and forest landowners, including conservation plans and assistance implementing best management practices.
nrcs.usda.gov



CONGRATULATIONS!

YOU ARE NOW THE OWNER OF CONSERVED LAND.

The Land Trust for Tennessee is honored to partner with you to protect your land for future generations. We take our promise to protect natural and historic landscapes and sites seriously. Our Stewardship Team works closely with landowners to answer questions about their conservation easements and ensure that these agreements are followed.

THROUGH OUR STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM, WE:

- Help landowners understand how their conservation easement applies to their property
- Visit every protected property annually (typically between January and April)
- Review and approve major activity requests, such as requests to build structures, cut timber, etc.
- Take steps, when necessary, to remedy and defend any violation of a conservation easement



SARAH O'REAR
Director of Stewardship



MIKE SZYMKOWICZ
Stewardship Manager



MIJA NICHOLS
Conservation & Engagement
Data Analyst



ANNA HOLMAN
Stewardship Coordinator

Our goal is to be a resource to landowners and to ensure that a conservation easement's conditions are upheld — *not to tell people how to use or manage their land.*



UNDERSTANDING YOUR RESERVED RIGHTS

When you own land, you also own many rights associated with it. These might include rights to harvest timber, build structures, subdivide the property, mine resources, grow crops, and so on (subject to zoning and other restrictions). When you grant a conservation easement to a land trust, you permanently limit or extinguish some of these rights. Each conservation easement is unique, tailored to meet the landowner's wishes for their land and protect the conservation values of the property.

Certain rights can be “reserved” within the conservation easement but may require permission from The Land Trust for Tennessee in order to exercise, such as construction of new structures or roads or the establishment of building envelopes. We work to make this process as seamless as possible through our Reserved Right Request Form. Once we receive all pertinent information, we will respond to the request within 30 days, although we are typically able to respond within one week.

Visit LandTrustTN.org/stewardship for more information.

WHEN TO CONTACT THE LAND TRUST FOR TENNESSEE

We encourage you to contact us any time you have questions about your conservation easement. There are multiple activities that may require our input or approval. As a general rule, it's always a good idea to contact us before making any substantial changes. For example, you should always contact our Stewardship Team:



BEFORE YOU SELL

The conservation easement stays with the land even if you decide to sell or transfer the property. This means the next owner will need to be aware of how it works. Contacting us before selling or transferring your property is very important to this process.



BEFORE YOU BUILD

In many cases, a conservation easement allows for residential or agricultural structures to be built on the property. However, it is essential to confirm with us that your agreement permits new structures or expansion of existing structures and to follow the proper process before beginning any construction.



BEFORE YOU CUT

Your conservation easement likely requires the forestland on your property to be cared for in accordance with a timber management plan. We can provide a list of foresters to help you stay in compliance and achieve your goals. Please contact us before starting any timber management activity.

PREPARING FOR YOUR ANNUAL VISIT

We visit properties protected with a conservation easement every year. Our “monitoring season” is typically January through April, so you can expect a staff member or a trained stewardship volunteer to contact you during that time.



WHAT TO EXPECT:

Members of The Land Trust staff or trained volunteers will walk the property, take photos and notes for our records, and visit with you if you are available. The focus of the visit will be to document any changes since the last monitoring visit. It is also a great time to share any questions or concerns you may have and discuss future plans.



SCHEDULING AND AVAILABILITY:

We encourage you to be present if possible. We always enjoy visiting with landowners, but we understand if you are not available at the time we are able to visit. We may also conduct additional visits during times of construction, to gather information in regards to a reserved right request, or out of concern of a potential issue.



WHAT HAPPENS IF THERE IS A VIOLATION?

Our goal is to stay in close contact with landowners so violations are avoided. In the event an accidental or unintended violation does occur, we are legally obligated to uphold the easement. However, we always aim to maintain a positive, collaborative relationship with landowners to work towards a resolution.