



United States Department of Agriculture



# Agricultural Land Easements (ALE)

Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)



Natural  
Resources  
Conservation  
Service

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# Easement Success Story

## Woody Wolfe, Wallowa County, Oregon



CONSERVATION  
SHOWCASE

Video Link: <https://youtu.be/yeTjtKvuWKs> (3:20)



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# What is a Conservation Easement?

An interest in real property established by an agreement between a **LANDOWNER** and an eligible **ENTITY** to prohibit some uses of the land, such as non-agricultural development.

The landowner, the entity, and **NRCS** work together to determine which uses should be prohibited to achieve certain conservation goals.



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# 2 types of easements with NRCS

## #1: Agricultural Land Easement (ALE)



## #2: Wetland Reserve Easement (WRE)



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# Agricultural Land Easements

- **Protect agricultural use of your land FOREVER**
- **Protects grazing uses and related conservation values**
- **Prevents future development on your property**
- **Easement terms apply regardless of changes in ownership of the property**
- **The easement is managed and held by a third-party Land Trust or other entity**



# What is an Eligible Entity?

An organization which meets NRCS' requirements to hold an agricultural easement, such as:

- ✓ Private Organization (ex: Land Trust)
- ✓ American Indian Tribe
- ✓ State or Local Government

Eligible entities purchase conservation easements from landowners to protect the agricultural and natural resource values of a property.

Find an eligible entity in your area at:

[www.oregonlandtrusts.org](http://www.oregonlandtrusts.org)





# Are you eligible for ALE?



- **Eligible land types include:**
  - ✓ **Sites that would protect grazing uses and related conservation values by restoring and conserving land**
  - ✓ **Sites that will further a state or local policy consistent with NRCS conservation easement purposes**
  - ✓ **Sites with prime, unique, or other productive soils**
  - ✓ **Historical or archaeological resources**
- **Eligible participant**
  - ✓ **Established records with USDA**
  - ✓ **Adjusted Gross Income Requirement**
  - ✓ **Must meet compliance for Highly Erodible Lands and Wetland Conservation**



# Will you be paid for ALE?



- **Yes! The value of your easement is determined by a third-party appraisal (fair market value)**
- **The entity you are working with will hire the appraiser. You do not pay for the appraisal.**
- **NRCS provides 50/50 cost share to the entity for fair market value. For special cases, such as grasslands of significance, NRCS may pay up to 75% of the cost. The entity pays the remaining cost.**
- **Any payments you receive will come from the entity, not from NRCS.**





# 7 Things to Know Up-Front about ALE

1. This will take time, anywhere from 2 to 7 years.
2. ALE easements are FOREVER, regardless of changes in property ownership.
3. The land still belongs to YOU, just with restrictions. YOU retain the right to transfer ownership of your land.
4. Only an eligible entity can hold an ALE easement, not a landowner.
5. The entity you select will work with NRCS. Payments you receive will come from your entity, not NRCS.
6. The ALE agreement is only between NRCS and your entity. You will have a separate agreement between you and your entity.
7. YOU provide input into your easement plan. It's a living document and can be modified.



# 5 STEPS to ALE

## Duration

**1. Identify an eligible entity and submit an application to NRCS.** *The entity will submit the application for you.*

1 month –  
1 year

**2. NRCS determines eligibility, ranking and selection for funding.** *This step includes a landowner interview and site visit.*

6-8 months

**3. Enter into the ALE Agreement.** *This step includes appraisal, developing an ALE plan and deed terms.*

1-3 years

**4. Review documents and establish the Easement.** *NRCS, the entity and the landowner review all documents.*

90 days –  
120 days

**5. Monitoring and Management.** *Entity continues to work with you to implement your easement plan and monitor progress.*

Ongoing



# ALE Priority Areas



- **Priority Grasslands in ODFW Conservation Strategy**
- **Portland Metro Area**
- **Mid-Columbia River Steelhead Recovery Plan Area**
- **Southern Oregon Northeastern California Migratory Bird Habitat**
- **Future Sage Grouse Habitat**

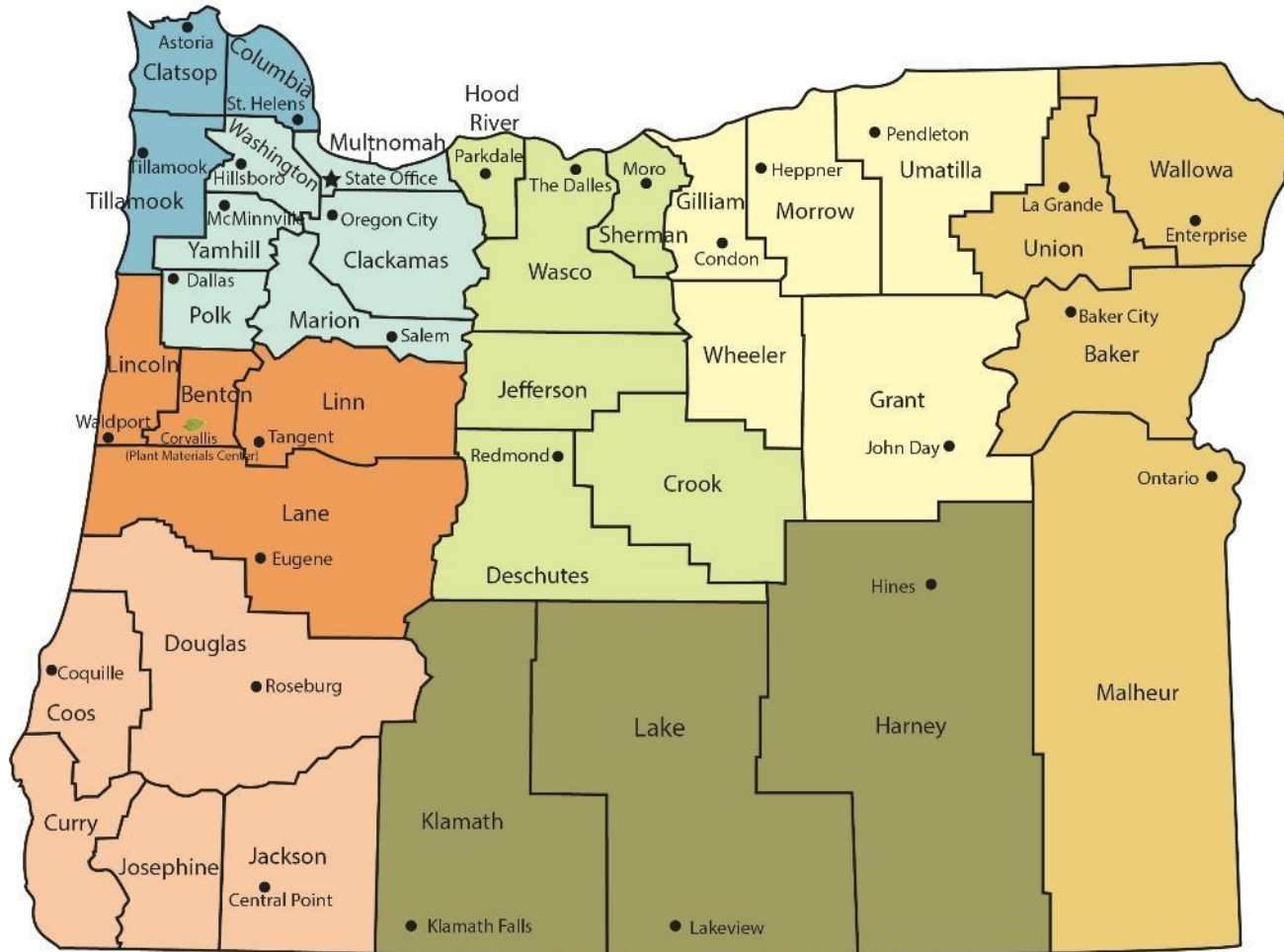


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# Oregon NRCS Field Offices



-  **NORTH COAST BASIN**
-  **LOWER WILLAMETTE BASIN**
-  **CENTRAL COAST/  
UPPER WILLAMETTE BASIN**
-  **SOUTHWEST OREGON BASIN**
-  **DESCHUTES BASIN**
-  **HIGH DESERT BASIN**
-  **JOHN DAY UMATILLA BASIN**
-  **SNAKE RIVER BASIN**







# Questions?

**Website: [www.or.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.or.nrcs.usda.gov)**

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