

Conservation Incentive Programs Cheat Sheet

Permanent approaches – selling something

➤ **Selling your property for conservation**

- Sale of farm property to another farmer, or sale of unproductive farmland or conservation easement to a land trust or public agency

Benefits: Protection of the land in perpetuity, landowner continues to own and farm land, compensation in one lump payment

➤ **PDR - Purchase of Development Rights**

- Voluntary program, publicly funded
- Development rights extinguished, landowner receives \$ for conservation easement placed on land
- Ag or forest land maintained in perpetuity

Benefits: One lump payment, farmer still retains ownership and other property rights—can still farm land

➤ **TDR – Transfer of Development Rights to developers**

- Voluntary program, privately funded
- Development rights extinguished, landowner receives \$ for conservation easement placed on land
- Market-driven— Rights purchased by private developers so they can develop more densely elsewhere
- Ag or forest land maintained in perpetuity

Benefits: One lump payment, farmer still retains ownership and other property rights—can still farm land

➤ **WRE—Wetland Reserve Easement**

- Apply through Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
- Landowner is paid to put wetlands (up to 50% upland) into a conservation easement for 30 yrs or in perpetuity
- NRCS funds restoration work

Benefits: One lump payment, you retain ownership

➤ **Critical Area Buffer Mitigation Bank**

- Bank Sponsor (Habitat Bank LLC) restores habitat on site
- Developer buys “credits” from Bank Sponsor to mitigate for impacts, proceeds with development

Benefits: Financial compensation for restoration and permanent protection of the site; you maintain ownership

Temporary approaches – leasing/non-permanent programs

➤ CREP – Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

- Apply through Snohomish Conservation District
- Sign contract for 10 or 15 years, signing bonus of \$100/acre
- Annual rental payment (~\$200 - \$450/acre/year)
- Provides 100% funding for fencing, planting, and maintenance for you or your contractor, minimum buffer width of 35' and 1 acre enrolled

Benefits: Annual income, you retain ownership, funding for permanent fencing and livestock watering facilities

➤ Open Space Tax Exemptions

- Sign up with Snohomish County Assessor
- Pay \$500 enrollment fee, sign contract for 10 years. Pay back-taxes for last 7 years to remove land early
- Enroll agricultural land, working forest land, or open space

Benefits: Reduced property taxes, you retain ownership

Project-based approaches – get help paying for something

➤ EQIP – Environmental Quality Incentives Program

- Apply through Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
- Provides portion of funds for projects that benefit natural resources (usually 50-100%)
- Agricultural land or working forestland only
- You pay upfront and are reimbursed
- Examples include: stream crossings, irrigation, manure storage, fences, livestock watering, confinement areas, etc.

Benefits: Pays for projects you want done, improves property value, increase agricultural viability and livestock health

➤ Grant funded projects

- Work with organization who acquires/has grant funding
- Must provide public benefit
- Can pay for 100% for project, usually includes funding for 3 years maintenance
- Project usually include: plantings along waterways, livestock exclusion fencing, replacing undersized culverts, installing large wood in streams, removing rip rap, moving dikes back.

Benefits: Get fences, watering stations, manure bins, etc. paid for. Retain ownership, get help to be good stewards of your property

For more information about any of these programs, contact Cindy Dittbrenner, Snohomish Conservation District, 425-335-5634 x113, cindy@snohomishcd.org.