

WASATCH COUNTY – LANDOWNER’S OPEN SPACE PACKET

Dear Wasatch County Landowner,

Thank you for considering Open Space conservation options for your property. Protecting Wasatch County’s agricultural and open space lands will protect our community’s heritage and character.

Because county voters approved a \$10 million bond in 2018, the County Council established the **Wasatch Open Lands Board (WOLB)** to help to preserve open space in our County. WOLB will make recommendations to the County Council on Applications to spend bond money.

Here is information about how to protect your lands as Open Space, make an application to WOLB, and potentially receive compensation from the County’s Open Space bond money and other funding sources for a conservation easement.

This is your **WASATCH COUNTY LANDOWNER’S OPEN SPACE PACKET**. This Packet contains:

- The **PROCESS CHART** of applying for Open Space Bond Money.
- The County **CODE**, criteria & more info on Open Space Bond Money.
- A **LIST** of Qualified Land Trusts (or Land Use Organizations) to work with.
- A **NOTICE OF INTEREST APPLICATION (NOI)** – or the initial application.)

The Open Space bond funds come from the property taxes of county residents, so WOLB feels an additional duty to **leverage the bond money** to the greatest extent possible. To do this we ask you to choose and work with a Qualified Land Trust listed on page 3 in this packet. The certification requirements for Land Trusts are explained there. ***The Qualified Land Trust will help you apply for matching federal, state and private grants along with preparing and submitting your NOI and their Land Trust Application to WOLB.*** The initial application is called the NOI – Notice of Interest Application. It is on pages 4-5 of this packet. Or if you are reading this from the Open Lands Website at <https://www.wasatch.utah.gov/Departments/Open-Lands-Board>, you can download the NOI separately.

Please contact any Qualified Land Trust directly or meet with them at the WOLB Landowner Meetings, which are posted on the Open Lands Website. Email us at openlands@wasatch.utah.gov with any questions.

******To ensure that your NOI Application receives the highest priority from WOLB to the County Council for bond money funding you should consider contributing up to 25% towards the total cost of the conservation easement. Your contribution happens as a qualified tax deduction, not as money out of pocket. This contribution toward a conservation easement qualifies you for tax benefits that a Qualified Land Trust can explain.***

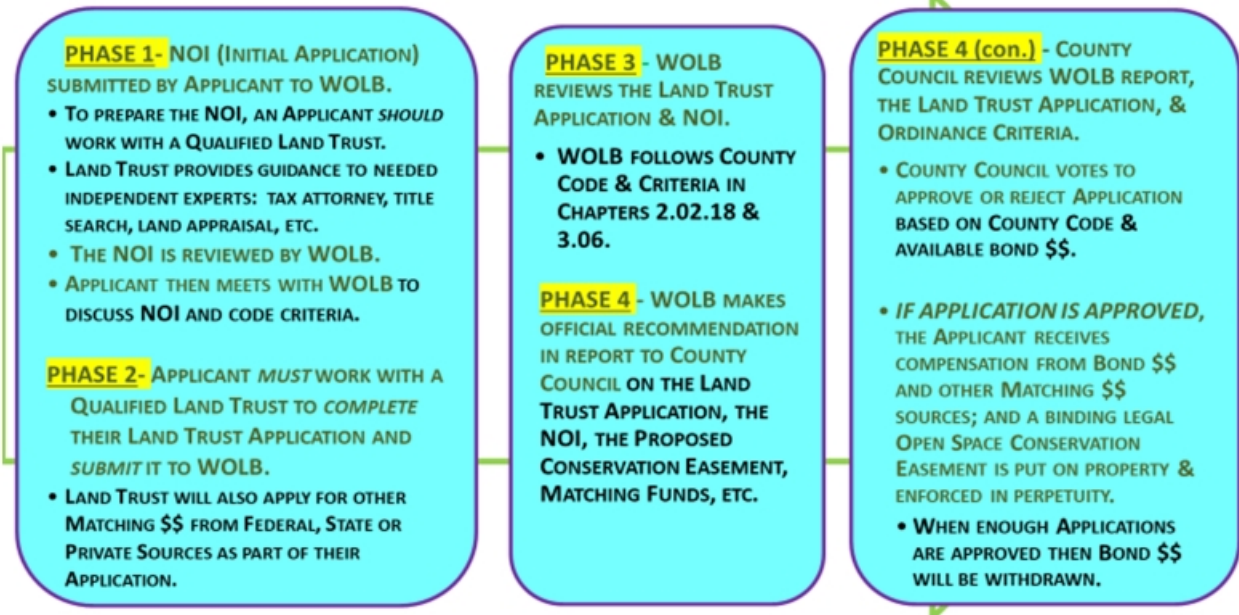
Your Notice of Interest Application submitted to WOLB does *not* commit you to any obligation at this time but will help us and your chosen Land Trust understand your property’s circumstances and qualifications. It can take a few years to go through the conservation easement process and qualify for the County Bond Money as well as receive other grant money.

Your chosen Land Trust can submit your NOI to: openlands@wasatch.utah.gov -- after which we will verify the receipt of your NOI back to you and follow ‘**The Process Chart,**’ Phases 1-4 listed on page 2 of this packet.

Thank you again for your interest in preserving Open Space within our County! This Packet and process is thorough and will protect your rights. Yet it is your opportunity to establish a permanent, timeless legacy for future generations in Wasatch County.

Sincerely,
The Wasatch Open Lands Board (WOLB)

THE PROCESS CHART FOR WASATCH COUNTY OPEN SPACE BOND \$\$



For Phases 1 & 2 above ***you will choose which Qualified Land Trust (or Land Use Organization) you want to work with.*** Qualified Land Trusts are listed on **page 3** of this Landowner Packet. The Qualified Land Trust will help you complete and submit to WOLB your NOI in Phase 1, & their Land Trust Application in Phase 2. **The Qualified Land Trust will also apply for other federal, state and private funding sources, etc.,** as part of *their* Application.

Each Qualified Land Trust follows their own processes in doing this, which include but are not limited to the following:

- Substantiating applicant's land value thru a qualified conservation easement appraisal;
- Title insurance and/or a title review;
- Determination of federal & state 'Conservation Values'; and additional criteria listed in the Wasatch County Code 3.06., particularly 3.06.04;
- Providing landowners with information regarding IRS tax benefits;
- Plus, Qualification & application for federal, state and private matching grants, etc.

These are some of the common requirements for land conservation per federal and state laws.

In order to ***finalize*** a conservation easement for your land a number of required documents will be executed, and each document may also require additional professional fees, for example: a land trust appraisal, a survey, a geologist report, etc. In addition to these additional professional fees, a legal conservation easement and baseline documentation will be drafted in compliance with federal and state laws.

Each Qualified Land Trust varies in how the project costs are covered. Some costs may be reimbursed with Wasatch County Open Space bond money. This is especially where you need a Qualified Land Trust to guide you.

Each Qualified Land Trust will follow processes that are thorough, legal, and detailed. This is why it can take a few years. ***Yet all of this is worth it to protect and benefit you, your land, the taxpayers' bond money, and preserve the heritage of Wasatch County.***

OTHER IMPORTANT REQUIREMENTS OF THE WASATCH COUNTY CODE (SHOWN ON NEXT PAGE):

- No members or family members of WOLB can own a substantial interest in any NOI application property.
- No gifts or payments to any member of WOLB or the Wasatch County Council can be made to represent a property owner applicant or their interests thru the NOI/Bond money process.
- No changes in property ownership can be done between the dates of the NOI application and the full execution of the application.

CRITERIA & MORE INFO ON OPEN SPACE BOND MONEY

WASATCH COUNTY CODE 3.06: PRESERVATION OF OPEN LANDS

The criteria listed on the NOI – Notice of Application, and other criteria comes from this code. A complete understanding of the process, WOLB responsibilities, etc., is listed in these codes and WOLB Bylaws.

https://wasatch.municipalcodeonline.com/book?type=ordinances#name=Chapter_3.06:_PRESERVATION_OF_OPEN_LANDS

WASATCH COUNTY OPEN LANDS BOARD WEBSITE: *(for more information)*

<https://www.wasatch.utah.gov/Departments/Open-Lands-Board>

WASATCH COUNTY CODE 2.18: THE WASATCH OPEN LANDS BOARD

https://wasatch.municipalcodeonline.com/book?type=ordinances#name=2.02.18:_WASATCH_OPEN_LANDS_BOARD

*** Again, to ensure that your NOI & Land Trust Application receives the *highest priority* from WOLB to the County Council as well as other matching or leveraged funding sources, you should seriously consider contributing up to 25% towards the total conservation easement cost. Your contribution happens as a qualified tax deduction, *not* as money out of pocket. Your contribution toward a conservation easement will allow future tax benefits that a Qualified Land Trust can explain.

LIST OF QUALIFIED LAND TRUSTS / LAND USE ORGANIZATIONS

(In Alphabetical Order)

**According to Wasatch County Code 3.06.02 any Qualified Land Trust / Land Use Organization used by Applicants must be currently certified as a 501(c)3 and 170(h) organizations under the IRS Code, and be currently registered with the State of Utah.

Summit Land Conservancy

PO Box 1775

Park City, UT 84060

435-649-9884

<https://wesaveland.org/>

<https://wesaveland.org/about-us/contact-us/>

Utah Open Lands Conservation Association, Inc.

1488 S. Main Street

Salt Lake City, UT 84115

801-463-6156

<https://utahopenlands.org/>

<https://utahopenlands.org/contact/>

https://www.findalandtrust.org/states/utah49/land_trusts

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