



Ravalli County Open Lands Bond Program

The Open Lands Bond Program preserves working farms, ranches, and wildlife habitat for future generations, through creation of conservation easements and the purchase of land for parks and other public uses



How it Began

- ✓ Loss of agricultural lands and wildlife habitat in the Bitterroot Valley lead citizens to pursue methods of protecting lands, including funding conservation easements through a county bond initiative.
- ✓ In 2006, 60% of Ravalli County voters approved a \$10 million bond issue for purchase of conservation easements and purchase of land for public use.
- ✓ The Open Lands Board was created in 2007 to assist County Government to evaluate proposed easements and land purchases.
- ✓ The Board is made up of local farmers and ranchers, water and natural resource specialists, representatives from various county boards, and members at-large.

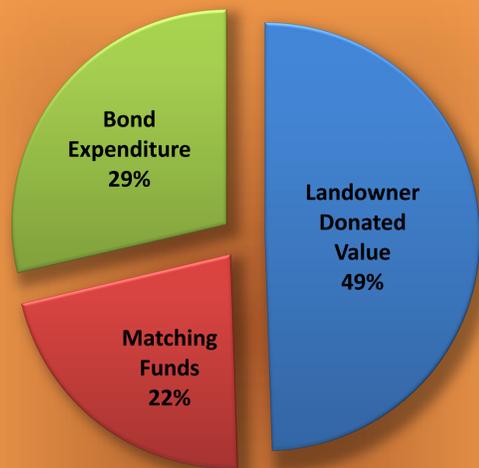
How the Program Works

- ✓ Landowners interested in creating an easement contact a land trust, an organization qualified to create and protect easements in perpetuity.
- ✓ The land trust advises and assists landowners in preparing a formal application for easement funding through the County's Open Lands Bond Program.
- ✓ The land trust identifies other sources of funding to supplement funding through the Open Lands Bond Program.
- ✓ The application for funding is reviewed by the Open Lands Board, which makes a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners.
- ✓ The Board of County Commissioners have final authority to approve funding through the Open Lands Bond Program.

Program Accomplishments

- ✓ Since the Program's inception, 4,522 acres of farm and ranch land have been preserved through easements in Ravalli County.
- ✓ As of May 2015, nearly \$3 million of the \$10 million approved by voters have been spent for conservation easements and land purchases since the Program's inception.
- ✓ To date, a total of \$2,292,550 has been obtained from other public and private sources to supplement funds provided through the Open Lands Bond Program.
- ✓ Applications for several new easements are currently being evaluated, as of July, 2015.

Conservation Easement Funding

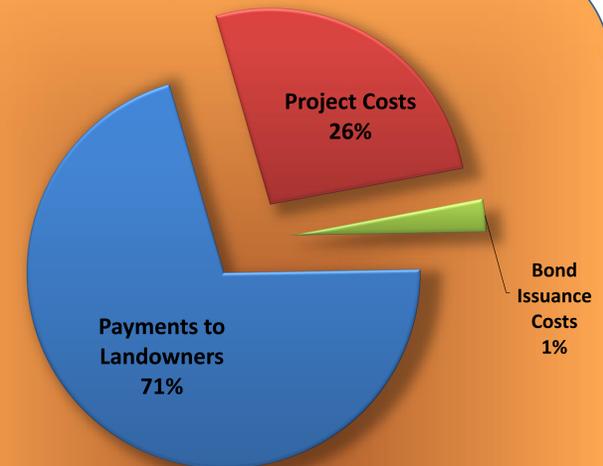


Landowner Donated Value	\$5,193,950
Matching Funds (includes public and private sources)	\$2,292,550
Bond Expenditure	\$3,013,472
Total Conservation Easement Value	\$10,499,972

*Figures are approximate as of 7/28/2015

Project	Acres	Date	Attributes		
			Agricultural	Habitat	Other
Wood Family Ranch	265	Sept. 1, 2009	Livestock, hay	Wildlife habitat	Proximity to other farms and easements
Lost Horse Creek Ranch	409	December 23, 2009	Livestock, hay	Riparian, fish habitat, winter range	Conserves significant open space in Lost Horse area
Sawtooth Ranch	840	December 31, 2009	Livestock	Riparian, fish habitat, winter range	Large easement, close to Hamilton and National Forest
Bell Family Ranch & Skalkaho Confluence	143	June 23, 2010	Livestock, hay, grain	Riparian, fish habitat, winter range	Highly visible land near Hamilton
Lodmell Property	55	October 13, 2010	Livestock	Riparian, fish habitat, wetlands, winter range	Contiguous to 1000 acres of conservation easements
Triple J Bar Ranch	160	December 22, 2011	Livestock, hay, grain	Riparian, fish habitat, wildlife habitat	Proximity to other farms, easements, public lands
Severson's Flying E Ranch	354	December 29, 2011	Livestock, hay, grain, irrigation	Wildlife habitat	Proximity to Stevensville, other farms and easements
Popham Ranch	185	Nov. 5, 2012	Livestock, hay, grain, irrigation, agricultural soils	Wildlife habitat	Historic homestead; proximity to other farms & Eastside Hwy
Sunset Bench	363	Nov. 5, 2012	Livestock, hay, irrigation	Wildlife habitat	Proximity to Stevensville, other farms and easements
Holloron Ranch	168	December 18, 2013	Livestock, hay, irrigation	Wildlife habitat	Historic homestead; proximity to other farms and easements
KBK River Property	160	December 18, 2013	No agricultural attributes	Riparian, fish habitat, wildlife habitat	Proximity to other easements, National Forest, Hwy. 93
Laursen Property	244	February 14, 2014	Hay, irrigation	Wildlife habitat	Proximity to other farms and easements
Steve Powell Park	22	December 17, 2014	No agricultural attributes	Riparian, fish habitat, wetlands, wildlife habitat	Provides public access, near Hamilton and City parks, highly visible from Bitterroot River
Gingerich Farm	74	December 17, 2014	Grain, alfalfa, irrigation	Wildlife Habitat	Proximity to other farms and easements, as well as Eastside Hwy
Lazy J Cross Ranch	1,080	May 7, 2015	Livestock, hay	Riparian, fish habitat, wildlife habitat, winter range	Large easement, proximity to public lands and Hwy. 472 (East Fork Rd.), public hunting access
TOTAL ACRES	4,522				

Bond Expenditure Allocation



Payments to Landowners	\$2,133,905
Project Costs (includes appraisals, legal fees, title work, baseline studies, project application and closing fees)	\$798,090
Bond Issuance Costs	\$81,477
Total Bond Expenditures	\$3,013,472

*Figures are approximate as of 7/28/2015

