

Deciding The Future of Your Land

You have a connection to the land you care for and own. The land nourishes us, creates opportunities to make a living, and provides for wildlife. The land holds a special value to you and your family. Yet society puts a price on the land that can make landowners like you need to decide between conservation or other uses like development or production.

You decide the future of your land. Protecting your land through one of the conservation options described below can allow you to keep your land in a natural state while providing you with some form of financial compensation. It's a win-win situation for you and for nature. Your course of action can leave a legacy of vital habitats for plants, wildlife, and people.

Your Land Protection Partner

Red-tail Land Conservancy is a land trust that protects and connects habitats where wildlife and people thrive together. A nonprofit organization, Red-tail is funded entirely by private contributions from individuals, business, and foundations. The woodlands, wetlands, and grasslands we protect from development are preserved forever. Our mission focuses on five counties in east central Indiana: Delaware, Henry, Madison, Randolph, and Wayne counties.

Our conservation work includes land protection, restoration, and education. We offer options to help landowners like you achieve their conservation vision. Our land protection tools may include a conservation easement where you continue to own the land privately or acquiring land through donation or purchase to create a nature preserve. Visit our website to learn more about the special places we protect in east central Indiana.

Conservation Options

There are many different ways to preserve and protect your land. Your local trust, Red-tail Land Conservancy, are specialists that can help you find the right option for you and your land.



Classified Forest & Wildlands - Indiana Department of Natural Resources: The Classified Forest and Wildlands Program encourages timber production, watershed protection, and wildlife habitat management on private lands in Indiana. Program landowners receive a property tax reduction in return for following a management plan. In addition to the tax incentive, landowners receive free technical assistance from DNR foresters and wildlife biologists. The minimum requirement for program enrollment is 10 acres of forest, wetland, shrubland, and/or grassland.



Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) - USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service: EQIP is designed to promote both agricultural operations and environmental protection. The program assists landowners by providing financial and technical assistance to implement conservation practices. Using these conservation practices can mean healthier soil, cleaner air, improved water quality, and greater wildlife habitat.



Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) - USDA Farm Services Agency: CRP is a federally funded, voluntary program that contracts with agricultural producers so that environmentally sensitive agricultural land is used for conservation benefits, such as wetlands and grasslands. FSA provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance to plant grasses or trees to improve soil health, prevent erosion, and enrich wildlife habitat. Contract duration is approximately 15 years.



Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) - USDA National Resources Conservation Service:

WRP is a voluntary program offering landowners technical and financial support to protect, restore, and enhance wetlands on their property. The NRCS goal is to achieve the greatest wetland functions and values, along with optimum wildlife habitat, on every acre enrolled in the program. Depending on the level of funding received, landowners may choose a permanent or 30-year conservation easement or a cost-share agreement where no easement is involved.



Conservation Easement (CE) - Red-tail Land Conservancy:

A CE is a voluntary legal agreement that landowners can use to permanently preserve wildlife habitat, natural areas, and agricultural land. Each easement is unique and reflects the landowner’s vision for his or her land, while protecting the land’s conservation values forever. Future owners must abide by the terms of the conservation easement. Red-tail regularly monitors land under easement to be sure its natural values are protected now and in the future.



Sale or Donation of Land - Red-tail Land Conservancy:

A landowner may choose to relinquish ownership of the land, especially when their children or heirs have no interest in caring for the land. Land trusts can accept partial or full donations of land which they will then steward and protect forever. Limited funds may be available to purchase land, or property can be given as a bequest following the owner’s death. Full and partial donations of land can provide tax benefits to the landowner.

	Continue Living on Land	Retain Title	Compensation	Tax Reduction	Protection Level
Classified Forest	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Some
EQIP	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Some
CRP	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Moderate
Conservation Easement	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	High
Donation or partial donation of land	No	No	Depends	Yes	Highest
Sale of land	No	No	Yes	No	Highest