

## Who We Are

Wood-Land-Lakes (WLL) Resource Conservation and Development, Inc. is a not for profit, tax exempt organization directed by local volunteers.

We are local citizens in DeKalb, Elkhart, LaGrange, Noble, Steuben and Whitley counties who are committed to natural resource protection. Our mission is volunteers working together for responsible stewardship of our natural resources.

## What We Do

WLL has resource committees that focus on the forestry, land and waters of northeast Indiana. The Land Committee works with concerned landowners and explains options for protecting and preserving their farmland.

WLL holds conservation easements on a number of properties which preserve farmland, woodland, wildlife habitat and wetlands.

## Focus Area

Landowners owning land in DeKalb, Elkhart, LaGrange, Noble, Steuben and Whitley counties and adjoining counties of Allen, Huntington, Kosciusko, Marshall, St. Joseph and Wabash (IN); Defiance and Williams (OH); and Branch, Cass, Hillsdale and St. Joseph (MI) with a minimum of 20 acres are eligible to participate.



*Photo contributed by Marcia McNagy*

# Conservation Options for Private Landowners



*Photo contributed by Fineline Images, Howe, IN*

A guide to the  
voluntary protection  
of farmland

Wood-Land-Lakes prohibits discrimination in its programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs or family status.(7.02)

## Working with a Land Conservancy

A private, nonprofit organization provides many ways to save land of natural, scenic or historic value – but only if you make plans for your land's future.

The land protection methods described in this brochure have been used by thousands of landowners to protect millions of acres across the nation. Many of these protected lands have remained in private ownership; some have become public parks or nature preserves. In each case, the way in which the land was protected was determined by the wishes of the landowner and the character of the land.

Land conservation is an area where individuals can truly make a difference. What the U.S. will look like in 100 years is being decided day-by-day, parcel-by-parcel, by landowners like you.

## Tools to Keep Land Protected

Four voluntary, innovative tools will be the primary mechanisms. These tools will be selectively applied to lands located in the designated area, which meet the criteria for each tool and for which landowners are interested in participating.

**Conservation Easements** are voluntary, legal agreements between a landowner and a land trust or government agency that allow property owners to permanently limit or prohibit development on their property. Conservation easements are permanent and run with the title so that all future owners of the land are bound by the original agreement. Conservation easements can be donated or purchased.

**Land Acquisition** is used when willing landowners want to conserve their land by selling or donating it outright. This mechanism allows a land trust or government entity to have more control over a property's future.

**Agricultural Security Zones** permit intensive agricultural uses and recognize certain needs of the agricultural community. County zoning ordinances may be amended to allow for new agricultural protection districts.

**Agricultural Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) Districts** can provide economic incentives for farmers to keep their land in productive agriculture. Applications may be submitted to local Economic Redevelopment Commissions.

## Your Next Step. . . .

If you have land you would like to see protected for future generations, learn more about the options available to you:

Contact:

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Angola, IN 46703  
(260) 665-7723  
office@wood-land-lakes.org  
www.wood-land-lakes.org

Wood-Land-Lakes will listen to your goals and help match these with protection opportunities. WLL can help you arrive at a conservation plan that makes the most sense for you. WLL can put you in touch with appraisers and attorneys familiar with conservation techniques.

## Talk with your own legal and financial advisors

Get independent advice. A land trust can provide an array of information and assistance, but cannot provide legal, financial, or estate planning advice; or guarantee that a particular conservation plan is best for your personal and financial circumstances.

This publication is designed to provide accurate, authoritative information in regard to the subject matter covered. It is given with the understanding that WLL is not engaged in rendering legal, accounting or other professional service. If legal advice or other expert assistance is required, the services of experienced professional advisors should be sought.

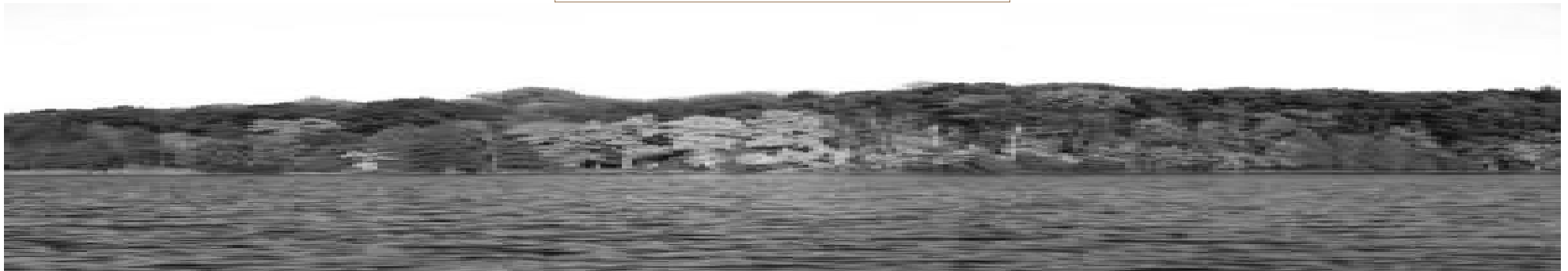


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