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Ten Reasons to Protect Farmland

- * decrease agricultural land conversion
- * control urban sprawl and development
- * sustain agriculture & ag-related business
- * ensure that we have productive farms for future
- * maintain rural character with open spaces
- * affects soil, water, air, plants, animals and people
- * once it's gone, it's gone
- * preserve your family farm
- * protect wildlife habitat
- * because we still can

Wood-Land-Lakes:

- ◆ Combination of volunteers solving natural resource problems through local involvement
- ◆ Serves DeKalb, Elkhart, LaGrange, Noble, Steuben and Whitley counties
- ◆ Tax exempt organization
- ◆ Holds conservation easements on a number of properties which preserve farmland, woodland, wildlife habitat and wetlands

Mission

VOLUNTEERS WORKING TOGETHER FOR
RESPONSIBLE STEWARDSHIP OF OUR
NATURAL RESOURCES

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 (2.03)

Saving Farmland Today for Tomorrow



Photo was contributed by Finesline Images, Howe, IN

**Conservation Easements
... for the Protection of Forest,
Farmland and Open Spaces**

What is a Conservation Easement?

- * voluntary, written agreement between landowner and qualified conservation group
- * landowner agrees to restrict the use of their land, specifically development
- * legally binding and permanent, future landowners bound by original agreement

What Types of Land are Eligible?

* farmland



* woodland



* pastureland

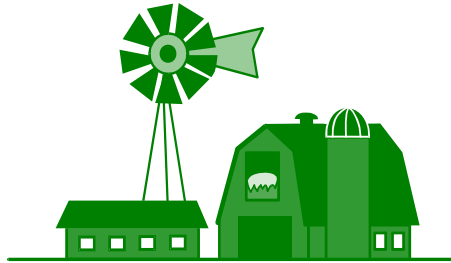


* wetland



How does this Affect Me as a Landowner?

- * keep title to the land
- * privately owned; no public access
- * can use land in any way not restricted by terms of conservation easement
- * can sell, lease or transfer land



What are the Tax Benefits?

- * **donated conservation easements may be eligible for**
 1. federal income tax benefits,
 2. estate tax benefits and/or
 3. property tax benefits

Who is Eligible to Participate?

- * 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)
- * Minimum of 20 acres
- * Must be evaluated by Land Committee

What are the Responsibilities of the Easement Holder?

- * permanent guardian for the land's conservation values
- * annual monitoring to assure terms upheld, visits scheduled with landowner
- * educate future landowner about terms of easement