



Land Conservation Options



Greenbelt
Essex County's Land Trust

*Helping you conserve your land
for future generations.*

We Can Help You Make Informed Decisions about the Future of Your Land

Greenbelt's land conservation staff can help you determine which conservation option is the right fit for you, your family and your financial situation.

OPTIONS FOR CONSERVING YOUR LAND

Conservation Restriction (CR)

- You remain the owner of your land, forever extinguishing certain development rights on your land while retaining other rights, such as farming, recreational use and timber harvesting.
- A CR can pertain to all or a portion of your land.
- Each CR is tailored to your unique circumstances, and to your property.

Donating Your Land

- Assures that your land will be forever preserved and sustainably managed by Greenbelt's professional stewardship staff.

Charitable Sale of Your Land or Conservation Restriction

- Offers you immediate income, while still qualifying you for tax benefits.

Selling Your Land or CR

- For high-priority parcels it is sometimes possible for Greenbelt to purchase land or conservation restrictions at their full fair-market value.

Bequest

- Donate your land or a conservation restriction through your will.

Reserved Life Estate

- Transfer your land to Greenbelt while retaining exclusive lifetime use and occupancy of your property.

TAX BENEFITS

These conservation options may offer you significant tax benefits, including: federal income tax deduction, a state tax credit, property tax relief, and reduced capital gains & estate taxes.

Greenbelt often works in conjunction with landowners' attorneys, accountants, and financial advisors. We strongly recommend that you consult your advisors when considering a real estate transaction.



Clapp Property | IPSWICH

FARM FIELDS, SALT MARSH, WOODLANDS

Protecting Cherished Land

When Nathaniel and Hester Clapp began thinking about downsizing from their turn-of-the-century home in Ipswich, their goal was to remain on their property and move into a smaller home to be constructed on their 21-acre parcel. While the Clapps hoped a family member would move into their original home, there was no guarantee the time frame and location would be right for anyone in the family. That led them to consider conserving the property in the event they decided to sell the original house and much of the land.

Greenbelt's staff worked with Nat, Hester and a local land planner to craft a conservation plan that defined an area for the new home, maintained the setting and views from the original dwelling, and protected the integrity of the farm fields, salt marsh and woodlands.

The land planning process concluded that if developed to its maximum extent, the property could support a total of four building lots. By donating a conservation restriction (CR) that eliminated two lots, the Clapps generated a significant federal income tax deduction, and were eligible for a state tax credit, as well.

At the completion of the project, the family was comfortable knowing that not only had the property been protected, honoring their family's history on the land, but in a manner that gave them flexibility for the future.

GOALS

Protect Land in Anticipation of Sale
Estate Planning
Retain Building Lot for Future Use

TOOLS

Conservation Restriction (CR)
Donation

LANDOWNER BENEFITS

Federal Income Tax Deduction
State Tax Credit



Conservation Plan

"We were very pleased at how hard Greenbelt worked with us to preserve the fields, woods and marsh that our family loves and still give us flexibility to address our needs as they change over time."

Nathaniel and Hester Clapp

Wheeler Brook Farm | GEORGETOWN

FARMLAND, WOODLANDS, STREAM Preserving the Family Farm

Bob and Barbara Morehouse spent more than 40 years growing Wheeler Brook Farm into a favorite destination to pick berries and buy vegetables from the honor-system farm stand. Declining health meant the Morehouses could no longer run the farm, prompting them to meet with Greenbelt to explore conservation options. **They wanted to make sure it stayed a farm, but they also needed retirement income and wanted to leave their children a meaningful inheritance.** Despite offers from developers, they held firm to the hope that they could find a way to keep their land a working farm.

An appraisal determined that the farm could be subdivided into four house lots. Bob and Barb did not want that to happen, but they needed some compensation for giving up these development rights. Greenbelt suggested that the Morehouses grant a CR that would eliminate non-agricultural development rights, but include the flexibility for the farm to expand and prosper into the future. Greenbelt would buy the CR for less than its fair market value, a “charitable sale”, allowing the Morehouses to qualify for federal and state tax benefits in addition to income from the sale. In the end, the Morehouses were able to remove a significant amount of value from their estate, which helps their heirs avoid estate taxes. Further, with the development rights removed, the land will be more affordable for a future farmer to buy.

GOALS

Estate Planning
Balance Farm Preservation
and Financial Considerations

TOOL

Conservation Restriction (CR)
Charitable Sale

LANDOWNER BENEFITS

Federal Income Tax Deduction
State Tax Credit
Income from Sale

“To preserve the land we love as a farm... that is the legacy we want to leave to the next generation.”

Bob Morehouse



Farm photo: Kelly Chadwick
kelychadwickphotography.com
Landowner & farm stand photo
courtesy of Beth Glasmann
marybethglasmann.com

SCENIC WILDLIFE HABITAT

Creating a Family Legacy

When John Morris purchased his 25-acre Newbury property, his intent was to restore the farmhouse, and perhaps create a place where his sons could build houses for themselves. Over the span of more than 20 years, John did a masterful job on the farmhouse, and created a lovely landscape of open fields and woodlands. Over time it became clear that his children's plans did not include the land in Newbury, and it was then that John connected with Greenbelt, and began to think about a conservation sale.

A major consideration for John was his desire to dispose of the property in one transaction, rather than separating the house from the balance of the land. Greenbelt agreed to purchase the entire property, with the intent of selling the house privately while retaining 18 acres as a Greenbelt reservation. Partial funding was secured from the state, as the property abutted a major state conservation area. Greenbelt found a buyer for the house, and raised the balance of the required funds from private sources. A key component of the project was John's willingness to accept less than the full fair market value for the property, bringing the project within Greenbelt's financial capacity.

At the dedication, the property was named the Hans Morris Reservation, for one of John's grandsons. John and Hans had spent many hours walking the property, observing the birds and other species that made it their home. The knowledge that it was now permanently protected and open to other kids and their grandparents was very satisfying for John.

GOALS

Sale of Land and House
Balance Conservation and
Financial Considerations

TOOLS

Charitable Sale

LANDOWNER BENEFITS

Federal Income Tax Deduction
Income from Sale



"When I walked the new trail that had been blazed, and saw the wildlife and the flowers that were in the preserved property, I was very satisfied with what I had done..."

John Morris

Bobolink photo courtesy of Craig Gibson



FIND OUT MORE!

Greenbelt Provides:

- Free, confidential, independent advice.
- Expert knowledge of the technical aspects of land conservation, including tax & financial benefits.
- Multi-faceted solutions tailored to your unique situation and to your land.



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www.ecga.org/conserve_your_land

Since 1961, Greenbelt has been working to protect the farmland, wildlife habitat and scenic landscapes for the benefit of all who live, work and enjoy the resources in Essex County. Our work helps to maintain clean air and water, preserve the fragile ecosystems that harbor our native wildlife and plants, sustain farmland to assure a safe, local food supply, and protect vulnerable scenic views and open space that contribute to our region's unique quality of life.



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Protecting land and nature for you, our communities and the future.