



Northwest
LAND
Conservation
Trust

P. O. Box 18302
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Newsletter

Saving Oregon farmland, wildlife habitat and natural resources.



Iris Country, Brooks, Oregon

Roger R. Nelson, Steward of the Land

by Malcolm Higgins

Roger Nelson is known to many persons in Salem, Oregon. Most know him through his work as a salesman in the men's clothing department at Nordstrom's Department Store.

The first thing you notice, when you see Roger in his role as a salesman, is his complete focus on YOU as a customer. There is an aura of confidence and energy about him that lets you know he is there to help you. But there is another quality about Roger that makes him an excellent salesman-- it's his skill in questioning his customers and listening to their needs before assisting them with a purchase. Roger Nelson is a friendly, caring person.

That same lively concern is evident when you visit Roger Nelson at his *Iris Country* farm near Brooks, Oregon. Only here you don't see a nattily dressed salesman who sells \$500 suits to VIPs.

a visionary, he knows that what he has done... is of importance to future generations

Nebraskan, I would say he fits perfectly the definition of a "workaholic". Like other good stewards of the land, Roger's complaint is that there is never enough daylight, especially when it is necessary to have an extra job for income while building up a farm. When you are able to get him to sit down and talk, you soon realize that this individual is keenly aware of what is happening to land in the Willamette Valley. He sees more and more prime farmland being lost to commercial and industrial development. A man of foresight, he began to inquire what could be done to protect his own farm from the urbanization creeping out from Salem and Keizer. His property taxes were increasingly reflecting the possibility of a change in zoning.

Once he learned of *Northwest Land Conservation Trust*, he lost no time in working to establish a conservation easement on his farm. The easement protects and preserves the land in

You see a self-taught botanist working in his greenhouse, or pushing a wheelbarrow full of compost to spread around exotic plants and shrubs, or laying up rock terraces.

Based on the two years I have known this former

perpetuity so that it will always be used for agricultural purposes. It also protects the water, wildlife habitat, trees and other environmental values of the property. And assures that the property cannot be subdivided, cut up into cookie cutter lots, and used in the future to add to urban sprawl.

In taking this action, Roger has not given up the management or ownership of his farm. He has the satisfaction of knowing that future owners will also be bound by the restrictions which protect and preserve the open space and natural resources of his farm. Roger is a visionary. He knows that what he has done not only benefits today's Oregonians, but is of equal importance to future generations. Over and above all of his qualities, I like to think of Roger as a good steward of the land.

To visit IRIS COUNTRY in bloom, call Roger R. Nelson at (503) 393-4739.....after dark.

For information about conservation easements, or about Northwest Land Conservation Trust, contact: Malcolm B. Higgins, President, Phone: (503) 873-8777 or send an e-mail to: nwlct@open.org



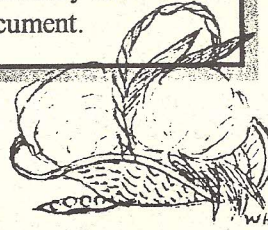
A B C's to remember about conservation easements

A The easement is structured to satisfy the landowner's needs and desires for the present and for the future. The easement drawn to protect farmland describes the permitted uses broadly to take into account current farming practices and also accommodate future changes in economic conditions, farm management practices and new technologies.

B The landowner retains title to the property. He or she continues to live on the property and manage it. The easement does not grant public access or limit in any way the owner's right to sell, lease, mortgage, devise or otherwise transfer title to his or her land, subject only to the terms of the easement which the landowner voluntarily describes in the legal document.

C The conservation easement can yield significant benefits to the landowner when the easement is granted in perpetuity to a legally qualified land trust, such as *Northwest Land Conservation Trust*. It may qualify as a charitable contribution, allowing a reduction in federal income, estate, and gift tax obligations. It may be used to reduce capital gains tax. And there may be local property tax benefits as well. Your tax attorney or C.P.A. should be familiar with these benefits.

Why save Oregon farmland?



Farms feed America.

Farms provide a direct link to our nation's agricultural heritage.

Farms contribute to the scenic open spaces of our Oregon countryside.

Farmland offers important wildlife habitat and acts as a buffer between urban and wilderness areas.

Farms contribute more in taxes than they require in services, while sprawling residential developments demand more than they contribute.

Going, going will it be lost forever?

Each year, development claims another million acres of productive U.S. farmland! Virtually every productive agricultural region in our country is affected. Acre by acre, farmland is being overrun and destroyed by scatter-shot urban development. This kind of ill-planned development is costly - agriculturally, economically, socially and environmentally.

The Willamette Valley is no exception. Although our land use laws are beneficial, and no doubt help to slow down the loss of our state's prime farmland (3/4 of the state's prime farmland is located within the valley), when you drive the I-5 corridor between Eugene and Portland you see houses, golf courses, shopping malls and our

expanding highways eating away at the remaining open space. Oregonians need to look more closely at our land use laws and how complicated their administration has become.

Fifteen percent of the Willamette Valley is already lost. One doesn't need statistics to show that something isn't working when houses are going up in and around farming areas. One alarming fact stands out: in just twenty years Oregon's land in production has dropped from 19.6 million acres to 17.6 million acres - a loss of two million acres.

A real concern is that, if we continue in this direction, we will be forced to rely on foreign countries for our fruits

and vegetables and other agricultural commodities, weakening the economic capital of our nation and our state..



"It is essential that we keep a viable agriculture industry, not just for the economics of it, but for the sheer humanity of feeding people"

....Bruce Andrews
Director, OR Dept. Of Agriculture
in *The Agriculture Quarterly*

Julia Cady

Where there's a will, there's a way. .

Julia Cady lives on a farm in Ohio. She was worried that housing tracts and industrial parks would gobble up her farm. Her ancestors first plowed the fields in 1848 and they worked hard to make the land productive.

Cady, like many farmers, is not against change, but **she is a strong believer in saving farmland**. Looking ahead to the time when she would not be able to manage the farm, she realized that the farm could be lost if her descendants could not resist the temptation to sell the farm to developers. The thought of her farm being swallowed up in urban sprawl spurred **Cady** into action. So what did **Cady** do?

Since there was no program in Ohio to purchase the farmer's development rights, she granted a **conservation easement** to a local organization (much like Northwest Land Conservation Trust) that promotes preservation of farmland.

Under the terms of the easement, Cady and her family manage and own the land, and can even sell it, but no future owner may develop it....Where there is a will, there is a way.



*"First the blade, then the ear
after that the full corn in the ear"*

Protecting Vital and Natural Lands

Oregonians have relied heavily on state land-use planning goals to protect the environmentally sensitive land in Oregon, and that can create a false sense of security. There are nineteen land use planning goals, frequently altered and modified by the legislature. The administrative procedures which implement them are complex, confusing, and often too legalistic for the landowner to understand. Oregon cities and counties make thousands of land use decisions each year. It is impossible to predict the final outcome of any land use case that must run the gamut of planning department, public hearing, and the judicial process.

Oregon is steadily losing thousands of acres of farm land in the Willamette Valley and elsewhere throughout the state each year.

Oregon landowners need to learn more about conservation

easements as a way to protect and preserve **farmland, forests, wildlife habitat, open space, and natural resources**. The legislation that enables conservation easements in Oregon has been on the books for over twenty years.

Conservation easements are established voluntarily between the landowner and a qualified land trust. The trust works quietly to protect and preserve the environmental attributes of the land *in perpetuity*. There are no public hearings, no political battles, no costly litigation and no interference with the rights of other landowners.

The process of establishing a conservation easement is straight forward and above board. It must be done thoughtfully and the landowner must be fully informed as to his/her options before the document is signed and placed in the public records of the county clerk.

Although relatively new in Oregon, conservation easements have been employed for protection and preservation in other states for many years.

Northwest Land Conservation Trust is a qualified land trust established in Oregon. It is a non-profit, public benefit organization, and its Directors serve voluntarily and without compensation for their time and expertise. Your inquiry as to the details of a conservation easement, its form, use, and value to the public as well as the landowner, is welcomed. Contact any of the persons serving on the Board of Directors to receive a copy of the publication entitled "Conservation Easements". Additional information may be obtained from Malcolm Higgins, President of NWLCT.

The mission of Northwest Land Conservation Trust is to insure broad community awareness of the importance of Oregon's agricultural lands, and other natural resources, and to promote the protection and preservation of such lands through the use of conservation easements.

The trust was founded in 1994 and is registered with the Secretary of State and the Office of the Attorney General. Its support depends solely on gifts and contributions from its members and the general public. Contributions are Tax deductible.

Board of Directors

Malcolm B. Higgins (President)
Neil W. Austin (Vice-President)
Carol Baumann
Dennis Magnello
David C. Polite
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Yes, I would like to be a Member and support NWLCT goals.

Name: _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____

___ \$15 Regular Member

___ \$30 Contributing Member

___ \$50 Supporting Member

___ \$100 Sustaining Member

___ Donation to Stewardship Fund in the amount of \$ _____

NWLCT will be a participant in the walkabout information fair on Tuesday, April 21 at the Oregon State University campus in Corvallis. The fair is made up of displays from environmentally-oriented groups, organizations and business and is a well attended event. The fair is held outside at the Quad in front of the Memorial Union (Memorial Union Ballroom in case of harsh weather) from **10 a.m. to 3 p.m.**, and there is no fee to attend. **We hope to see you there.**



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