



# Agricultural Conservation Easement Program – Agricultural Land Easements

## Program overview

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NRCS provides financial assistance to eligible partners for purchasing Agricultural Land Easements (ACEP-ALE) that protect the agricultural use and conservation values of eligible land. In the case of working farms, ACEP-ALE helps farmers and ranchers keep their land in agriculture. The easements can also protect grazing uses and related conservation values by conserving grassland, including rangeland, pastureland and shrubland.

Landowners interested in enrolling their working farms into this program must find a cooperating entity to partner with on their application. Eligible cooperating entity partners include Indian tribes, state and local governments and non-governmental organizations that have farmland or grassland protection programs and land trusts. NRCS will not hold the easement deeds with individuals and NRCS field offices will not accept applications from individual landowners.

Below are some land trusts operating in Iowa that landowners may contact:

Four Mounds Foundation	Chris Olson	chris@fourmounds.org
Whiterock Conservancy	Conrad Kramer Barbra Juszker-Torrier	conrad@whiterockconservancy.org barbra@whiterockconservancy.org
Bur Oak Land Trust	Tammy Wright	info@buroaklandtrust.org
Dubuque County Conservation Society	Pat Hayes Paul Kaufman	wwnativeseeds@aol.com
Riverland Conservancy	Tom Hanson	info@riverlandconservancy.org
Sustainable Iowa Land Trust	Suzan Erem	suzan@silt.org
Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation	Joe McGovern Anita O’Gara Lisa Hein	jmcgovern@inhf.org aogara@inhf.org lhein@inhf.org
The Nature Conservancy	Susanne Hickey	shickey@tnc.org

ACEP-ALE preserves the agricultural use of the land encumbered. Landowners will need to develop a working ALE operation plan with the cooperating entity that is approved by NRCS. Existing agricultural operations will have a baseline survey completed at the time of enrollment to document the current uses and farming infrastructure on site. The ALE easement restricts converting the land to a non-agricultural use. If the easement purpose is to protect grasslands then the easement may also restrict the transition to crop production or other type of agricultural production.

## **NEXT STEP – Landowner needs to make contact with a cooperating entity**

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