



SAMPLE CONSERVATION VALUES STATEMENTS FOR RCPP EASEMENTS

Instructions: This guide is intended to serve as a tool to facilitate discussions between State NRCS staff and Partners by providing samples of potential Conservation Values Statements and their compatibility with potential Resource Concerns that could be targeted by Programmatic Partnership Agreements (PPA's), including using the Critical Conservation Area (CCA) Priority Resource Concerns as well as non CCA Priority Resource Concerns to illustrate the alignment.

Whether funded by NRCS or not, every conservation easement should clearly identify the conservation values that it is protecting with its deed terms. Doing so is a key part of writing an effective conservation easement as recognized by the [Land Trust Alliance's Standards and Practices](#). The RCPP's Conservation Value Statements found in this resource may be used for projects both in and outside of a CCA priority area whether or not the proposed project is specific to a CCA project. Partners need to identify the deed's conservation value statements, and how the deed terms will protect the conservation values. NRCS should then help them translate those conservation values protected by deed terms into the priority resource concerns. The tables below include CCA specific resource concerns as indicated with CCA in parenthesis.

Partners and easement holders must ensure that conservation easement deed terms protect the conservation values identified in the Conservation Value Statements. This resource aid is not an exhaustive list of Conservation Value Statements nor is it required language; these are provided as samples to assist in the drafting of such statements prior to submission to Easement Programs Division (EPD) for review and approval as part of the Supplemental Agreement Type IV, Program Agreement. The guide will be updated with additional sample conservation values statements periodically.

Additionally, partners will need to further align their projects with conservation resource concerns components and program consideration components. NRCS should guide partners with this alignment as part of the proposal and PPA negotiation process. Partners should work with their State RCPP coordinator, but may also refer to available guidance on [Resource Concern Guide Sheets 1.pdf \(usda.gov\)](#) and National Planning Criteria: National Resource Concern List and Planning Criteria for descriptions, applicable land uses, planning criteria and other information on resource concerns and components to better understand how they may relate them to the purposes of their proposed easements. The resource concerns listed in the "Possible Compatible Resource Concern Categories" column are a sample (non-exhaustive) list of resource concerns that align with the CCA priority resource concerns. Additional resource concerns may potentially be met and can be documented and supported if addressed in the RCPP easement plan or in the deed language. All easements are intended to provide long term protection of the land from either or both loss of functions and values or a threat of conversion, planning considerations should reflect this as well.

Sample Conservation Value Statement for Wetland and Riparian areas

Sample Statement:

Maximizing the functional values of wetlands, riparian areas, floodplains, and associated habitats; Providing conservation benefits including habitat for wetland-dependent wildlife, aquatic, and plant species, water quality improvement, flood water retention, groundwater recharge, environmental education, and related conservation values.

Types of Land to be Enrolled: Wetland, riparian areas, floodplains, and associated habitats

Similar Conservation Values to: Agricultural Conservation Easement Program – Wetland Reserve Easements (ACEP-WRE)



Compatible Priority Resource Concerns	Possible Compatible Resource Concern Categories
Inadequate Habitat for Fish, Wildlife, and Invertebrates (CCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aquatic Habitat • Terrestrial Habitat
Water Quality Degradation (CCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field Sediment, Nutrients and Pathogen Loss • Field Pesticide Loss
Excess/insufficient water/drought (CCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weather Resilience • Source water depletion
Degraded plant condition (CCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degraded plant condition-Plant structure and composition

Sample Conservation Value Statement for Floodplain and Habitat

Sample Conservation Value Statement: Maximize the functional values of floodplains, wetlands, riparian areas, and other lands; and for the conservation of natural values including fish and wildlife and their habitat, water quality improvement, flood water retention, groundwater recharge, open space, aesthetic values, and environmental education; and to safeguard lives and property from floods, drought, and the products of erosion.

Types of Land to be Enrolled: Flood control, floodplain, the conservation of natural values including fish and wildlife and their habitat, water quality improvement, flood water

Similar Conservation Values to: Emergency Watershed Protection Program – Floodplain Easements (EWPP-FPE)

Compatible Priority Resource Concerns	Possible Compatible Resource Concern Categories
Inadequate habitat (CCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aquatic Habitat • Terrestrial Habitat
Water quality degradation (CCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field Sediment, Nutrients and Pathogen Loss • Field Pesticide Loss
Excess/insufficient water/drought (CCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weather Resilience • Source water depletion
Degraded plant condition (CCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degraded plant condition-Plant structure and composition
Nutrients transported to surface water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field pesticide loss

Sample Conservation Value Statement for Floodplain & Riparian Areas

Sample Conservation Value Statement: Further the restoration, protection, enhancement, management, maintenance, and monitoring of riparian areas along rivers, streams or other waterways and the associated functions and values including: water quality and wetland protection, linking other protected lands, floodplain connectivity, flood storage, flow attenuation, groundwater recharge, control of erosion, and wildlife corridor habitat

Types of Land to be Enrolled: Floodplain, riparian areas

Similar Conservation Values to: EWPP-FPE, ACEP-WRE



Compatible Priority Resource Concerns	Possible Compatible Resource Concern Categories
Water quality degradation (CCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field Sediment, Nutrients and Pathogen Loss Field Pesticide Loss
Excess/insufficient water/drought (CCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weather Resilience Source water depletion
Degraded plant condition (CCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degraded plant condition-Plant structure and composition
Inadequate habitat (CCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aquatic Habitat Terrestrial Habitat

Sample Conservation Value Statement for Forest Habitat

Sample Conservation Value Statement: Sustaining healthy forest ecosystems and related functions and values, such as benefitting at-risk wildlife, aquatic, and plant species populations; improving biodiversity; increasing carbon sequestration; improving water quality; and reducing habitat fragmentation.

Types of Land to be Enrolled: Forest with habitat focus

Similar Conservation Values to: Healthy Forests Reserve Program (HFRP)

Compatible Priority Resource Concerns	Possible Compatible Resource Concern Categories
Degraded Plant Conditions (CCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degraded plant condition-Plant structure and composition
Inadequate Habitat for Fish, Wildlife, and Invertebrates (CCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aquatic Habitat Terrestrial Habitat
Water Quality Degradation (CCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field Sediment, Nutrients and Pathogen Loss Field Pesticide Loss
Emissions of Greenhouse Gases (GHG's)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Air Quality Emissions

Sample Conservation Value Statement for Agro-Forestry Lands

Sample Conservation Value Statement: Further the restoration, protection, enhancement, management, maintenance, and monitoring of sustaining healthy forest ecosystems and related functions and values, such as benefitting wildlife, aquatic and plant species populations; improving biodiversity; increasing carbon sequestration; improving water quality; and reducing fragmentation.

Types of Land to be Enrolled: Forestland, with non-commercial agroforestry focus

Similar Conservation Values to: --

Compatible Priority Resource Concerns	Possible Compatible Resource Concern Categories
Degraded Plant Condition (CCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degraded plant condition-Plant structure and composition
Inadequate Habitat for Fish, Wildlife, and Invertebrates (CCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aquatic Habitat Terrestrial Habitat



Water Quality Degradation (CCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field Sediment, Nutrients and Pathogen Loss • Field Pesticide Loss
Wildfire hazard from biomass accumulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire management
Emissions of Greenhouse Gases (GHG's)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air Quality Emissions

Sample Conservation Value Statement for Working Forested Lands

Sample Conservation Value Statement: Sustaining healthy forest or woodland ecosystems and related functions and values, such as open space in a forested or wooded condition, maintaining biodiversity; continued carbon sequestration potential; maintaining water quality and source water protection areas.

Types of Land to be Enrolled: Forest with production focus

Similar Conservation Values to: --

Compatible Priority Resource Concerns	Possible Compatible Resource Concern Categories
Degraded Plant Conditions (CCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degraded plant condition-Plant structure and composition
Water Quality Degradation (CCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field Sediment, Nutrients and Pathogen Loss • Field Pesticide Loss

Sample Conservation Value Statement for Grasslands

Sample Conservation Value Statement: Sustaining the health and vigor of native grassland, forb, shrubland, wildlife habitat, and other natural characteristics of the property; protecting and providing habitat for threatened, endangered, or at-risk species; protecting sensitive or declining native grasslands; protecting highly sensitive natural resources; and increasing carbon sequestration.

Types of Land to be Enrolled: Grasslands and grasslands of special environmental significance.

Similar Conservation Values to: Agricultural Conservation Easement Program – Agricultural Land Easements Grasslands of Special Significance (ACEP-ALE GSS), Grasslands Reserve Program (GRP)

Compatible Priority Resource Concerns	Possible Compatible Resource Concern Categories
Degraded plant condition (CCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degraded plant condition-Plant structure and composition; Productivity and health
Excess/insufficient water/drought (CCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weather Resilience • Source water depletion
Inadequate Habitat for Fish, Wildlife, and Invertebrates (CCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aquatic Habitat • Terrestrial Habitat
Emissions of Greenhouse Gases (GHG's)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air Quality Emissions



Sample Conservation Value Statement for Working Lands

Sample Conservation Value Statement: Protecting the agricultural use and future viability, and related conservation values, by limiting nonagricultural uses that negatively affect the agricultural uses and related conservation values.

Types of Land to be Enrolled: Agriculture including forestry not limited to conservation uses

Similar Conservation Values to: ACEP-ALE

Compatible Priority Resource Concerns	Possible Compatible Resource Concern Categories
Excess/insufficient water/drought (CCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weather Resilience • Source water depletion
Nutrients transported to surface water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storage and handling of pollutants

Sample Conservation Value Statement for Grazing

Sample Conservation Value Statement: Protecting grazing uses and related conservation values by limiting non-grassland uses that negatively affect the grazing uses and related conservation values.

Types of Land to be Enrolled: Grazing/Grassland as only agriculture use

Similar Conservation Values to: ACEP-ALE GSS

Compatible Priority Resource Concerns	Possible Compatible Resource Concern Categories
Degraded plant condition (CCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degraded plant condition-Plant structure and composition; Productivity and health
Terrestrial habitat for wildlife (CCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terrestrial habitat