Local Greenprinting *for* Growth Workbook

Using Land Conservation to Guide Growth and Preserve the Character of Our Communities

VOLUME III:
HOW TO SECURE CONSERVATION FUNDS

THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND

NACo National Association of Counties
Counties Care for America

The Trust for Public Land

The Trust for Public Land conserves land for people to improve the quality of life in our communities and to protect our natural and historic resources for future generations.

This is a publication of TPL's Center for Land and People. TPL's Center for Land and People is dedicated to exploring, understanding, and celebrating the connection between land and people and the importance of that connection to the spirit, health, economic vitality, and quality of life in all communities.

National Association of Counties

Founded in 1935, the National Association of Counties (NACo) is the only national organization in the country that represents county governments. With headquarters on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., NACo's primary mission is to ensure that the county government message is heard and understood in the White House and the halls of Congress. NACo's purpose and objectives are to

- Serve as a liaison with other levels of government
- Improve public understanding of counties
- Act as a national advocate for counties, and
- Help counties find innovative methods for meeting the challenges they face.

Through its research arm, the National Association of Counties Research Foundation, NACo provides county officials with a wealth of expertise and services in a broad range of subject areas, including job training, environmental programs, human services, welfare-to-work initiatives, housing, county governance, and community infrastructure.

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On the cover: Lake Namekagon in northern Wisconsin. Photo by Bob Firth

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This report was produced with funding from
the Henry M. Jackson Foundation, the Surdna Foundation,
and the Environmental Protection Agency

THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND

Conserving Land for People

NACo National Association of Counties

Counties Care for America

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Greenprinting is a voluntary, incentive-based, land conservation technique that's designed to steer growth toward existing infrastructure and away from important natural resources. In the process, a community can preserve its quality of life, bolster its economy, and save local dollars.

In communities across the country, conservation funding is reaching record levels. This report, the third in a four-part series, explores funding options at the federal, state, local, and private levels. The process of securing funds involves careful research and the design of a strategy to maximize conservation dollars. It also requires an investment of local funds.

Volume IV, the last report in the series, addresses the implementation of greenprinting —acquiring and managing conservation lands.

The Trust for Public Land and the National Association of Counties are committed to local greenprinting. We welcome your questions and comments and wish you luck in your smart growth and conservation endeavors. Check our web site at *www.tpl.org/greenprinting* for more information and to order additional copies of the reports in this series.

Sincerely,

The Honorable Robert Eckels
Chair, NACo Environment, Energy
and Land Use Steering Committee

Will Rogers
President
The Trust for Public Land

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Chair

The Honorable Robert Eckels
County Judge
Harris County, Texas

Members

The Honorable John Bartlett
County Freeholder
Ocean County, New Jersey

The Honorable Sharon Bronson
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The Honorable Robert Weiner
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Introduction

Greenprinting (grēn´prĭnt´ing) *n.* a smart growth strategy that emphasizes land conservation to ensure quality of life, clean air and water, recreation, and economic health. *v.* to employ a greenprinting strategy for growth

Growth may be inevitable, but sprawl is not. Faced with increasing growth-related challenges, communities across the country are rejecting low-density, single-use, auto-dependent development patterns for a more sensible, smart growth approach.

Smart growth strategies and initiatives help communities plan for and accommodate growth in a way that meets environmental and economic objectives. Communities are made attractive and livable, with walkable neighborhoods, a variety of transportation and housing choices, distinctive characters, and permanently protected open space, farmland, and sensitive water resource areas.

Why is the protection of open space an integral part of a smart growth strategy? In a nutshell, land conservation promotes smart growth goals by creating more healthy, livable, economically sound communities. How? By attracting home buyers and businesses, protecting public health and the environment, preventing costly flood damage, and preserving places that people value. By redirecting growth and redeveloping brownfields, this approach also helps to revitalize older communities. Clearly land conservation—when used strategically—becomes a smart investment that protects both the quality of life and the bottom line for communities new and old.

A variety of techniques can be used to protect open space, including a process known as greenprinting. Greenprinting is a voluntary, proactive approach to land conservation that is designed to steer growth toward existing infrastructure and away from a community's most sensitive land and water resources. Open space and development rights are acquired from willing sellers, and conservation becomes a powerful and cost-effective tool for managing growth—an equal partner with zoning and regulation.

The traditional approach to land conservation has been reactive and piecemeal: individual pieces of property are protected in order to prevent development, often without consideration for a larger conservation and growth vision. Greenprinting puts planning front and center in the land conservation process; a community plans for open space in the same way it plans for other aspects of its infrastructure—transportation and communication networks, schools, hospitals, utilities, and so on. And a community integrates conservation with other development and landuse plans. The result is an interconnected network of parks, open space, greenways, and natural lands that allows for growth where growth makes sense.

The Trust for Public Land (TPL) and the National Association of Counties (NACo), with support from the Henry M. Jackson Foundation, the Surdna Foundation, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, are publishing a series of in-depth reports that are intended to help counties, cities, and towns explore greenprinting as an approach to land conservation.

BOB FIRTH

People of all ages enjoy protected forestland along beautiful Lake Namekagon in northern Wisconsin.

KEN SHERMAN

In 2001, New York's Westchester Legacy Program allocated $50 million over five years to preserve open space, protect water quality, and create new parks countywide.

An advisory panel of local public officials—landuse experts from communities across the country—has also been created to advise this greenprinting series and provide case studies. TPL and NACo resources are available to public officials, legislators and staff, community advocates, land trust professionals, and other local leaders embarking on the greenprinting-for-growth process.

As developed by TPL, a national nonprofit land conservation organization, a greenprint follows these steps:

- *Step 1. Defining a conservation vision:* Developing a land protection plan that reflects a community's smart growth goals and enjoys public support
- *Step 2. Securing conservation funds:* Identifying and obtaining funds to implement the vision
- *Step 3. Acquiring and managing park and conservation lands:* Administering the greenprint program, completing transactions, and managing protected lands

This report focuses on step two, establishing a predictable and steady stream of funds to implement the conservation vision. While many communities have found that the cost of protecting land is less than the cost of development, a considerable financial investment is required. Fortunately, the availability of federal, state, and private conservation funds is greater than ever. And voters are approving open space financing measures at record levels.

Most communities have a variety of potential fiscal options and financing techniques available to them, from federal and state grants to local taxes and bonds. Explore them all. By tapping into every option, a community can create a "funding quilt" that increases overall dollars and avoids too great a reliance on a single, potentially unpredictable funding source. It's important to note that this "quilting" work often takes place on individual projects as opposed to entire programs. Each project may require its own funding strategy and combination of funding sources.

Keep in mind, too, that the largest portion of the financial burden typically rests with the local government, through approval of local tax or bond legislation or ballot measures. Federal, state, and private funds are limited and in high demand and should serve as incentives or supplements to locally generated conservation dollars. This report considers all the options—federal, state, local, and private—with an emphasis on the local share.

CHECKLIST: SECURING CONSERVATION FUNDS

This checklist outlines the considerations for securing conservation funds. Each component below is addressed in detail in the body of this report.

1. **Identify local funding options**
   - Determine all available funding options, including pay-as-you-go and borrowing
2. **Design a local ballot measure**
   - Assess funding options in detail, including various funding levels and corresponding costs to taxpayers
   - Research legal constraints of referring a measure to the ballot
   - Conduct a professional, public-opinion poll that tests voters' conservation priorities and spending tolerance
   - Design a measure that reflects public opinion and addresses conservation challenges
3. **Understand community values and cost/benefits of open space.**
   - Design a greenprinting plan and secure a local funding source
   - Research potential grant and incentive programs to determine where there is geographic or programmatic convergence
   - Forge alliances with public- and private-sector leaders who can facilitate funding and champion local efforts
4. **Identify federal funding sources**
   - Evaluate federal funding sources
   - Determine the federal or state agency that distributes funds and the process by which funds are allocated
5. **Evaluate a state's conservation funding landscape**
   - Assess a state's role in providing direct funding (grants and incentives) and authorizing local funding
   - Consider the following best practices:
     —a substantial, dedicated state funding source
     —significant local enabling options
     —a program of incentives for local governments
     —a purchase-of-development-rights program
     —public-private partnerships
     —conservation tax credits
6. **Assess private funding sources**
   - Consider funding from foundations, corporations, and individuals
   - Partner with nonprofit land trusts that can sponsor private fundraising campaigns and solicit foundation funds

How to Identify Local Financing Options

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT:
The primary responsibility for funding any type of local conservation program rests with local governments. Relying exclusively on funds from outside sources can threaten the success of a local greenprinting initiative.

The tools for raising park and open space revenues at the local level are quite diverse and continually expanding. In many cases, money comes from traditional revenue sources, such as sales and property taxes. In other places, unusual options such as the local income tax and cell phone tax are being identified and tapped as valuable resources.

The availability of financing options depends on state enabling legislation and local regulations, and take the form of "pay-as-you-go," long-term borrowing, or a combination of the two. With pay-as-you-go, the government spends revenues from general appropriations or a dedicated funding source. These funding sources, which can include property assessments, sales tax set-asides, real-estate transfer taxes, and even one-time environmental fines and budget surpluses, can be attractive to debt-resistant voters and public officials.[1] Pay-as-you-go means year-by-year accountability and no borrowing costs. It also means relatively small annual revenues (sometimes too small to pay for large capital projects) and funding that can be difficult to sustain as the politics and leadership of a community change.

GLOSSARY OF CONSERVATION TERMS

Greenprinting—a smart growth strategy that emphasizes land conservation to ensure quality of life, clean air and water, recreation, and economic health

Open space—a broad term for land largely free of residential, commercial, and industrial development (including formerly developed brownfield sites) that can provide wildlife habitat, access to recreation, and scenic viewscapes

Greenways—corridors of open space that connect people and places, provide recreational opportunities, protect natural habitat, improve water quality, and reduce the impacts of flooding

Conservation land—open space with critical natural resources protected by federal, state, or local governments, land trusts, and conservation organizations

Borrowing presents its own set of opportunities and obstacles. On the one hand, borrowing can provide a community with the revenue and flexibility it needs up-front to fund large-scale park and open space projects, the cost of which is less today than it will be tomorrow. On the other hand, many general obligation bonds require voter approval, and convincing voters of the merits of incurring debt and paying financing costs can be challenging. (Revenue bonds, which may or may not require voter approval, borrow against pay-as-you-go funds to bring in more up-front cash.)

The following is a summary of common conservation funding sources and financing techniques.

"PAY-AS-YOU-GO" APPROACHES AND NONTAXING TOOLS

A *budget appropriation* by the governing body can involve a reallocation of existing resources or a legislatively approved tax levy. The City Council of Virginia Beach, Virginia, approved $53.4 million in park and open space funding. The appropriation allowed the city to begin

Voters in Ocean County, New Jersey, approved an open space trust fund in 1997, raising property taxes to protect open space and environmentally sensitive lands along Barnegat Bay.

acquiring properties identified in its recently completed Virginia Beach Outdoors Plan 2000 Update, which was developed during an intensive 15-month research and planning effort.

Voters in communities across the country have also been willing to increase their *property taxes,* particularly when revenues are earmarked for park and open space protection and spending accountability is guaranteed. In New Jersey, voters in 19 of 21 counties and 179 of 566 municipalities have approved open space trust funds paid for with property tax increases. Revenues are used to acquire and maintain open space, natural lands, and farmlands. Even in a tax-sensitive state such as Idaho, people are willing to increase their property taxes in order to conserve land. Boise voters overwhelmingly approved a $10 million tax levy in May 2002 to protect critical open space in the city's foothills.

The *sales tax* is the second-largest source of income for state and local governments. Levied on the sale of goods or services, the tax can generate large sums, even in small taxing increments. It can also tap into tourism profits generated by open space amenities. On the downside, tax revenues can drop when the economy slows, and the tax is often criticized as regressive, falling disproportionately on lower-income people. In addition, many jurisdictions require that a sales tax increase be in large increments—even 1 cent—making it harder to fine-tune than the property tax. In 1967, the city of Boulder passed the nation's first local dedicated tax for open space protection and parkland acquisition—a 0.40 percent sales tax. Many Colorado communities have followed Boulder's lead, including four counties with successful sales tax measures in 2001.

The *real-estate transfer tax* is levied on the sale of property, increasing with the value of the property being sold. Costs are sometimes imposed on the seller, who has likely experienced an increase in the property's value over the years. Other times the burden is placed on buyers, who, it is argued, are making an investment in the future of their community. The tax can create substantial funds for park and open space acquisition, particularly in fast-growing communities, but revenues can plummet in a soft real-estate market. Perhaps most important, winning approval for the tax in the face of opposition from real-estate interests has proven to be a tough challenge for many communities. In fact, these taxes are usually successful only in wealthy resort communities, such as Hilton Head Island, South Carolina.

An *impact fee* is a one-time charge that private entrepreneurs, often developers, must pay to

ERIC SWANSON

THE FACTS

Location:
Harris County, Texas

Type:
Urban, suburban

Population:
3,400,578

Area:
1,729 square miles

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Bond Supplements a Variety of State and Local Funding Sources

Harris County, Texas, is the third most populated county in the country, and growing. As the city of Houston spreads in all directions, growing pains—particularly traffic congestion—are felt throughout the metropolitan region. As a result, local leaders are working harder than ever to preserve the county's quality of life and meet the demand for parks, recreation, and open space.

Unique to Texas, Harris County's parks system is divided into four separate precincts, each developed and managed independently to serve residents' particular needs. While this system works well, by the late 1990s local leaders recognized the need for a master plan that took a more global approach to parks, recreation, greenways, and open space while preserving local control. The master planning process was also intended to facilitate cooperation and coordination between the county and its municipalities, surrounding counties, and various regional agencies.

The process involved a county-needs assessment that included a telephone survey and interviews with precinct staff, field personnel, and sports leagues. The assessment also included an exhaustive inventory of resources. Potential acquisition zones were mapped and prioritized and key issues were identified as follows: expansion of parkland; development of railways and roadways into bikeways; development of greenways along waterways; balance among recreation, habitat restoration, and ecological concerns; and sustaining biodiversity in the urban landscape.

The county uses a variety of funding sources to pay for its parks plan, most significantly annual budget appropriations. The county will not build a new park unless it has identified the staff and budget to maintain it. To fill a funding gap and keep pace with population growth, county leaders put a $60 million general obligation bond on the November 2001 ballot. This measure was the largest county park bond in history, and it passed—despite sharing the ballot with a $475 million county road bond and a $776 million city bond for streets, police, fire, and parks. Funds are being divided equally among the four precincts. To determine priorities, the county relies on a scoring system. Final allocation decisions are made by individual park precincts; there are no citizens advisory committees. The county has also identified several Texas Parks and Wildlife matching-grant programs that can help fund the acquisition and development of parks and open space.

Just slightly above sea level, Harris County also has to deal with serious flood-control issues over the years. The overseeing entity is the Harris County Flood Control District, a separate political jurisdiction that acquires and develops land for flood-control purposes. Once acquired, the district allows land to be used for recreational purposes by the county and any other municipalities through various interlocal agreements. These lands are an important local resource, without which the county would not be able to meet its parkland goals.

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY PARK AND RECREATION OFFICIALS (NACPRO)

Organization Provides Support for Local County Park Professionals

NACPRO is an independent organization, affiliated with the National Association of Counties, that serves county park administrators and professionals throughout the United States. NACPRO provides technical assistance to professionals, information about national trends, policies and funding, news and reports from county park systems, and networking opportunities. Members can also post Request for Information items on the Information Kiosk page of the NACPRO web site. For more information, check the NACPRO web site at *www.nacpro.org.*

Oak Creek Canyon near Sedona, Arizona, attracts outdoor enthusiasts with its diverse desert vegetation, rugged rock formations, and recreational opportunities.

the local government in order to undertake a project. In turn, revenue from the impact fee finances public goods and services that the developer would not otherwise provide. Water and sewer lines, streets and bridges, and parks and recreational facilities are typical projects funded by impact fees.

Most state statutes require a direct correlation between the projects funded and the impact of the development, and the adoption of some type of comprehensive landuse plan.[2] There are, however, occasions in which the impact fee or a similar financing option can be used more broadly. For instance, the park excise tax in Olathe, Kansas, helps finance neighborhood parks throughout the city, not just near a development project.

Impact fees have their detractors who oppose the added cost of development and, in some cases, a decreased availability of affordable housing. Still, at the local level, impact fees commonly help fund the acquisition, maintenance, and construction of parks and recreational facilities near new development. More and more states are adopting impact fee enabling legislation. In Raleigh, North Carolina, known as the "park with a city in it," residential developers pay impact fees that help finance greenways and other parks.

A *mitigation land bank* is natural land set aside, paid for or restored by developers who are compensating for the adverse impacts of development—often the degradation of wetlands. This land can be adjacent to development or in a location other than the development site. Mitigation is often the best option when development violations have already occurred on-site or when key natural areas are targeted for protection. This approach also offers local governments flexibility in their landuse decisions and gives communities the ability to protect a single, larger area rather than smaller, scattered tracts of land. By doing so, mitigation provides the greatest value for people, wildlife, and threatened ecosystems.

Both local and state governments can also offer *tax incentives* that encourage the donation of land. Montgomery County, Maryland, offers a 100 percent property-tax credit for the donation of conservation land.[3]

Although less common, *income taxes* and even *cell phone taxes* have been used locally to fund parks and open space.

Finally, several kinds of *special districts* can help fund land acquisition or maintenance. *Special assessment districts* are separate units of government that manage specific resources within defined boundaries. Districts vary in size, encompassing a single community or several counties. They can be established by the local government or by voter initiative, depending on state laws and regulations. As self-financing legal entities, these districts have the ability to raise a predictable stream of money (through taxes, user fees, or bonds) directly from the people who benefit from the services—often parks and recreation.

Special districts are helping protect and maintain parkland throughout the country. One of the first special districts, California's East Bay Regional Park District, was created in 1934 with a nickel-per-$100 value property assessment. The district now owns and operates 53 parks, with 78,000 acres, and has an operating budget of more than $60 million.

Another option is a *benefit assessment district.* These districts assess a defined constituency and provide benefits to those residents, from water and roads to parks and recreational facilities.

Unlike special assessment districts, benefit assessment districts lack a partnership, structure, or separate governmental body with management responsibilities. Benefit assessment districts are being used to protect natural resources in many California communities.

BORROWING

General obligation (g.o.) bonds are loans taken out by a local government against the value of its taxable property. These bonds are secured by the issuer's full faith, credit, and taxing power to make timely payments of principal and interest. Depending on the situation, open space bond money can be included in a general capital funding measure or paired with related environmental programs such as agricultural land preservation, soil conservation, or storm water management.

General obligation bonds are a popular open space financing tool at the state and local levels as they allow for the immediate purchase of land that is often quickly rising in value. They do not, however, provide a source of funds for maintenance, and can be difficult to attain for several reasons. First, g.o. bonds require either voter approval (sometimes as much as two-thirds of the electorate) or legislative approval, or both. Interest charges also add costs, and debt ceilings limit the amount of bonds a community can issue. Finally, there is generally stiff competition for g.o. bonds among the many local programs in need of financing.

Revenue bonds are usually easier to approve and costlier to repay than g.o. bonds. Voter approval is not typically required since the government is not obligated to repay the debt if the revenue stream does not flow as expected. (The revenue stream could be user fees or a tax levied specifically to fund the project.) Unlike g.o. bonds, revenue bonds are not constrained by debt ceilings.

Short-term debt instruments such as promissory notes and bond and tax anticipation warrants can also provide communities with park and open space financing options. Although more costly to the borrower, these mechanisms can help local governments that have limited long-term bonding capacity but sufficient income to cover the debt service of a loan.[4]

NATIONAL SUPPORT FOR SMART GROWTH

The Smart Growth Network is a collaboration of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and members of the nonprofit, professional, historic preservation, development and real estate, and state and local government communities. This coalition works to promote smart growth practices that boost the economy, protect the environment, and enhance community vitality. Its guiding principles are as follows:

- Create a range of housing opportunities and choices
- Create walkable neighborhoods
- Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration
- Foster distinctive, attractive areas with a strong sense of place
- Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost effective
- Mix land uses
- Preserve open spaces, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental choices
- Strengthen and direct building toward existing communities
- Take advantage of compact building design

For more information about the Smart Growth Network and how it can help your community develop a smart growth plan, check its web site at *www.smartgrowth.org*.

ALTERNATIVE FINANCING TECHNIQUES

Lease/purchase contracts can be used when a decision has been made to buy a property but up-front funds are unavailable. Under such an arrangement, acquisition can be paid for in periodic payments, or installments, that include principal, interest, and associated costs. The contract can grant possession or use for a specific or indeterminate period, until purchase funds are in hand.

These contracts do not necessarily bind a future government to a purchase—often this is not legally feasible. Most governments can, however, enter into a conditional agreement to pay principal and interest subject to annual appropriation. In general, the economic effect of a lease/purchase is similar to that of a bond, but the arrangement is structured so that it does not violate constitutional limitations on borrowing or affect the debt ceiling. One drawback is the complicated nature of the transaction and potentially high transaction costs. In addition,

COMMON LOCAL FINANCING OPTIONS

METHOD	DEFINITION	PROS	CONS
Property tax	tax on real property paid for by commercial and residential property owners	◆ steady source of revenue ◆ relatively easily administered ◆ tax burden fairly broadly distributed ◆ small increases create substantial funding ◆ popular with voters when focused on compelling land conservation needs	◆ competition for other public purposes ◆ overall concern among taxpayers about high rates
Sales and use tax	tax on the sales of goods or services	◆ relatively easily administered ◆ low reporting costs ◆ can generate large sums, even at small tax levels ◆ may be paid in part by out-of-town visitors ◆ can tap into tourism profits generated by open space amenities ◆ may include exemptions such as food and medicine	◆ revenues can drop when economy slows ◆ considered regressive
Real estate transfer tax	tax on the sale of property, paid by either the buyer or seller	◆ funds can be substantial ◆ nexus between taxing new development and protecting open space	◆ opposition from real estate/development interests that makes passage difficult for some communities ◆ less predictable revenue stream
Impact fee	one-time fee paid by developer to offset costs of infrastructure caused by new development	◆ nexus between taxing new development and protecting open space	◆ parks and open space projects might require direct link to new development ◆ may make housing develop-ment unaffordable
Special assessment district	special tax district for an area that benefits from an open space project	◆ users finance acquisition and management ◆ predictable revenue stream ◆ accountability in government spending ◆ sense of ownership of and responsibility for area parks and services ◆ taxable in small increments ◆ ability to set own election date and process	◆ possibly time consuming to implement ◆ overall concern over high rates among taxpayers
General obligation bond	loan taken out by a city or county against the value of the taxable property	◆ allows for immediate purchase of open space, locking in land at current prices ◆ distributes the cost of acquisi-tion over time	◆ extra interest costs of borrowing ◆ voter approval required, some-times by supermajority levels
Revenue bond	loan paid from proceeds of a tax levied for a specific public proj-ect, or with proceeds of fees charged to those who use the financed facility	◆ not constrained by debt ceilings of general obligation bonds ◆ voter approval rarely required	◆ more expensive than general obligation bonds


BETH DAVIDOW

THE FACTS

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Palm Beach County, Florida

Type:
Urban, suburban, natural areas

Population:
1,134,184

Area:
1,974 square miles

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Funds Secured for Land Acquisition and Management

Palm Beach County, Florida, boasts 47 miles of sandy beach, a year-round temperate climate, and outdoor activities that span from the Everglades to the Atlantic. It's no wonder the county attracts visitors from around the world and has one of the fastest rates of population growth in the country.

Fortunately, county leaders have been working overtime to protect the area's open spaces and natural resources before they disappear. And voters have been willing to do their part, approving two general obligation bond measures in the 1990s that have funded the permanent preservation of thousands of acres of land.

The first bond, in 1991, allocated $100 million in bonds for the acquisition of environmentally sensitive lands. With bond funds running low, voters approved a $150 million conservation bond in 1999 with 66 percent of the vote, despite well-funded opposition. The county effectively used the bond money to leverage additional state Preservation 2000 and Florida Forever dollars—more than $37 million from the 1991 bond. Some municipalities have also passed their own bonds and funded joint city-county land purchases.

The latest bond designated $100 million for the purchase of land in the designated Agricultural Reserve Area and $50 million for the purchase of environmentally sensitive lands countywide. The Agricultural Reserve contains some of the south county's most valuable remaining real estate; a number of zoning changes over the years have replaced farms with luxury homes. In response, county staff worked with regional agencies and consultants to prepare a master plan for the Agricultural Reserve. This plan helps target land within the reserve that preserves agriculture, enhances water resources, and protects open space. By approving the bond, targeted land can be permanently protected and the development of up to 6,000 homes prevented, saving the county about $64 million in infrastructure costs.

Much of the work identifying and prioritizing environmentally sensitive lands was done before the bond measure passed. County staff first conducted a detailed survey to determine what remaining lands were most worth saving. The citizen-led Lands Acquisition Selection Committee reviewed this information and recommended to the Board of County Commissioners that 38 sites covering roughly 12,700 acres be designated as top priority. While these lands were not named in the bond language, properties were listed in promotional materials to give the public as much specific information about future acquisitions as possible.

landowners may not be willing to wait for their money over a period of years. Land trusts often play a middle-man role between landowners and public agencies, paying landowners and contracting directly with agencies to provide the time necessary for payment.

Certificates of participation (COPs) are a variation on the leasing theme that are structured to allow for investment in lease/purchase agreements. COPs allow a government to pay for a leased property over time; the transaction is not formally considered debt and therefore neither requires a referendum nor impacts a community's debt limit. Although fairly new, COPs are becoming an increasingly important tool for protecting open space at the local level.

How to Design a Local Ballot Measure

Despite economic recession and national security challenges, 2002 was a banner year for conservation at the ballot box. In all, 74 percent of the 139 state and local conservation measures won voter approval, generating roughly $5.7 billion in new funding for parks and open space. The local ballot measures ranged in size from a $380,000 tax levy in the town of Buckland, Massachusetts (about half dedicated to open space protection) to a $200 million, ten-year real estate tax extension in Southampton, New York. State and local conservation measures generated nearly $1.7 billion in 2001 and $7.5 billion in 2002.[5] (Complete conservation election results are available from LandVote, a project of the Trust for Public Land and the Land Trust Alliance. The web site address is *www.LandVote.org.*)

Many voters clearly recognize the interrelationship of conservation, a safe environment, a strong economy, and a livable community. While local funding can take the form of a general fund appropriation or a legislatively approved tax increase, often the price tag, the politics, and the legal options warrant approval by voters of a conservation spending measure. Given a well-designed measure, voters may be willing to commit public funds to protect their land and their quality of life.

To succeed at the ballot box, a measure must be economically prudent. It must also reflect a community's greenprinting and smart growth goals—water quality protection, wildlife corridors, farmland preservation, and so on. The design of a successful measure entails careful research and public-opinion polling.

Local leaders in Miami-Dade County, Florida, were unclear about the needs of the county's 29 municipalities when they began planning their Safe Neighborhood Parks Act bond of 1996. TPL's Miami office conducted an extensive survey of municipal park and recreation agencies, historical and cultural facilities, and sports venues to determine the universe of unfunded need. Combined with the county's capital-improvement projects, the total price tag was more than $1 billion—a figure that far exceeded the public's spending tolerance. The county and municipal park agencies then pared and prioritized their needs to reflect the $200 million funding threshold of the bond measure—an amount determined by research and polling to be acceptable to most voters.

Through the research process, stakeholders can uncover local funding options, potential funding levels, and the corresponding costs to taxpayers. When determining the most appropriate timing, it is also important to take a look at election trends, carefully considering voter turnout and support for past fiscal and environmental measures. Finally, it is essential to understand the legal constraints of referring a measure to the ballot. This includes examining ballot language requirements, timing, and the referral process.

Findings from the research will help guide the design of a public-opinion poll that accurately assesses attitudes about parks and land conservation, particularly tolerance for tax increases and spending. There are several elements to the design of a successful ballot measure poll:

- **The selection of a qualified pollster.** The pollster is generally responsible for designing

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT:
Local funding is the cornerstone of a successful greenprinting initiative. These funds can be secured through passage of a well-designed conservation ballot measure.

The creation of a greenway along the Miami River is a multiyear, public-private collaboration that has attracted significant investments from private foundations.

BETH DAVIDOW

poll drafts, selecting the sample, conducting the survey, and interpreting the results. Many professional pollsters have experience testing environmental and/or conservation ballot measures.

- **Appropriate timing.** A poll should be taken early—before a measure is designed or a decision is made to move forward—but not so early as to render the results obsolete.
- **An effective questionnaire.** The survey should address the following questions: What do voters want? How much will voters spend? When is the best time to seek voter support?

If research and polling indicate sufficient support, the next step is to design a measure that reflects voters' conservation priorities and spending tolerance. It is also important to take into account advice from local leaders, advisory board members, and other conservation stakeholders.

The measure's wording is the last (and sometimes the only) thing a voter will see before casting a vote. Drafting the strongest, most effective ballot language is critical. Several fundamental questions should be addressed during the measure design process:

- On which ballot should a measure be placed? Consider local voter turnout trends, poll results, and competing spending measures.
- How much money should the measure attempt to raise? Polling will reveal voters' spending threshold—the maximum dollar amount they will spend on conservation.
- Which fiscal safeguards should be included in the measure? Voters are wary of added government spending and want assurance that their tax dollars will be spent wisely. Fiscal safeguards such as citizens advisory committees, independent audits, sunset clauses, and administrative cost caps should be considered.
- How much and what types of land should be targeted? Farmland, open space, parks, wildlife habitat—research, polling, and community outreach will reveal public conservation priorities.
- How should the ballot measure be worded? Legal research, poll results, and a review of past measures can help guide the wording of a ballot measure, ballot title, and ballot arguments.

Ballot measures can take a variety of forms depending on state and local election ordinances and traditions: some are only ballot title and question, some offer more plain-spoken summaries, while still others include pages of arguments for and against the measure. Ballot language authors also vary: in some jurisdictions, measures are written by the state attorney general or the county counsel, while in others, the local governing body (legislature, county supervisors, city council, etc.) may write and adopt the language.

Once a measure is on the ballot, supporters will need to launch a campaign to help secure its passage. County officials and community activists can work together on this effort by forming a campaign committee outside the auspices of local government. The Trust for Public Land's Conservation Finance Program can provide assistance with this endeavor.

BEST PRACTICES

▶ Research local financing options.

▶ Test these options and various spending levels in a public-opinion poll.

▶ Test the public's conservation priorities (open space protection, farmland preservation, etc.).

▶ Design a measure that reflects voters' conservation priorities and fiscal tolerance.

▶ Build consensus for the distribution of funds to municipalities, public agencies, and nonprofits.

▶ Use funds to leverage federal and state resources and to stimulate funding in other local jurisdictions.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF LOCAL FUNDS

A Summary of Approaches

With local dollars, a community can leverage important federal and state resources. Counties can also use their funds to stimulate greenprinting in their towns and cities by requiring a local match or the adoption of an open space plan. Done strategically and in partnership with others, local funds can also help purchase regionally significant lands such as trails, watersheds, and wildlife migration routes.

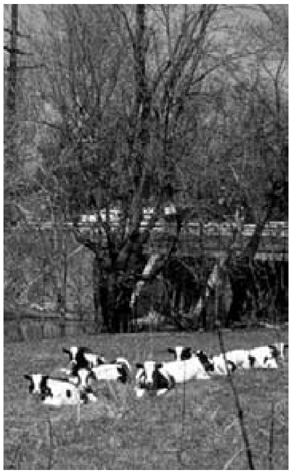
Funds are typically allocated from one jurisdiction to another (county to municipality) or from a jurisdiction to a nonprofit organization or other public agency. Counties use a variety of distribution formulas to reach funding equity: some take municipal conservation priorities into consideration but distribute no money to other jurisdictions or entities, while others establish detailed distribution formulas that allocate or grant funds to municipalities, nonprofit organizations, and other public agencies. Commonly, funds are divided into thirds: one-third to municipalities, one-third to unincorporated areas of the county, and one-third in the form of grants to private nonprofit organizations, municipalities, and/or public agencies. The spending of grant money can be either stipulated prior to distribution in accordance with the overall plan or left to the discretion of the recipient. Like nominations for land acquisition, grant applications may be submitted to an advisory board, which then makes recommendations to the governing body based on an established set of criteria.

Counties allocate a share of funding to municipalities via a variety of approaches:

- Each municipality is returned a proportion of the taxes it generated.
- Each municipality receives a per capita allocation of funds.
- Each municipality receives an equal amount of available funds, with a matching requirement.
- A sum of money is spent annually in each political district within a county or special district.

Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, divided $30 million in conservation bond funds from 1999 equally among six municipalities. To be eligible for the $5 million share, each town must have an open space master plan and the ability to match the county funds on a one-to-two basis. Funds that are not spent during a five-year period are available to other jurisdictions on a first-come, first-serve basis.

In Miami-Dade County, Florida, more than half the funds from the $200 million Safe Neighborhood Park Bond in 1996 are allocated to public agencies and nonprofit organizations for the development, improvement, or acquisition of parklands—some determined on a per capita basis. Additional challenge grants are available to these entities for land acquisition and recreational services. Once awarded grant funds, a contract with the jurisdiction is drafted and program administrators monitor the progress of the project.



TOM EVERS

Voters in Dakota County, Minnesota, passed a $20 million bond in November 2002 to protect farmland, open space, water, and natural areas.

BALLOT LANGUAGE FOR SUCCESSFUL CONSERVATION FINANCE

A ballot measure that reflects public priorities and spending tolerance has the greatest chance of success at the ballot box. A measure's author(s) may depend on the jurisdiction (county counsel, legislative body) and include input from community leaders, land trusts, and others. Look to research and polling to guide the wording of the ballot title, measure, and arguments. And remember to keep it simple and avoid jargon or technical language. Here are some examples of successful conservation-finance ballot measures.

St. Louis, Missouri, November 2000

Shall there be organized in the City of St. Louis, state of Missouri, a metropolitan park and recreation district for the purposes of improving water quality, increasing park safety, providing community trails, improving, restoring, and expanding parks, providing disabled and expanded public access to recreational areas, preserving natural lands for wildlife and maintaining other recreational grounds within the boundaries of such proposed metropolitan district, and shall the City of St. Louis join such other counties of St. Louis, St. Charles, Franklin, Jefferson, Lincoln and Warren that approve the formation of such a district in their respective counties to form one metropolitan district to be known as the "Metropolitan Park and Recreation District," with funding authority not to exceed one-tenth of one cent sales taxation, subject to an independent annual audit, with fifty percent of such revenue going to the metropolitan district and fifty percent being returned to the City of St. Louis for local park improvements, all as authorized by the Board of Alderman of the City of St. Louis pursuant to Ordinance No. 64994, approved and in effect on the 14th day of July, 2000?

Boise, Idaho, May 2001

Question: For the purpose of preserving land in the Boise Foothills as open space and natural areas, shall the City of Boise establish a Foothills Open Space Protection Fund with a $5 million property tax override levy for each of two years, subject to a review by a citizens' committee and an annual independent audit?

Summary: Proposed Open Space Protection Trust Fund would acquire open space and natural areas in the Boise Foothills. Approved levy funds will:

- Protect water quality;
- Preserve wildlife habitat;
- Provide increased recreational areas for walking, biking, and other outdoor activities;
- Limit overdevelopment and traffic; and
- Protect natural vegetation that prevents mudflows and washouts.

Buying open space for public use will balance private development in the Boise area. Cost of the levy is $1.33/month for each one hundred thousand dollars of assessed home value, for two years only.

DeKalb County, Georgia, March 2001

"Safe Parks, Clean Water and Greenspace"

Shall special recreation tax district, general obligation bonds to acquire land for additional parks and natural areas, preserve greenspace, protect clean water, improve existing parks, and develop new facilities, in the amount of $125,000,000 be issued by DeKalb County, and not less than 70 percent of the net proceeds shall be used for the acquisition of land and any improvements thereon and the remainder of the net proceeds shall be used to improve existing parks and develop new facilities, payable from the levy of a direct annual ad valorem tax upon all taxable property within the unincorporated areas of DeKalb County?

ERIC SWANSON

THE FACTS

Location:
Santa Fe County, New Mexico

Type:
Urban, suburban, rural

Population:
129,292 (2000)

Area:
1,909 square miles

Staff Contacts:
Jack Kolkmeyer,
planning director
Paul Olafson, Open Space and
Trails Program manager

Address:
Santa Fe County
P.O. Box 276
102 Grant Avenue
Santa Fe, NM 87504

Phone: (505) 986-6200;
(505) 992-2704

Fax: (505) 986-6206

Web Site:
www.co.santa-fe.nm.us/

Email:
javier@uswest.nets

Voters Approve Three Measures in Five Years

Land conservation is gaining momentum in Santa Fe County, New Mexico. To fund the protection of threatened land, voters in this fast-growing community have approved three separate conservation-finance measures in a period of five years—each measure carefully designed to reflect voters' conservation priorities and spending tolerance.

The process began when the county acquired an 11-mile rail trail that has the potential to become the spine of county's entire land conservation program. To fund future projects, County Commissioner Javier Gonzales spearheaded the design of a $12 million general obligation bond measure in 1998. Public-opinion polls showed strong support for a program to protect historic and cultural sites related to the 400 years of Hispanic settlement and the thousands of years of Native American settlement in the county. The measure was designed accordingly, seeking to protect critical lands throughout the county with an emphasis on lands of cultural or historic value. By passing the measure with 71 percent of the vote, Santa Fe County became the first county to exercise new statewide conservation bonding authority.

Prior to spending any of the bond funds, the county commission charged a 30-member advisory committee (the Citizens Open Land and Trails Planning Advisory Committee—COLTPAC) with completing the greenprinting plan, including setting strict criteria for land acquisitions. The result was the Wildlife, Mountains, Trails, and Historic Place program—a comprehensive greenprinting initiative that recommends long-term conservation strategies and a program to evaluate, acquire, develop, and manage the lands. (The county's Growth Management Plan, which requires open space and trails in new planning district areas, served as the foundation for the initiative.)

By the spring of 2000, the county had made its first round of acquisitions and committed the remaining bond funds. With money running low, Gonzales urged his colleagues to place an $8 million general obligation bond on the ballot in 2000. An opinion poll this time around showed strong support for the program, COLTPAC's public process, and the county's timely purchases of threatened land. In fact, land conservation ranked as a top priority among voters. The conservation finance measure passed again and the county quickly protected more than 2,000 acres.

Voters continued to support the successful program in 2002 with a sales tax measure that dedicates revenues to conservation. Throughout the process, local leaders relied on research, polling, and community input to design their measures and their conservation program. This process shaped key decisions, from the level of funding to the type of land to be protected.

Case Study — VOTERS IN OCEAN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY, INCREASE TAXES TO PROTECT BARNEGAT BAY

GEORGE M. ARONSON

THE FACTS

Location:
Ocean County, New Jersey

Type:
Town, suburban, natural areas

Population:
510,916 (2000)

Area:
636 square miles

Local Official Contact:
John Bartlett,
county freeholder

Staff Contact:
Dave McKeon,
Department of Planning

Address:
County Administration Building
101 Hooper Avenue
Toms River, NJ 08754-2191

Phone:
(732) 244-2121

Fax: (732) 506-1918

Web Site:
www.co.ocean.nj.us/planning

Email:
dmkeon@OCPlanning.co.
ocean.nj.us

Measure Relies on Research, Polling, and Community Outreach

Located in Ocean County midway along New Jersey's eastern shore, Barnegat Bay is a coastal estuary that is home to diverse native species, pinelands, wetlands, and a regional watershed. Rapid population growth—outpacing other counties for the past 50 years—has threatened the delicate balance of the bay's ecosystem as well as residents' quality of life. In response, the county launched its land conservation program in 1991, protecting thousands of acres. The Trust for Public Land also spearheaded two comprehensive scientific greenprinting studies—*The Century Plan and Beyond the Century Plan*—that assessed the entire bay watershed, inventoried natural resources, and helped the county and its municipalities prioritize parcels for preservation.

Dedicated funding was the next hurdle. Since state enabling legislation was passed in 1989, voters in counties and municipalities across New Jersey have enacted open space trust funds paid for with property taxes. Committed to keeping taxes low, some members of the Ocean County Board of Chosen Freeholders had initially been reluctant to consider a measure. The county's large senior citizen population was also viewed as unlikely to support new taxes for conservation.

Yet research and public-opinion polls demonstrated strong potential support for a measure. An analysis of county voting patterns on statewide Green Acres bond measures, for instance, revealed that many precincts with high concentrations of seniors showed strong support. Poll results supported these findings and indicated that natural lands and water quality were key issues for county voters. Further, the poll clearly showed how much voters were willing to spend: support was strong for the 1.2-cent-per-$100 tax but dropped off significantly for anything more.

A citizens advisory committee also proved instrumental in the effort. Representing diverse constituencies such as business, senior citizens, and environmentalists, this group worked with local elected officials (headed by Freeholder John Bartlett) to guide the design of a measure that reflected the conservation needs of the county and public priorities. Once the measure was referred to the ballot, a campaign committee organized community outreach activities.

Voters approved the measure in November 1997, allowing the county to impose a 1.2-cent-per-$100 conservation property tax and bond against revenues. Proceeds are deposited into the Ocean County Natural Land Trust Fund, which is used to acquire and maintain open space, farmland, and environmentally sensitive lands, including stream corridors, recharge areas, and buffer areas. With its own dedicated revenue source, the county is now able to access state Green Acres matching funds. The Green Acres Planning Incentive Program makes competitive grants (50 percent match) to communities that have approved a dedicated land conservation tax and created an open space plan. The county's program generates roughly $4 million annually. As of March 2002, approximately 2,100 acres have been preserved through the county's Natural Land Program.

How to Secure Federal, State, and Private Funds

There is no formula for securing conservation grants and matching funds from federal, state, and private sources. A variety of factors come into play, including programmatic objectives and competing applicants. There are, however, some fundamental considerations.

First and foremost, a local government should have a greenprinting vision completed and local funding resources committed. A plan, a budget, and local funding either will be required by the funder or will significantly increase the likelihood of securing grants or matching funds from outside sources. (In some cases, however, state and private funding precedes local dollars.)

Next, local leaders should research potential funding sources to determine where there is geographical or programmatic convergence. What programs exist that could help fund a community's specific greenprinting goals? What grants have been awarded to neighboring counties, cities, and towns, or communities with similar greenprinting goals? Are there new legislative developments that impact potential funding? NACo, state government associations, and TPL can help answer these questions.

Finally, it is important to forge alliances with public- and private-sector leaders. These partners can help local efforts. Potential allies include state legislators, members of Congress, and leaders in business and the nonprofit community.

Keep in mind that foundations can become visioning as well as funding partners, helping

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT:
Communities that create a predictable and sustainable "funding quilt" of financial resources are able to implement their greenprinting vision over time. All potential outside sources of greenprinting funding—federal, state, and private dollars—should be explored.

BEST PRACTICES

▶ Explore all local sources.

▶ Tap into all available federal, state, and private conservation financing sources.

SUSAN LAPIDES

In Massachusetts, the Community Preservation Act (CPA) allows voters to raise local property taxes to fund land conservation. North Andover approved the use of CPA funds in 2002 to purchase 35-acres along the shores of Lake Cochichewick, the town's sole source of drinking water.

Case Study REGIONAL "FUNDING QUILT" PROTECTS PIVOTAL MASSACHUSETTS PROPERTY

MARY UHLIN

THE FACTS

Location:
Lakeville, Massachusetts

Type:
Suburban

Population:
9,900

Area:
36 square miles

Local Official Contact:
Chawner Hurd, chairman of the Board of Selectman

Staff Contact:
Rita Garbitt, town administrator

Address:
346 Bedford Street
Lakeville, MA 02347

Phone:
(508) 946-8803

Fax:
(508) 946-0112

Web Site:
www.state.ma.us/cc/lakeville.html

Email:
selectmen@tmlp.com

State, Local, and Private Dollars Committed to town of Lakeville

At 2,444 acres, Assawompsett Pond is the largest natural body of fresh water in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Along with adjacent ponds, the Assawompsett provides drinking water for the residents of the towns of New Bedford, Taunton, and other neighboring communities. It also supports the largest fishery in the state, contains valuable archaeological sites, and provides habitat for several rare species of wildlife (it's the only site in eastern Massachusetts where bald eagles are known to successfully raise their young).

The town of Lakeville and surrounding communities have long targeted Betty's Neck, the peninsula at the southern end of the pond with more than 2.5 miles of waterfront, for permanent protection. Most of the privately owned land, which contained productive cranberry bogs, had been considered for a 1,000-home development. After nearly a year of work, a coalition of state and local governments and nonprofit organizations successfully protected the 480-acre property and, in related agreements, protected nearly 3,500 acres of municipal watershed land in Lakeville and six neighboring towns. To raise the $9 million needed to secure the deal, partners created a true "funding quilt" that pieced together federal, state, local, and private dollars.

The majority of funding was provided by the state's Department of Environmental Protection Aquifer Land Acquisition Program, which made a $6.55 million grant for acquisition and associated costs. As a condition of the grants, the Commonwealth received a conservation restriction over Betty's Neck and watershed lands owned by the cities of New Bedford and Taunton.

Local funds followed. At a special town meeting in May 2002, Lakeville residents approved $1.1 million in bond funds toward the acquisition of Betty's Neck. The bond will cost average homeowners $16.50 per year for 20 years. Prior to the vote, more than 200 residents attended a tour of the property that included a walk through the woods and a hayride along scenic hay and alfalfa fields. New Bedford contributed $600,000 and Taunton is lining up the same amount pending state funding through the Statewide Revolving Fund.

Thanks to the generosity of an anonymous Boston-based foundation, the Trust for Public Land contributed $250,000 to the project. TPL also facilitated negotiations between the towns and the landowner.

"This project is a wonderful example of regional cooperation that we hope will be a model for the rest of the state. Conserving this land will bring tremendous benefits to Lakeville and surrounding communities, including the protection of rare species habitat, drinking water quality, and scenic beauty. It will also help Lakeville manage growth over the coming years," says Chawner Hurd, chairman of the Lakeville Board of Selectmen.[6]

communities frame the issue, study best practices, solicit community input, and design greenprinting strategies. Foundation support can attract and leverage a mix of public and private implementation funds. In this way, foundations can be important catalysts for conservation, initiating greenprinting efforts in advance of public appropriations for acquisition.

How to Identify Federal Funding Sources

Federal funds are made available to state and local governments and nonprofit organizations through appropriations, grants, and incentives. Many of these programs require matching funds, underscoring the need to secure state, local, and private funds.

Though the availability of most federal conservation funds fluctuates annually depending on the political and economic climate, the outlook has improved somewhat in recent years. In FY 2001 Congress appropriated a record $1.6 billion for a variety of conservation programs and established a six-year federal commitment to these programs under the Conservation Spending Account. By creating this account, Congress recognized the importance of ensuring a steady stream of funding for certain critical conservation programs.

How federal funds reach the local level depends on the program. Some funds are fully administered by state agencies; in others, the federal agency takes a more direct role. State agencies often provide information about federal funding sources, procedures, and contacts. A summary of key federal funding programs follows. More details and a list of administering agencies are located in the appendix.

- *Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)* is the largest source of federal money for parks, wilderness, and open space acquisition. The program's funding comes primarily from offshore oil-and-gas-drilling receipts. At the national level, funds are used to acquire and protect new national forests, parks, wildlife areas, and other public lands. In FY 2002 Congress appropriated $429 million for specific acquisitions in these federal units. Stateside LWCF is a matching grant program that provides funds to states for planning, development, and acquiring land and water areas. Following a five-year drought without appropriations, Congress reinstated funding for the program in FY 2000 and funded it at $144 million in FY 2002. Funds are apportioned annually to states on a formula basis.
- *The Forest Legacy Program* is administered by the U.S. Forest Service under its State and Private Forestry division and provides matching funds to states to assist in forest protection. States may receive federal Forest Legacy grants of up to 75 percent of the total cost of the acquisition, with the remainder to be matched by nonfederal funds. In FY 2002, Congress appropriated $65 million for this program.
- *The North American Wetlands Conservation Act* promotes voluntary, public-private partnerships to conserve wetland ecosystems for waterfowl and other migratory birds. Acquired or restored habitat can be owned or managed by any federal, state, or nonprofit organization involved in land management. In FY 2002, Congress appropriated $43.5 million for this program.
- *The Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund* (Section 6 of the Endangered Species Act) provides matching grants to states for conservation projects that benefit candidate, proposed, and listed species on state, private, and other nonfederal land. In FY 2002,

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT:
There are a wide variety of federal funding programs that support state and local conservation efforts. An understanding of these programs—what they support and how they are administered—can help a community secure funding and support.

A vest-pocket park provides a gathering place for neighbors and bicyclists along the proposed greenway, and marks a step forward in developing the Los Angeles River as a recreational resource.

Congress appropriated more than $96 million for this program.

- *The Coastal Zone Management Program (CZMP),* overseen by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, is a partnership between the federal government and the 35 individual coastal states to better steward the nation's coastal zone. While this program focuses primarily on management issues, there has been a recent push—backed up with federal funding—to better integrate conservation within the overall coastal zone management strategy. The federal program requires each state to have its own coastal program, which brings in additional state funding.
- *The Farmland Protection Program* provides federal matching funds for state and local farmland protection efforts. To be eligible, a state, county, or local jurisdiction must have a complementary program of funding for the purchase of conservation easements. The 2002 Farm Bill provides $600 million over six years for the Farmland Protection Program.
- *The Transportation Efficiency Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21)* provides states with funds to acquire land for historic preservation, trails, scenic beautification, and water-pollution mitigation related to surface transportation through its Transportation Enhancements Program. The Recreational Trails Program provides funds for bike and pedestrian trails, and the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program funds projects that improve air quality. TEA-21 will be up for congressional reauthorization in 2003.
- *The Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Program (UPARR)* provides direct federal assistance to urban localities for rehabilitation of critically needed recreation facilities. Types of recreation facilities rehabilitated through the UPARR program include playgrounds, recreation centers, neighborhood parks, ball fields, tennis and basketball courts, swimming pools, picnic areas, and trails. At this time, UPARR funds cannot be used for acquisition. In FY 2002, Congress appropriated $30 million for this program.
- *Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilots* are designed to empower states, local governments, and communities in economic and environmental redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, and safely cleanup brownfields to promote their sustainable reuse. The program funds up to $200,000 over a two-year period. Greenspace redevelopment includes parks, playgrounds, trails, gardens, habitat restoration, open space, and/or greenspace preservation.
- *The Brownfield Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund* program allows states, local governments, and Indian tribes to receive loan funds for environmental cleanup of brownfields. Up to $1 million over five years for each pilot is available.

Additional funding is available through National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grants, the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), water quality grants, the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund, and additional federal programs detailed in the appendix.

How to Evaluate a State's Conservation Funding Landscape

While landuse decisions are primarily the domain of local governments, the public policies established by state governments shape those decisions significantly—particularly in the area of land conservation. States can play an enormous role in local greenprinting by putting forth an ambitious conservation vision and communicating it to local leaders. This is being done effectively in states such as New Jersey and Florida. States can also provide technical assistance, such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping, landuse analysis, and the creation of growth scenarios.

In the arena of conservation funding, states provide local governments with two important tools: direct funding (grants and incentives); and the authority to raise local funds. Given the scope of this report, it is impossible to provide an assessment of these tools on a state-by-state basis. Instead, a TPL framework is presented by which to evaluate a state's conservation funding landscape and local funding opportunities.[7] States with the following resources lay a foundation for effective conservation programs at the county and municipal levels. Without state support, local options are limited.

Substantial, dedicated state funding source(s). A stable state revenue source is the foundation upon which effective conservation programs are built. States with dedicated funding sources are able to foster program development and provide a long-term conservation vision.

Commonly used funding sources include lotteries, general obligation bonds, sales taxes, transfer taxes or deed recording fees, and general fund appropriations. In Colorado, the lottery funds state and local conservation projects through the successful Great Outdoors Colorado program. Maryland's 30-year-old dedicated real-estate transfer tax and periodic state bonds help fund the protection of farmland, forestland, and open space. And the Florida Forever program is generating $3 billion for conservation over ten years, using bonds backed by the state's real-estate transfer tax, known as the documentary stamp tax. Florida Forever is the successor to the state's Preservation 2000 program—which saved one million acres of natural land over a decade—broadened to include urban parks and recreation. Grants and matching funds are available to local governments.

Significant local enabling options. Federal and state governments cannot meet all local conservation needs, so it is up to states to provide local governments with the tools to fund projects and meet conservation goals. In the process, local dollars and local control are expanded.

In Massachusetts, the Community Preservation Act (CPA) is designed to help communities plan ahead for sustainable growth and raise funds to achieve their goals. CPA allows towns and cities to approve a referendum for a community-wide property-tax surcharge of up to 3 percent for the purpose of creating a local

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT:
The array of conservation tools, incentives, and programs available to local governments is established by the state. Understanding the state's role and the conservation landscape it has created can have a significant impact on local greenprinting efforts.

BRIAN DRYPOLCHER

The Trust for Public Land has worked with the city of Santa Fe and community groups to develop a plan for the public space component of the Santa Fe Railyard, which includes a ten-acre park, community plaza, and network of walkways and bicycle trails.

Community Preservation Fund and qualifying for state matching funds. The fund must be used to acquire and protect open space, preserve historic buildings and landscapes, and create and maintain affordable housing.

New Mexico voters expanded their own local financing authority by passing a constitutional amendment in 1996 allowing counties to bond for open space. Two years later, Santa Fe County became the first to exercise this new option, passing a $12 million bond to protect wildlife, mountains, trails, and historic places.

A program of incentives for local governments. State incentives, often in the form of matching grants and low-interest loans, encourage local governments and nonprofit partners to generate local dollars while strengthening partnerships.

New Jersey enjoys a constitutionally dedicated state funding source ($98 million annually in state sales taxes) and landmark enabling legislation that provides incentives for counties and municipalities to establish voter-approved Open Space Trust Funds with property-tax levies. Through the Green Acres Planning Incentive Program, the state offers matching grants and low-interest loans to communities that develop open space and recreation plans and approve the dedicated taxes for land acquisition.

Purchase of development rights (PDR) program. There are a variety of regulatory and incentive-based strategies that can help local governments protect open space, farmland, and ranchland. An increasingly popular and cost-effective tool is the purchase of development rights. PDRs are a voluntary approach to conservation that allow for protection of the land and continued private ownership. To support the purchase of development rights, states can pass PDR enabling legislation, work cooperatively with local governments to purchase easements, appropriate funds to local governments and nonprofits, and create PDR programs that are administered at the state level.[8]

The state of Maryland was one of the early pioneers of farmland protection, establishing a PDR program in 1977. The program receives a portion of the state's real-estate transfer tax and agricultural-land transfer tax. By the 1980s, several counties adopted programs to supplement the state's.

Public-private partnerships. Encouraging partnerships with private, nonprofit organizations can help promote land conservation goals and leverage conservation resources.

In Maine, the Department of Conservation relied on a unique public-private partnership to complete the state's largest conservation

STATE CONSERVATION LEADERS

STATE	PROGRAM	ESTABLISHED	AUTHORIZATION	FUNDING	REVENUE	PROTECTED	CONSERVATION
Florida	Preservation 2000 Florida Forever	1990 1999	state legislature	revenue bonds backed by documentary stamp (real-estate transfer) tax	$3 billion over ten years	more than one million acres by 1999	◆ substantial dedicated state funding source: documentary stamp tax/revenue bonds ◆ program of incentives for local governments; Florida Communities Trust (FTC), a state agency, provides land acquisition grants and matching funds to local governments to help them implement their conservation and growth-management plans. The FTC is the nation's largest community park and open space acquisition program
New Jersey	Green Acres Open Space Land Conservation Program	1961	gubernatorial and voter support	voter-approved general obligation bonds. In '98, voters approved the Garden State Preservation Trust Act, a constitutional amendment that dedicates $98 million annually for up to 30 years from the existing sales tax, to protect half the state's remaining undeveloped land.	$1.4 billion	390,000 acres	◆ substantial, dedicated state funding source: unbroken record of nine bond approvals; dedicated sales tax revenues significant local enabling options: 1989 legislation authorized counties and municipalities to establish voter-approved Open Space Trust Funds supported by property taxes ◆ program of incentives for local governments: the Green Acres Planning Incentive Program gives grants and loans to local governments that have enacted an open space tax and have adopted open space and recreation plans; ◆ purchase of development rights: the state runs a Farmland Preservation Program and a county easement purchase program
Colorado	Great Outdoors Colorado	1992	voter approval	50 percent of proceeds from the state lottery	$240.9 million	more than 375,000 acres	◆ substantial, dedicated state funding source: state lottery ◆ significant local enabling options: counties and municipalities have authority to levy sales taxes and property taxes and issue bonds to fund conservation ◆ program of incentives for local governments: communities are eligible for Conservation Trust Fund matching grants to acquire open space ◆ purchase of development rights: the program requires matching funds from applicants ◆ conservation easement tax credit: tax credits to individuals or corporations for the donation of conservation easements

ANN STATES

THE FACTS

Location:
DeKalb County, Georgia

Type:
Urban, suburban

Population:
665,865 (2000)

Area:
268 square miles

Local Official Contact:
J. Vernon Jones,
chief executive officer

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"DeKalb County was once one of the largest dairy counties in Georgia with lots of clear-running creeks and streams. But we are now the densest county in Georgia and the quality of our water and lives have suffered from unprecedented growth and development. Our greenspace program is part of the solution, protecting and preserving much of the undeveloped land that's left and increasing our stream buffers thereby helping to clean up our waters."[9]

Jacqueline Scott, commissioner
DeKalb County Board
of Commissioners

Strong Leadership Jump-starts Greenprinting Programs

Upon his election as governor of Georgia in 1999, Roy Barnes set out the ambitious goal of permanently protecting 20 percent of the state's land. He quickly appointed a commission to explore preservation methods, and by the next legislative session, $30 million in annual funding was targeted for land acquisition in the state's 40 most rapidly growing counties, many of them in the Atlanta metro area.

To receive funding, eligible counties had to design a greenspace program using a public process by the end of 2000. The plan had to identify strategies to permanently protect 20 percent of the county's land area. While no local matching dollars were required, state funds had to be used solely for acquiring land that achieved stated greenprint goals.

In fast-growing DeKalb County, just east of Atlanta, plans for the creation of a green space land acquisition program were jump-started after the governor's speech. The county's public meeting attracted 300 people, garnered press coverage, and helped public officials understand public sentiment. The new program sets out to conserve lands that help define the community, provide recreational opportunities, and protect important natural resources. With the design of the program, the county became eligible for about $3 million annually in state funds. Yet significant local funds would be also be required for implementation.

Local leaders initially expected to set the stage for a local bond referendum over several years. Then Vernon Jones was elected chief executive officer in November 2001 and became a forceful champion of the green-space program. To build momentum and save the county the added cost of a separate election, Jones accelerated the bond referendum to March 2001 as part of a special election being held to fill the seat of an assassinated local sheriff, himself a popular leader and champion of youth recreation programs. Voters were asked to raise their property taxes to pay for a $125 million general obligation bond, 70 percent ($87 million) of which would fund the acquisition of land. The remaining money would used to improve existing parks and facilities.

A campaign committee took the measure to the community, talking to neighborhood groups, business leaders, churches, and other public forums. Direct mail, cable television, radio, signs, and a web site also helped inform voters about the measure's benefits. Voters responded to the conservation message and approved the measure by an overwhelming margin. With the vote, a citizens committee was created to advise the Board of Commissioners in the management of the bond program. As part of this effort, the city created a separate office, the Office of Park Bonds and Greenspace, to spearhead the green-space program and leverage the county's funds with additional public- and private-sector funding.

In fast-growing communities like DeKalb County, parks and green spaces have often been an afterthought of development. (More than 70 percent of the county's land is developed.) The green-space program and bond funding has helped change the approach: Open space protection is becoming a tool to steer growth, protect important open space, provide for recreational opportunities, and enhance the county's quality of life.

KEN SHERMAN

Regional planning and cooperation are the hallmark of the Initiative for Mountain Island Lake in North Carolina. The passage of a bond measure in Mecklenburg County has helped generate local funds for the project.

easement transaction in April 2000. Working with landowners, businesses, government agencies, and a variety of conservation organizations, the state protected more than 21,000 acres around Nicatous and West Lakes, including 78 undeveloped islands and 30 miles of shoreline. The landowner, Robbins Lumber Company, will continue to own timber rights and manage the land according to sustainable-forestry guidelines. Funding was secured from federal, state, and private sources, including $3 million from the Forest Legacy Program and $750,000 from the voter-approved Land for Maine's Future Program.

Conservation tax credits. State tax-credit laws are becoming an increasingly popular tool to encourage the donations of land or easements to public or private nonprofit entities for conservation. Enacted in 1983, North Carolina passed the nation's first conservation tax-credit law, providing a 25 percent tax credit on the value of land or easements donated to public or private nonprofit conservation organizations. To qualify, land acquisitions must increase public access to beaches, water, or trails; enhance fish and wildlife habitat; or meet other conservation goals. Credits cannot exceed $250,000 for individuals and $500,000 for corporations. There is a five-year carryover if credits exceed tax liability in a single year.

California's tax-credit legislation was approved in June 2000. The Natural Heritage Preservation Tax Credit Act provides a state tax credit of 55 percent of the fair market value of land or conservation easements donated for wildlife habitat, open space, or agricultural land. If the credit exceeds the landowner's tax liability, the excess may be carried over in up to seven succeeding years until the credit is exhausted. The act authorizes up to $100 million in tax credits over five years.


KEN SHERMAN

THE FACTS

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Established in 1989, Iowa's Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) program funds a variety of state and local resource protection programs, including state historical resources, soil and water enhancement, county land conservation, and city parks and open space. The program is authorized to receive up to $20 million a year from gaming receipts and the sale of natural resource license plates. The state legislature, however, typically allocates about $10 million a year, and a budget crunch in 2001 and 2002 has resulted in further cuts.

County conservation funds (20 percent of REAP funds) are available to counties for land easements or acquisition, capital improvements, environmental education, and so on. A significant portion of the county funds are awarded through competitive grants.

REAP was designed by a coalition of private conservation organizations and a handful of state legislators. This group recognized the importance of active, ongoing public participation to gain support for the program and continue a steady stream of funding. A three-tiered organizational structure was developed. At the local level, individual county REAP bodies are organized to develop county REAP plans and coordinate local projects. Members are described as anyone and everyone interested in local REAP program, including conservationists, recreation enthusiasts, farmers, and so on. These range in size depending on county and local interest. Each county committee is responsible for preparing a five-year REAP plan listing specific projects that address the identified priorities.

At the next level are REAP Assemblies, open public meetings where all REAP programs and projects are presented and regional projects identified. The final body is the REAP Congress, an 85-member delegation that makes policy and funding recommendations to the governor, state legislature, and state agencies based on the findings from the 17 assemblies.

Public participation has been instrumental in the program's success. While budget cuts have impacted the program, the structure has remained intact and proponents remain optimistic about its future.

How to Assess Private Funding Sources

Private funds from foundations, corporations, and individuals can provide an important boost to a local or regional greenprinting program. Foundations in particular can provide early funding and visioning support, helping communities leverage state and federal resources. Like federal and state funds, however, private dollars are best relied on as supplements to a significant and steady local revenue stream.

Nonprofit land trusts can be instrumental in helping raise private funds. To begin, nonprofits can solicit donations from foundations, many of which have policies against awarding grants directly to governmental agencies. They can also sponsor private fundraising campaigns that raise money from corporations and individuals. (For information about how land trusts can help maximize funds, see *Local Greenprinting for Growth Workbook, Volume IV: How to Acquire and Manage Park and Conservation Lands.*)

Foundations can also be created for the purpose of assisting a local government's conservation programs. These entities can provide financial and other types of support, raising money from individual and corporate donors, foundations, and state and federal grant programs. In Jefferson County, Colorado, the Jeffco Open Space Foundation was created specifically to assist Jefferson

JANE BERNARD

One of Colorado's most scenic drives includes this protected land in Gunnison County.

PRIVATE PHILANTHROPIES INVEST IN GREENPRINTING

Foundations are working with communities across the country to design, fund, and implement greenprinting visions. A few of their efforts are featured here.

- In Miami-Dade County, Florida, The Knight Foundation provided $2.5 million after TPL and the local community designed a plan for the Miami River greenway. The greenway is designed to protect the river corridor for public access, provide an impetus for neighborhood-based revitalization plans, and preserve the marine-based economy that the river supports. Foundation funds will support additional planning and outreach, engineering and concept plans for the trails and bridges, and capital funding for trail construction.
- Grants from the Loridans, Turner, and Woodruff foundations have helped fund preservation along the Chattahoochee River, a critical environmental and recreational resource for rapidly growing Atlanta.
- A fundraising committee raised more than $25 million in corporate land and dollars from companies that recognized the connection between the health of the river and the state's economy.
- In Kansas City, Missouri, the Hall Family Foundation worked with a team of planners and consultants on the first steps of MetroGreen, a regional greenway master plan that's designed to link seven metro counties. The foundation helped fund and support the visioning and public participation process.
- Funds from the Doris Duke Foundation were used to leverage local purchase-of-development-rights money in Gallatin County, Montana.

The David and Lucile Packard Foundation is supporting greenprinting that protects the Lower Skagit River Delta in Skagit County, Washington, from sprawl-related threats.

County's Open Space program. The 501(c)(3) tax-exempt, citizen-initiated organization promotes county programs by accepting donations (land, equipment, real property, historical artifacts), accepting appreciated assets such as stock certificates, applying for and receiving grants, and organizing individual and corporate fundraising efforts.

In Pinellas County, Florida has entered into a unique partnership with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization, to conserve the region's natural resources and quality of life. They have formed the Pinellas County Environmental Foundation (PCEF), an organization that uses county, federal, and corporate funds to help jump-start worthy conservation projects, including the protection of fish and wildlife habitats. In 2001, the foundation awarded more than $1.5 million to support 20 grants. Factoring in local matches, this figure jumps to $3.9 million.

Why will money flow to a foundation and not to a public agency with the same mission? It comes down to a lack of trust in government and a belief that public agencies are too limited by regulatory constraints to adequately complete the job. As explained by John L. Crompton, a professor of Park, Recreation and Tourism Sciences at Texas A&M University, individuals and corporations "are more comfortable donating to a foundation, even if the donation eventually supports a government project. This sentiment tends to be especially strong if the donation involves land. Those who have owned land for a long time frequently have an emotional attachment to it and are passionately concerned about its future use."[10]

Land or funds donated to a foundation and passed along to a local government can be protected, even in a changing political climate. The safeguard, known as a reverter clause, can specify that if the conditions of the donation are not honored, the donation reverts from the public agency to the foundation.

DWIGHT HISCANO

The 515-acre Belt Farm includes the last stand of virgin hardwood forest on the Atlantic coastal plain. Located 13 miles from Washington, D.C., the farm was protected from encroaching development in the 1990s and is now part of Maryland's 109 acre Belt Woods Natural Environmental Area.

Conclusion

Since the early 1990s, there has been a wholesale shift in the way land is protected. Once reactive and piecemeal, local conservation has become comprehensive and strategic. Greenprinting is emerging as an important tool for smart growth and the protection of open space.

TPL and NACo are promoting greenprinting as a way to use land conservation to ensure quality of life, clean air and water, recreation, and economic health. The greenprinting methodology is threefold: defining a conservation visioning, securing funds, and acquiring and managing park and conservation lands.

Successful communities seek funding from all sources—federal, state, local, and private. By tapping into a range of funding sources, communities can pull in significant resources and avoid reliance on a single, potentially unpredictable revenue stream. (Unique, multi-tiered funding strategies may be required for individual projects as well as an overall greenprinting program.)

Whatever the combination of resources, the local share is typically the largest and most critical, demonstrating a local commitment needed to leverage outside dollars. Local funds are being generated in record numbers through passage of conservation finance measures at the county, city, and town levels. With thorough research and public opinion polling, a community can assess local support for conservation spending and design a voter-approved finance measure accordingly.

Appendix

Resources: Profile of Federal Programs

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). The largest source of federal money for park, wildlife, and open space land acquisition. The program's funding comes primarily from offshore oil-and-gas-drilling receipts. Funds are used to acquire and protect new national forests, parks, wildlife areas, and other public lands. **Administering Agency:** Appropriations are made to various federal agencies such as the Bureau of Land Management and National Park Service.

Stateside LWCF. Matching grant program provides funds to states for planning, development, and acquiring land and water areas for state and local parks and recreation areas. **Administering Agency:** National Park Service; *www.ncrc.nps.gov/lwcf*. (The Americans for Our Heritage and Recreation web site lists state LWCF recreation liaison offices and state park and recreation associations; *www.ahrinfo.org*.)

Urban Park and Recreation Recovery (UPARR). An urban complement to the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Provides direct federal assistance to urban localities for the rehabilitation of recreational facilities while encouraging the continuing operations and maintenance of recreational programs. **Administering Agency:** National Park Service; *www.nps.gov/phso/uparr.htm.*

Transportation Efficiency Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). Provides states with funds to acquire land for historic preservation, trails, scenic beautification, and water-pollution mitigation related to surface transportation through the Transportation Enhancement Program; for bike and pedestrian trails through the Recreational Trails Program; and for projects that improve air quality through the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program. **Administering Agency:** U.S. Department of Transportation; *www.fhwa.dot.gov/tea21/index.htm.*

Farmland Protection Program. Provides federal matching funds for state and local farmland protection efforts. To be eligible for funding, a state, county, or local jurisdiction must have a complementary program of funding for the purchase of conservation easements. Grants are awarded competitively through the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service. **Administering Agency:** U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service; *www.nhq.nrcs.usda.gov/PROGRAMS/.*

Wetlands Reserve Program. Offers landowners three options: permanent easements, 30-year easements, and restoration cost-share agreements of a minimum 10-year duration. For a property to be eligible for a WRP grant, the landowner must have owned the land for at least one year (unless the land was inherited or the landowner can prove the land was not purchased for enrollment into the program) and the land must be restorable and suitable for wildlife benefits. The landowner continues to control access to the land and may lease the land for recreational activities. **Administering Agency:** U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service; *www.nhq.nrcs.usda.gov/PROGRAMS/wrp/.*

Forest Legacy. Provides state funding to assist in securing conservation easements on forest lands threatened with conversion. **Administering Agency:** U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Forest Service; *svinet2.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/flp.htm.*

Pittman-Robertson Act (Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act). Provides funding for the selection, restoration, rehabilitation, and improvement of wildlife habitat, wildlife management research, and the distribution of information produced by the projects. Funds are derived from an 11 percent excise tax on sporting arms, handguns, ammunition, and archery equipment. States apply for reimbursement for up to 75 percent of the project expenses. **Administering Agency:** U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service; *www.fws.gov/r9nawwo/nawcahp.html.*

The North American Wetlands Conservation Act. Encourages voluntary, public-private partnerships to conserve wetland ecosystems. Funds projects in North America that acquire, enhance, and restore wetland ecosystems for waterfowl and other migratory birds. Acquired or restored habitat can be owned or managed by any federal, state, or nonprofit organization involved in land management. **Administering Agency:** U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service; *www.fws.gov/r9nawwo/nawcahp.html.*

The Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund (Section 6 of the Endangered Species Act). Provides grants to states and territories for conservation projects that conserve listed and nonlisted species on state, private, and other nonfederal lands. **Administering Agency:** U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service; *www.endangered.fws.gov.*

Migratory Bird Conservation Fund. Provides funds to acquire migratory-bird habitat and waterfowl-production areas within national wildlife refuges. **Administering Agency:** U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service; *www.fws.gov/r9mbmo/homepg.html.*

National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grants. Matching funds provided through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to designated state agencies to acquire, restore, enhance, or manage coastal wetland ecosystems. **Administering Agency:** U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, Branch of Habitat Restoration, Division of Habitat Conservation; *www.fws.gov/cep/cwgcover.html.*

Coastal Zone Management. A federal/state partnership whose primary purpose is the management of the nation's coastal resources, which allows for management, enhancement, protection, and acquisition of coastal lands. Administering Agency: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management (OCRM), Coastal Programs Division; *www.ocrm.nos.noaa.gov/czm/.*

National Estuarine Research System (NERRS) Sanctuaries and Reserve Division. Provides matching grants to states for land acquisition, education, facilities development, and research. **Administering Agency:** National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; *www.ocrm.nos.noaa.gov/nerr/welcome.html.*

Clean Water Act (Section 319). Funds the national and state Nonpoint Source Pollution (NSP) programs to restore and protect areas damaged by nonpoint source pollution. In order to qualify, each state needs to put together a Unified Watershed Assessment (UWA), which prioritizes, through nine key elements, watersheds in need of restoration. **Administering Agency:** U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; *www.epa.gov/owow/cwa/.*

Safe Drinking Water Act. The Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974 was reauthorized in 1996 in an effort to make more loans and grants available to the states for the protection of drinking water throughout the United States. This bill created a special revolving-loan fund of up to $1 billion a year that states can draw from to upgrade local water systems. Loan assistance is granted to a state if the purpose of the loan is to acquire land or a conservation easement from a willing seller or grantor to protect a water source from contamination. **Administering Agency:** U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; *www.epa.gov/safewater/sdwa/sdwa.html#sdwa25.*

Resources: National Publications

Building Green Infrastructure: Land Conservation as Water Protection Strategy. This report presents the cases of four watersheds in which land conservation is helping preserve water quality. For a copy, contact TPL at (415) 495-4014 or *www.tpl.org.*

Solving Sprawl: Models of Smart Growth in Communities Across America. This book from the National Resources Defense Council illustrates how people in cities, suburbs, and rural areas have found profitable, community-oriented alternatives to sprawl. To order a copy, contact the NRDC at *www.nrdc.org.*

The Economic Benefits of Parks and Open Space: How Land Conservation Helps Communities Grow Smart and Protect the Bottom Line. This report offers ample evidence that open space protection is a wise investment that produces important economic benefits, attracting investment, revitalizing cities, boosting tourism, protecting farms and ranches, preventing flood damage, and safeguarding the environment. Written by Steve Lerner and William Poole and published by the Trust for Public Land. For a copy, contact TPL at (415) 495-4014 or *www.tpl.org.*

Local Parks, Local Financing, Volume I: Increasing Public Investment in Parks & Open Space. This handbook outlines the options available to local governments to raise conservation funds. Written by Kim Hopper and published by the Trust for Public Land. For a copy, contact TPL at (415) 495-4014 or *www.tpl.org.*

Local Parks, Local Financing: Volume II: Paying for Urban Parks Without Raising Taxes. This report provides information about the non-tax funding of urban park and recreational programs. Written by Peter Harnik and published by the Trust for Public Land. For a copy, contact TPL at (415) 495-4014 or *www.tpl.org.*

The Conservation Easement Handbook: Managing Land Conservation and Historic Preservation Easement Programs. An indispensable guide for land trusts, historic preservation organizations, public agencies, landowners, landscape architects, attorneys—anyone interested in conservation easements. Written by Janet Diehl and Thomas S. Barrett and published by the Trust for Public Land and the Land Trust Alliance with the Public Resource Foundation. For a copy of the book, contact the Land Trust Alliance, *www.lta.org/publications/.*

Doing Deals: A Guide to Buying Land for Conservation. Written by the Trust for Public Land and published by TPL and the Land Trust Alliance; 1995. For a copy of the book, visit the Land Trust Alliance web site at *www.lta.org/publications/.*

The Impact of Park and Open Space and Property Values and the Property Tax Base. This report examines the economic contributions of parks and open space through their impact on property values. Written by John L. Crompton, Ph.D., professor of Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences at Texas A&M University. To order, visit the Texas A&M web site at *www.rpts.tamu.edu.*

Financing, Managing, and Marketing Recreation and Park Resources. This book presents a wide range of alternative funding methods being used to bridge the gap and pay for new park and recreation facilities and programs. Written by John L. Crompton, Ph.D., professor of Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences at Texas A&M University. To order, visit the Texas A&M web site at *www.rpts.tamu.edu.*

Saving American Farmland: What Works. This comprehensive guidebook presents American Farmland Trust's latest research on farmland protection. Specifically designed for policymakers, planners, community organizations, and concerned citizens who are working to save farmland at the local level, *Saving American Farmland* discusses the challenges of farming on the edge of development and illustrates the value of farmland to our nation, states, and communities. It reviews techniques that state and local governments are using to protect farmland, as well as federal farmland-protection policies. The book includes case studies of innovative and successful farmland-protection programs in California, Maryland, and Washington. The final section of the book offers lessons that other communities can learn from these farmland-protection pioneers and outlines the steps involved in creating a farmland-protection program. 1997; 334 pages; $34.95. To order, contact AFT by phone at (413) 586-9330 or electronically at *www.farmland.org.*

Getting to Smart Growth: 100 Policies for Implementation. This is the fourth in a series of primers designed to introduce communities to the benefits and techniques of smart growth. The report aims to support communities that have recognized the value and importance of smart growth and now seek to implement it. It does so by highlighting and describing techniques to help policymakers put smart growth principles into practice. The report is available on the web at *www.smartgrowth.org.*

Operational Guidelines for Grounds Management. This book is designed to help park managers and other grounds management stakeholders build operational and staffing plans. Published by the Association of Higher Education Facilities Officers, the National Recreation and Park Association, and the Professional Grounds Management Society. This report is available on the National Recreation and Park Association web site at *www.nrpa.org.*

Management of Park and Recreation Agencies. This park management reference book contains background on organizational structure and development, interagency management, information technology, public relations and marketing, human resource management and employment, financial management and budgeting, risk management/law enforcement/security, and evaluation. Published by the National Recreation and Park Association. Copies are available on the web at *www.nrpa.org.*

Rails-With-Trails. This reports provides design, management, and operating characteristics of 61 trails along active rail lines. Published by the Trail-to-Trails Conservancy. Available electronically at *www.trailsandgreenways.org.*

Rail-Trails and Liability. A primer on trail-related liability issues and risk management techniques. Published by the Trail-to-Trails Conservancy. Available electronically at *www.trailsandgreenways.org.*

Rail-Trail Maintenance, Preparing for the Future of Your Trail. Written by Susan Thagard, this report is designed to answer questions about trail maintenance programs and organization. Available electronically at *www.trailsandgreenways.org.*

References: Local Government Programs and Publications

More information about the local land conservation programs highlighted in this greenprinting series can be found in the following sources:

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Ocean County Natural Lands Trust Fund Program Recommendations for State Acquisition, prepared by the Natural Lands Trust Fund Advisory Committee; Ocean County, New Jersey (July 26, 2000).

The Better Jacksonville Plan and the Preservation Project, Mayor John Delaney; Jacksonville, Florida (1999).

Jefferson County Open Space Master Plan, Jefferson County, Colorado (December 1998).

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Environmentally Endangered Lands Program, 1999 Local Initiatives Award for Excellence in Land Resources Management, prepared by the Department of Environmental Resources Management; Miami-Dade County, Florida, November 26, 1999.

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Boulder County Open Space, An Owner's Guide, Boulder County, Colorado (1997–1999).

The City of Boulder Open Space Department History and Long Range Management Policies, Boulder, Colorado (2000).

Austin Smart Growth Initiative, Planning, Environmental & Conservation Services, Austin, Texas (2000).

Douglas County Open Space Policies and Procedures, Douglas County, Colorado (August 22, 1995).

Suffolk County Agricultural Protection Plan, prepared by the Suffolk County Planning Department and the Suffolk County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board, Long Island, New York (June 1996).

Suffolk County Land Acquisition Program, compiled by the Suffolk County Planning Department; Suffolk County, New York (October 1999).

Suffolk County Department of Parks, Recreation & Conservation Annual Report, Suffolk County, New York (1999).

Pima County Bond Improvement Plan, May 20, 1997 Special Election; Pima County, Arizona.

Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan, County Administrator C. H. Huckelberry; Pima County, Arizona (October 28, 1998).

Joint DeKalb County/Municipal Greenspace Program, DeKalb County, Georgia (November 2000).

Harris County Parks Master Plan, Harris County, Texas (May 4, 2001).

New Castle County 2002 Comprehensive Development Plan Update, New Castle County Department of Land Use (January 2002).

National Resources for Open Space Protection

American Farmland Trust
(202) 331-7300
www.farmland.org

The Conservation Fund
(703) 525-6300
www.conservationfund.org

Ducks Unlimited
(202) 347-1530
www.ducks.org

Environmental Protection Agency
(202) 260-2750
www.epa.gov/smartgrowth

International Rivers Network
(510) 848-1150
www.irn.org

Land Trust Alliance
(202) 628-4725
www.lta.org

National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program
(202) 354-6900
www.nps.gov/rtca

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U.S. Forest Service
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