

Standard 12: Fee Land Stewardship

Fee Lands Policy

Funding Stewardship, Land Management & Monitoring

Utah Open Lands (UOL) has a program of responsible stewardship for the land it holds in fee for conservation purposes.

Failure to manage and monitor the property held in fee for conservation purposes could lead to loss of or damage to the property's conservation values, injury to visitors, or even loss of the property itself. Utah Open Lands makes contingency provisions for its land in the event it can no longer fulfill its stewardship obligations.

Funding Land Stewardship

UOL determines the immediate and long-term financial and management implications of each land transaction and secures the dedicated and/or operating funds needed to manage the property, including funds for liability insurance, maintenance, improvements, monitoring, enforcement and other costs. If funds are not secured at or before the completion of the transaction, the land trust has a plan to secure these funds and has a policy committing the funds to this purpose. Determining the above is done through the selection criteria process/ checklist and approval procedures.

Stewardship Principles

UOL establishes general principles to guide the stewardship of its fee-owned properties, including determining what uses are and are not appropriate on its properties, the types of improvements it might make and any land management practices it will follow.

Land Management

UOL inventories the natural and cultural features of each property prior to developing a management plan that identifies its conservation goals for the property and how it plans to achieve them. Permitted activities are compatible with the conservation goals, stewardship principles and public benefit mission of the organization. Permitted activities occur only when the activity poses no significant threat to the important conservation values, reduces threats or restores ecological processes, and/or advances learning and demonstration opportunities.

- Land Management Plan

- When to Prepare the Plan

- Who Prepares the Plan

- What Goes in the Plan

Monitoring Land Trust Properties

UOL marks its boundaries and regularly monitors its properties for potential management problems (such as trespass, misuse or overuse, vandalism or safety hazards) and takes action to rectify such problems.

- The Importance of Monitoring Fee-Owned Land

- Identifying and Marking Boundaries

- Regular Monitoring

- Dealing with Encroachment

Transferring Land

Utah Open Lands will only transfer fee title to land specifically held by the organization for conservation to a qualified conservation entity as identified under 170 (h) of the IRS Code. Utah Open Lands never transfers restricted land to another entity without placing a conservation easement on the property first, codifying the intention of the organization to preserve the land for the benefit of the public. Utah Open Lands also ensures that all requisite stewardship funding is in place prior to transferring fee title.