

Standard 11: Conservation Easement Stewardship

Easement Monitoring Policy

Utah Open Lands (UOL) monitors its easement properties regularly, at least annually, in a manner appropriate to the size and restrictions of each property, and keeps documentation (such as reports, updated photographs and maps) of each monitoring activity.

Monitoring helps develop a relationship with the landowner, helps discover changes in land ownership, helps uncover violations, saves time and money on enforcement actions, and establishes a record in case of court action. Annual monitoring routinely reminds the landowner of the easement and provides a means for annual landowner contact. With annual monitoring, UOL can promptly document any changes in the property's condition relative to the easement. All monitoring activities are documented to build a record for future monitoring and in case UOL must address a violation. Some easements such as these with particularly sensitive conditions may require monitoring more frequently than once a year. UOL uses a combination of on-the-ground review, aerial observation and other methods as appropriate for monitoring.

UOL has established monitoring procedures that provide guidance for staff and volunteers. The procedures cover the purpose; frequency and method of monitoring; documentation and recordkeeping; who should monitor; pitfalls to avoid, and how monitors should be trained. Procedures clearly describe each step of the monitoring process to ensure that all properties are inspected in a similar manner regardless of who conducts the monitoring visits.