



THE **OUTSIDE** IS IN US ALL.

Saving the Best Forever

Assessment form for November/December 2016 "Saving the Best Forever" (CCRA.R.10)

1. Who is the author of the article?
 - Brett French
 - John Warner
 - Henry Gordon
 - Author is not listed
2. According to American Farmland Trust, how many acres of prime farmland has Montana lost to development since 1982?
 - 15,000 acres
 - 204,100 acres
 - 40 percent of all of Montana's farmland
 - 2,292 acres
3. Which of the following best describes a conservation easement?
 - A real estate development group that preserves land for farmers and ranchers.
 - A government program that develops farm ground into conservation easements.
 - A voluntary legal agreement between a landowner and nonprofit group or public agency like FWP. The landowner receives a one-time payment in exchange for restricting development such as housing subdivisions, which eliminate wildlife habitat.
 - A legal agreement between a landowner and a real estate group to turn farm ground into subdivisions.

4. According to the article, what are some examples of rules that can be applied with a conservation easement with FWP? (select all that apply)
- No subdividing parcels of land
 - No ranching or farming
 - No plowing up native grasslands
 - No public access
5. According to the article, how many total acres had FWP acquired as conservation easements as of 2016?
- 4 million acres
 - 28,000 acres
 - 15,000 acres
 - 458,824 acres
6. Where does FWP get the money to purchase conservation easements? (select all that apply)
- Habitat Montana Program, funded by hunting license fees
 - Donations
 - Grants from the Forest Legacy Project, administered by the U.S. Forest Service
 - State and Federal Taxes
7. According to the article, how do most conservation easements begin?
- Conversations between a landowner and a wildlife biologist
 - Notices in the mail to landowners
 - Law enforcement officers
 - YouTube videos
8. Why does FWP try to link conservation easements with other existing protected lands?
- Because it requires less paperwork
 - So that ranchers have more places to graze cattle
 - It allows for wildlife to have greater unobstructed movement
 - The article does not cover that information
9. Why doesn't FWP just buy prime wildlife habitat from willing sellers? (select all that apply)
- It does do that sometimes

- Because often the agency can get more “bang for the buck” with easements.
- Because sometimes a landowner wants to keep working the land, which isn’t possible if it’s acquired as a wildlife management area
- Because Montana already has too much prime wildlife habitat

10. According to the article, what kind of land does FWP target for conservation easements? (select all that apply)

- Prime wildlife habitat
- Land linked with other protected lands
- Timbered lands that contain critical habitat for endangered animals
- Wildlife-rich riparian habitat

11. How long does a conservation easement last?

- For however long FWP decides it should
- Forever
- Until the landowner decides to sell the land for housing subdivisions
- Until FWP runs out of money

12. How does FWP ensure that wildlife and hunters will benefit from the purchase of a conservation easement? (select all that apply)

- Public access and land use is negotiated between the landowner and FWP
- Ranchers are no longer allowed to graze the easement
- FWP transfers ownership of the easements to the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
- Many easements are also enrolled in Block Management for hunting access

13. How is a conservation easement altered when a landowner sells the land?

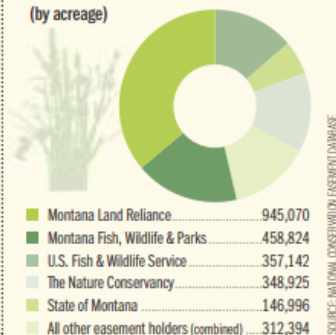
- The easement is dissolved
- FWP pays the new landowner
- The easement remains in effect forever
- The easement is transferred to the Montana Land Reliance

Other conservation easements in Montana

FWP's 458,824 acres of conservation easements comprise roughly one-fifth of the more than 2.5 million acres of conservation easements in Montana. Many other groups also purchase or receive donations of easements, including The Nature Conservancy, Montana Land Reliance, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, and Gallatin Valley, Flathead, Five Valleys, Bitter Root, and Prickly Pear Land Trusts.

"We're proud that Montana has conserved all these acres," says Glenn Marx, executive director of the Montana Association of Land Trusts. "But it's a common misconception that because the number of conservation easements has grown over the years, the amount of open land in Montana has increased, too. It hasn't. Pretty much every day someone, somewhere converts Montana farm or ranch land to another use." That's okay, says Marx, who knows that Montanans want economic development and new job opportunities. "But it's a good thing—as we grow our economy and as our population grows—that landowners work with land trusts and agencies like FWP to conserve priority habitats and farmlands," he says. "These easements conserve some of the best Montana has to offer." ■

Montana's largest easement holders
(by acreage)



Use the information and chart provided to answer the remaining questions

14. Who is Montana's largest easement holder?

- Montana Land Reliance
- Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- The Nature Conservancy
- State of Montana

15. About what percentage of all conservation easements in Montana are owned by FWP?

- $\frac{1}{5}$
- $\frac{1}{3}$
- $\frac{1}{2}$
- $\frac{2}{3}$

16. How many acres of conservation easements exist in Montana?

- 945,070 acres
- 458,824 acres
- Over 2.5 million acres
- 312,394 acres

Get your boots on the ground and dig deeper!

Use the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Hunt Planner page to complete the following tasks (MTSSCS.3)

<http://fwp.mt.gov/gis/maps/huntPlanner/>

1. Under the layers tab select the box labeled FWP Access Opportunities and then select the box labeled FWP Lands and Easements - Hunting

2. Select the layers tab labeled “legend”
3. Explore around the state while looking for FWP conservation easements
4. Locate the conservation easement discussed in the article north of Chinook, the Gordon Cattle Company Conservation Easement (it shares much of its border with Canada)
5. What types of lands mostly surround the Gordon Cattle Company Conservation Easement?
6. Vocabulary: Define the following
 - a. BLM land
 - b. State land
 - c. Block Management
 - d. National Park Service land
 - e. Perpetual
 - f. U.S. Forest Service land



Created by Kristopher D. Schreiner
Montana History Teacher
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