



**Landowner Application
for a Non-Binding Bid to Obtain a Conservation Easement.
Avon Hills Round of Bidding Ending February 4, 2015**

Form updated 6 November 2014

- **Complete, sign, and return all 4 pages of this form in a sealed envelope.**
- **Include a copy of your property map. Indicate on the map the areas you wish to include in the easement and areas you wish to leave out.**

Deliver in person or by mail to the office of Saint John's Outdoor University, New Science 104, 2346 Science Drive, (PO Box 3000), Collegeville, MN 56321-3000. It must arrive before noon on February 4, 2015. (Acceptance is assured for applications postmarked on or before January 30.)

Conservation easements are a legal tool used to restrict certain activities on private property in perpetuity in order to achieve conservation goals. Easements are negotiable, tailored to the land and the landowners. The broadest goal of an easement is to keep most of the land undeveloped.

The purpose of this form is to allow landowners to voluntarily bid and compete for public funds made available to the Avon Hills Initiative through the Legislative Citizens Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR). Saint John's University is the fiscal agent for the grant and distributes the funds.

Bids will be prioritized using a method which compares the environmental benefits to the landowners bid to create a conservation value rating. (Multifaceted Approach to Prioritizing Land Easements -MAPLE) Successful bidders will be paid upon finalizing a conservation easement with the easement holder, the Minnesota Land Trust (MLT).

Landowner Information:

Name(s): _____

Yes No ---> The names above include all persons who have a legal share in this property.

Designated Easement Contact Person(s) Information:

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone(s): Day: ____-____-____ Cell: ____-____-____

E-mail(s): _____

Legal Description or copy of tax statement: _____

Landowner Application

for a Non-Binding Bid to Obtain a Conservation Easement.

Section 1: The following information is useful for the easement holder (Minnesota Land Trust) in determining how complicated the process of finalizing an easement might be. Answering “True” is preferred, but not necessarily required in this section. (The terms “we” and “us” means those parties which have a legal interest in the property being considered for an easement.)

T F The property which is intended to be covered by the easement (Hereafter “the property”) is held free and clear by us. (No mortgages, encumbrances, liens, or delinquent taxes exist against the land.)

T F The property is not currently the subject of a lawsuit, annexation, condemnation, or a proposed utility right-of-way.

T F The property does not currently have any easements or deed restrictions that we are aware of or if they exist, we have attached a description of such deed restrictions. (A title review will be done as part of the easement process.)

T F The property not been the subject of a proposed development or plat taken before a planning commission by us within the last 3 years.

T F It is not currently our intent to develop the land intended to be covered by the easement within the next 5 years.

T F We believe we have a good understanding of easements in general.

T F We understand that an easement will have permanent restrictions on the land to benefit long-term conservation.

T F We understand that we will be able to bequeath, donate, or sell our land to any person or entity, but that those parties will continue to live with the easement restrictions. We understand that the easement will become part of the deed.

T F We believe we have a good understanding of what property uses we would like to restrict and also those we would like to retain in this easement.

T F We have discussed conservation easements in general with our family.

T F We have discussed our interest in this conservation easement with our family.

T F We have an attorney or could find one with whom we can discuss this conservation easement if we so choose.

T F We have a financial adviser or could find one with whom we can discuss this conservation easement if we so choose.

Section 2: Please indicate that you have read, understand, and agree with each of the following statements by circling either Y for yes or N for no. Answering “yes” to each question in this section is required to qualify for an easement.

Y N Our application must be received in a sealed envelope marked “Easement Bid” at the offices of Saint John's Outdoor University, New Science 104, 2346 Science Drive, (PO Box 3000), Collegeville, MN 56321-3000 so that it arrives before noon on February 4, 2015. Our “code name” will be on the outside of the envelope.

Y N Information regarding completed easements will be considered public information as public funds are being used. Any information submitted on the application may be made public if the names and legal descriptions are removed.

Y N We may be party to only one application per round of bidding.

Y N At least part of our land is in the Avon Hills as described in the map [The Avon Hills Landscape of Stearns County](#) and contiguous to any part outside the map area.

Y N Separate landowners may pool their bids on a single application as a group, providing 1) they all agree to accept their combined environmental benefits score and 2) provided they all agree to the same bid rate per acre. If accepted as a group, each landowner will receive an individualized easement, but all landowners must sign their easements for any to be accepted.

Y N We are not legally committed to the easement until we agree and sign the final easement documents. We may withdraw at any time for any reason prior to signing. The only penalty for applicants who choose to withdraw after their bid is accepted is that they may not participate in a future round of bidding sponsored by the same funding source for 18 months.

Y N The MN Land Trust (MLT) will be the easement holder and is not legally committed to the easement until they agree and sign the final easement documents. MLT may withdraw at any time for any reason prior to signing without legal recourse by the applicants.

Y N To have a bid accepted, you must be able to convince the easement holder (MLT) that you can legally sign an easement within the time constraints set by the easement holder and/or the funding source which is June 30, 2016. This decision is at the sole discretion of the easement holder. Rejected landowners may apply at any future round of bidding.

Y N The Environmental Benefits Points determination is partly subjective and we accept the score as presented.

Y N The Conservation Value Rating is determined by dividing your Environmental Benefits Points by the dollars /acre you wish to be paid from funding provided by the LCCMR. Other parties may offer additional funding to specific landowners without affecting that landowner's Conservation Value Rating.

Y N Our bid must meet the minimum threshold of Environmental Benefits (500 points) and will be prioritized against any other bids based on the highest Conservation Value Rating.

Y N We understand that the landowner whose bid has the highest Conservation Value Rating will be offered the opportunity for an easement. If funds remain, the landowner with the next highest Conservation Value Rating will be offered the opportunity and so on until the available funds are expended.

Y N If a landowner is next in line for funding, but not enough funding remains to fulfill their bid the landowner may choose to: 1) Withdraw their bid and be allowed to bid without penalty in the next round. 2) Lower their bid to use all the remaining funds while keeping all the acres they originally bid for the easement.

Y N There is a limit to the amount of funding a landowner may receive which is the lesser of either the 1) appraised value of the rights given up in the easement or 2) the limit connecting Environmental Benefits to a percentage of the Assessor's Township Average Market Value (ATAMV) per acre.

Y N If a landowner's bid is higher than the appraised value of the easement, the land owner may choose to: 1) Withdraw their bid and be allowed to bid without penalty in the next round. 2) Lower their bid to maximum appraised value while keeping all the acres they originally bid for the easement.

Y N The income from any payment we receive for an easement is considered taxable income.

Y N As needed, the landowner is responsible for the costs of acquiring a land management plan. (\$7-12/acre estimated)

Y N As needed, the landowner is responsible for the costs associated with surveying.

Y N The previous answers represent the full agreement of everyone applying for this easement.

Print name(s) and sign by landowner(s) or designated easement contact: (Add signature pages as needed.) Date:

Avon Hills Area Conservation Easement Bid Worksheet Using the MMAPLE Method

Complete using data from the worksheet or attach printout from worksheet.

_____ = Code name for this bid. (Use anything you want.)

Size of Property (based on tax statement acres)	
	Total acres owned by applicant contiguous to this proposed easement. (For information only)
0	Acres to be protected by an easement, not including any house site acres within the easement area.
0.0	Acres of this proposed easement plus those acres outside the easement that would fall within a full "40" or Gov. Lot
	(i.e. 75 acres in easement + 5 homesite acres = 80 acres. Include only those acres owned by applicant.)
0	Total contiguous easement acres or largest block if not all acres are contiguous
Special Natural & Cultural Resources to be Protected by the Easement (count only those acres covered by the easement)	
0	Acres of Outstanding Quality DNR Sites of Biodiversity Significance (SOBS) (Rounded up to nearest 5 acres)
0	Acres of High Quality DNR Sites of Biodiversity Significance (SOBS) (Rounded up to nearest 5 acres)
0	Acres of Moderate Quality DNR Sites of Biodiversity Significance (SOBS) (Rounded up to nearest 5 acres)
0	Feet of Shoreline on "public waters" (streams, lakes+ wetlands>10 ac) from the Public Water Inventory Map (round up to nearest 10)
0	Feet of the longest contiguous section of shoreline on "public waters" for each lake on which the survey is "meandered." (round up to nearest 10)
0	Acres which are designated as a source of public drinking water or aquifer recharge area.
0	Feet of protected property boundary which is adjacent to a designated scenic road, river, trail, or other designated scenic feature.
0	# of documented sites of historical or cultural significance which will be protected.
Open Space /Working Forest /Working Ag to be Protected by the Easement (count only those acres covered by the easement)	
0	Acres to be used for working forest, prairie, preserved forest, savanna, or wetland . (Not intended for agriculture, pasturing, or horticulture.)
0	Acres to be allowed for use as agriculture, pasturing, or horticulture.
0	Acres for which a current land management plan exists. (i.e. Forest Stewardship Plan or NRCS Farm Plan)
Location of the Property to be Protected (count only those acres covered by the easement)	
0	Acres on which unrestricted public access will be allowed.
0	Feet of protected property boundary which is adjacent to either public land or other permanently protected land.
0	Acres which are inside some kind of specially designated conservation protection area. (Township, county conservation overlay district)
Building Allotments to be Extinguished, or Retained for Future Use, or are Already Used by the Applicant (within next full "40")	
(Include building areas inside the easement area plus those controlled by the applicant outside the easement that would fall within the next largest full "40" or Gov. Lot.)	
A40	Current property zoning. Examples A5, T20, A40 - Check with zoning board.
0	Total number of building allotments (used or unused) that are assigned by zoning . (Often 1 per 40 acres. Check with zoning board.)
0	Number of building allotments already used or to be retained from above. (Include any existing homesites you own.)
0	Number of building allotments to be extinguished within the proposed easement area.
1	Clustering: How many unconnected areas will contain building sites? Clustered building sites that have adjoining boundaries are counted as 1 area.
Enter 0 above	Boundaries of individual building sites must adjoin on the longest or second longest side to be counted as one cluster.
1	How many separate legal easement document sets need to be created? (Multiple bidders or current/future land splits require separate easements.)
\$0	\$/acre Admin fee for multiple easements. (\$15,000 per additional legal easement sets needed /acres protected. \$0 fee for the first easement.)
OF ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS POINTS	
Deductions (if any) for Not Extinguishing all Building Allotments (100% protection = no deductions)	
0%	Percent of land in the easement compared to the next highest "full 40" or government lot. (Protection > 80% has no deductions.)
0%	Percent of total allotments to extinguished. (Must be >65% for full credit.)
No Houses	Acres of protected land per homesite or developed cluster. Must exceed 75 acres for 100%. 160+ acres = max of 130%.

Hand calculate your bid below.	
0	(A) =Your Total Environmental Benefits points
\$ per acre	(B) = \$ per acre you want to be paid for the easement.
\$0	(C) Add this admin fee to (B) your total price /acre
	(D) = Your Conservation Value Rating
	(D) Conservation Value Ratings = (A) ÷ (B+C)
0	(E) = Total acres you are protecting with an easement.
\$	(F) =Total \$ you could receive if accepted. (F)=(B x E)

Y N The bid above represents the full agreement of everyone applying for this easement.

Print name(s) and sign by landowner(s) or designated easement contact:

Date:

Print name(s) and sign by landowner(s) or designated easement contact:

Date:

(add signature pages as needed)