LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY OF AGRICULTURE

Intergenerational Transition

Voluntary Conservation

Land Preservation
The average age of farmers has never been higher and the number of beginning farmers and ranchers is shrinking.

CURRENT AVG. YEARS OF AGE: 60

BEGINNING FARMERS ENCOMPASS 24% OF ALL FARMERS & RANCHERS (2012)
These “working lands” encompass more than 25% of Oregon’s 63 million acres.
Over the next 20 years, 64% of Oregon’s agricultural lands will change hands.
84% of Oregon farms are sole proprietorships, suggesting they have not done thorough planning for succession.
Farm Succession Planning

Challenges

- Don’t have successors
- Don’t know where to start
- Emotionally and financially complex
Lack of Succession Planning

- Family Strife
- Loss of Assets
- Limited Access for BFRs
AS A RESULT, PARCELIZATION & NON-FARMER OWNERSHIP OCCUR

More Fragmented Into Parcels

Converted to Non-Farm Uses

Harder for Beginning Farmers
“The interests of Oregon for today and in the future must be protected from the grasping wastrels of the land. We must respect another truism – that unlimited and unregulated growth leads inexorably to a lowered quality of life.”

Oregon Governor Tom McCall, 1973
Land Use alone is not enough

Oregon’s unique land use program has slowed development of open space

But 500,000 acres have been removed from agricultural use and 65,500 acres from EFU since the program was created.

There are over 50 permitted non-farm uses on EFU.
NEW AND GROWING COMPETITION FOR OREGON FARMLAND
THE DIFFICULTIES FARMERS & RANCHERS FACE

Succession Planning

Access to Land
Easements & Covenants

A conservation easement is a voluntary legal agreement between a landowner and land trust or government agency that permanently limits use of the land to protect its conservation values.
Agricultural Conservation Easement Program – Agricultural Conservation Easements (ACEP-ALE)

NRCS ACEP-ALE offers 50-75% match for working lands easements.

28 states have state match programs for ACEP-ALE.
ACEP dollars received and acres enrolled in 2014 and 2015 between states with and without a state match agricultural conservation easement program

- **States without a state match program**
  - Financial Assistance dollars received (in thousands of dollars): $26,113.9
  - Total Technical and Financial Assistance dollars received (in thousands of dollars): $80,565.0
  - Total Agricultural Land Easement acres enrolled in 2014 and 2015: 42741.1

- **States with a state match program**
  - Financial Assistance dollars received (in thousands of dollars): $82,534.0
  - Total Technical and Financial Assistance dollars received (in thousands of dollars): $229,550.5
  - Total Agricultural Land Easement acres enrolled in 2014 and 2015: 77614.6

**A 68% difference in ACEP dollars received for purchasing easements and for implementing conservation practices.**

**A 65% difference in total ACEP dollars received.**

**A 45% difference in acres conserved with ACEP funding.**
How do PNWER U.S. states measure up?

Percent of ACEP-ALE funding received

Montana* – 2.7%
Washington* – 2.6%
Idaho – 1.3%
Alaska – 0.21%
Oregon – 0.19%

* Have ACEP-ALE state match programs
Work Group Convened by Governor’s office

Six diverse nonprofits, OWEB, one farmer, one rancher

Met every 2 weeks for over one year

Nine listening sessions held across the state
Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program Elements

Match grants for voluntary conservation
- Permanent easements
- Temporary covenants
- Conservation management plans

Capacity building for easement holders

Succession planning workshops

Study of Oregon estate tax