



2019 Policy Platform

The Washington Association of Land Trusts (WALT) unites 27 land trusts across the state to advance voluntary, collaborative conservation. WALT connects and leverages the work of members to protect and restore the lands that sustain us.

Land trusts are partnering with communities across the state to conserve land for future generations – but success hinges on robust public funding and effective tools. In the face of increased development, population growth, and a changing climate, it is more important than ever to support policies and programs that will ensure our farms, forests and shorelines continue to contribute to Washington’s economy, culture and landscape.

1) Ensure robust funding of state Capital Budget conservation programs

Washington state’s Capital Budget funds critical programs to help communities conserve and restore lands and waters for future generations – and in turn, support local economies, quality of life, and outdoor recreation. WALT urges the passage of the 2019-2020 State Capital Budget with strong funding for all natural resource programs. See the attached list of WALT supported state capital budget programs.

2) Advance community-based forestry and working forest protection

When the community is actively represented and included in the development, governance, management and use of working forest land, it can bring substantial benefits to health and wellbeing, enhance forest resilience and wildlife habitat, and generate local jobs and economic activity. WALT supports continued investment into research and outreach on behalf of community-based forestry in Washington State, and the creation of a new statewide grant program to provide funding for community forest projects. WALT also supports the continued improvement of existing statewide funding programs that protect private working forest land and recognize their ability to provide multiple benefits such as local jobs, improved water supply, resilient wildlife habitat, as well as carbon storage and sequestration.

3) Enhanced funding for shorelines and salmon recovery

Washington’s shorelines are complex, biodiverse ecosystems and form the basis of food webs driving our regional economy, providing important recreational opportunities, and sustaining keystone species like salmon and orcas. In the face of a continued shoreline conversion, habitat degradation, and sea level rise, WALT supports enhanced funding for acquisition and restoration programs benefiting shorelines and salmon population recovery statewide.

The Washington Association of Land Trusts supports strong funding and integrity of the following grant programs:

State funding sources

WA Department of Natural Resources

- Community Forest Trust (CFT)
- Trust Land Transfer

Department of Ecology

- Floodplains by Design

WA Recreation & Conservation Office

- Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account (ALEA)
- Coastal Restoration Grants
- Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP)
- Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR)
- Salmon Recovery Funding
- Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP)

Federal funding sources

US Department of the Interior

- Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS)

- Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund (Section 6)
- National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program (NCWC)
- North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA)
- Wildlife & Sport Fish Restoration Program (WSFR): Wildlife Restoration Program
- WSFR: Landowner Incentive Program (LIP)

National Ocean and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

- Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP)
- Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF)

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

- Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)
- Healthy Forests Reserve Program (HRFP)
- Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

US Forest Service

- Community Forest Program (CFP)
- Forest Legacy Program (FLP)

US Department of Defense

- Readiness & Environmental Protection Integration Program (REPI)

US Department of Transportation

- National Recreational Trails Program (RTP)