PROTECTING YOUR LAND FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

Protecting the land and our way of life. An agricultural conservation easement helps protect farming as a way of life for you, your children, and for all those who love the land and depend on its bounty. It's a sensible farm planning tool that is as good for the pocketbook as it is for the heart.

Sutter Buttes Regional Land Trust

Sutter Buttes Regional Land Trust
P.O. Box 3359
Yuba City, California 95992



Sutter Buttes Regional Land Trust

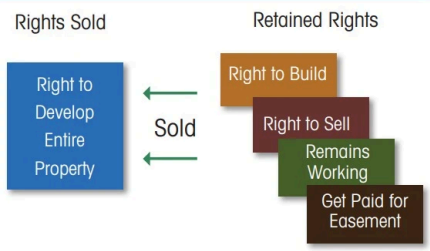
AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION EASEMENTS

Agricultural Conservation Easements

What is an Easement?

- A VOLUNTARY legal agreement a landowner makes with a non-profit land trust or government agency that permanently restricts the type and amount of future development while continuing to use the land for farming or ranching.
- The landowner continues to own the property.
- The nonprofit land trust or government agency that purchases the easement is responsible for insuring that continuing land uses are consistent with the easement terms.
- The easement "runs with the land" and remains in place even after the land is sold.
- The easement is a flexible document that can be tailored to the specific property and needs of the landowner.
- An easement can be purchased or donated.

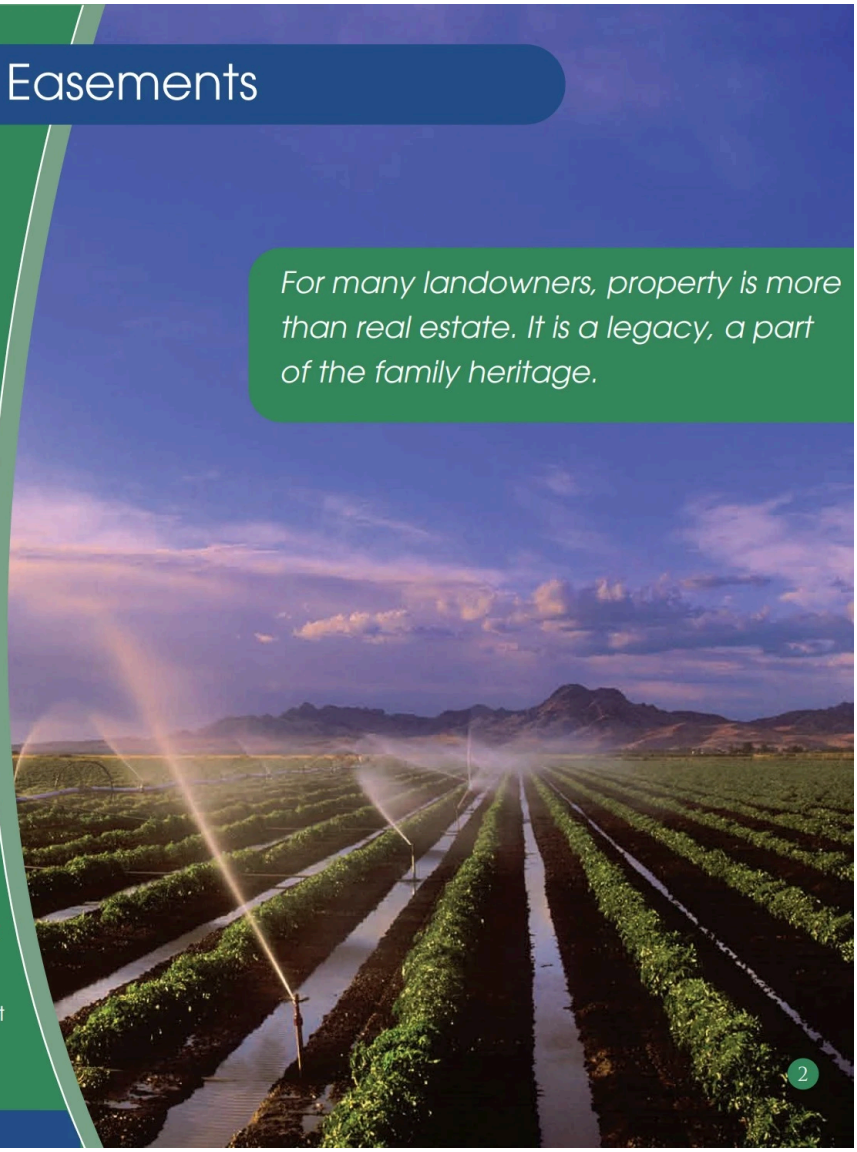
Conservation Easement



Every property comes with numerous rights such as the right to harvest timber, subdivide, build a home or to farm, to name a few. When a landowner places an agricultural conservation easement on his or her property, most of the development rights are transferred to the easement holder but the landowner retains the right to farm or ranch.

1

For many landowners, property is more than real estate. It is a legacy, a part of the family heritage.



2

www.sutterbutteslandtrust.org | 530.755.3568

Economic Benefits of an Easement



Protect your land forever with an agricultural conservation easement.

THE BENEFITS OF CONSERVATION EASEMENTS

The sale of a conservation easement can provide numerous benefits to landowners. There can be significant economic benefits to selling an easement. Landowners are encouraged to consult with their own tax consultants about the specifics of tax benefits applicable to their situation.

- Can help a landowner pass land intact to the next generation. Reduce estate taxes by excluding the easement value from the taxable value of the estate.
- Reduce property taxes by reducing the value of the property.
- If all or part of the easement value is donated, the landowner receives income tax benefits that were greatly improved under the Pension Protection Act of 2006 (www.lta.org).
- Provide an infusion of cash for farming or ranching operations.

How an easement payment can be used

The landowner is free to use the easement payment as he or she wishes, such as:

- Build a new barn
- Purchase additional land
- Loan repayment
- Start a retirement fund
- Provide a financial reserve

3

www.sutterbutteslandtrust.org | 530.755.3568

A conservation easement is a win-win for everyone involved. The landowner is able to keep farming their land to produce high quality food, while also protecting their rich family history, and unique natural resources. Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Conservation Service provide support for ongoing agricultural activities, and the land trust is able to fulfill its mission to protect the land and natural resources of the region for present and future generations.

4

How to Calculate Your Easement



At a Glance:

How to calculate the value of an Agricultural conservation easement

A farmer's 200-acre walnut orchard is valued at $17,000 per acre before an easement is in place, totaling $3,400,000 for all 200 acres. By placing an easement on the property, and removing the non-farm development rights, the per-acre value is lowered to $4,200, so the total market value of the property becomes $850,000. The difference between the before and after easement land value is $2,550,000. (Note: This is only an example of a potential project. Actual easement values vary widely from one property to the next and are based on the local real estate market, a property's development rights and the restrictions described in the easement.)

5

Agricultural conservation easements are funded by public agencies as well as private donations.



6

www.sutterbutteslandtrust.org | 530.755.3568

Protecting Fedora Farms

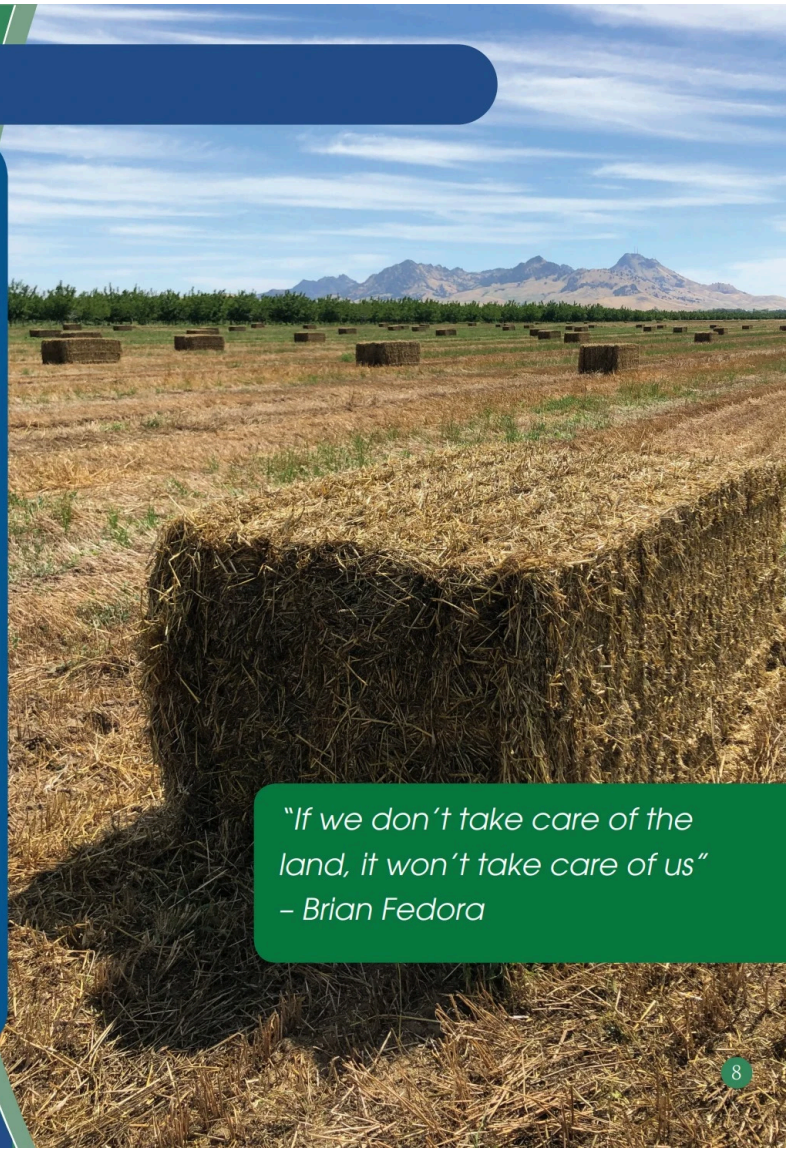


In the small rural town of Meridian, adjacent to the Sacramento River and Butte Slough, lies Fedora Farms. Landowner Sibley Fedora's ancestors migrated to the United States on the Mayflower and acquired the property in the late 1800's. Since that time, five generations have been raised on the family farm, including Sibley Fedora, his wife, Margaret, and sons, Brian and Chris, who have now taken over the family agricultural operation, growing walnuts and other crops. For the Fedora Family, farming is a way of life, and through it they have built a deep appreciation and connection to the land.

When potential development threatened the ranch, the family knew they needed to act quickly to conserve their land and protect their rural heritage. In 2014, working with the Sutter Buttes Regional Land Trust, the family was able to protect their way of life and continue their good stewardship practices, by placing a conservation easement on their property. The easement was drafted in a way that allowed the Fedora's to continue to farm with minimal restrictions. The land trust worked with the landowners to identify building envelopes where housing, shops, barns, agricultural processing and storage facilities are, or will be located, with minimal restrictions to allow flexibility in the use of these areas for agricultural purposes.

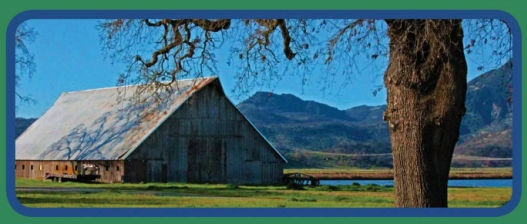
The easement is held and monitored by Sutter Buttes Regional Land Trust to ensure the protection of the agricultural land, wetland habitat, scenic views of the Sutter Buttes, and valuable habitat and open space for migratory birds and other wildlife into perpetuity. Funding for the easement purchase was provided by the California Department of Conservation (DOC) and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

*The process for obtaining an easement will vary from landowner to landowner



"If we don't take care of the land, it won't take care of us"
– Brian Fedora

How to Apply for an Easement



Protecting the land and a way of life.

Applying is easy

- Determine if agriculture is in your future plans
- Talk to your legal and financial advisors
- Meet with Sutter Buttes Regional Land Trust
- Work with Sutter Buttes Regional Land Trust to draft your easement agreement

Questions? Contact Us

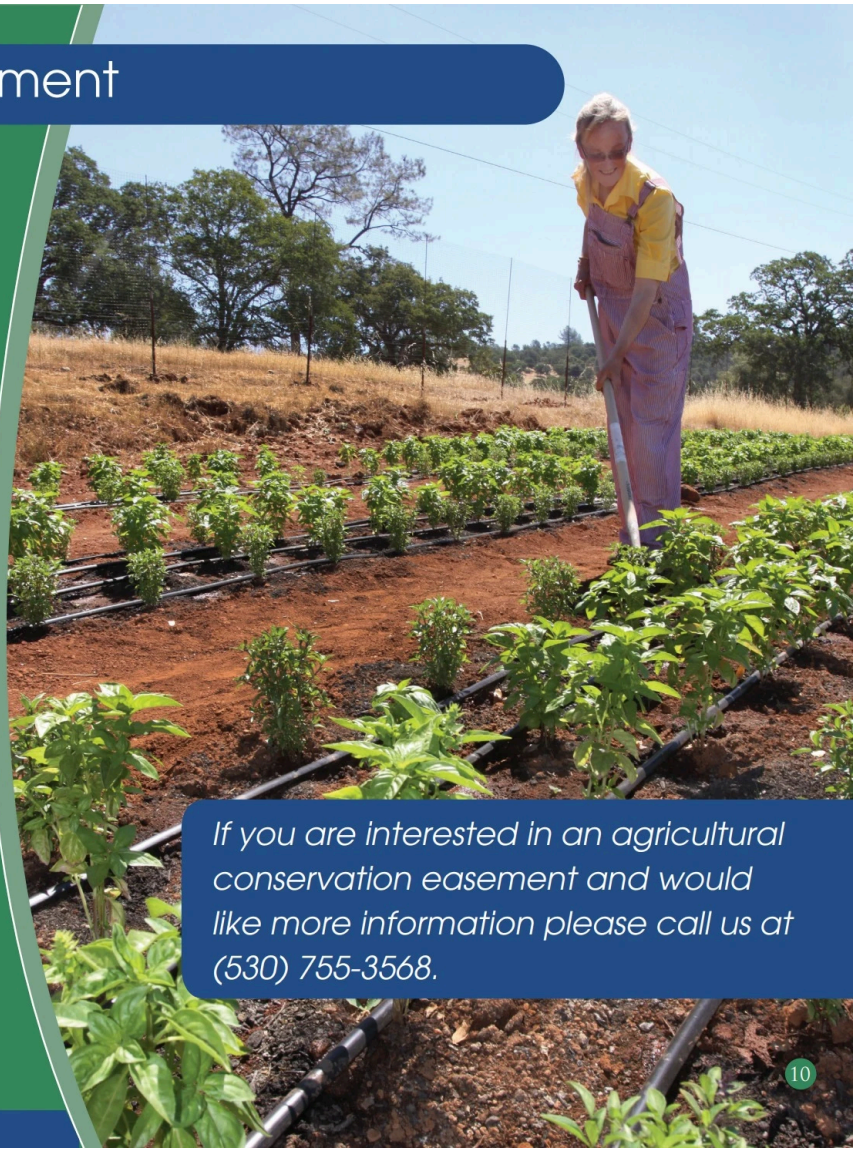
Sutter Buttes Regional Land Trust
PO Box 3359
Yuba City, CA 95992-3359
Phone 530.755.3568
email: info@sutterbutteslandtrust.org

© Photos by John Hollis and Lisa Lindman 2022

ACCREDITED LAND TRUST ACCREDITATION COMMISSION

9

www.sutterbutteslandtrust.org | 530.755.3568



If you are interested in an agricultural conservation easement and would like more information please call us at (530) 755-3568.

10