Conservation Easements Encyclopedia Article

Conservation Easements

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Conservation Easements

A **conservation** easement is a covenant, restriction, or condition in a deed, will, or other legal document that allows the owner to maintain ownership and control of real property, but restricts the use of that property so the land is conserved in its natural state, or, in the case of a historic conservation easement, so that it provides a historic benefit. The uses allowed by the easement can include **recreation**, agriculture, cultural uses, and establishment of **wildlife habitat**. The federal government allows tax deductions for conservation easements that provide a certified value to the public, such as protecting ecologically valuable natural habitat or, in the case of an easement based on the historical conservation of the property, that contribute to the historic character of the district in which the property is located. Conservation easements are legal instruments enabled by many states as well as non-United States governments, including Canada and most of its provinces.