

Creating Great Relationships with Landowners

CCLT Landowner Relations Webinar

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Why am I Teaching This Class?

- We can get too involved in talking about what we do and forget about our audience
- Best way to conserve Colorado is to have happy landowners
- People don't care what you know until they know you care



Get to Know Who You're Working With

- When someone calls to ask about conservation easements, what do you do?
 - Ask questions to understand how to best help them
 - Start with a “Respect” question

Introductory Questions

- Other introductory questions to ask
 - Tell me about your land
 - What is important to you about your land?
 - What is the biggest challenge you are facing with your land?
 - Who will need to be involved with the decision on what to do with your land?
 - What is your preferred method of communicating?

Introductory Questions cont.

- Why are you asking these introductory questions?
 - Know whether you should schedule a time to meet in person
 - Establish rapport
 - Know what they need



Experience Questions

- Don't make assumptions about what they know
- Examples of experience questions:
 - How familiar are you with conservation easements?
 - What interests you most about conserving your land?
 - What other options are you considering to deal with the challenges on your land?

Experience Questions cont.

- Apply information learned:
 - Tailor level of detail
 - Any incorrect pre-conceived ideas?
 - Address aspects of land conservation most important to the landowner first

Use of Land Questions

- Good questions to ask about the use of their land:
 - Who is currently running your agricultural operation?
 - How is your land currently being used?
 - Does anyone live on your land?
 - Are you planning on selling your land soon?
 - Do you plan to pass your land down to your heirs one day?
 - Do you plan to change how you're using your land anytime in the future?

Use of Land Questions cont.

- Why are these questions important?
 - Need to know if what they are currently doing and want to do is compatible with conservation
 - Lets you know if there are some benefits more or less important to them



Criteria Questions

- Determine landowner criteria for conserving their land:
 - How much money/value do you need to afford conserving your land?
 - What timeframe are you hoping to be able to finish your conservation easement?
 - Have you talked to your family about conserving your property? How do they feel about it?
 - What are all the names on the deeds? Are they involved?
 - Who have you talked to so far?
 - What do you like most about conserving your land?

Criteria Questions cont.

- Why are these questions important?
 - If there are unrealistic expectations, it is good to let them know right away, so they can decide if it's worth their time to learn more.
 - Are there going to be family dynamic issues to deal with?
 - How quickly should you be following up with them – what is their timeframe for closing?
 - Know how to best advise them about the next steps.

Finishing Questions

- Determine whether they have had a chance to say everything that is on their mind:
 - Do you have any other goals for your land that you think I should know about?
 - Before I start telling you about how our land trust/conservation easements/tax credits work, do you have any questions?
 - When is convenient time for us to talk again if we run out of time?.

Finishing Questions cont.

- Why are these questions important?
 - Something important may come up out-of-left-field that might have otherwise missed
 - Help them feel they got you all of the information they wanted to tell you.
 - Conveys respect for them.

Objectives

- Why are these questions important?
 - Learn as much as you can about them: listen and take notes
 - Establish rapport – verbal and non-verbal cues, allow pauses, express empathy
 - Prepare a strong presentation: determine what information will be beneficial to them

Presentation

- Tailor the examples to something relevant for them
- Give the correct amount of information based on where they are in the learning curve.

Keep Landowners Happy

- Keep them informed
- Take care of the details for them
- Say thank you every chance you get

Wrapping it up

- Listen before you speak
- Treat people as they would like to be treated- not necessarily how you'd like to be treated
- Show them you care

Questions?

- Contact me anytime with questions
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