

YOU CARE ABOUT YOUR LAND.

Whether it's because you wish to carry on a multigenerational family legacy or because you purchased the land yourself to have a place to call your own, you ultimately want what's best for your land.

The Southern Indiana Sentinel Landscape (SISL) partnership is working to transform conservation in South Central Indiana by connecting landowners to conservation programs for agriculture, forestry, water quality, and ecosystem restoration. By having a landscape dominated by conservation-minded sustainable land uses, including working farms and forests, we all can contribute to preserving the critical mission of military training and readiness at our Department of Defense installations and promote conservation at the same time. Our job at the Conservation Law Center is to facilitate this program and connect you to the right resources to make this happen.

There are a variety of conservation programs available to landowners who want to implement or expand land conservation practices on their property. Below you will find a summary of select programs that may be right for you. Feel free to reach out to us at any time and we will help you connect with the right conservation options to meet your goals.

Permanent Land Protection

The highest level of protection you can give your land is permanent protection through a conservation easement or transfer of fee title ownership. If continuing a family legacy of ownership is important to you, but you still want to make a permanent commitment to conservation and land protection, then selling or donating a conservation easement might be the best fit for you. With this option, you retain ownership of the land and can be compensated to enter into a permanent agreement to limit certain uses of the land. Fee ownership options include selling or donating your land to a private conservation organization or public land holding agency.

<https://www.landtrustalliance.org/what-you-can-do/conserv-your-land/conservation-options>

Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) offers two types of easements through ACEP. Agricultural Land Easements (ALE) can protect cropland, grassland, pastureland, and forest land. Land enrolled in Wetland Reserve Easements (WRE) must be farmland or converted wetlands that can be successfully and cost-effectively restored. ALE easements must be held by a partnering land trust, while WRE easements are held by the US Department of Agriculture. Landowners receive compensation for enrolling their land in either program.

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs-initiatives/acep-agricultural-conservation-easement-program>

Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI)

The Department of Defense (DoD) REPI Program can assist landowners obtain conservation easements within three miles of the boundaries of NSA Crane or Lake Glendora Test Facility.

<https://www.repi.mil/>

Technical and Financial Assistance for Land Management

Many programs provide technical and financial assistance to landowners for conservation practices. Below are a few commonly used programs and practices in SISL.

Classified Forest and Wildlands Program

This program administered by the Indiana DNR Division of Forestry offers a property tax reduction on forests, wetlands, shrublands, and/or grasslands in exchange for good stewardship of the land. The land must be a minimum of 10.0 contiguous acres and be free of any permanent structures.

<https://www.in.gov/dnr/forestry/programs/classified-forest-and-wildlands/>

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

EQIP is a program through NRCS that provides financial and technical assistance to landowners for conservation practices including brush management (invasive species control), forest stand improvement, tree/shrub planting, warm season grass/pollinator plantings, cover crops, and nutrient management.

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2022-06/EQIP-Factsheet%20%28%29.pdf>

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

CRP, administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA), allows landowners to receive financial assistance to implement conservation practices such as warm season grass/pollinator plantings, tree and shrub plantings, or grass waterways on lands with an eligible cropping history. Annual payments are then granted through ten- or fifteen-year contracts.

<https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/conservation-programs/conservation-reserve-program/index>

Partners for Fish and Wildlife

Partners for Fish and Wildlife is a program offered by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to provide technical and financial assistance to landowners to do habitat restoration on their properties. The restoration work is intended to benefit migratory birds as well as federally threatened or endangered species. This habitat restoration primarily takes the form of grasslands, wetlands, reforestation, and/or invasive species management. In exchange for the technical and financial assistance, landowners are asked to sign a ten-year agreement with USFWS. Landowners must have at least 5 acres to enroll.

<https://www.fws.gov/program/partners-fish-and-wildlife/initiatives>

Consulting Foresters

Consulting foresters are a great resource to help you meet your land management goals for practices such as forest stand improvement, brush management, tree/shrub planting, grass/pollinator planting, forest inventories, timber sales, or timber appraisals.

<https://www.findindianaforester.org/>



FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit <https://www.sisl.org> for a custom property report or contact:

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SOUTHERN INDIANA SENTINEL LANDSCAPE

In 2022, Conservation Law Center (CLC) was selected by the federal government to oversee the new Southern Indiana Sentinel Landscape (SISL) partnership program, at the time one of only ten such designations in the country. At 3.5 million acres, this landscape-scale project is the one of the largest conservation projects ever undertaken in the Midwest. The partnership involves dozens of partners including state and federal agencies, multiple branches of the

military, national and local land trusts, private conservation organizations, universities, and regional economic development organizations. The goals of the program include preserving and protecting military missions, promoting sustainable farming and forestry, facilitating ecosystem restoration and resiliency, supporting people and partnerships, and improving landscape resiliency.

