

LONG-TERM STEWARDSHIP CALCULATOR:

A KEY TOOL TO ENSURE THAT CONSERVATION PROJECTS ARE SUSTAINABLE AND APPROPRIATELY FUNDED



Long-leaf pine savanna on fire © Carlton Ward Jr.

Ever wondered how to ensure your restoration or protection project is successful 10, 20, 50 years from now?

We can invest a great deal of time and money in protecting and restoring a site, but the key to achieving lasting conservation outcomes is to ensure that sufficient funding is available for long-term stewardship of the site into the future. Unfortunately, costs associated with long-term stewardship are inherently difficult to predict and often underestimated. If adequate funds are not set aside, there's the risk that the natural resources will become degraded over time. For compensatory mitigation sites, this could ultimately result in the loss of resources or needing to raise additional funds to maintain the site, both of which would indicate that the original project did not fulfill its full regulatory requirements.

To help address this challenge, The Nature Conservancy convened a team of national stewardship experts to develop a **free and simple calculator** that estimates

long-term stewardship costs and the amount that should be set aside to provide a secure source of future funding.

The calculator can be used by:

- **Land managers** to estimate the long-term stewardship costs associated with voluntary conservation projects, both for conservation easements and fee-owned land;
- **Mitigation providers** to estimate long-term management costs and establish endowments;
- Long-term **land stewards** and **easement holders** to determine the funding they will need to complete long-term management tasks on mitigation properties before they assume such responsibility; and
- **Regulators** to ensure sufficient funds are set aside for long-term management.

This easy to use tool helps consolidate and highlight common expenses to improve the ease and accuracy of calculating costs. A little investment in upfront planning can save future headaches, liability, and financial challenges in the long-term.

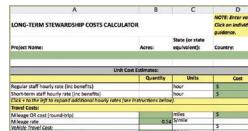
“The calculator is a valuable tool to help the mitigation community plan for the long-term and estimate the funds needed to provide for the long-term.”

Jenny Thomas, Office of Wetlands, Oceans, and Watersheds, US Environmental Protection Agency

The following resources are available to help practitioners calculate long-term management costs, downloadable at

www.nature.org/stewardshipcalculator

Long-term Stewardship Calculator

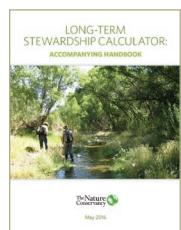


An Excel file with four tabs that walks users through different cost inputs.

[Calculator for internal TNC use](#)

[Calculator for external \(non-TNC\) use](#)

Accompanying handbook

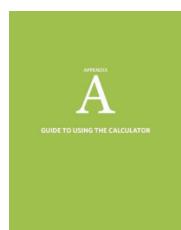


The handbook mirrors the format of the calculator and is meant to be a side-by-side resource for users filling in the calculator. Users can read the full handbook or just use sections where they have

questions on specific costs. There are helpful tips on estimating costs and managing money for the long-term that may be useful for first time users or new project managers.

The handbook also includes example calculations for a variety of projects and links to additional resources.

Quick reference guide



This is a short "cheat sheet" with instructions for using the calculator. Practitioners who have used the calculator and handbook before may find this a useful tool to remind them of key considerations when using the tool.

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ADDITIONAL HELPFUL RESOURCES

Mitigation Resources:

- Environmental Law Institute. 2012. Wetland and Stream Mitigation: A Handbook for Land Trusts. Washington, DC, www.eli.org/land-biodiversity/wetland-and-stream-mitigation-handbook-land-trusts
- Long-Term Management Plan template for conservation and mitigation banks in California (a good example for reference): <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Planning/Banking/Templates>
- Additional templates developed by various USACE Districts may be available on the RIBITS (Regulatory In-lieu fee and Bank Information Tracking System): <https://ribits.usace.army.mil>.

Land Trust Alliance Resources:

- The Land Trust Alliance's Learning Center contains many resources for members and partners: <http://learningcenter.lta.org>.
- Land Trust Alliance Conservation Defense: www.landtrustalliance.org/topics/conservation-defense
- Land Trust Alliance Legal Defense Reserves Calculator. The tool is available to Alliance members here: <http://tlc.lta.org/calculator>. Non-members can request access by emailing tlc@lta.org.
- Terra firma Risk Retention Group LLC helps land trusts insure against legal challenges to easements or fee-owned land: www.terra firma.org.

Land Trust Standards and Practices:

- Bates, S.K. and T. Van Ryn, eds. 2006. Land Trust Standards and Practices Guidebook: An Operating Manual for Land Trusts, Volume 1 and 2, revised. Land Trust Alliance. www.landtrustalliance.org/publication/land-trust-standards-and-practices-guidebook
- Bouplon, R. and B. Lind. 2008. Conservation Easement Stewardship. Standards and Practices Curriculum. Ed. Sylvia Bates. Land Trust Alliance. www.landtrustalliance.org/publication/conservation-easement-stewardship
- Brown, H. and A. Pitz. 2008. Caring for Land Trust Properties. Standards and Practices Curriculum. Ed. Sylvia Bates. Land Trust Alliance. www.landtrustalliance.org/publication/caring-land-trust-properties
- Doscher, P., B. Lind, E. Sturgis and C. West. 2007. Determining Stewardship Costs and Raising and Managing Dedicated Funds. Standards and Practices Curriculum. Ed. Sylvia Bates. Land Trust Alliance. www.landtrustalliance.org/publication/determining-stewardship-costs-raising-and-managing-dedicated-funds
- Ratley-Beach, L. 2009. Managing Conservation Easements in Perpetuity. Standards and Practices Curriculum. Ed. Sylvia Bates. Land Trust Alliance. www.landtrustalliance.org/publication/managing-conservation-easements-perpetuity
- Rowley, E. and K. Sohl. 2010. Financial Management of Land Trusts. Standards and Practices Curriculum. Ed. Sylvia Bates. Land Trust Alliance. www.landtrustalliance.org/publication/financial-management-land-trusts