**Policy 4.10 Stewardship Principles: Fee Properties**

**Committee Responsible**: Stewardship Committee

**Adopted**: **[DATE]**

**Amended**: **[DATE]**

**Purpose**

The overarching goal of the Land Trust is to steward fee properties to promote both ecosystem health and regional biodiversity. The Land Trust will manage its properties guided by two principles: what is ecologically appropriate and what is feasible given the human and financial resources available.
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**Policy**

1. At the time of acquisition and periodically thereafter, each property will be inventoried and assessed as to its most appropriate use or value, as well as donor wishes or restrictions, and then managed accordingly. The inventory will identify the property’s natural features, noting in particular uncommon species that the Land Trust wishes to protect. This document will be the property’s management plan.
2. The Stewardship Committee will coordinate the initial inventory and assessment with the Preservation Committee. The Stewardship Committee will make its recommendation to the Board relative to the acquisition of properties.
3. Management plans will be reviewed periodically and revised as needed, based on changed conditions on the property or in the surrounding environment. All properties will be actively monitored to prevent misuse, to observe the natural succession, and to evaluate our active management efforts.
4. The Stewardship Committee may recommend to the full Board relinquishment of properties it cannot effectively manage and recommend appropriate disposition.
5. The Land Trust will monitor all fee land properties on an annual basis and more frequent monitoring will be encouraged to prevent gaps in the information concerning the property. The monitoring reports, as well as any supporting photographs taken during monitoring visits and other information the Land Trust may acquire with respect to the property, shall be used to update the management plan. Such updated plan materials will be formatted and stored consistent with the Land Trust records policy.
6. The Stewardship Committee recommends to the Board the level of public use of each property, taking into account the donor’s wishes, deed restrictions, access, etc.
7. Each fee property will have its boundary marked with Land Trust signs. This activity will be a high priority to prevent encroachment from adjoining private property owners and misuse of any natural communities, features, or species.