

LCHIP

Land & Community Heritage Investment Program



Guidance Document:

Conservation Easement Baseline Documentation Reports

The Baseline Documentation Report (BDR) documents the condition of the easement area as of the date of conveyance. The BDR should be prepared prior to closing, and signed by Grantor/ee prior to, or at, closing. BDRs do not need to be recorded.

Interim BDR - If seasonal conditions prevent a full BDR from being completed prior to conveyance, interim data and a schedule for finalizing the full BDR may be signed by Grantor/ee at or before closing, with a final, full BDR completed and submitted to LCHIP by a date agreed to in advance. The post-grant obligation to submit a full BDR will be added to the LCHIP grant agreement. Failure to meet this obligation may require grant funds be repaid.

REQUIRED CONTENTS:

1. Property Name & Aliases

2. Interest Holders - List each legal interest held in the property, including the holder's name, address and contact information. If the property owner is not local, include a local contact if available (ex. farm manager, lessee)

3. Deeds / Plans - list date of record and registry book and page or drawer/plan numbers for all recorded documents

4. Directions – Provide directions from the nearest intersection of publicly-maintained roads to the primary access point and the approximate street address of any secondary access points

5. Project Description - Describe the project's history, conservation goals, and any key partners and/or funders

6. Property Description

a. Acreage - list the total acres conserved, indicating if acreage includes excluded areas, building envelopes, special management areas etc. If the easement lies in more than one community, breakdown acreage by community

b. Land Cover by % of total easement area

i. Forest

ii. Wetland (Forested, scrub-shrub, open, etc.)

iii. Grassland (non-ag)

iv. Agricultural (Cropland, Orchard, Hay field, Pasture)

v. Surface Water (pond, lake)

vi. Developed (identify by type - farmstead, log landing, roads, etc.)

vii. Impervious surface coverage if limited by deed, with breakdown (e.g., barn, tanks, high tunnels)

c. Description of Conservation Attributes / Values (*When drafting BDR, choose the term that was used in the CE*)

i. Agriculture – soils, irrigation sources, tilled/able fields, orchards or other perennial crops, infrastructure

ii. Forestry - soils, stands, harvest history, existing forestry plan

iii. Habitat - flora and fauna, key habitat types and known or suspected species

iv. Water – surface, subsurface, wetlands, drinking water supply protection, etc.

- v. Recreation / education - existing recreational or educational use
- vi. Scenic/aesthetic – public locations (roads, trails, or surface water) from which the easement area is visible
- vii. Cultural/historic - history of the easement area and any known historical or cultural resources (including archeological) known or suspected to be present

d. Buildings and Structures

- i. List all extant buildings or structures, describing size, materials, condition, and existing use(s)
- ii. Identify the location of each

e. Other improvements / disturbances

- f. Existing Conditions - observed conditions that may be inconsistent with the CE e.g., existing erosion, dumping, or unauthorized use

7. Condition of Boundaries - describe tagging and blazing (type, color, intervals). In the attached photographs, provide photograph(s) representative of blazing/tagging. Consider including photographs indicating the location of any obscured or less-conspicuous corner monuments such as iron pins or drill holes.

8. Signed Affidavit of Preparer - Identify preparer and describe qualifications, dates of inspection and extent of investigation and brief description of report (# of total pages, # of maps, # of photographs).

9. Attachments

a. Maps - Overlay boundary lines and use consistent orientation, scale and data frame when feasible.

- i. Aerial Map – aerial photograph with easement area boundaries
- ii. Land Cover Map - current uses, natural and disturbed land areas, and key features, buildings, structures, and improvements
- iii. Soils Map - forest or agricultural soils as appropriate to the project
- iv. Wildlife Habitat Land Cover Map (NHFG Wildlife Action Plan) – existing habitat types
- v. Water Resources Map - Surface, subsurface, hydric soils, wetlands, and high-priority water supply lands (as defined by NH DES) as appropriate to the project
- vi. Photo Locator Map - location and perspective of each photograph

b. Photographs - numbered to correspond with locations on photo locator map and showing resources protected, structures and improvements, and other key features

c. Recorded survey / plan

d. New Hampshire Natural Heritage Report

e. Recorded easement

f. Environmental Assessment - Phase 1 or Environmental Review

10. Signed Acknowledgements of Condition

a. Grantor/ee - include the following above the Grantor/ee signature

The undersigned accept and acknowledge that the foregoing description of natural resources and other features, together with its attachments, is an accurate representation of the easement area at the time of the conservation easement conveyance. The Grantor/ee further certifies that if any of the documentation (information, exhibits, or photographs) was prepared in advance of the closing and date of execution of the conservation easement, the condition of the easement area as depicted in this Report has not materially changed since the date of documentation. The Grantor and Grantee accept and acknowledge that the entirety of this report is intended to aid in the enforcement of the conservation easement.

b. LCHIP - LCHIP prefers not to sign BDRs. If required to do so, the following must appear above the LCHIP signature line.

The undersigned states that, to the best of her knowledge, the foregoing description of natural resources and other features, together with its attachments, is an accurate representation of the property at the time of the conservation easement conveyance; that she has no evidence contradicting the foregoing description, and that she is relying on the knowledge and expertise of the preparer in accepting and acknowledging this description.