

ISSUES TO CONSIDER IN ASSEMBLING A PACE (PDR) PROGRAM

In creating a local purchase of development rights (PDR) program (also sometimes referred to as purchase of agricultural conservation easement (PACE) programs) there are a number of considerations a community might take into account. These are:

- **Priorities:**
What will be the priorities of such a program: Economic viability? Size? Proximity or distance from development threat? Proximity or contiguity with other agricultural lands? Scenic, environmental, or other values? Soils? Price? Etc. Each program must make these decisions.
- **Selection system:**
How are the priorities actualized? Do we use a point system? Is there a selection board with discretion (and if so, who is on it)? Combination? Does the selection board have authority to decide or only to advise?
- **Independent acquisitions:**
Would the program only acquire properties if it can match FRPP money, or could it acquire them independently, if needed? (There are issues with leveraging and priorities in this decision.)
- **Funding:**
How would the program be funded? (Does it minimize financial impacts on the agriculture industry.)
- **State or local:**
Is this a State program (where the applicant applies at the State level and competes statewide) or is it local (farmers and ranchers apply locally and the decisions and priorities are local)?
- **How do state priorities factor in to outcomes?**
If the State is involved, is it being asked only to provide funding to help support local programs? What prerequisites (if any) should/might the State ask in exchange for that funding?
- **What agencies or governments manage program?**
What agencies of government are preferred as managers of this work? (The WWRC program places responsibility in the Conservation and Recreation Office (RCO). The unfunded PACE bill passed in 2002 placed responsibility in the State Conservation Commission and Conservation Districts. Is the Department of Agriculture an option? Locally, who will take the lead (e.g. counties, conservation districts, other)?
- **Easement stewardship responsibilities:**
Who should hold and be responsible or managing the conservation easements acquired by these programs? Local government? A trusted local private land trust? Note that WACD is in the process of forming a statewide land trust that might help with this function. The Cattlemen have a Statewide rangelands trust.
- **Public involvement in program creation & operation:**
How will the public be engaged and involved in initial creation and ongoing operation of this program? Who will be included? How will they be selected?

For further information, contact:

Don Stuart
www.donstuart.net
dondstuart@gmail.com

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