

Santa Fe Conservation Trust Conservation Easement Project Selection Criteria

Project Name: _____ Size in acres: _____

General Location: _____ SFCT Focal Area: _____

Conservation Values to be protected: _____

Proposed Reserved Rights: _____

A strong project will meet all of the criteria in the first two sections of this form. Please include detail in text boxes below as necessary.

1. SFCT Mission/Feasibility Issues and Criteria:

- The proposed conservation easement is consistent with the goals in our Mission Statement

- The property is in SFCT's service area

- The landowner is willing to execute an engagement letter and agree to cover SFCT's transactional costs as outlined in the letter

- The easement can be effectively monitored and stewarded by SFCT

- The land is of sufficient size to warrant our efforts

- The project is free from concerns about current or future zoning/land use on adjacent parcels that could make the land less desirable for conservation or make stewardship difficult

- The project will result in average or below-average liability exposure for SFCT (rather than an unusual or special liability exposure that would warrant increased insurance coverage)

- The property is legally developable (rather than already effectively protected in some fashion, by deed restrictions)

- All of the conservation intentions and purposes of the donor can be met by our standard conservation easement agreement (no extraordinary requests are being made of the trust)

- The project is likely to encourage other land to be preserved in the same area

- The project will protect lands that are significant to communities that are underrepresented in the conservation movement

- The project will complement existing land conservation efforts by SFCT, other groups, or agencies in the area

2. Legal Issues and Criteria (to be confirmed by title report and other due diligence before closing):

- The landowner has clear legal title to the property

- The property is free from problematic encumbrances (liens, mortgages, etc) or these can easily be resolved before closing

- The landowner owns the mineral rights, or it is likely that a geologist's report can be obtained finding that the chance of mineral development is so remote as to be negligible

- Adequate and permanent legal and physical access to the property for easement enforcement purposes is available to SFCT, or can be obtained at or before closing

- The landowner is current on property taxes

- Property lines are identifiable and no encroachment is present

- The property is free from hazardous material/pollution

To qualify for tax benefits, and to be a strong candidate for SFCT protection, a project must satisfy at least the first criterion of at least one of the following sections. The more criteria a project satisfies the better.

3. Natural Resource Issues and Criteria:

- The easement will protect relatively natural habitat for wildlife, fish, or plants

- Significant restoration is not needed or landowner will pay for needed restoration

4. Public Recreation/Education Issues and Criteria:

- The easement will provide for the public's regular use of the property for recreation or education

- The easement will help create or maintain public access to public land

- The project will promote outdoor recreation by or the education of the general public

5. Open Space and Working Lands Issues and Criteria:

- The easement will protect open space for the scenic enjoyment of the general public and/or pursuant to a clearly delineated federal, state, or local governmental policy

- The easement will protect cropland, grazing land, or working forestland

6. Historic Preservation Issues and Criteria:

- The easement will protect a designated historically important land area or certified historic structure

Date Reviewed by Land Review Committee: _____

Committee Decision: _____
