



Department of Conservation

[DLRP \(/DLRP/Pages/Index.aspx\)](#) > [LCA \(/dlrp/lca/Pages/Index.aspx\)](#)

The Land Conservation (Williamson) Act

The California Land Conservation Act of 1965--commonly referred to as the Williamson Act--enables local governments to enter into contracts with private landowners for the purpose of restricting specific parcels of land to agricultural or related open space use. In return, landowners receive property tax assessments which are much lower than normal because they are based upon farming and open space uses as opposed to full market value. The Open Space Subvention Act of 1971 provided local governments an annual subvention of forgone property tax revenues from the state through the year 2009; these payment have been suspended in more recent years due to revenue shortfalls.



New and Frequently Requested Information

Solar-Use Easements - Senate Bill 618

This bill authorizes parties of a Williamson Act contract, under specific circumstances, to agree to rescind the contract and simultaneously enter into a solar-use easement. In most cases, the easement will require that the land be used for solar photovoltaic facilities for a term no less than 20 years.

The comment period for the formal SB 618 draft regulations ended on September 30, 2013. On October 23, 2013, modifications to the formal draft regulations were released for a 15 day review period, which ended on November 7, 2013. Please see the [Solar-Use Easements page \(/dlrp/lca/Pages/SolarUseEasements.aspx\)](/dlrp/lca/Pages/SolarUseEasements.aspx) for more information.

For more information regarding the rulemaking process, please refer to the [Office of Administrative Law \(http://www.oal.ca.gov/Regular_Rulemaking_Process.htm\)](http://www.oal.ca.gov/Regular_Rulemaking_Process.htm).

2013 Land Conservation Act and Open Space Subvention Act Survey

The [2013 Land Conservation Act and Open Space Subvention Act \(OSSA\) Survey \(/dlrp/lca/oss/Pages/app_oss.aspx\)](/dlrp/lca/oss/Pages/app_oss.aspx) is now available. Despite elimination of OSSA payments in the FY 2013 budget, this annual information is critical in order to document the level of participation in the program and the impact the loss of OSSA payments is having on local governments. It is the basis for the biennial Land Conservation Act Status Report, which provides information to the Legislature and general public on the status of the Program among counties and cities.

Guidance for Cancellation of Williamson Act Contracts

The Department has compiled a [Cancellation Petition Advice Paper \(/dlrp/lca/basic_contract_provisions/Documents/Cancellation%20Advice%20Paper%20Final_amended_04_18_13.pdf\)](/dlrp/lca/basic_contract_provisions/Documents/Cancellation%20Advice%20Paper%20Final_amended_04_18_13.pdf) (PDF) to assist landowners and jurisdictions in compiling and organizing the materials necessary to document the need to prematurely exit existing Williamson Act contracts.

Guidance for the Public Acquisition of Williamson Act Land

When there is a need for a public agency or other eligible entity to acquire land enrolled in a Williamson Act contract, or located in an agricultural preserve, the Department of Conservation must be notified as set forth in Government Codes §51290 through §51295 and §51296.

The Department has created a number of example documents that may be useful if you are compiling a public acquisition notice. Please see the [Public Acquisitions \(/dlrp/lca/basic_contract_provisions/Pages/public_acquisitions.aspx\)](/dlrp/lca/basic_contract_provisions/Pages/public_acquisitions.aspx) page for further information.

Working with the LESA Model

The Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) Model (/dlrp/Pages/gh_lesa.aspx) evaluates agricultural characteristics of specific sites, as indicated in California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines.

Legislation and Policy

- Open Space Subventions FAQ (/dlrp/lca/ossP/Pages/questions_answers.aspx)
- AB 1265 - Advisory Statement (PDF) (</dlrp/lca/Documents/AB%201265%20Advisory%20Statemen2t.pdf>)
Recapture of Property Tax Loss
- Equine Facilities Policy (PDF) (</dlrp/lca/Documents/Equine%20Industry%20policy%200409.pdf>)

Data and Maps

- Williamson Act Status Report (/dlrp/lca/stats_reports/Pages/Index.aspx)
The 2012 Status Report is in process. Until it is available, the most recent edition is current to 2010.
- Williamson Act Maps (PDF) (<ftp://ftp.consrv.ca.gov/pub/dlrp/wa/>)
- Effectively Administering the Williamson Act (</dlrp/lca/Documents/WA%20Workshop%20Presentations%201109.pdf>) (9 MB PDF)
Information on a range of topics from regional training workshops held in 2009.



[\(/dlrp/Pages/Index.aspx\)](/dlrp/Pages/Index.aspx)

Division of Land Resource Protection

Land Conservation (Williamson) Act Links

Basic Contract Provisions

[\(/dlrp/lca/basic_contract_provisions/Pages/wa_overview.aspx\)](/dlrp/lca/basic_contract_provisions/Pages/wa_overview.aspx)

[Easement Exchanges \(/dlrp/lca/easement_exchanges/Pages/index.aspx\)](/dlrp/lca/easement_exchanges/Pages/index.aspx)

[Farmland Security Zones \(/dlrp/lca/farmland_security_zones/Pages/index.aspx\)](/dlrp/lca/farmland_security_zones/Pages/index.aspx)

[Laws, Regulations & Court Cases \(/dlrp/lca/lrcc/Pages/index.aspx\)](/dlrp/lca/lrcc/Pages/index.aspx)

[Open Space Subventions \(/dlrp/lca/oss/Pages/index.aspx\)](#)

[Solar-Use Easements \(/dlrp/lca/Pages/SolarUseEasements.aspx\)](#)

[Enrollment Statistics \(/dlrp/lca/stats_reports/Pages/Index.aspx\)](#)

[Back to Top](#)

[Conditions of Use](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

[Accessibility](#)

[Contact Us](#)

Copyright © 2013 State of California