

Open Space Land Activity

Department Overview

The Open Lands Program was created by the County Commission to meet the desire of the community to conserve agricultural and natural resource lands and provide for increased access to public recreation.

In 2000, the voters of Gallatin County passed the first \$10 million Open Space Bond to fund Conservation and Parks programs in the County. In FY 2000, the Commission appointed the Open Lands Board to make recommendations on the granting of funds from the Open Space Bond Fund.

Absent from the 2000 Bond approval was any funding for the administration of the Conservation and Parks programs. To address this issue, the Open Lands Board created the "Open Land" license plate in of which the sales go to fund the administrative portion of the Conservation and Parks programs. Twenty-Five (\$25) dollars from the sale of each license plate goes to Gallatin County. The Administrative portion of the Conservation and Parks programs are entirely funded through private contributions from license plates, not tax dollars.

In 2004, the voters of Gallatin County approved a second Open Space Bond authorizing the County to fund an additional \$10 million in projects, for conservation of agricultural and natural resource lands, the conservation of water quality and quantity, and to provide recreational opportunities. The Voters overwhelmingly approved the 2 requests for a total of \$20 million.

The Gallatin County Open Lands Board serves in an advisory capacity to the County Commission by reviewing and making recommendations as to the expenditure of the Open Space Bond funds. The County has sold two bond issues for Open Lands. The first in 2002 was for \$3.8 million. The second sold in 2003 was for \$4.0 million. The sale of \$4.0 million occurred in FY 06 and \$5.0 million in FY 08 leaves a balance of \$2.8 million in bonding authority still remaining.

The Board's goals are to preserve open spaces, agriculture lands, riparian areas, water quality, recreational parks, trails and wildlife corridors. The Board is composed of 15 members appointed by the County Commission.

To date, the Open Lands Program has funded the purchase of conservation easements equaling 50 square miles and purchased three parks and two public access easements.

Additional expenditures from the license plate funds have been used to complete a Comprehensive Park and Trails Plan for all of Gallatin County. The plan will cover the future construction, operation and maintenance needs for parks and recreation in the county.

Department Goals

- To conserve farm and ranch land.
- To conserve wildlife habitat.
- To protect and preserve the quality and quantity of water resources.
- To preserve scenic resources.
- To manage growth and development.
- To maximize the potential for recreation.

Recent Accomplishments

- Programmed two new conservation easement projects.
- Finalized two new conservation easements.
- Over 56 square miles under conservation easement through our program and three parks.

RECREATION AND OTHER ACTIVITY

Open Space Land Activity

Department Budget

Object of Expenditure	Actual FY 2012	BUDGET FY 2013	Actual FY 2013	Request FY 2014	Preliminary FY 2014	BUDGET FY 2014
Personnel	\$ 84,746	\$ 90,449	\$ 85,964	\$ 91,940	\$ 92,937	\$ 94,275
Operations	16,148	586,668	14,550	609,549	608,552	578,308
Debt Service	1,406,430	1,278,373	1,265,589	1,305,771	1,305,771	1,238,086
Capital Outlay	2,175,015	2,214,029	350,000	2,151,711	1,840,836	1,680,435
Transfers Out	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	<u>\$ 3,682,339</u>	<u>\$ 4,169,519</u>	<u>\$ 1,716,103</u>	<u>\$ 4,158,971</u>	<u>\$ 3,848,096</u>	<u>\$ 3,591,104</u>

Budget by Fund Group

General Fund	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Special Revenue Funds	100,894	677,117	100,514	701,489	701,489	672,583
Debt Service Funds	1,406,430	1,278,373	1,265,589	1,305,771	1,305,771	1,238,086
Capital Project Funds	2,175,015	2,214,029	350,000	2,151,711	1,840,836	1,680,435
Enterprise Funds	-	-	-	-	-	-
Internal Service Funds	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trust & Agency Funds	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	<u>\$ 3,682,339</u>	<u>\$ 4,169,519</u>	<u>\$ 1,716,103</u>	<u>\$ 4,158,971</u>	<u>\$ 3,848,096</u>	<u>\$ 3,591,104</u>

Funding Sources

Tax Revenues	\$ 1,236,885	\$ 1,151,361	\$ 1,236,885	\$ 1,179,455	\$ 1,179,455	\$ 1,187,407
Non-Tax Revenues	120,590	146,797	124,777	146,797	146,797	129,906
Cash Reappropriated	2,324,864	2,871,361	354,440	2,832,719	2,521,844	2,273,791
Total	<u>\$ 3,682,339</u>	<u>\$ 4,169,519</u>	<u>\$ 1,716,103</u>	<u>\$ 4,158,971</u>	<u>\$ 3,848,096</u>	<u>\$ 3,591,104</u>

Department Personnel

No. of Positions	FT/PT	Title	FTE 2012	FTE 2013	FTE 2014
1	Full-Time	Open Lands Coordinator	1.00	1.00	1.00
1	Part-Time	Administrative Support	0.07	0.07	0.07
2		Total Program	1.07	1.07	1.07

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2014 Budget Highlights

Personnel

- Continue to run operations on a limited budget by partnering with outside organizations. One additional part time staff is being supplied in conjunction with Planning for Open Lands Board meetings and park planning.

Operations

- Operations continue to be funded via license plates with no need of additional Commission funds.

Capital

- Open Space Bonds funds are beginning to diminish. We have numerous projects in the works that are solid land conservation and some public access. We continue to maintain a 4 to 1 leverage on all of our bond projects.
- Open Space Bond \$1,680,435

County Commission Goals/Department Response

The County Commission established a set of overarching goals for the County government. Listed below are the goals, followed by the methods by which the Department is striving to fulfill those goals.

Align community needs with budgetary decisions

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Adhere to long-term plans

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Demonstrate Exceptional Customer Service

- Provide an incentive based alternative for landowners.
- Maintain or improve the quality of life for residents and visitors of Gallatin County by conserving important agricultural and natural resource lands and providing increased access to recreation.

Serve as a Model for Excellence in Government

- Open Lands Program is self funded through alternative sources requiring no general fund allocations.
- All bond revenue from the first and second authorized \$10 million bond initiatives are matched with funds from outside sources making the value of the local tax dollar spent on land conservation matched 4:1 by outside sources.
- Balance Open Lands Program activities with other county needs and departmental objectives.

Improve communication within county government, other jurisdictions and our public

- Begin education and outreach program based on critical landscapes and community important areas that will be used to shape the future direction of land conservation in the County.
- Highlight the opportunities that exist for rural landowners through incentive based planning programs like conservation easements.

Be an Employer of Choice and improve employee retention

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RECREATION AND OTHER ACTIVITY

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Workload Indicators / Performance Measures

Workload Indicators

Indicator	Actual FY 2011	Actual FY 2012	Actual FY 2013	Projected FY 2014
1. Easement projects	3	1		
2. Parks & Recreation projects	2	0		
3. Bond/Levy Authorization campaign	0	0		
4. License Plates sold	6,500	6,000		
5. Federal Conservation Grants	1	1		
6. New programs implementation	1	0		

Performance Measures

Measure	Actual FY 2011	Actual FY 2012	Actual FY 2013	Projected FY 2014
1. Projects reviewed	4	2		
2. Projects approved	4	2		
3. Projects completed	4	0		
4. Acres Conserved	4,000	2,000		
5. Development Right Value (\$\$\$)	5,000,000	3,100,000		
6. County contribution (\$\$\$)	1,500,000	600,000		
7. Successful Bond Campaign	0	0		
8. Presentations & consultations	0	0		

Comments