

QUALITY GROWTH COMMISSION

2021 Report to the Legislature

Quality Growth

Growth happens. But as Envision Utah's motto reminds us, *how we grow matters*. As Utahns, we have a history of recognizing that this is the place, a crossroads, and a destination that will blossom as a rose. People flock to and remain in Utah as a choice destination for themselves and their families for many reasons, however, it would be irresponsible not to recognize the essential role that Utah's amazing natural places play in our economic prosperity. Our own youth, along with the best and brightest from around the country, are attracted to Utah precisely because of our plentiful outdoor access.

Through the LeRay McAllister Critical Lands Conservation Fund, the Utah Quality Growth Commission continues to make significant strides in achieving the purposes of the Utah Quality Growth Act. The Commission is able to deliver the goals of the Act with the help of many partners, all focused on maintaining Utah's quality of life for our children and their children. Future generations' must have access to

What is the Quality Growth Commission?

In 1999, the Legislature created the Utah Quality Growth Commission to advise the Legislature on growth management issues, to assist local governments in planning for quality growth, and to administer the LeRay McAllister Critical Lands Fund - a program designed to preserve and restore open and agricultural lands.

The Commission is comprised of 13 members from local governments, state agencies, and the private sector. They are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. The Commission is politically and geographically diverse. Commissioners bring a wealth of expertise in local government, natural resources, agriculture, real estate, and outdoor recreation.

Over the years, the Commission has conducted studies, provided technical planning assistance grants to local governments, and managed the LeRay McAllister fund according to legislative appropriations. In recent years, the focus has increasingly been on the role land conservation plays in improving quality of life and ensuring adequate food and water supplies for future generations.

locally-grown food, abundant wildlife, and pure drinking water. Good decisions about Utah's open lands will pay dividends for generations to come.

Making an impact....

125
projects

24
counties

>94,000
acres preserved

\$218.7 million
In matching funds

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The Commission recognizes the critical role these open and agricultural lands play in our state. The Commission is composed of not only agricultural, wildlife, and recreational interests, but also includes representatives from the Home Builders and Board of Realtors. All our commissioners recognize the essential need to conserve the lands that provide food, fiber, and pristine water resources - while also contributing to our sense of place, our sense of beauty, and our ability to recreate.

The adage in real estate development of “location, location, location” underscores the importance of place and what surrounds it. Quality land conservation is part of quality growth - and is also good business.

Sustaining the Lands that Sustain Us

Food and water constitute the most basic and foundational needs for our society, and

both require access to finite lands with unique characteristics.

Maintaining a viable agricultural industry will require a critical mass of arable farmlands. With increasing development pressure, an intentional effort is needed to maintain our state’s strategically-significant agricultural resources.. The majority of the acres preserved using LeRay McAllister Fund

dollars have been used to preserve agricultural lands.

Going forward, even greater emphasis will be placed on our working agricultural lands. As required by HB 305 during the 2021 General Session, the Quality Growth Commission

has completely overhauled the application process and scoring criteria for the LeRay McAllister Fund to strengthen projects that preserve working agricultural lands and to increase the objectivity and rigor of the entire program. Each project is scored based on publicly-available data produced by state and federal agencies.

Utah’s Approach to Open Lands

FREE MARKET APPROACH

Only willing buyers and willing sellers

LOCALLY DRIVEN

Collaborative approach, projects driven by landowners and local government

REASONABLE PRESERVATION

Lands must be managed and kept in use

FISCALLY PRUDENT

Requires matching funds to leverage state dollars.

These refinements have improved the quality of the projects funded and taken much of the subjectivity out of the funding process.

Leaving a Legacy

Since 1999, the \$24.64 million dollars invested by the Legislature has been leveraged many times over to fund a total of \$243.4 million in conservation and restoration projects throughout the state. Each of these projects preserved lands that are deemed critical - critical for water, food, wildlife, community character, and our quality of life. Projects have included saving long time farms tucked away in Cache Valley, protecting little-known sage grouse habitat in Utah's uplands, and keeping riparian corridors along Utah's blue ribbon trout streams blue. Other McAllister projects have preserved iconic landscapes, dairies, and recreational gems that are enjoyed by thousands of visitors each year. Names such as the Zion Narrows, Corner Canyon, Kays Creek, Confluence Park, The American West Heritage Center, Zollinger Farm, Weber River Parkway, the Bonneville Shoreline Trail, and Heber Valley Cheese resonate with thousands of Utahns. They evoke deep feelings of connection to the essence of what makes Utah special. And McAllister Fund Dollars were used to help preserve these statewide treasures.

Recent Accomplishments

In the past two years, conservation efforts have continued across the state. The following projects have been funded using

LeRay McAllister dollars during 2019 and 2020.

- **Iron County** - Higbee Ranch. This project conserves valued condor habitat, ranch land, and big game habitat.
- **Midway** - Kohler Dairy. A multi-generation grass-fed dairy that provides food, education opportunities, and community character in Heber Valley.
- **Avon** - Evans Ranch. This mountainous ranch sits adjacent to the Little Bear River. In addition to being quality ranch land and wildlife habitat, it also contains lands with historical significance to the local Shoshone Band.
- **La Verkin** - Confluence Park. This historically-significant open land provides a window into the past in a unique desert environment. Funds were used to help restore fire damage and remove invasive species.
- **Millcreek** - Jordan River. This project helped ameliorate an area adjacent to the Jordan River and will provide public access to a natural oasis in the heart of Utah's most populous county.
- **Provo** - Robins Utah Lake. Sitting adjacent to the Provo River Delta project, this parcel will continue to serve as agricultural lands while expanding protected wildlife habitat and a water quality buffer to Utah Lake.
- **Cottonwood Heights** - Bonneville Shoreline Trail. Development of this

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hillside parcel would have hindered access to the Bonneville Shoreline trail and reduced valued open space.

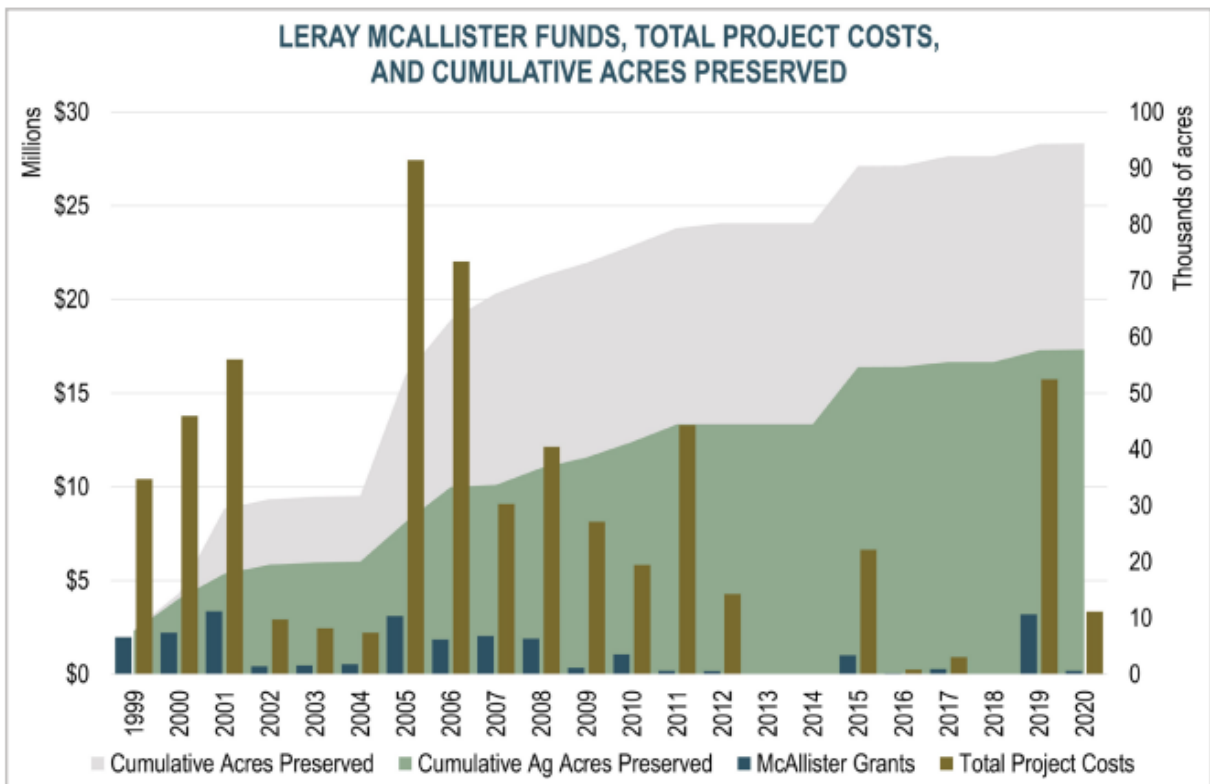
- **Coalville** - Sargent Weber River. The Sargent parcel preserves valuable working agricultural lands and riparian habitat along the Weber River near Coalville.
- **Pine Valley** - Pine Valley Meadows. These parcels complete one of the final steps in a decades-long effort to preserve the lush agricultural meadows that make Pine Valley Utah so unique in southern Utah.
- **Salt Lake County** - Gate Buttress. This project will restore vegetation in

a way that will protect the natural beauty of an iconic landscape that is being “loved to death”.

Unmet Opportunities

While the Commission has been able to accomplish a significant amount with the generous funding allocated by the Legislature, more could be done if additional resources can be secured.

During the 2021 funding cycle, ten pre-applications were submitted to compete. For the \$1 million appropriated from the Legislature, there were \$6.87 million in requests that would have helped fund over \$25 million in total project costs - including

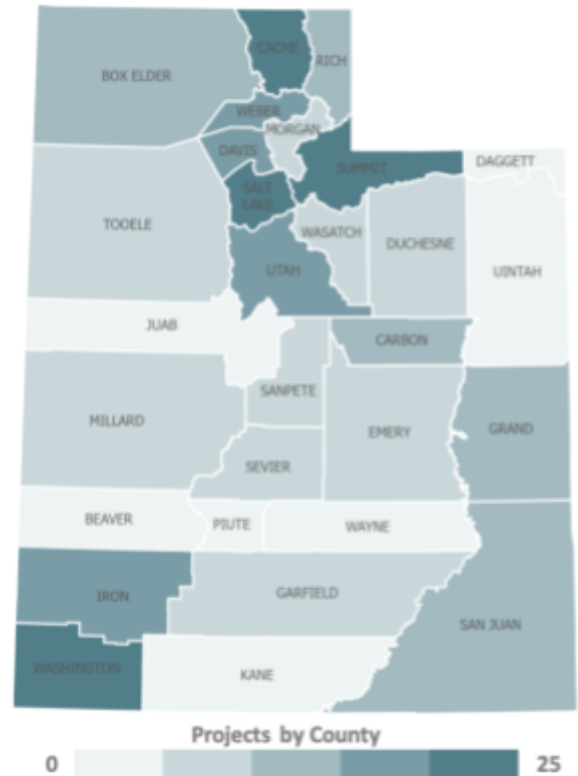


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\$4.8 million in landowner donations and \$10 million in matching federal funds. The applicants proposed conserving over 8,700 acres of land - 99% of which were working agricultural lands.

There are few uses of state dollars that provide such a high return on investment and such lasting benefits. While the growing number of applications demonstrate the interest and current opportunities, without additional funding, the LeRay McAllister fund, and thus the state itself, is failing to meet the critical needs of future generations. With the advent of the new project ranking criteria, it is the commission's hope that the legislature will feel more comfortable in committing additional funds to the critical work of maintaining Utah's unique landscapes and the economic and quality of life benefits they bring.



Examples of recent projects

Application Year	County	Project Title	McAllister Grant	Total Match	Total Cost	Acreage	Purpose
1999	Washington	Virgin River Confluence	\$500,000	\$1,624,000	\$2,124,000	125	Open land easement
1999	San Juan	Curtis Jones Farm	\$309,174	\$625,000	\$934,174	144.22	Agricultural easement
1999	Washington	Grafton Preservation	\$251,875	\$1,150,000	\$1,401,875	212.56	Agricultural easement
1999	Davis	Black Agriland	\$172,000	\$221,500	\$393,500	39.4	Agricultural easement
1999	Morgan	Peaceful Valley Ranch	\$750,000	\$4,801,000	\$5,551,000	7300	Agricultural easement
2000	San Juan	UPRR/ Jordan River Property	\$124,235	\$124,235	\$248,470	12.5	Open land easement
2000	Davis	PacifiCorp Conservation Easement	\$56,415	\$57,015	\$113,430	70.8	Open land easement
2000	Davis	Kays Creek Corridor	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$300,000	30	Open land easement
2000	Weber	Gary Hess Weber River Property	\$38,048	\$35,750	\$73,798	4.76	Open land easement
2000	Sevier	Jorgensen Bar J Ranch Conservation Project	\$700,000	\$3,550,000	\$4,250,000	5776	Agricultural easement
2000	Iron	Dr. Priddy Meek's Pioneer Farmstead Park & Urban Fishery	\$12,500	\$121,000	\$133,500	3.61	Agricultural restoration
2000	Utah	K. Dale and Sonja Despain Ranch and Bird Refuge	\$200,000	\$825,000	\$1,025,000	333.03	Open land easement
2000	Salt Lake	Dry Creek Riparian Restoration	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$500,000	16	Open land restoration
2000	Summit	Summit Park	\$400,000	\$662,000	\$1,062,000	325	Open land easement
2000	Cache	American West Heritage Center Farmland Preserve	\$100,000	\$120,242	\$220,242	15.89	Agricultural easement
2000	Salt Lake	Jordan River Critical Lands Preservation and Re-meandering	\$439,778	\$6,047,000	\$6,486,778	58.22	Open land easement
2001	Carbon	Wilcox Property	\$500,000	\$2,008,300	\$2,508,300	4208.35	Agricultural easement
2001	Summit	Chalk Creek Restoration Phase I	\$10,000	\$10,332	\$20,332	N/A	Open land easement
2001	Grand	Proudfoot Bend Ranch	\$537,500	\$537,500	\$1,075,000	184.27	Agricultural easement
2001	Washington	Virgin River Confluence Phase II	\$500,000	\$1,450,000	\$1,950,000	405	Open land easement
2001	Cache	Rinder- knecht Property	\$12,950	\$12,950	\$25,900	1.75	Open land restoration
2001	Washington	Cox Property	\$71,075	\$110,000	\$181,075	7.97	Agricultural easement
2001	Salt Lake	Willow Heights, Big Cottonwood Canyon	\$700,000	\$790,500	\$1,490,500	155.41	Open land easement
2001	Summit	Castle Rock	\$900,000	\$8,360,322	\$9,260,322	10013	Open land easement
2001	Salt Lake	West Valley City Wetlands/ Storm Water Park	\$136,146	\$177,350	\$313,496	20	Open land easement
2002	Grand	Castle Valley Preservation Initiative	\$85,200	\$271,000	\$356,200	90	Open land easement
2002	Davis	Mabey Pond	\$45,412	\$45,412	\$90,824	2.31	Open land aquisition
2002	Cache	Brooke Ranch Easement	\$250,000	\$1,750,000	\$2,000,000	1563.32	Agricultural easement
2002	Summit	Provo River Corridor	\$35,000	\$430,000	\$465,000	16.82	Open land easement
2003	Salt Lake	UPRR Property - North	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$300,000	11.65	Open land easement
2003	Summit	Chalk Creek Restoration Phase II	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$40,000	N/A	Open land restoration
2003	Salt Lake	TreeUtah/Audubon Migratory Bird Habitat Restoration	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$20,000	120	Open land restoration
2003	Weber	Parkway/Centennial Trail	\$60,000	\$90,000	\$150,000	15.62	Open land aquisition
2003	Cache	Sagamore Farms	\$250,000	\$1,750,000	\$2,000,000	430	Agricultural easement
2004	Cache	Fuhriman Agricultural Easement	\$100,000	\$455,494	\$555,494	68	Agricultural easement
2004	Cache	Woodlee/Gittins Dairy	\$155,000	\$275,000	\$430,000	21	Agricultural easement
2004	Salt Lake	Red Butte Garden/Heritage preserve planning and restoration	\$73,000	\$147,000	\$220,000	436	Open land restoration
2004	Washington	Arboretum Restoration Project	\$30,000	\$35,000	\$65,000	15	Open land restoration
2004	Utah	wetlands classroom	\$20,000	\$140,000	\$160,000	1	Open land easement
2004	Weber	Bingham Fort Farm	\$265,000	\$800,000	\$1,066,000	30	Agricultural easement
2005	Salt Lake	Sheilds River Walk	\$97,500	\$292,500	\$390,000	2.75	Open land aquisition
2005	Summit	Kamas-Kevin Conway Wildlife Management Area	\$300,000	\$1,300,000	\$1,600,000	569	Open land easement
2005	Iron	Co op Valley and Spanish Hollow	\$400,000	\$2,600,000	\$3,000,000	3265	Open land easement
2005	Salt Lake	Audubon/Tree Utah Migratory Bird Habitat Restoration Phase 2	\$20,000	\$451,630	\$471,630	20	Open land restoration
2005	Summit	Parley's Creek Viewshed Preservation	\$100,000	\$250,000	\$350,000	46.7	Open land easement
2005	Cache	Zollinger Farm	\$300,000	\$1,100,000	\$1,400,000	49	Agricultural easement
2005	Salt Lake	Draper Corner Canyon Easement Project	\$500,000	\$10,596,000	\$11,096,000	1035	Open land easement
2005	Cache	Selman Ranch Conservation Project	\$420,000	\$3,602,750	\$4,022,750	6700	Agricultural easement
2005	Garfield	Boulder Creek Canyon	\$400,000	\$1,294,750	\$1,694,750	310	Agricultural easement
2005	Davis	Improvements to Utah Botanical Center	\$50,000	\$350,000	\$400,000	64	Open land restoration
2005	Salt Lake	Perkins Flat - Emigration Canyon	\$350,000	\$1,300,000	\$1,650,000	20	Open land easement
2005	Duchesne	Sandwash/Sink Draw Conservation Easement	\$225,000	\$2,005,000	\$2,230,000	9504	Open land easement
2006	Summit	Chalk Creek C and E Ranch	\$400,000	\$5,225,000	\$5,625,000	4700	Agricultural easement
2006	Cache	Trout of Paradise	\$200,000	\$700,000	\$900,000	179	Agricultural easement
2006	Summit	Richins Ranch	\$400,000	\$2,539,000	\$2,939,000	1208	Agricultural easement
2006	Washington	Virgin River Headwaters Project	\$300,000	\$4,897,000	\$5,197,000	3562	Open land easement
2006	Cache	Selman Ranch Conservation Project 2*	\$90,000	\$4,159,916	\$4,249,916	N/A	Agricultural easement
2006	Salt Lake	Foothill Preservation Project	\$195,000	\$1,755,000	\$1,950,000	16	Open land aquisition
2006	Cache	Glenn Family Farm	\$240,000	\$841,000	\$1,081,000	165	Agricultural easement

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2006	Weber	Weber River Parkway	\$25,000	\$57,900	\$82,900	17	Open land aquisition
2006	Salt Lake	Jordan River restoration	\$10,000	\$245,000	\$255,000	N/A	Open land restoration
2007	Millard	Emergency Wildfire Reseeding	\$200,000	\$54,286,319	\$54,486,319	N/A	Open land restoration
2007	Cache	American West Heritage Center Farmland Preserve	\$75,000	\$200,000	\$275,000	55	Agricultural easement
2007	Cache	Gittins/Woodlee Dairy	\$500,000	\$890,000	\$1,390,000	68	Agricultural easement
2007	Carbon	Rainbow Glass Ranch, Phase 3	\$350,000	\$680,000	\$1,030,000	2393	Open land easement
2007	Sanpete	Nuttall Property	\$105,000	\$921,000	\$1,026,000	354	Open land easement
2007	Washington	Santa Clara Arboretum Restoration Project	\$30,000	\$46,875	\$76,875	15	Open land restoration
2007	Washington	Virgin River Headwaters Project, Phase 2	\$650,000	\$2,397,300	\$3,047,300	1602	Open land easement
2007	Salt Lake	Audubon/Tree Utah Migratory Bird Habitat Restoration Phase 4	\$20,000	\$132,750	\$152,750	20	Open land restoration
2007	Summit	OW Ranch Easement Phase 2	\$350,000	\$1,975,250	\$2,325,250	200	Agricultural easement
2008	Summit	South Fork Ranch	\$500,000	\$2,533,850	\$3,033,850	2350	Agricultural easement
2008	Cache	Curtis Farm	\$115,000	\$792,000	\$907,000	357	Agricultural easement
2008	Cache	Elkhorn Ranch	\$320,000	\$1,040,000	\$1,360,000	167.5	Agricultural easement
2008	Utah	Lindon Hollow Wetlands	\$150,000	\$2,449,523	\$2,599,523	14	Open land easement
2008	Utah	City of Salem	\$75,000	\$4,425,000	\$4,500,000	33	Open land restoration
2008	Washington	Pine Valley Meadows Preservation Project	\$200,000	\$1,044,000	\$1,244,000	24	Agricultural easement
2008	Salt Lake	TreeUtah/Audubon Migratory Bird Habitat Restoration Phase 4	\$25,000	\$159,550	\$184,550	N/A	Open land restoration
2008	Weber	Taylor's Buffalo Springs	\$250,000	\$568,000	\$818,000	29.3	Agricultural easement
2008	Davis	Nature Conservancy Preserve, Jaques Farm	\$363,800	\$1,810,380	\$2,174,180	116	Agricultural easement
2009	Davis	Stringham Homestead Project	\$20,000	\$295,850	\$315,850	126.5	Open land easement
2009	Washington	Pine Valley Meadows Preservation Project, Phase 2	\$30,000	\$0	\$30,000		Open land easement
2009	Iron	Dry Lakes Ranch	\$75,000	\$1,792,000	\$1,867,000	1862	Agricultural easement
2009	Salt Lake	Killyon Canyon Watershed Preserve	\$100,000	\$2,650,000	\$2,750,000	265	Open land easement
2009	Tooele	Tooele City Preserve	\$40,000	\$2,585,000	\$2,625,000	101	Open land easement
2009	Rich	Bear Lake Gateway Project	\$75,000	\$469,500	\$544,500	20	Open land easement
2009	Salt Lake	Wasatch Hollow Restoration	\$20,000	\$75,896	\$95,896	10	Open land restoration
2009	Salt Lake	TreeUtah Riparian Restoration 6	\$10,200	\$128,300	\$138,500	20	Open land restoration
2010	Cache	Green Canyon Ranch Project	\$250,000	\$1,455,125	\$1,705,125	2500	Agricultural easement
2010	Washington	Zion Chamberlain Ranch	\$313,500	\$1,286,500	\$1,600,000	280	Open land easement
2010	Washington	East Zion Meadows	\$210,000	\$260,000	\$470,000	250	Agricultural easement
2010	Salt Lake	Jordan River Property	\$167,000	\$1,083,000	\$1,250,000	10	Open land easement
2010	Weber	Uintah Loop Trail	\$18,500	\$19,000	\$37,500	2.2	Open land aquisition
2010	Washington	Confluence Park Restoration	\$30,000	\$187,415	\$217,415	10	Open land restoration
2010	Rich	Bear Lake Gateway Project Phase 2	\$100,000	\$670,000	\$770,000	20	Agricultural easement
2011	Rich	Bear Lake Gateway Phase 3	\$50,000	\$550,000	\$600,000	20	Agricultural easement
2011	Davis	Stringham Homestead Project Phase 2	\$23,000	\$71,880	\$94,880	20	Open land easement
2011	Washington	Confluence Park Restoration Phase 2	\$26,500	\$87,500	\$114,000	10	Open land restoration
2011	Salt Lake	Wasatch Hollow Restoration 2	\$26,500	\$26,817	\$53,317	10	Open land restoration
2011	Cache	Green Canyon Ranch Project Phase 2	\$75,000	\$3,481,500	\$3,556,500	3000	Agricultural easement
2011	Summit	Osguthorpe Farm	\$36,500	\$9,005,500	\$9,042,000	121	Agricultural easement
2012	Davis	Stringham Homestead	\$20,000	\$80,000	\$100,000	20	Open land aquisition
2012	Salt Lake	Jordan River Property Restoration	\$30,000	\$77,000	\$107,000	20	Open land restoration
2012	Washington	Confluence Park Restoration	\$27,172	\$60,359	\$87,531	20	Open land restoration
2012	Box Elder	Malad River Trail	\$40,000	\$80,000	\$120,000	34	Open land easement
2012	Salt Lake	8600 South Trailhead	\$40,000	\$60,000	\$100,000	0.28	Open land aquisition
2012	Summit	Toll Canyon	\$62,500	\$3,902,500	\$3,965,000	781	Open land easement
2015	Box Elder	Birch Creek Ranch Phase 2	\$335,000	\$648,800	\$983,800	2159	Agricultural easement
2015	Box Elder	Northwest Utah Properties	\$468,000	\$1,880,000	\$2,348,000	5872	Agricultural easement
2015	Summit	Ercanbrack Ranch	\$200,000	\$3,103,680	\$3,303,680	2161	Agricultural easement
2016	Salt Lake	Wasatch Hollow Restoration	\$31,000	\$57,500	\$88,500	4	Open land restoration
2016	Cache	Sheiss Ranch	\$63,500	\$679,500	\$743,000	26	Agricultural easement
2017	Summit	Wright Ranch	\$111,800	\$1,102,395	\$1,214,195	841.34	Agricultural easement
2017	Washington	Zion Narrows	\$110,000	\$1,030,000	\$1,140,000	880	Open land easement
2017	Weber	Weber River Parkway	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$120,000	12.6	Open land aquisition
2019	Iron	Deep Creek	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$600,000	818	Agricultural easement
2019	Wasatch	Kohler Dairy	\$500,000	\$8,640,000	\$9,140,000	102	Agricultural easement
2019	Cache	Evans	\$162,500	\$487,500	\$650,000	1100	Agricultural easement
2019	Washington	Confluence Park	\$35,000	\$70,500	\$105,500	6.9	Open land restoration
2019	Cache	Kunzler	\$481,750	\$481,750	\$963,500	73	Open land easement
2019	Salt Lake	Millcreek	\$68,000	\$82,000	\$150,000	1.1	Open land aquisition

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2019	Utah	<i>Robins Utah Lake</i>	\$300,000	\$511,550	\$811,550	30.84	Agricultural easement
2019	Salt Lake	<i>Cottonwood Heights BST</i>	\$500,000	\$3,579,087	\$4,079,087	13	Open land easement
2020	Summit	<i>Sargent Weber River</i>	\$175,000	\$3,167,267	\$3,342,267	105	Agricultural easement
2020	Washington	<i>Pine Valley</i>	\$68,500	\$206,500	\$275,000	1.94	Agricultural easement
2020	Washington	<i>Confluence Park 2020</i>	\$36,000	\$36,000	\$72,000	Pending	Open land restoration
2020	Salt Lake	<i>Gate Buttress</i>	\$25,000	\$181,000	\$206,000	140	Open land restoration