

Groundswell Conservancy Policy

Name: Outdoor Recreation Structures

Approval: Approved by Executive Committee November 8, 2010
Amendment approved by Executive Committee February 12, 2020

Groundswell Conservancy supports the use of conservation easement-restricted land for nature-based outdoor recreation activities including, but not limited to, hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking, cross-country skiing, and wildlife observation, which are consistent with the rural character of the surrounding landscape. To allow landowners to have reasonable use of easement-restricted property for such activities, Groundswell Conservancy permits the construction and use of structures supporting nature-based outdoor recreation activities (e.g. hunting stands, blinds, observation platforms) with certain restrictions.

The Landowner may construct, install, or maintain structures to provide for nature-based outdoor recreation activities provided that no such structure (a) diminishes the conservation values of the protected property, (b) is disallowed by law or by the rules of any government agency or program with a legal interest in the protected property, (c) exceeds a footprint of 64 square feet including any external access structures or components such as ladders or stairs (with the prior written approval of Groundswell, stairs, ramps, or other facilities specifically designed to create access to such permitted outdoor recreation structures by people of all abilities may be allowed even if they cause the structure to exceed the 64 square foot size limitation), (d) is improved with electricity, plumbing, or other utilities. Additionally, if conservation of the scenic quality of the property is a stated purpose of the conservation easement, each such structure shall be 'visually inconspicuous' when viewed from any roads, trails, lands, or waters open to the public. For the purposes of this policy, the term 'visually inconspicuous' shall mean 'difficult to be seen' and 'not readily noticeable during the time when leaves are on deciduous trees'. Specific terms and conditions regarding recreational structures will be addressed in the language of the conservation easement consistent with this policy.

Groundswell Conservancy is accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission. Policies may be updated to reflect changing accreditation standards and practices, as well as changing local organizational needs.