

Groundswell Conservancy Policy

Name: **Bequests and Other Large Unrestricted Gifts**

Approval: Approved by Executive Committee June 12, 2023

This policy supersedes the Bequest Usage policy approved by Board of Directors November 16, 2011.

When an unrestricted gift of \$25,000 or more is received, 10% of the funds will go directly into the Easement Enforcement Endowment Fund held at Madison Community Foundation until the fund has reached 120% of the amount calculated by Groundswell Conservancy's Easement Endowment Worksheet. The Executive Director will present asset allocation recommendations for the remaining funds for review and approval by the Executive Committee and/or the Board of Directors.

Staff will consider the following in this order when making recommendations:

1. Priority consideration shall be given to filling existing or anticipated gaps within the current fiscal year's operating budget.
2. Second consideration shall be given to allocating assets to the Land Trust Fund. The Land Trust Fund includes both operating reserves and funds for legal defense of conservation easements and fee-owned lands. The operating reserves should total at minimum 6 months of operating expenses. The sub-fund for legal defense should be fully funded as determined by the online Legal Defense Reserve Calculator of the Land Trust Alliance.
3. Third consideration shall be given to contributing additional funds to the permanently restricted Easement Enforcement Endowment Fund held at Madison Community Foundation. The endowment should be funded at 120% of the amount calculated by Groundswell Conservancy's Easement Endowment Worksheet.
4. Fourth consideration shall be given to priority projects or funds, organizational systems, technology, staffing, and capital improvement needs that would most effectively advance Groundswell Conservancy's impact and capacity.

If unobligated gift funds exist after consideration of the above, they will be added to the organization's operating reserve.

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.