

Groundswell Conservancy Policy

Name: **Naming**

Approval: Developed by Staff March 14, 2024
 Approved by Executive Committee May 6, 2024
 Approved by Board of Directors May 22, 2024

Cultural Context

Groundswell Conservancy acknowledges that local lands were historically home to Indigenous people. Naming properties for the most recent landowner focuses on the recent past without acknowledging the long-term history of the land. The following policy seeks to avoid adding the names of individuals, families, or other entities to the landscape. An exception is internal names needed for staff efficiency.

Internal Names for Fee Simple Properties and Conservation Easements

A typical naming convention for individual tracts is based on the last name of the most recent landowner. For fee simple acquisitions that name is followed by the word “Addition”. For easements, that name is followed by the words “Conservation Easement”. Examples are Thompson Addition and Rudd Conservation Easement.

At times staff may choose to discuss with the landowner a place-based name that might reflect a natural feature the landowner associates with the property. That identifier could become all or part of the internal name. An example is Cave Bluff Conservation Easement.

In other instances, staff may choose a name that reflects the property’s location and/or gives needed identifying information. Examples are Tierney Hillside Conservation Easement and Meyers South Conservation Easement.

These names are displayed on our web map of protected properties. When a landowner prefers an anonymous association with a property, an alias name may be assigned, such as Lower Mud Lake 2022 Addition. Internal names do not generally appear on signs or other structures at the property or easement.

External Names for Fee Simple Properties

A group of individual tracts may have a preserve name, such as Patrick Marsh and Westport Prairie. This name will be promoted to the public at the property, on the website, and in publications. The name will refer to the landscape (not individuals, families, or other entities) and will align with Groundswell Conservancy values. Staff will decide on the name.

Recognition of Landowner or Significant Donor of Fee Simple Properties

If a landowner makes a significant contribution of property value or if a donor makes a significant gift of cash towards the purchase of a property interest, staff may agree to an alternative form of naming. A significant contribution must be at least 50% of the total conservation cost (i.e.,

appraised value plus transactional expenses). An example is Pasley's Swan Creek Farm, which recognizes that family's heritage with the landscape. For a costly property that is of high priority to Groundswell and where naming is required by the landowner, staff may agree to a lower contribution percentage if needed to complete the acquisition; the Executive Committee must approve the lowered contribution percentage.

In addition to the name of an individual, family or other entity, the full landscape name will include an identifier. When the individual/family/other entity's name sunsets (see below), the identifier name will be retained. An example is Pasley's Swan Creek Farm, where the Pasley family name will sunset, and the property will then be called simply Swan Creek Farm. Staff will decide on the identifier name.

This type of naming will be at the insistence of the landowner or donor. Groundswell Conservancy staff will create a written agreement to record the name, where and how the name will be displayed, and that the name will sunset in 20 years. The agreement will specify that Groundswell Conservancy cannot guarantee that a name will be retained if the property is transferred to another owner. A perpetual naming right will not be granted. The naming agreement will be approved and signed by the executive director.

Honorary Names

Initiated Internally: To recognize exceptional service, Groundswell Conservancy may on rare occasions honor an individual or family by recognizing them on an asset (i.e., not the land itself and not a natural feature). The asset could be a bench, structure, or something similar; it will not be a trail. The named asset must be consistent with the land management plan for the property. A perpetual naming right will not be granted.

Initiated Externally: If an individual or other entity requests the opportunity to name an asset, Groundswell Conservancy staff may choose to accept or decline the offer. The asset could be a bench, structure, or something similar; it will not be the land itself, a natural feature, or a trail. The named asset must be consistent with the land management plan for the property. Staff will approve the type of asset (based on relevant plans). The individual or entity will need to provide the funding, which may include some staff time. A perpetual naming right will not be granted.

Changing a Name

When circumstances have changed such that a selected name is no longer aligned with Groundswell Conservancy's values, the name may be changed. If there is a written naming agreement that has not expired, the name change will be approved by the Board of Directors or the Executive Committee and signed by the executive director.

Guideline Regarding Fee Simple Acquisitions

There is a difference between land that is already protected (e.g., Patrick Marsh) and a land deal that is pending. Staff will not add a public-facing name for an individual, family or other entity to a landscape that is already protected.