

Kansas Land Trust Landowner Communication Policy

The Kansas Land Trust (KLT) engages in partnerships with landowners, funders, and communities. Our interactions with landowners must be respectful, and until proven otherwise, based on the assumptions that landowners intend to act upon the best information they have, exercise good stewardship, and intend to act with integrity and in good faith. The following guidelines are recommended for KLT interactions with landowners.

1. Reinforce the voluntary nature of conservation and conservation easements.
 - a. Do not coerce or mislead landowners to entice them to grant an easement
 - b. As much as KLT can accommodate, allow the landowner to dictate the pace of the project
 - c. Explain the landowner finally decides whether to accept the terms of the easement approaching the last step of closing.
2. Listen to the landowners. Make sure to understand their goals and needs.
3. Inform the landowner of the appropriate conservation options, including those that may not directly involve KLT. If a government agency is involved, explain their role.
4. Conservation easements involve highly complex issues. Provide the information and options more than once, preferably both verbally and in writing.
5. With an appropriate understanding of the landowner's vision and goals, introduce KLT's model conservation easement early in the easement development process.
6. Following KLT's policies and procedures, extend reasonable efforts to accommodate the landowners' needs in the due diligence process.
7. Work towards a clear understanding between the landowner and KLT of the easement purpose, conservation values, landowner rights, landowner reserved rights, required notifications and KLT's approval, mediation, remedies, costs and liabilities, extinguishment and proceeds, amendment, subordination of mortgages, assignment and transfer of responsibilities. Communicate that the easement's conservation values must be protected in perpetuity.
8. Maintain credibility and trust. Communicate only what you know. Clarify what you don't know.
9. Never give legal, tax or financial advice.
10. Always recommend that each party involved obtain independent legal, tax and financial advice.
11. Do not give assurances as to whether a particular easement donation might be deductible or what the resulting tax benefits of a deduction might be.
12. Ensure that all parties have a clear understanding of their roles, rights and responsibilities in the granting and acceptance of the easement, and allowed future land uses. Communicate these intentions, due diligence process, project budget, stewardship contribution, closing, and public information through an engagement letter. Communicate that this letter states good faith intentions while the final agreement rests with the landowner and the KLT Board of Directors later in the process. Signatures of the landowner and KLT Executive Director direct all parties to proceed in

good faith with the required due diligence.

13. Be respectful with both welcomed and unwanted communications.

14. Remember that good personal relationships enhance KLT's mission, program implementation, desired outcomes, and community support.



Jerry Jost, Executive Director

September 8, 2021

Date