



The Easement Stewardship Process: Our Annual Visit

To ensure that the terms of the easement are being upheld, WLT conducts annual visits to every easement-protected property to document its current condition and track any changes in ownership or management activities that might affect the property's conservation values.

Below is an overview of this process so that landowners may know what to expect on an annual basis:

Prior to the visit

1. Contact the landowner(s) to schedule the annual visit. Preferably, we will schedule the visit at a time and day so that the landowner(s) may meet with us in person and/or accompany us.
2. Review easement documentation (WLT) – The WLT staff member conducting the visit reviews the baseline documentation report, past monitoring reports, the original conservation easement, and prepares a plan for the visit.
3. Review easement documentation (Landowner) – We encourage the landowner to review the same documents and prepare a list of questions/concerns to be brought up to the staff member on the day of the visit.

During the visit

1. Meet the landowner/designated representative – WLT staff and landowners will discuss any current or future management plans for the property, follow-up on any past issues, and formulate a route for the visit. The annual visit is a great time for landowners and WLT staff to discuss the easement, review recent or upcoming management activities, and answer any questions.
2. Walk the property – Depending on the size, accessibility, and terrain of the property, the staff member along with the landowner, if they wish, will walk as much of the property as possible. In our experience, the majority of issues we observe regarding easement compliance arise from outside uses of the property (ex. dumping of yard or other waste, prohibited vehicle uses, etc.). A primary focus of our visits is thus checking the condition of property boundaries along roads and abutting properties.

After the visit

1. Produce the annual monitoring report – The staff member who conducted the visit will compile the photos, maps, and observations taken during the visit into a final report. The report is saved in our records and a copy will be sent to the landowner for their review. Any observed issues or potential easement violations are listed in the report. It is the responsibility of the landowner to take steps to address the issue(s). The landowner is encouraged to contact WLT staff with any questions or concerns regarding the annual monitoring report.
2. Follow-up with the landowner(s) – WLT may contact the landowner(s) later in the year following submission of the monitoring report to check if the landowner received the report, has any questions, and/or has taken steps to address any observed issues.