Program Eligibility Criteria and Process

To receive a transaction costs grant application, respond to the following criteria via email to Amanda Hill ([ahill@goco.org](mailto:ahill@goco.org)). It is our goal that all eligibility questions will be answered prior to anyone beginning an application to ensure only eligible applications are received. Contact Amanda with any questions via email or at 303-226-4521.

The transaction costs grant program was created to help communities and organizations acquire conservation easements from landowners who would not be able to fund the transaction costs without assistance. The program will target projects that include priorities identified in GOCO’s Strategic Plan, such as the continuation of landscape-scale conservation and conservation on properties along riparian corridors, among others.

To be eligible for GOCO’s transaction costs grant program, the two following criteria must be met:

* 1. The conservation easement must be 100% donated
  2. Landowner Need: The landowner and land trust must assert that the landowner had an average adjusted gross income (AGI) of $900,000 or less over the last three years. (This number is based on the NRCS limit for conservation easement purchase assistance.) Please submit an affidavit signed by the landowner asserting that they meet this requirement. GOCO staff may make an exception to this requirement if the landowner and land trust demonstrate the landowner would not be able to fund the conservation easement transaction costs without assistance.

GOCO intends to support healthy conservation organizations that have the capacity to steward their conservation easements in perpetuity. For all open space grant programs, GOCO now requires the following information about a potential conservation easement holder’s organizational health and capacity:

* + 1. Is the conservation easement holder certified by the State of Colorado?
    2. Is the conservation easement holder accredited by the Land Trust Alliance?
    3. Has the conservation easement holder applied for Terrafirma insurance coverage? If yes, were you accepted? If you have not applied or you were not accepted, describe your approach to guarding your organization from legal challenges related to your conservation easements.
    4. Has the conservation easement holder submitted an organizational stewardship report to GOCO using GOCO’s form in the last two years? If not, please submit one with this eligibility information.\*

\*Contact GOCO staff. Please note GOCO will seek updated organizational stewardship reports in 2018. Old organizational stewardship reports will not meet the requirement.