



CAR Position Paper- Purchase of Development Rights

What is 'Purchase of Development Rights'?

A Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) is a voluntary program that compensates owners of agricultural property for their willingness to accept a **permanent deed restriction** on their land that limits future development of the land for non-agricultural purposes.

The value of property owners' development rights is based on the difference between what it could be sold for on the open market with no restrictions and what it can be sold for as farmland. Independent, professional appraisers determine these values and an agreement is negotiated on an individual basis with the farmer. This is the amount in which landowners entering into the program are compensated.

Once a conservation easement is in place, the property owner may still sell the land on the open market with the permanent deed restricting future development. All other private property rights remain intact.

What is CAR's Position on Purchase of Development Rights?

CAR is opposed to government funding of Purchase of Development Rights programs.

However, as advocates of private property rights, CAR does not oppose the concept of PDR's, as every property owner should have the prerogative to sell certain rights to their property if they so choose (development, mineral, hunting, etc.).

Any sale of property rights should be purchased by private parties, be it a private foundation or individuals.

Why is CAR Opposed to Government Funding Purchase of Development Rights?

- CAR recognizes that while development rights are fundamental rights of property owners, PDR's do in fact **intrude on the free market** approach to land development, which is not a role the government should play.
- PDR's are **permanent**; communities grow and change over time, but PDR's do not allow that land to ever be developed to match the future character of its surrounding community. The result: a farm surrounded by developed land.
- Under government funded PDR programs, taxpayers would pay to preserve land that the **general public has no access to** (as opposed to parks and trails).
- With the PDR program, there is **no stipulation that guarantees once development rights are sold, that land must continue to be actively farmed**. PDR's are billed as saving farms, but there are no promises that this will indeed occur.