

Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry  
**Study of Conserved Lands Owned by Nonprofit Organizations**  
Authorizing Legislation  
(P.L. 2017, chapter 284, Part TT, section TT-2)

**Sec. TT-2. Study of conserved lands owned by nonprofit conservation organizations.**

**1. Study.** The Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, referred to in this section as “the committee,” shall conduct a study of the financial and nonfinancial aspects of conserved lands owned by nonprofit conservation organizations, including property taxes paid, community benefits realized and value of lands to the State's economy.

**2. Staffing; additional assistance.** The Legislative Council shall provide staffing services to the committee. The committee may invite the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry and other appropriate agencies of State Government to provide additional staff support or assistance to the committee.

**3. Duties.** The committee shall review and evaluate for conserved lands owned by nonprofit organizations:

A. The property tax payments nonprofit conservation organizations make on those conserved lands including property tax payments, payments in lieu of taxes and other similar payments;

B. The economic impact of those conserved lands on other real property, including working farms and commercial forest land, and the access to those conserved lands for licensed Maine guides, commercial fishermen and marine shellfish and worm harvesters;

C. The economic impact of those conserved lands on the public and Maine's tourism economy, including opportunities to hunt, fish, hike, snowmobile, canoe and engage in other outdoor recreational activities. The committee shall determine the miles of trails and the number of water access sites and similar recreational infrastructure;

D. The community benefits of those conserved lands owned by nonprofit conservation organizations, including education programs, downtown revitalization efforts, community gardens, youth sports activities and similar initiatives; and

E. Examine any other issues that the committee determines are related to the purpose of the study.

**4. Input and collaboration.** In conducting the duties under subsection 3, the committee shall seek public input and shall consult and collaborate with relevant stakeholders, including representatives of Maine's nonprofit land trust community.

**5. Meetings.** The committee shall hold at least 3 meetings.

**6. Report.** The committee shall complete its report, including any recommendations for legislation, and provide it to the public no later than February 15, 2018.