

Gallatin County, MT: PACE Ranking Criteria

<http://www.gallatin.mt.gov/openlands/selections.htm>

Selections Criteria

Give a description of the physical location of the property (i.e. distance and location from nearest town) and the amount of acreage proposed for easement, and/or purchase, along with appropriate maps or aerial photos:

SECTION IV. CRITERIA DOCUMENTATION

The following 11 criteria will assist the Open Lands Board in prioritizing which projects will receive funding. Please explain how your project will meet the following criteria. Please limit your responses to one page per criteria:

- **Prime agriculture crop, range, and forest land**
A higher priority will be given land with historical ties to agriculture and where the preservation of this land will maintain the rural landscape and important view shed areas.

- **Size and configuration of land**
A higher priority will be given to projects of 640 or more acres of land. The configuration will be considered, giving a higher priority to land enhancing all of the selection criteria.

- **Positive social and economic impacts**
A higher priority will be given to applications that promote and maintain economic viability of the agriculture industry, thereby benefitting the community's social and economic stability.

- **Wildlife habitat and wildlife movement corridors**
A higher priority will be given to areas containing basic habitat components needed to support diverse, healthy, and viable fish and wildlife species. The more of these components there are and the more juxtaposition there is of these components in any given area, the more important this area will be to fish and wildlife species diversity. These components are food, cover, water, and open space.

- **Riparian areas and wetlands**
A higher priority will be given to land that has perennial or intermittent streams, rivers, ponds and/or wetlands. Preservation of this land will help maintain the quality of surface water and underground aquifers.

- **Development pressures**
A higher priority will be given to land that is currently for sale or in the process of conversion to uses other than agriculture or open space. Consideration will be given for urgency in decision making because of development probability.
- **Recreational value**
A higher priority will be given to land for recreational consideration that will provide regional benefits. Consideration for recreational use will be given land that has suitable topography, soils, vegetation, size, and environmental education possibilities. The area should have optimal potential for social, cultural, and or athletic activities.
- **Within designated preservation areas**
A higher priority will be given to land that is located in an area that has been identified for preservation in accordance with the County's growth policy.
- **Acceptable contract**
A higher priority will be given to an application in which cost, conditions, and terms support the goals and objectives of the Gallatin County open space program.
- **Close or next to existing preserved areas**
A higher priority will be given to land that adjoins or is close to an area already preserved by conservation easement or designated for public use.
- **Away from existing development**
A higher priority will be given to applications on the basis of relation to existing development.