

Eco-Asset Value Methods Mark Twenty Years Boosting Land Net Worth

Land eco-valuation concepts, methods and tools, now in use for two decades, show consistent rise in landowner estate value

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES, June 29, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Eco-Asset Solutions and Innovations ([EASI](#)) has marked twenty years' experience identifying and developing ecological asset value on private lands in the U.S., consistently increasing opportunities for new land revenues, sale prices and tax related values.

In 1999 the New York Times interviewed EASI founder William Coleman about the program he was managing, then for the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI), to help U.S. energy companies understand the [eco-asset value](#) of legacy properties they were selling or donating for conservation purposes.

"The energy boom of the 1980s was over," Coleman recalls. "Holding on to land that wouldn't be needed for power plant development showed up as a liability on company books."

In many cases those lands were some of the most remote and ecologically important properties in America. Companies hoped to derive some level of value beyond a straight sale by, for example, donating the properties to glean the public relations value of committing lands for public enjoyment and conservation.

Coleman believed that these lands held far more value than companies realized. He considered the rapidly diversifying marketplace for ecological assets such as wetlands credits, stream credits, species credits and carbon credits.

"As early as 1990 these 'mitigation credits' were demonstrating significant monetary value in their individual market niches," said Coleman. "Nobody had thought about integrating those values into a single expression of property net worth."

Even donating a property could earn a landowner additional tax-related value, Coleman reasoned, if ecological assets were built in to the appraisal.

The Times wanted to find out how this idea worked. Their January 18, 1999 article wrote:

"...the ultimate goal of this approach is to translate a property's intangible environmental value

into a very tangible financial value. In that way, Coleman says, the value of utilities' most ecologically-important land holdings would be increased - perhaps significantly - which likely would satisfy utility shareholders, while at the same time satisfying environmentalists who want environmentally sensitive land to remain undisturbed."

"The Times article nailed it," according to Coleman.

In 2001 EPRI further acknowledged the success of this idea by awarding his team a coveted "Chauncey Award", the company's highest annual recognition (named for EPRI founder Chauncey Starr), for "evaluating, creating, and managing ecological assets linking improved environmental quality with private sector value."

Coleman went on to found EASI in 2014. Over the last six years the company has conducted more than thirty studies nationwide. Each project has confirmed that ecological asset value can deliver a combination of revenue, sales and tax-related values as well as long term ecological value by conserving those same rural properties in perpetuity.

"In our work, size doesn't matter," Coleman explained. "Whether 10,000 acres in Florida (\$125 million net eco-asset value), 1400 acres near Olympia, Washington (\$15M net), or 65 acres on the San Francisco Bay (\$40M net), a property can leverage substantial value for its owner. It's more about location than size...that old real estate mantra."

Coleman believes that property eco-asset values will soon be a standard component of every land appraisal. "Highest and best use turns out to be about both ecological and economic value," he said. "We've worked with the appraisers to show them how it's done. The smart companies are already putting our concepts, methods and tools to work for their clients."

He added, "The next twenty years will prove this idea beyond a doubt. I intend to be around to see it happen."

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