

Rising Landlocked Property Disputes in Texas: What Buyers Should Know in 2026

New Braunfels, Texas Jul 23, 2026 ([IssueWire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - Real estate attorneys across Texas are reporting a growing number of disputes over landlocked property as rural land purchases continue to rise. Buyers seeking affordable acreage for development, recreation, or investment sometimes discover after closing that their land has **no legally recorded access to a public road**.

Recent market data shows that demand for rural acreage continues to drive land transactions statewide. According to the [Texas Real Estate Research Center](#) at Texas A&M University, the **statewide rural land price reached approximately \$5,158 per acre in 2025, reflecting a 5.9% year-over-year increase**.

The data indicates that while the **number of rural land sales declined slightly year over year**, land values continued to rise as buyers pursued larger tracts and lifestyle properties

The Legal Meaning of a Landlocked Parcel

A landlocked parcel is typically surrounded by privately owned land with no legally recognized route to a public road. A path or driveway may physically exist, but the legal right to use that route may not be recorded in the property's deed or title records.

In Texas, property access and easements are governed by provisions within the [Texas Property Code](#), which addresses property interests and rights associated with land ownership.

When disputes occur, courts may review whether an access right exists through a recorded easement, long-term use of a roadway, or circumstances in which a property became landlocked after subdivision. Determining those rights typically requires examination of deed records, surveys, and historical transfers of the property.

Why Buyers Discover the Problem After Purchase

Attorneys note that access disputes often surface when land changes ownership. Buyers may rely on visible roads, historic use of neighboring land, or informal agreements between prior owners. Without recorded easements, however, neighboring landowners may challenge the right to cross their property.

Common situations that lead to landlocked property disputes include:

- Subdivision of large ranches without formally recorded access easements
- Older survey descriptions that do not reflect modern roadway access
- Informal road use between neighboring landowners that was never documented
- Property transfers through inheritance or probate without an updated title review

“Access is one of the first issues that should be confirmed in a rural land transaction,” said [Christopher H. Moore](#), co-founder of Texas Horizons Law Group. “A property may appear to have a road leading to it, but unless the right to use that route is legally recorded, disputes can arise after the purchase.”

In some cases, the issue emerges after property transfers through inheritance or probate. Rural land that passes through generations may contain outdated surveys or incomplete access documentation. When heirs later divide or sell the land, missing easements can lead to conflicts with surrounding property owners.

Checking Access Before Buying Rural Land

Legal review of title commitments, surveys, and deed records is commonly used to confirm the existence of legal access before a purchase. These documents can reveal whether easements are recorded and whether the property has a legally recognized connection to a public roadway.

If a property lacks recorded access, legal solutions may still exist. Possible legal remedies may include:

- **Easement by necessity**, when land becomes inaccessible after subdivision
- **Prescriptive easements**, based on long-term and consistent roadway use
- **Negotiated access easements** between neighboring landowners
- **Quiet title or declaratory actions** to clarify property rights

Real estate attorneys often assist with transactional due diligence before closing. This may include reviewing purchase contracts, confirming easement language in deeds, examining title commitments, and identifying potential access issues before a buyer completes the transaction. Access questions may also arise when rural property is transferred through **estate planning or probate proceedings**, particularly when older documentation does not clearly establish roadway access.

Legal guidance can also be important when rural land transfers are made through probate or estate planning arrangements, where older deeds and surveys may not reflect current access rights.

About Texas Horizons Law Group

Based in Texas, Texas Horizons Law Group provides legal services in real estate, estate planning, probate, business law, and related matters. The firm serves clients across Texas, including Central Texas communities. Additional information is available at <https://thlg.law>.

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