

# REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION

## HENDERSON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

**MEETING DATE:** September 20, 2023

**SUBJECT:** Farmland Preservation

**PRESENTER:** Liz Hanson, Planner  
Autumn Radcliff, Planning Director

**ATTACHMENTS:** 1. PowerPoint Presentation

### **SUMMARY OF REQUEST:**

The Board has been discussing farmland preservation. Staff will provide an overview presentation on this subject.

### **BOARD ACTION:**

Board action is not required at this time.

### **Suggested Motion:**

*None.*



# Farmland Preservation

Henderson County  
Board of Commissioners – September 20, 2023

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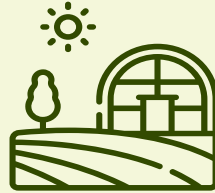


What is Farmland Preservation



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## Why Farmland Preservation?

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### Farmland Loss in NC

- North Carolina is the second-most threatened state for farmland loss
  - 732,000 acres of agricultural land converted between 2001 and 2016
    - *78% of agricultural land was converted to low-density residential uses*
- North Carolina is projected to lose over 1 million acres of agricultural land by 2040
  - Loss of nearly 20,000 jobs
  - Loss of 9,000 farms
  - Loss of \$1.25 billion in farming output

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## Agriculture in Henderson County

- Agriculture (including managed forests) covers 26% of land in the County (60,000 acres)
  - Nearly a \$1 billion industry
  - Approximately 4,000 jobs



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## Farmland Loss in Henderson County

- Henderson County lost 2,058 acres of agricultural land between 2020 and 2023
  - The County lost 1/3 of orchard land between 2002 and 2017
- Example causes of farmland loss include low-density residential and commercial development, growth of utility services



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## Why Preserve Farmland in Henderson County

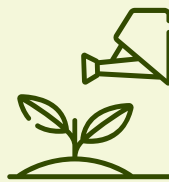
Quality of life & rural character

Food production & security

Agribusiness & agritourism

Economic & employment benefits

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## What is Farmland Preservation?

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## Agricultural Conservation Easements

- Purchase of Agricultural Easements programs (PACE) permanently preserves agricultural lands from future residential, commercial, or industrial development.
  - Voluntary, incentive-based program
  - Binding agreement recorded at Register of Deeds
  - Provides an alternative to restrictive land use
  - Property remains in private ownership
  - Reduces conflict between agricultural uses and other uses
  - Preserves agricultural land for future generations
  - Allows land to remain in Present-Use Value

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## Wake County, NC Agricultural Conservation Easement Program

- Wake County has lost **22,964 acres** of agricultural land (~20%) since 2014
- To protect the nearly **700** farms within the County, a **Farmland Preservation Program Ordinance** was created using three different preservation tools



### Agricultural Conservation Easement Program

- Permanently protect and conserve land for agricultural uses
- Better integrate policies of government that may conflict with farmland protection
- Reduce land conflicts between agriculture and other uses
- The easement is a recorded deed in which the landowner enters an agreement with the Wake County Soil and Water Conservation District
- Binding agreement stays with the property even as it changes ownership and is regularly monitored by our staff and Advisory Board
- Tax benefits may include tax incentives, federal income tax reduction and estate tax deduction

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# Agricultural Conservation Easement Funding

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## Funding Sources

### NC Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services

- Agricultural Development & Farmland Preservation (ADFP) Trust Fund

### US Department of Agriculture Natural Resource Conservation Service

- Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)
- Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)



### Department of Defense Readiness & Environmental Protection Integration

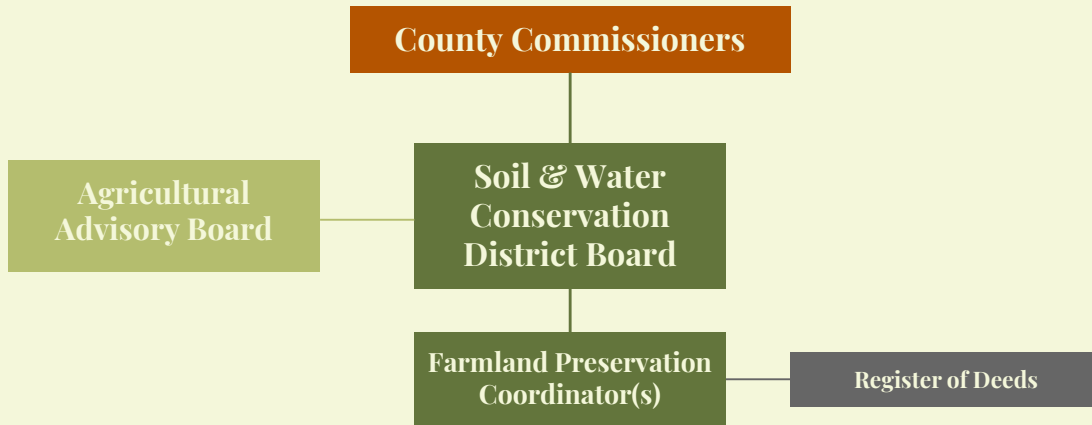
- US Air Force
- US Navy/US Marine Corps

### County Funding

- Higher Grant Application Score with Secured County Funding
- Local Taxes & Fees
- Taxes acquired through PUV Program

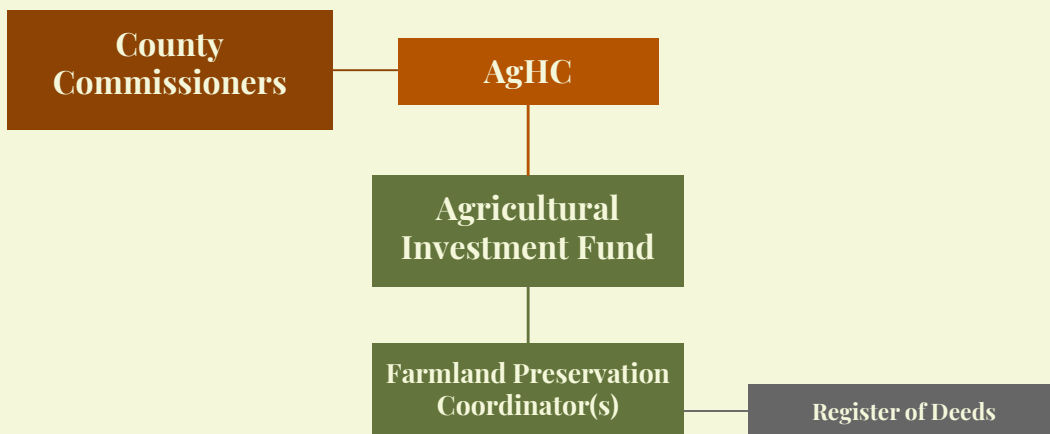
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## Program Administration & Oversight #1



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## Program Administration & Oversight #2



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