



Chatham Agricultural Preservation & Development Trust Fund

FY 2024 Pilot Program



Overview

Goals and Objectives

The Chatham County Agricultural Preservation & Development (APD) Trust Fund goals and objectives are to fund projects encouraging the long-term preservation of qualifying agricultural, horticultural, and forestlands to foster the growth, development, and sustainability of family farms.

Background

The [2009 Chatham Farmland Preservation Plan](#) recommends creating a county Working Lands Protection Program by building support for conservation easement programs through a local funding option. An update to the Farmland Preservation Plan is being drafted and should be completed by the end of 2023.

The [Chatham County Comprehensive Plan](#), adopted in 2017, also provides a set of recommendations for farmland protection and agricultural development:

- Goal #1: Preserve the rural character and lifestyle of Chatham County
- Goal #2: Preserve, protect, and enable agriculture and forestry
- Goal #5: Conserve natural resources

In an American Farmland Trust study published in 2022, North Carolina was projected to lose the second-most acres of farmland in the United States by the year 2040. In Chatham County, we stand to lose some 14,700 acres, based on moderate projections. This calculation does not include the impact associated with large industrial manufacturing projects that have recently come to Chatham County due to the study utilizing datasets and trends from 2001 to 2016.

Local Funding

On November 18, 2019, the Board of Commissioners approved a resolution that, pending the passing of the Article 46 tax referendum, would result in revenues to be used for education, parks and recreation, agriculture preservation and enhancement, and affordable housing. In March 2020, Chatham County voters approved the referendum, and the tax was levied in April of 2020.

On October 17, 2022, the Chatham County Board of Commissioners voted unanimously to establish the first-ever county-based trust fund aimed at supporting agricultural preservation and development within Chatham County.

The Chatham Agricultural Preservation & Development Trust Fund was established and funded with a portion of Article 46 tax revenue.

The aim of this initiative is to protect Chatham County farms and working lands while also addressing the need to help farmers stay in business, both now and for future generations.



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Projects eligible for funding

Applications will be accepted from qualifying, non-profit conservation land trust entities for the following categories:

1. Perpetual Agricultural Working-lands Easements.
2. Transaction costs related to or necessary to facilitate a working-land easement transaction.
3. Organizational and Programming support that promotes the preservation and development of working lands within Chatham County through perpetual agricultural conservation easements.

Eligibility

- All applicants must be non-profit conservation organizations (G.S.106-744)
 - Farmers, landowners, or others interested in applying must partner with an eligible non-profit conservation organization.
- Perpetual Agricultural Working-lands Easement
 - To be awarded funding for a conservation easement purchase through the Chatham Agricultural Preservation & Development Trust Fund, the property must be located within the borders Chatham County, NC, and in working lands use (agriculture, horticulture, forestry).(Meets NC GS § 160D-903. Agricultural Uses).
 - Minimum acreage requirements must follow the present-use value guidelines: five acres for horticulture, 10 acres for agriculture (row crops or pasture), 20 acres for forestry, or a combination of working lands use.
 - If there are existing easements that have removed the development rights from the property, those easement areas will be ineligible for the program and do not count toward the minimum acreage requirements.
 - If the easement is deemed eligible by award for the NCD ADFP Easement program or for the USDA ACEP easement program, the easement is eligible in Chatham County.
- Transaction Costs and Transaction Funds Mini-Grants
 - Transaction Funds Mini-Grant awards must expedite a permanent conservation easement acquisition that otherwise meets program requirements.
 - Transaction Cost Mini-Grants are intended to facilitate a conservation easement where the applicant or landowner does not otherwise have funds available to cover these expenses. The applying entity is responsible for demonstrating this financial need.
- Organizational and Programming support
 - Eligible entities must promote or maintain the preservation and development of working lands within Chatham County, through perpetual conservation easements.

Funding Requests

- Perpetual Agricultural Working-lands Easements



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- Total funds from the Chatham Agricultural Preservation & Development Trust Fund to be awarded for easements in FY 2023-2024 shall not exceed \$600,000.00.
 - Each application request is limited to 50% of the estimated easement value plus additional allowable costs outlined below. Applications requesting less than 50% will rank higher in proportion to that percentage.
 - Applicant must show a budget with all match values and sources for remaining balance of the easement value as well as additional allowable costs.
 - Amounts awarded for easement acquisition will be paid upon closing.
 - Transaction costs eligible for funding within a Perpetual Agricultural Working-lands Easement Acquisition funding request include the following: surveys, legal descriptions, appraisals, Phase I Environmental Assessments, legal fees and closing costs, title insurance, recording fees, ad valorem taxes (Grant Recipient's portion), baseline documentation report preparation, and stewardship/legal defense fund contributions (up to 50% of calculated stewardship/legal defense fund donation request, provided all funds are deposited into a restricted stewardship fund; not to exceed 3% of the appraised easement value).
 - Transaction costs will be awarded as reimbursement for incurred expense. Chatham APD Trust Fund will reimburse grantee for project expenses prior to, at, or after closing, provided the grantee complies with the conditions of the Grant Contract and is acting in good faith. Closing is defined as recording of Warranty Deed, Conservation Agreement, and other documents required by the Grant Contract.
 - Transaction cost reimbursements may not exceed \$25,000.00 and must be detailed in the project budget.
 - The Chatham APD Trust Fund recognizes there may be expenses needed to establish a final agreement with the landowner and is willing to share reasonable costs to establish a purchase value before greater expenses are incurred. These cases will be considered on a case-by-case basis subject to funding availability. Contact staff for further information about this provision.
 - Requests for any transaction costs or expenses prior to closing require a signed agreement between the Chatham APD Trust Fund and the grantee requiring reimbursement to the Trust Fund if the project fails to close.
- Transaction Funds Mini-Grants
 - The Transaction Funds Mini-Grant program is intended to support Working-lands Conservation Easement projects where funds for necessary transaction costs are not otherwise provided by a participating grant resource or impose an excessive financial hardship on the participating landowner.



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- Costs eligible for Transaction Funds Mini-Grants are the same as those listed in the “Perpetual Agricultural Working-lands Easements” section above and subject to the same requirements and guidelines.
- Transaction Funds Mini-Grants may not exceed \$25,000.00 per request and are subject to availability after awards for Perpetual Agricultural Working-lands Easement and Organizational and Programming Support. The Chatham APD Trust Fund cannot guarantee that Transaction Funds Mini-Grants will be available or awarded in any specific funding cycle.
- Organizational and Programming support
 - Total funds from the Chatham Agricultural Preservation & Development Trust Fund to be awarded for organizational support in 2023 shall not exceed \$75,000.00



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Conservation Easement Application

A. General Questions:

1. Applicant Organization (must be a qualified nonprofit land trust and conservation organization):
2. Project Title:
3. Landowners agree to perpetual restrictions of proposed conservation easement (through letter of intent or a legal Option to Purchase Agricultural Easement). Include signed authorization form all parties with an interest in the ownership. Attach documents.
4. Acres proposed for Conservation Easement:
 - a. Total acres of farm operation:
 - b. Acres proposed for conservation easement:

B. Applicant Organizational Questions:

1. Organization Mailing Address:
2. UEI Number:
3. Tax ID Number:
4. Project Manager Name & Title
5. Project Manager Phone
6. Project Manager email
7. Applicant proof of insurance (attach documents)
8. Applicant a registered Land Trust Alliance Member?
9. Applicant accreditation certificate (if applicable)
10. Organization's portfolio of work in Chatham County: (attach a summary of historical and current projects and properties protected in Chatham County with partnering agencies and/or funders, future goals for working lands protections in Chatham County)

C. Easement Property & Ownership Questions:

1. Easement Property Address
2. Easement Property mailing address
3. Easement Latitude & Longitude
4. Chatham County Parcel Numbers
5. Owner name (of each parcel)
6. Ownership structure
7. List of all parties that have ownership interest
8. Certification that all land parcels in easement area are in the same ownership structure.
9. General Warranty Deed to verify ownership of property (attach)
10. Acknowledgment of a lien on the property (if applicable)
11. If awarded funding from Chatham County, the landowner is willing to be interviewed for a press release.



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D. Ag Operation Questions:

1. How many total acres are under agricultural production for this operation:
 - a. Acres of cropland:
 - b. Acres of pastureland (include number and species of livestock):
 - c. Prime, unique, or soils of statewide importance on the easement area:
 - d. Acres of timberland:
 - e. Acres of horticultural production:
 - f. Acres of undisturbed riparian buffer:
 - g. Acres of associated agricultural infrastructure (barns, farm stands, processing, storage, access roads, etc)
 - h. Acres of residential:
 - i. Other areas (describe):

(Attach map of operation showing each of above.)
2. What are the agricultural products produced on the farm?
3. Provide documentation that this farm is bona-fide, as defined by NC GS § 160D-903, for at least 4 years?
4. Is the farm leased or operated by others who are producing agricultural products? (Provide proof of farm income for others.)
5. Is the farm enrolled in the Present Use Value tax deferral program?
6. Is the farm enrolled in the Voluntary Agriculture District Program?
7. Summarize the known history of the farm:
8. Summarize the future goals of the farm:
9. Is the farm owned and operated by a historically underserved, marginalized, or socially disadvantaged community? Please describe:
10. Proximity to high development risk and population centers:
 - a. Easement is located within or adjoining city limits?
 - b. Easement is within an ETJ?
 - c. Easement is within 1 mile of city limits or ETJ?
 - d. Are there other recognizable threats to agricultural production within the area? If so, describe.
11. Proximity to other conserved lands:
 - a. Is the farm adjacent to another agricultural conservation easement?
 - b. Other perpetual conservation easement?
 - c. Within 4 miles of an easement? If so, please indicate on a map.
 - d. Is the farm adjacent to, or within 2 miles of, public lands preserved for open space or conservation?
12. Describe any incompatible land uses on the proposed conservation easement that may prohibit current or future agricultural production such as, but not limited to: trash piles,



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dumps, discontinued equipment staging, structures in disrepair beyond use, recreational use areas (ex: atv courses), soil borrow pits, eroded areas, or other unconventional management areas.

E. Natural Resource Conservation Questions:

1. Have the landowners participated in programs offered by NRCS or Chatham SWCD on this farm? If so, describe:
2. Attach a conservation Plan:
3. Attach a Prime Farmland Soils statement:
4. If under cultivation, is the farm using conservation best management practices to ensure soil loss is less than "T" or "2T" following the HEL guidance from UDSA. Describe cropping system and management practices.
5. If grazed, farm is operating under a prescribed grazing plan?
6. If timberland, farm is operating under a current forest management plan? Attach current Forestry Management Plan.
7. Perennial water bodies are located on or along the property:
 - a. Y/N Ponds
 - b. Y/N Streams or Rivers
 - c. y/n Streams are listed under most recent 303(d) list as impaired.
 - d. y/n Streams are protected by undisturbed buffer of _____ ft on average (excluding crossing areas).
 - e. If there are perennial streams on the property, is the farm willing to protect or establish an undisturbed buffer zone?
8. List any innovative practices that may reduce energy consumption, water usage and/or increase carbon storage on the farm.
9. List any natural heritage sites or other information regarding unique or endangered species or habitats on the property.

F. Discretionary Factors

1. Describe any factors supporting permanent conservation of the farm not otherwise addressed in this application.

G. Requested Funding

1. Requested funding amount? \$_____ per acre x _____ acres
2. Total appraised value per acre? \$_____ per acre x _____ acres
3. Other funding sources?
 - a. y/n NC ADFP \$_____ per acre x _____ acres
 - b. y/n USDA ACE \$_____ per acre x _____ acres
 - c. y/n Landowner donation \$_____ per acre x _____ acres
 - d. y/n Other funding source \$_____ per acre x _____ acres



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4. What percentage of match will the Chatham Agricultural Preservation and Development Trust Fund be providing? _____%
5. Requested funding for transaction costs or other additional items?
 - a. y/n Appraisal reimbursement \$ _____
 - b. y/n Survey reimbursement \$ _____
 - c. y/n Closing costs reimbursement (see list of eligible costs in the "Eligibility" section above) \$ _____
 - d. y/n Other direct costs not covered by partners (list) \$ _____
6. Total Chatham Agricultural Preservation and Development Trust Fund requested: \$ _____
7. Please provide a proposed budget for the funding requested.

Documents required for application:

Applicant's Organizational documents

Proof of insurance

Non-profit land trust status

Organizational mission

Accreditation certificate (if available)

Proof of farm ownership

Property Card showing PUV status and VAD status (if applicable)

All owners sign letter of intent or option to sell conservation easement

Financial documentation showing economic interest and bonafide status

Farm map showing:

Proposed easement acres

Acreage on farm (residences, building envelopes, structures, cropland, forestland, pastureland, buffers, streams & ponds, incompatible use areas)

Site map showing:

Farm location

City and ETJ limits if applicable

Other Working lands easements within 4 miles



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Other protected spaces within 2 miles

Natural Resource Conservation Documentation

Prime Soils certification

Conservation Plan or Forestry Management Plan

Natural Heritage areas or other areas of unique or endangered natural species.

Easement Budget

Including acquisition funding, transaction cost, and other allowable costs for which funding is requested.

If requesting reimbursement of any transactional costs prior to closing, submit documentation of need and good faith proof with an agreement that awarded amount will be reimbursed if project fails to close.

Project Narrative

Narrative describing project need and benefits (not to exceed 750 words). Include here auxiliary project benefits to be considered for the "Discretionary Points" category and any other pertinent information not otherwise requested in the project application.



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Transaction Funds Mini-Grant Application

**Applications for Transaction Funds Mini-Grants should follow the format and requirements for the Conservation Easement grants described above and include a statement of need indicating why Chatham APD Trust Fund resources are necessary to complete the farmland preservation conservation easement.*

For Transaction Fund Mini-Grants, applications to the NC ADFP Trust Fund or other grant applications may be substituted under some conditions. The statement of need is still required. Substitutions must be pre-approved by CAPD staff prior to application.



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Organizational & Programming Support Application

A. General Questions:

1. Applicant Organization (must be a nonprofit land trust and conservation organization):
2. Proposal Title:

B. Applicant Organizational Questions:

1. Organization Mailing Address:
2. UEI Number:
3. Tax ID Number:
4. Contact Name & Title
5. Contact Phone:
6. Contact email
7. Applicant proof of insurance (attach documents)
8. Applicant a registered Land Trust Alliance Member?
9. Accreditation certificate (if applicable)
10. Organization's portfolio or summary of work in Chatham County including, but not limited to:
 - a. Completed working lands easements
 - b. Natural resources conservation projects
 - c. Agricultural development projects
 - d. Other current or ongoing projects
 - e. Partnering agencies and/or funders

C. Organizational & Programming Support Questions:

1. Provide a proposal on how you, the applicant, will promote and implement the preservation and development of working lands within Chatham County. Please include obtainable and measurable objectives and goals for the short term and long term.
2. Will you be willing to submit 6-month progress reports on how you are meeting your objectives?
3. Will you be dedicating staff to Chatham County to prioritize preservation and development of working lands here? If so, please describe the workload and percentage of time dedicated to Chatham County projects.
4. Will these funds be dedicated to current programs, or will you develop new programs to support Chatham County's Farmland Preservation efforts (e.g., county-wide mapping initiatives, public programming, landowner seminars, economic or ecosystem service analysis, etc.)? Please describe.
5. How will the proposal support historically underserved, marginalized, or socially disadvantaged communities? Include in this question program initiatives for increasing access to farmland for new or disadvantaged farmers. Please describe.



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6. Other than working lands protection, please describe your current organizational priorities in Chatham County, if any.

D. Funding Questions:

1. How much are you requesting? \$_____
2. Please provide a proposed budget for the above funding.

Documents required for application:

- Applicant's Organizational documents
 - Proof of insurance
 - Non-profit land trust status
 - Organizational mission
- Portfolio of projects
- Proposal
- Budget details



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Ranking Matrix

PILOT FY 2024 Chatham Conservation Easement & Transaction Costs Application Scoring						
Step 1						
Application Questions and Points (Supporting Documentation Required for a "Yes" response)						
Max Points per category	Points per answer	Questions	Mark Only For Yes Response	Points Assigned For Yes Response	Documentation	Scoring Item Objective
20		What percentage of the proposed easement will be funded by the Chatham Agricultural Preservation & Development Trust Fund? Funds may cover up to 50% assessed value of development rights.			Budget including match percentages and partners.	The limited amount of local funding available for purchasing permanent working lands conservation easements will be better utilized if matched by other entities and/or partners so that the funding may be spread across more acreage protected. NC ADFP may cover up to 50% of value. USDA ACE may cover 25% of value. Landowner or Private donation may be included as match.
	20	Funding requested covers 10% or less of the valued amount per acre required to purchase the proposed conservation easement				
	15	Funding requested covers between 10% & 25% of the valued amount per acre required to purchase the proposed conservation easement				
	5	Funding requested covers between 25% & 50% of the valued amount per acre required to purchase the proposed conservation easement				
	0	Funding requested covers 50% of the valued amount per acre required to purchase the proposed conservation easement				
10		What percentage of the proposed easement will be donated by the landowner?			Budget including match percentages and partners.	Donations made by the landowner show the intent and objective of preserving farmland into perpetuity.
	10	The donation covers 50% or more of the valued amount per acre				
	7.5	The donation covers between 25% & 50% of the valued amount per acre				
	5	The donation covers up to 25% of the valued amount per acre				
	0	No Owner donation				
10	10	Does the proposed conservation easement area contain 60% or greater Prime, Unique or soils of statewide importance?			Soil Certification	Prime Soils are designated as best use for farming and also are at highest risk for development and fragmentation due to septic capabilities.
	6	Does the proposed conservation easement area contain 50% or greater Prime, Unique or soils of statewide importance?				
	2	Does the proposed conservation easement area contain 40% or greater Prime, Unique or soils of statewide importance?				
	0	Does the proposed conservation easement area contain less than 40% Prime, Unique or soils of statewide importance?				
5	5	Is the landowner(s) pledging to keep the proposed conservation easement acres in availability for future production of agricultural commodities as defined in NC Statute 106-581.1?			Pledge statement signed by landowner(s) and applicant organization	This pledge demonstrates the landowner(s)'s desire to keep the proposed conservation easement in working lands in the future, which may include the transition of the farm to future owner/operators or leasees. At closing, a perpetual deed restriction, compliant with the NC ADFP program, will be recorded.
3		Is the proposed conservation easement property currently being used for agricultural production as defined in NC Statute 106-581.1? If so, when was the last production? Please mark appropriate response based upon majority (50% or more) usage of the proposed conservation easement area. Indicate only one response.			To demonstrate active impact to the local ag economy, timestamped photos of crops or residue in the field, a 578 producer print/crop report, a signed letter from the NC Forest Service or a private forester certifying active timber sales, a timestamped photo of livestock on pasture, a receipt of timber sale, a livestock bill of sale	Evidence of a current or recent crop or active commercial timber operations demonstrates that the land parcels are part of working farm and forestry operations.
	3	A crop or livestock is currently or was grown for harvest within the last year				
	2	A crop or livestock was grown for harvest within the last 2 years.				
	1	A crop or livestock was grown for harvest within the last 4 years				
	0	No evidence of crop production for harvest within the last 4 years				
5	5	Does the landowner(s) have an economic interest as a producer in the agricultural production as defined in NC Statute 106-581.1 on the proposed conservation easement acreage? (Producer defined as an individual or entity that produces an Agricultural Commodity through participation in the day-to-day labor, management, and field operations; or that has the legal right to harvest an Agricultural Commodity)			578 producer print/crop report, livestock bill of sale, fertilizer bill, CCC-902 form, farm lease agreement, proof of crop insurance, receipt of chemicals receipt; for forestry productions: forestry management plan with landowner's name, receipt of timber sale	Evidence of economic interest in the proposed conservation easement demonstrates that the landowner(s) depend on the land for their livelihood, a portion of their livelihood, are actively engaged in the operation, or are making investments in the property.
5		Are other private entities with an economic interest as producer in the agricultural production as defined in NC Statute 106-581.1 on the proposed conservation easement acreage? Designate only one response.			578 producer print/crop report, livestock bill of sale, fertilizer bill, CCC-902 form, farm lease agreement, proof of crop insurance, receipt of chemicals receipt; for forestry productions: forestry management plan with landowner's name, receipt of timber sale	Evidence of economic interest in the proposed conservation easement demonstrates that other people and business entities depend on the land for their livelihood, a portion of their livelihood, are actively engaged in the operation, or are making investments in the property.
	3	One producer?				
	5	Two or more producers?				
5	5	Socially disadvantaged or historically underserved?			Self-certified statement or CCC-860 form signed by producer(s) and filed with USDA FSA	This scoring item will provide Equitable access to the program for historically underserved communities.
5	5	Are the proposed agricultural conservation easement acres currently enrolled in Present-Use Value (PUV) taxation?			Current or 2021 tax card/bill or property record card	Evidence of PUV enrollment demonstrates that the land parcels are part of working farm and forestry operations. There are three classifications (agricultural, horticultural, and forestry) and three to four tests to qualify for PUV (ownership, size, income, and sound management).
5	5	Are the proposed agricultural conservation easement acres currently enrolled in VAD ?			confirmation from the county VAD administrator verifying current enrollment	This scoring item incentivizes enrollment in the VAD program at the local level. These programs are generally considered the first steps a landowner can take in farmland preservation.
5		Are the proposed agricultural conservation easement acres in the immediate vicinity of another agricultural conservation easement allowing the production of agricultural commodities as defined in NC Statute 106-581.1? If so, please mark the appropriate response. Indicate only one response.			Proximity map with other conservation easements and proposed property identified; needs to include buffer rings around proposed property showing 4 mile radius	This scoring incentivizes new conservation easements in working lands communities. According to the American Farmland Trust, farmers in urbanizing landscapes face challenges such as traffic congestion and the loss of agricultural infrastructure like large animal veterinarians, packing houses, and grain elevators. The preservation of large blocks of permanently protected land can act as a sprawl management tool. Areas

	5	The conservation easement is adjoining.							
	3	The conservation easement is 4 miles or less.							
	0	The conservation easement is 4 miles or greater.							of concentrated agricultural conservation easements create permanent working lands communities that can better support viable agricultural and agribusiness operations in the future.
5		Are the proposed agricultural conservation easement acres in the immediate vicinity of other permanently protected open space (parks, gamelands, wildlife refuges, easement protected buffers or wetlands, etc)? Not applicable, private recreational areas or public parks with 20% or more impervious surfaces or heavily managed grounds (ex: tennis courts, ball fields, golf courses)), ? If so, please mark the appropriate response. Indicate only one response.			Proximity map with other protected or conserved open spaces and proposed property identified; needs to include buffer ring around proposed property showing 4 mile radius				This scoring incentivizes clusters of open and natural space to benefit wildlife, reduce impacts to watersheds, reduces fragmentation and maintain areas of rural character. This scoring item demonstrates how the interconnectivity of protected lands can reduce the likelihood of conversion of working farms and forestlands. Other protected lands nearby create a "jigsaw puzzle" of compatible land uses that can reduce sprawl and development.
	5	The protected space is adjoining.							
	3	The protected space is 2 miles or less.							
	0	The protected space is 2 miles or greater.							
5	5	Are conservation land management plans being used on the proposed agricultural conservation easement acreage? Adjust using the following if applicable			a signed letter from the NRCS or local SWCD certifying that a conservation plan is current, a copy of a current conservation plan signed by the landowner and NRCS/SWCD, a signed letter from the NC Forest Service or a private forester stating that a forest management plan is current, a copy of a current forest management plan signed by the landowner and the NC Forest Service or a private forester				This scoring item incentivizes landowners that have current land management plans in place. Conservation plans and forest management plans improve soil, water, and air quality, including preventing on and off-farm impacts on natural resources. When conservation practices are enacted, they will help in controlling soil erosion, managing animal waste, enhancing wildlife habitat, improving irrigation water management, creating stream bank protections, and complying with environmental regulatory requirements.
	0	No land management plan points if HEL cropland exist and no conservation plan on file at the NRCS/Soil & Water District office.							
	0	No land management plan points if the property has 20 or more acres of woodland with no applicable forest management plan.							
3		Are there recognizable threats to non-compatible use for agricultural production within the area? Check only one response.			Proximity with proposed property, city limits, ETJ; needs to include buffer ring around proposed property showing 1-mile radius; tax card or property record card may show ETJ				This scoring item incentivizes landowners in areas of high development pressure and may address population access to farm products. The likelihood of conversion from working lands use to other development is highest in areas just outside municipal limits, in the extraterritorial jurisdiction, and in areas that are converting to low-density residential development. According to the American Farmland Trust, low-density residential areas were the largest driver of farmland conversion in North Carolina. Once agricultural land is converted to low-density residential land use, it is five times more likely to be converted again to urban and highly developed land use. This conversion further fragments the landscape and reduces the productivity of lands for agricultural use.
	3	The proposed agricultural conservation easement acreage is within or adjoins a city's limits.							
	2	The proposed agricultural conservation easement acreage does not adjoin the city limits but is within the city's ETJ.							
	1	The proposed agricultural conservation easement acreage does not adjoin the city limits but is within 1 mile of the city limits or the city's ETJ.							
4	4	There are no non-compatible land uses on the proposed agricultural conservation easement acreage such as trash piles, waste dumps, soil erosion, or alternative management that has diminished soil production which will inhibit or demise future agricultural production as defined in NC Statute 106-581.1?							This scoring item incentivizes land that is free of trash, waste, debris, erosion, or other negative impacts to the property.
5	5	Discretionary points			Discretionary points to be awarded based on how the project achieves or supports other Chatham County farmland or natural resource conservation developments (e.g., agricultural programming, incubator or community gardens, blueways or trails development, Natural Heritage or rare species protection, etc.)				This scoring item enables CAPD to evaluate and reward proposals that contain auxiliary benefits not otherwise accounted for within the scoring criteria.
95	100	Maximum Potential Points	TOTAL		0				

Step 2									
Chatham FPP Team tour proposed conservation easement parcel and take appropriate descriptive pictures. Take note of any incompatible issues.					Notes:				
Discuss with applicant and landowner their expressed and implied interest for the proposed agricultural conservation easement area for the proposed and future use in the production of food and fiber as defined in NC. Inquire about any hesitations. Document visit.									
Step 3									
Review and Ranking By Chatham FPP Team									
Review all application questions and verify for accurate answers.					Notes:				
Score the questions. The application score is reviewed for accuracy and correct information then adjusted accordingly if required.									
All applications are ranked in numerical point order.									
Step 4									
Present to AAB					Notes:				
Step 5									
Request approval from Commissioners					Notes:				
Step 6									
Send award letters and notify applicants of status.					Notes:				

PILOT FY 2024 Organizational & Programmatic Support Application Scoring

Step 1

Application Questions and Points (Supporting Documentation Required for a "Yes" response)

Max Points per category	Points per answer	Questions	Mark Only For Yes Response	Points Assigned For Yes Response	Documentation	Scoring Item Objective
20	20	Qualifying organization (non profit, land trust) with insurance to cover perpetual easement holding and monitoring			organizational documents, proof of insurance	indicator of longevity
15	15	Demonstrated history of working lands protection and/or agricultural development support in Chatham County.			portfolio	shows investment in, and dedication to, Chatham County working lands protection
10	10	Demonstrated history of natural resources conservation in Chatham County			portfolio	shows investment in, and dedication to, Chatham County natural resources protection
5	5	How does proposal increase understanding of farmland preservation priorities in Chatham County (mapping, economic or eco-system service analysis, landowner transition planning, public programming, etc.)			application	Shows that proposal supports farmland preservation literacy in Chatham County beyond direct land protection.
15	0-15	Proposal showing clear, obtainable and measurable objectives for working lands protection in Chatham County			application	Lends to the effectiveness of the local funding being put on the ground in Chatham County. Sliding score from 0-15 based on ability to meet objectives and how proposal is relevant to perpetual agland protection and development
15		How will funding provide dedicated staff to support Chatham County farmland preservation.			provide budget & application	Shows that Chatham County projects are a priority for the organization
10		Will funding support programing in Chatham County that promotes and protects agriculture?			provide budget	Shows priorities to Chatham County
	10	New programs				
	8	Existing Programs				
	5	Monitoring easements only				
5	5	Proposal enhances access to farmland for new or nontraditional farmers?			application	
5	5	Demonstrated ability or plan to support historically underserved, marginalized, or socially disadvantaged agricultural communities			application	Ability to provide equitable service to the ag community
100	100	Maximum Potential Points	TOTAL	0		

Step 2

Review all application questions and verify for accurate answers.	Notes:
Score the questions. The application score is reviewed for accuracy and correct information then adjusted accordingly if required.	
All applications are ranked in numerical point order.	

Step 3

Present to AAB	Notes:
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Step 4

Request approval from Commissioners	Notes:
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Step 5

Send award letters and notify applicants of status.	Notes:
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