



**N.C. Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services**  
N.C. ADFP Trust Fund  
*Additional Conservation Easement Purchase Funds Information Packet*



## **Purpose**

The purpose of the Additional Conservation Easement Purchase Funds Application is to allow grantees with existing conservation easement grant contracts through the Standard Conservation Easement Appraisal Program to add funds to the conservation easement purchase line item if the existing contract has less than 50 percent of the estimated or appraised value of the conservation easement purchase.

Eligible applicants are existing conservation easement grant contract awardees. All applicant entities must be considered Low Risk according to the N.C. ADFP Trust Fund Grantee Risk Assessment Guide before any grant awards.

All applications are restricted to the conservation easement purchase line item. Grant awards cannot exceed 50 percent of the estimated or appraised value of the conservation easement purchase.

## **Description**

The ADFP Trust Fund grants for the purchase of the conservation easement are limited to 50 percent or less of the appraised value of the conservation easement purchase.

There are scenarios in which grantees apply for grant funds from federal, local, nonprofit, or private sources for additional funds for the purchase of the conservation easement, and those funds are not awarded.

Additionally, there are scenarios in which the appraised value is higher than the initial budget projections.

This application provides a one-time opportunity to add easement purchase funds to existing conservation easement contracts if the existing contract has less than 50 percent of the estimated or appraised value of the conservation easement purchase.

Final conservation easement values must be determined by a Certified Development Rights Appraisal dated within the contract period and dated less than 365 days prior to closing. Supplemental appraisals, updated opinion letters, or reaffirmation letters by the appraiser for the original appraisal are acceptable if a closing occurs 365 days after issuance of the Certified Development Rights Appraisal, provided the appraiser certifies the land value with an updated effective date of valuation.

## **Application**

The following items must be included in the application for Additional Conservation Easement Purchase Funds:

- Current Conservation Easement Grant Contract Number and ADFPTF Tracking Number
- Additional Conservation Easement Purchase Funds request



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- May not exceed 50 percent of the estimated or appraised value of the conservation easement purchase
- Documentation of Additional Conservation Easement Purchase Funds calculation
  - Certified Development Rights Appraisal during the open contract period, or
  - Estimated value of the conservation easement purchase from the existing contract.
- Justification for Additional Conservation Easement Purchase Funds
  - Rejection or deferment of a grant funds application from federal, local, nonprofit, or private sources
  - Results of a Certified Development Rights Appraisal determine the conservation easement purchase value is higher than the contracted line item.
- Certification of same ownership as existing grant contract
- Certification of current working lands use
- Certification of up-to-date open contract reports and post-award monitoring reports
- Contract deliverables update

### **Evaluation**

All eligible applications are subject to an on-site farm visit during the evaluation period. The purpose of the on-site farm visit is to ensure that the information in the grant contract is current and accurate.

Basic eligibility requirements, such as private ownership and minimum acreage, will be verified by ADFP Trust Fund staff.

If the variance is greater than 5 percent of the contracted acres and is less than the acres listed in the grant contract, the grant funds for conservation easement purchase will be reduced proportionally based on the new acreage.

If the land in the grant contract is under new ownership or is no longer in working lands use, the grant application will be denied.

If all application materials and on-site evaluation are approved, the Additional Conservation Easement Purchase Funds Application is given the same score as the original Conservation Easement Application.

### **Grant Funds**

Grant funds are awarded by scoring order, and distributed by funding region.

When summed, this additional conservation easement purchase funds grant request, and the existing contract are capped at \$500,000 total for all line items.

This grant category will be limited to 15 percent of the available funding for the grant cycle. Additional funding may be available if there are unused funds from other grant categories for the cycle.