



E-mail Update

MAY 1, 2008

WWW.NCADFP.ORG

VOLUME 2, NUMBER 4

Web Links of Interest

Land Trust Alliance

<http://www.lta.org/farmersandranchers/index.html>

The Wilderness Society – New Web site called - **Housing Sprawl in the Southeast** - Our Vanishing Places. Watch the maps of the Southeast United States change colors from "green" to "red" between 1940 to 2030.

<http://www.tws.org/OurIssues/EasternForests/SprawlSE.cfm>

American Farmland Trust – Purchase of Agricultural Conservation

Easements (PACE) Survey -The 2007 state and local PACE survey results are now available. To view the tables, please select from the links provided above. The tables track the progress of farm and ranch land protection programs in 21 states and 56 localities that have acquired funding and/or easements. The data in this survey is current as of January 2007, unless otherwise indicated. We have also attached a map illustrating nationwide PACE activity by state.

As of July 2007:

1. Thirty-two states have PACE activity at the state and/or local level;
2. Twenty-seven states have state-level PACE activity; and
3. Eighteen states have PACE activity at the local level.

PACE tables are available in PDF format on the Farmland Information Center Web site, <http://www.farmlandinfo.org/>. Please feel free to copy and distribute these documents as necessary. These data are used by a variety of groups including: program managers, Natural Resources Conservation Service staff, elected officials, reporters and the general public.

ADFP Trust Fund News

ADFP Trust Fund grant applications were due December 14, 2007. Grant award recipients for the 2007-08 grant cycle will be announced in the summer of 2008. Thank you to everyone who submitted an application! If you have additional questions, please contact Lindsay Ballance, Environmental Programs Office Manager at (919) 733-7125 or e-mail ncadfp@ncmail.net.

Voluntary Agricultural District News

Wilkes & Onslow counties recently passed Voluntary Agricultural District ordinances! There are currently 61 counties with Voluntary Agricultural Districts in the state.

News

WRAL

Wake Buys 2 Tracts to Preserve as Open Space

Raleigh, N.C. — Wake County on Tuesday purchased 685 acres to preserve as open space. The Board of Commissioners approved spending \$11.8 million to acquire the 563-acre Procter Tract in the Little River watershed in eastern Wake County and \$3.5 million for the 122-acre Sinclair Tract in the Falls Lake watershed. The money came from open-space bonds approved by voters last year. The properties are seen as critical to protecting Wake County watersheds and future water supplies. They contain endangered aquatic species, rare plants, unique granite outcroppings and extensive streams protecting water quality and wildlife in the critical watersheds of Falls Lake and the future Little River Reservoir. "I am pleased that Wake County citizens continue to support our open space bonds and make it possible for us to preserve important lands like the Procter and Sinclair tracts," Joe Bryan, chairman of the Board of Commissioners, said in a statement. "It's a great day when our partners and private landowners work with us to protect our County's natural legacy and our future."

http://www.wral.com/news/news_briefs/story/2743472/

Asheville Citizen Times

Locally grown: New tailgate market opens

ASHEVILLE – The Asheville City Market debuted in downtown Asheville Saturday morning, drawing throngs of people eager to buy locally grown produce and other handmade and home-grown crafts and foods. But as shoppers browsed the booths, sampling herbs, goat cheese and artisan bread at the new market on South Charlotte Street, some vendors at Asheville's existing — all of them smaller — tailgate markets expressed concern that their own businesses might be hurt by the competition. "I've been farming and selling at the French Broad Food Co-op market (on Biltmore Avenue) for 11 years, and it's been a great market for me," said Anne Grier, who, with her husband, Aaron, raises produce, pork and beef at their Gaining Ground Farm in Buncombe County. "It causes some insecurity for me that this (new) market is opening a block-and-a-half away from the one I've been selling at. There's been a lot of tension." ...

<http://www.citizen-times.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080420/NEWS01/80419074/1009>

The Voices Project at Michigan State University Museum presents resources to build greater understanding about farmers, farming and food.

<http://foodfarmingandcommunity.org/>

NPR Articles on Farmland Preservation

Attached you will find a word document consisting of two articles from the National Public Radio web site. The first article talks about the permanency of easements and the second one gives an example of farming being challenged by urban sprawl.

web site:

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=88038482>

USDA AND NORTH CAROLINA PARTNER ON CONSERVATION PROGRAM EXPANSION TO PROTECT MORE RIVER BASINS

WASHINGTON, D.C. - April 30, 2008 - The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency (FSA) Administrator Teresa Lasseter today announced that USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) and the State of North Carolina are expanding their joint Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) agreement to further protect critical river areas.

"FSA is proud to collaborate with North Carolina on this important agreement that will improve water quality, protect drinking water supplies and enhance fisheries and wildlife habitats," said Lasseter.

Signup for the program begins May 1, 2008. North Carolina's original CREP agreement was signed in March 1999 and was developed to help protect the Albemarle-Pamlico Estuarine System (APES), including the Neuse, Tar-Pamlico, Chowan and Jordan Lake Watershed. Prior to 1999, the APES experienced excessive nutrient and sediment loading.

This expanded CREP agreement targets nine of North Carolina's 17 river basins: the Neuse, Tar-Pamlico, Chowan, Lumber, White Oak, Yadkin-PeeDee, Cape Fear (including Jordan Lake), Roanoke and Pasquotank. The CREP seeks 85,000 acres of riparian and 15,000 acres of non-riparian wetlands within the project basins. More information about this project can be found in the program fact sheet at: http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/nccrep.pdf. Sign up is set to begin May 1, 2008.

Eligible Practices

To be eligible for this program, an agricultural producer's land must meet specific eligibility requirements. If land does not meet CREP criteria, producers may also offer eligible acreage for continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) signup.

The following eligible practices may be established under this program:

Tree Planting, CP3 (Shortleaf Pine only)

Hardwood Tree Planting, CP3A

Filter Strip, CP21

Riparian Buffer, CP22

Wetland Restoration, CP23

Wetland Restoration, Non-Floodplain, CP23A

Bottomland Timber Establishment on Wetlands, CP31

Rental, Cost-share and Incentive Payments

Under this program, participants will receive annual rental payments and other incentives from CCC and the State of North Carolina for voluntarily enrolling land in contracts. The annual rental payment is based on the soil rental rate as calculated by the FSA. It includes an incentive payment based on the conservation practice installed. Incentive rates will be 70 percent for filter strips and 100 percent for riparian buffers, tree planting and wetland restoration.

The CCC will pay up to 50 percent of the cost of installing conservation practices. The total of all cost-share payments will not exceed 100 percent of a participant's out-of-pocket expenses.

In addition, a one-time payment equal to 25 percent of the cost of restoring hydrology for wetland restoration practices will be paid to eligible producers. For producers who enroll solely in a 10-year CRP contract under CREP, the State of North Carolina will pay 25 percent of the established costs of approved conservation practices. For producers who enroll solely in a CRP contract greater than 10 years and up to 15 years, the state will pay 30 percent of the established costs of approved conservation practices. For producers who enroll in an optional 30-year conservation easement for riparian buffers, filter strips or tree practices, the state will pay 40 percent of the established costs of approved conservation practices plus a one-time incentive payment of \$250 per acre for cropland and marginal pastureland. For producers who enroll in an optional permanent easement for riparian buffers, wetland restoration or tree practices, the state will pay 50 percent of the established costs of approved conservation practices plus a one-time incentive payment of \$1,000 per acre for cropland or marginal pastureland, and any additional eligible existing non-CRP forested buffer land voluntarily enrolled.

The total cost for the State of North Carolina CREP over a 15-year period is estimated at \$275 million for a total enrollment of 100,000 acres. North Carolina will contribute at least 20 percent of the overall annual program cost.

A component of the CRP, CREP is a federal-state natural resources conservation program that addresses state and nationally significant agricultural-related environmental concerns. Under CREP, program participants receive financial incentives from CCC to voluntarily enroll in contracts of 10 to 15 years. Participants remove cropland and marginal pastureland from agricultural production and convert the land to native grasses, trees and other vegetation. The CRP is authorized by the Food Security Act of 1985, as amended. FSA administers CRP on behalf of CCC.

NOTE: Farm Service Agency (FSA) news releases are available on the Web at FSA's home page: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>.

NCDA&CS, nursery/landscape industry team up to promote water-wise gardening, landscaping

Grant from Golden LEAF helps fund public information campaign

RALEIGH – The N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and the state's nursery and landscape industry have launched a campaign to educate the public about how they can successfully grow plants in the home landscape even during periods of drought and water restrictions, Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler announced today.

The Water-Wise Works! media campaign is a partnership between the department, the N.C. Green Industry Council and N.C. State University's Department of Horticultural Science. The campaign emphasizes ways that will help homeowners maintain an attractive landscape with less water.

"Drought and water restrictions across North Carolina have severely reduced demand for nursery and greenhouse plants and related services," Troxler said. "Many of these businesses report that sales have declined as much as 40 percent, and employee layoffs have approached 30 percent. This campaign will help people understand that even during a drought, you can still enjoy beautiful North Carolina-grown plants if you practice water-wise gardening.

"These tips make sense even as we return to more normal rainfall patterns," he said. "They focus on making the best use of the resources we have and not being wasteful. They're good principles to live by."

The statewide campaign is using public service advertisements on radio and television to tout the importance of water-wise landscaping and gardening. They feature NCSU horticulture expert Bryce Lane, host of UNC-TV's "In the Garden." The ads refer consumers to the Web site www.TarHeelGardening.com for tips and other information. The site was developed by the N.C. Nursery and Landscape Association and NCDA&CS.

The campaign is supported by a \$215,475 grant from the Golden LEAF Foundation and funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

TV spots are slated to run across the state from now through May. Radio ads have been running since late March. Ads also will be running in *Our State* magazine.

"Golden LEAF is pleased to support this project as the green industry is such an important sector of the agricultural economy in North Carolina," said Valeria Lee, president of Golden LEAF. "In addition, the whole state benefits as we adopt these practices for wise water use."

A report released last year estimated that the green industry contributes \$8.6 billion to North Carolina's economy and employs more than 151,000 people. The industry comprises growers of greenhouse/nursery stock, Christmas trees and flowers, sod producers, and related businesses such as landscape and irrigation contractors, lawn care professionals, arborists and retail lawn and garden centers.

Salisbury Post, 4/19

Piedmont Research Station work bears fruit

David Murdock and a host of university scientists picked a good time to come to Kannapolis to study fruits and vegetables. Years of research and experimentation at the N.C. Piedmont Research Station on Sherrills Ford Road appear ready to bear fruit — hardy new generations of strawberries, blueberries, blackberries and raspberries that flourish in Carolina red clay.

The Research Station's work will prove helpful not only to scientists at the N.C. Research Campus but, just as importantly, to farmers throughout the Carolinas looking for new, profitable, year-round crops. Long after field-grown strawberry plants had shut down for a long winter's nap, Andy Myers and members of his team at the Piedmont Research Station were still picking berries. Under the protective plastic domes commonly known as tunnels, Myers, who manages the station's Horticulture Unit, and fellow workers Joanne Mowery and Johnny Meisimer planted several varieties of strawberries on Sept. 14. They didn't pick the first fruit from those plants until Nov. 22, and then they continued picking berries until Jan. 16, when the temperature dipped to 10 degrees. The tunnels protect their plants by capturing the sun's heat. Research Station workers can adjust the heat by raising and lowering the sides of the plastic sheeting. They also cover the young plants with ground plastic and water them with drip irrigation. Myers said the tunnels protected the plants from temperatures as low as 13 degrees this past winter. And Myers and Dr. Jim Ballington, a professor at N.C. State University, are planning on adding "blanketing" protection on individual rows within the tunnels that should protect the plants through the coldest temperatures. Soon, "they are figuring to go all winter" growing strawberries, said Joe Hampton, director of Piedmont Research Station. ...

<http://www.salisburypost.com/Area/041908-Piedmont-Station-research-bears-fruit-pics>

For more information regarding the NC Agricultural Development & Farmland Preservation Trust Fund, please visit www.ncadfp.org or contact us at ncadfp@ncmail.net or (919)733-7125.

Hendersonville Times News, N&O, Fayetteville Observer, et al.

NC drought recovery for farmers unveiled

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — North Carolina farmers hurt by the continuing drought can tap into \$6 million starting next month to restore damaged pastures and develop new water sources, farming groups said Tuesday in announcing a cost-sharing initiative. The North Carolina Agricultural Drought Recovery Program will pay 75 percent of the cost of certain drought-related expenses so farmers can get ready for the growing season and try to reduce water supply problems in the future. North Carolina lost \$500 million in crops last year due to drought, according to an N.C. State University economist. Farmers also sent livestock to market earlier than planned because they couldn't raise or buy enough hay for them. ... http://www.blueridgenow.com/article/20080422/NEWS/331842384/1151/NEWS/NC_drought_recovery_for_farmers_unveiled

Asheville Citizen Times, AP stories on N&O, Wilmington Star websites, WWAY-TV N.C. may close agriculture research facilities

RALEIGH – A General Assembly draft report recommends consolidating two state-owned Western North Carolina agricultural research facilities in Fletcher and Waynesville, or possibly selling off the Waynesville station and another in Ashe County. The Program Evaluation Division, a nonpartisan staff unit of the legislature, was asked last summer to evaluate the state's 18 agricultural research stations and make recommendations about efficiency savings. As it stands, the N.C. Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services manages all 18 stations but owns only 12, with the remainder owned by the N.C. State University. The division recommends transferring the 12 stations owned by the agriculture department to N.C. State and having that university and N.C. A&T University manage them. The state operates the Mountain Horticultural Crops Research and Extension Center in Fletcher and the Mountain Research Station in Waynesville, among others. The division also suggests that an advisory board and planning review panel should consider the closure of seven stations where "only 12 percent of the (research) projects were conducted in 2007." Those include the Waynesville facility and another in Ashe County, as well as two stations in Granville County and one each in the counties of Columbus, New Hanover and Rockingham. ... <http://www.citizen-times.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080424/NEWS01/80423104>

News & Observer

TO FIND OUT IF YOUR FOOD IS GROWN LOCALLY: Carolina Farm Stewardship Association, a nonprofit network that promotes local organic agriculture, has started a searchable food guide at www.carolinalocalfood.org. The Web site allows visitors to find more than 300 "sustainable" farms, markets, grocers and organizations in the Carolinas. The group also is starting a "Eat Carolina Food Challenge." Participants agree to eat only food produced within North or South Carolina for one week: July 7-13. The winner gets free admission to the annual Sustainable Agriculture Conference. <http://www.newsobserver.com/news/story/1049404.html>

Waynesville Mountaineer, 4/25

Research station to close?

For years, the Mountain Research Station in Waynesville has been the place where scientists and farmers tested new breeds of cash crops like tomatoes and pumpkins, and experimented with spraying and planting techniques. But those practices may soon be a thing of the past. A report from the General Assembly recommends transferring ownership and management of several of the state's research stations and closing the Waynesville facility as well as six others. Such a move would not only be a blow to local farmers who rely on the station's scientific findings and recommendations, but would also mean the state-owned test farm could wind up being sold to the highest bidder. "That is a gorgeous piece of property, and I am sure someone would be willing to pay for it," said Brian Long, director of public affairs for the North Carolina Department of Agriculture, which is fighting the changes. The N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services manages all 18 stations statewide and owns 12 of them, with the rest owned by N.C. State University. The plan would bring North Carolina in line with how other states handle their ag research. The plan, which will be formally released on May 8, calls for transferring ownership and management of all the stations to N.C. State. There would then be an advisory committee which would formally recommend closure. The plan is not binding and needs legislators' approval. In all, it includes the closure and sale of the seven stations that would net the state \$54.7 million upfront, with nearly million in ongoing savings annually. ... http://www.themountaineer.com/cms/display/Top_Stories/pageDisplay.php?page2display=1209103200*25-Research%20station%20to%20close.php