NC DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES

FARMLAND PRESERVATION DIVISION

NC AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND FARMLAND PRESERVATION TRUST FUND

2016-2017 ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE REPORT

September 29, 2017

Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler
Chief Deputy Commissioner N. David Smith

Pursuit to G.S. 106.744 (i) … The Advisory Committee shall report no later than October 1 of each year to the Joint Legislative Commission on Governmental Operations, the Environmental Review Commission, and the House of Representatives and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees on Natural and Economic Resources regarding the activities of the Advisory Committee, the agriculture easements purchased, and agricultural projects funded during the previous year. (1991, c. 734, s. 1; 2000-171, ss. 1, 2; 2005-390, ss. 4, 17; 2006-252, s. 2.12; 2007-495, s. 23; 2009-303, ss. 1, 2, 3; 2009-484, s. 12.)

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Why Preserve Farms and Forests in North Carolina?

The NC ADFP Trust Fund Saves the Family Farm for Future Generations

-Agriculture and agribusiness is North Carolina's top industry, accounting for almost one-sixth of the state's economy and employees.

-Agriculture and agribusiness amounts for more than 17 percent, or $84 billion, of the $482 billion gross state product.

-Working lands provide fresh, local foods to North Carolina residents and quality products to the agriculture, forestry and fiber industries.

-Agriculture is a compatible industry with the military and military training, which is second in economic importance in the state at $66 billion.

-Working lands provide scenic rural landscapes for tourism, the third largest economic sector in North Carolina.

-Farms and forests are critical in providing a healthy environment. Working lands are actively managed by farmers, providing key benefits like erosion control, carbon sequestration and provides waterway buffers.

-Cost of community services studies in the state show that agricultural lands use less tax dollars than are collected. Working lands are a net provider of local tax dollars.

Advisory Committee and Staff

NC ADFP Trust Fund Advisory Committee	
Chair - Steve Troxler	Commissioner of Agriculture
Anthony Copeland	Secretary of Commerce
Jimmy Gentry	NC State Grange
Pryor Gibson	NC Forestry Association
Chris Hogan	NC Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts
William Holbrook	Farmer appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the NC Senate
Clarence Hood	Farmer appointed by the Speaker of the NC House of Representatives
Shirley Hymon-Parker	Dean of the School of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences at NC A&T University
B. Ray Jeffers	NC Association of County Commissioners
Jimmy Johnson	Designee of the NC Department of Environmental Quality
Scott Marlow	Rural Advancement Foundation International
Tom Melton	Designee of the Dean of the College of Agricultural and Life Science at NC State University
Edgar Miller	Conservation Trust for NC
Erica Peterson	NC Agribusiness Council
Stuart Pierce	Farmer appointed by the Governor
Darelle Tennie	NC Black Farmers and Agriculturalists Association
Steve Woodson	NC Farm Bureau Federation

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Dick Fowler	Field Staff	
Scott Shoulars	Field Staff	

2017 REPI Challenge

Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler, left, looks on as Col. Michael Scalise, deputy commander of Marine Corps Installations East, talks about the military's partnership with North Carolina.

In May 2017, the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services secured $10 million in federal funding to protect land from development and maintain agricultural, forestry and military uses.

“The Sentinel Landscape Partnership will use this grant to protect farms and forests that are vital to relieving encroachment on military training areas and airspace,” said Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler. “Working with willing landowners, this effort will establish conservation easements and management programs on high-priority lands to the benefit of both agriculture and the military, North Carolina’s two largest industries.”

The funding was awarded through a biennial competition known as the REPI Challenge, which is operated by the Department of Defense’s Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) Program. North Carolina topped nine other states in the competition.

Of the $10 million, $5.8 million will be used by the Marine Corps to establish an easement and support the creation of habitat for the red-cockaded woodpecker on more than 12,100 acres of state-owned land. This will free up Marine Corps lands for training.

The Air Force will use $3.4 million to protect more than 4,500 acres of high-priority land necessary to maintain training airspace for the Dare County Range, the primary training range for F-15E aircraft crews at Seymour Johnson Air Force Base in Goldsboro.

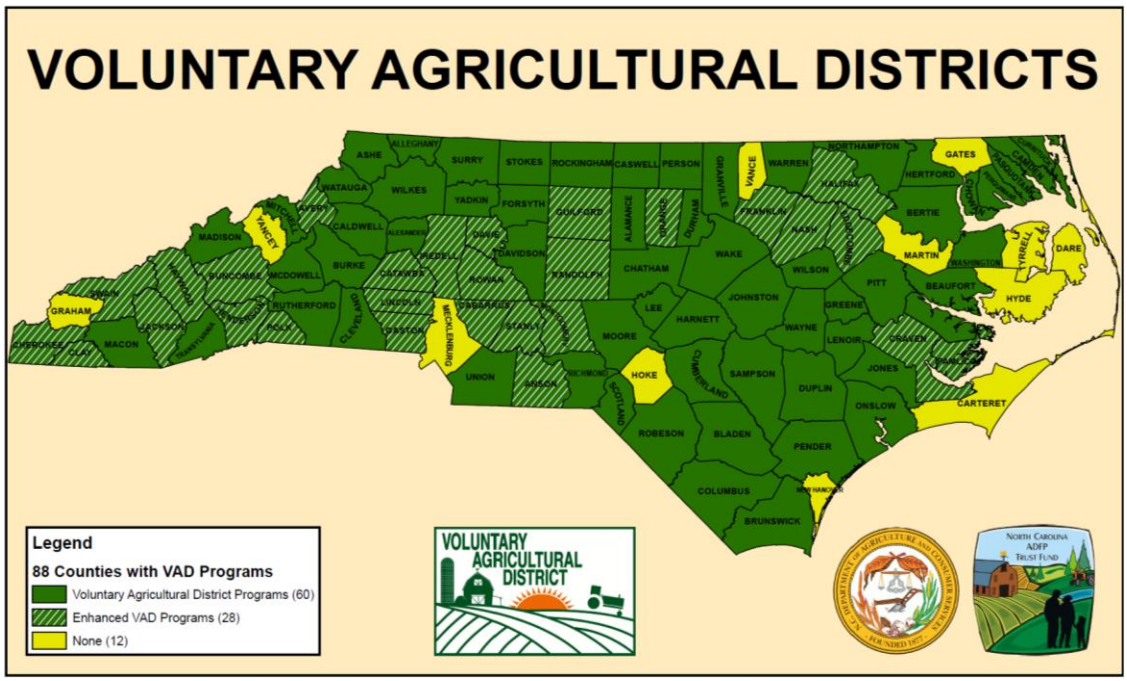
The Army will use $800,000 to protect 273 acres of agricultural and forestry land in a high-priority compatible-use training area on the border of Fort Bragg.

The REPI award will be matched with funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Air Force, the Marine Corps, the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission and the N.C. Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund.

Voluntary Agricultural Districts

The Voluntary Agricultural Districts (VAD) program encourages the preservation and protection of farmland by allowing landowners to publicly recognize their farms. The VAD program is a county-level ordinance that establishes an Agricultural Advisory Board that provides a voice for farm, forestry and horticultural interests in local government. Farms enrolled in the VAD program may reduce the threat of nuisance conflicts, may allow for waivers for water and sewer assessment and may provide public hearings for proposed condemnations. Program provisions vary by county. Enhanced VAD (EVAD) member benefits are the same as VAD, plus: May receive up to 25% of its gross sales from the sale of nonfarm products and still qualify as a bona fide farm and are eligible to receive a higher percentage of cost share funds under the Agriculture Cost Share Program. The EVAD conservation agreement is irrevocable for 10 years. The conservation agreement is automatically renewed for three (3) years absent a written notice to the county revoking the conservation agreements. There are 88 counties with VAD programs.

Farms Enrolled in the VAD Program Statewide	9,529
Acres of Farmland Enrolled in the VAD Program Statewide	782,423
Farms Enrolled in the Enhanced VAD Program Statewide	654
Acres of Farmland Enrolled in the Enhanced VAD Program Statewide	50,931
Total Farms Enrolled in the VAD and EVAD Program Statewide	10,183
Total Acres of Farmland Enrolled in the VAD and EVAD Program Statewide	833,354
Total Acres Enrolled in the VAD and EVAD Program Statewide **Decreased by 75,873 Acres, or 8.3%, since 2016.**	
Total Farms Enrolled in the VAD and EVAD Program Statewide **Increased by 563 farms, or 5.9%, since 2016.**	



Farmland Protection Plans

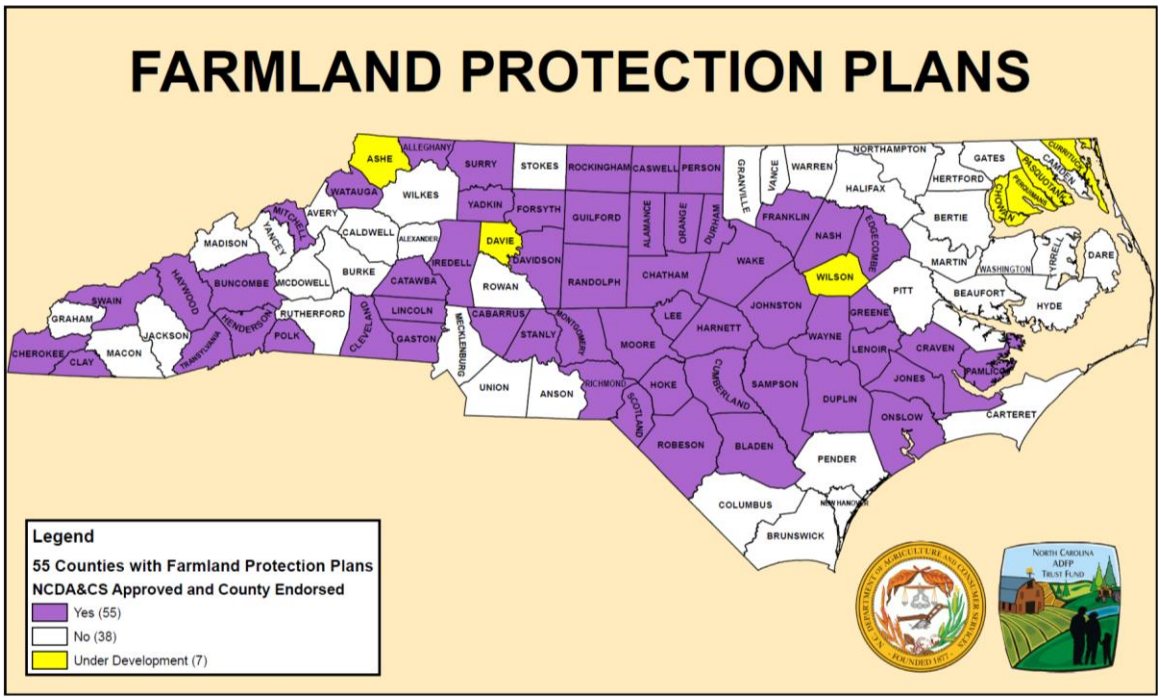
Guiding Counties to a Viable Agricultural Future

Farmland Protection Plans are strategic proposals that define how to maintain a viable agricultural economy in a county.

These plans describe existing agricultural activity in a county, list challenges to continued family farming in the county, list opportunities for enhancing the local agricultural economy, create a schedule for implementing the plan and identify possible funding sources for long-term support of the plan.

Farmland Protection Plans are approved by the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and endorsed by the county Board of Commissioners.

There are 55 counties in North Carolina with Farmland Protection Plans. Seven counties are developing Farmland Protection Plans.



NC ADFP Trust Fund Grants, Match and Acres Figures

As of September 1, 2017

Figures include conservation easements, development projects and agricultural plans.					
Year	**Cycle**	**Confirmed Match**	**Anticipated Match**	**Grant Expended**	**Funds Under Contract**
2006	Pilot	$3,418,700.00	$0.00	$44,000.00	$0.00
2008	Cycle I	$8,897,643.68	$0.00	$7,001,806.39	$0.00
2009	Cycle II	$13,206,169.33	$0.00	$3,230,088.53	$0.00
2010	Cycle III	$6,001,118.74	$0.00	$2,151,866.32	$0.00
2011	Cycle IV	$3,593,741.00	$0.00	$1,432,695.00	$0.00
2012	Cycle V	$2,394,677.00	$0.00	$1,763,770.00	$0.00
2013	Cycle VI – General Appropriations (GA)	$1,890,499.98	$0.00	$647,854.71	$0.00
2013	Cycle VI – TVA	$5,200,639.00	$0.00	$927,843.00	$0.00
2014	Cycle VII – GA	$102,516.18	$923,000.00	$305,538.61	$289,500.00
2014	Cycle VII – TVA	$1,444,198.45	$0.00	$1,385,549.54	$0.00
2014	Cycle VII – Sentinel Landscapes (SL)	$310,317.00	$0.00	$284,646.00	$0.00
2015	Cycle VIII – Military (MIL)	$84,500.00	$0.00	$84,500.00	$0.00
2015	Cycle VIII – GA	$527,434.82	$2,920,637.18	$630,899.37	$1,068,120.02
2015	Cycle VIII – SL	$6,130.00	$0.00	$16,000.00	$0.00
2016	Cycle IX – GA	$108,580.00	$2,538,894.50	$2,538,894.50	$1,553,836.45
2016	Cycle IX – MIL	$0.00	$2,625,676.88	$40,000	$1,677,295.54
Totals		**$47,186,865.18**	**$9,008,208.56**	**$22,485,951.97**	**$4,588,752.01**

Cycle	Easement Acres Recorded
Pilot	426.7
Cycle I	3,295.0
Cycle II	3,167.5
Cycle III	1,207.0
Cycle IV	715.3
Cycle V	1,038.0
Cycle VI – GA	470.5
Cycle VI – TVA	726.5
Cycle VII – GA	290.5
Cycle VII – SL	435.6
Cycle VII – TVA	498.6
Cycle VIII – GA	268.9
Cycle VIII – MIL	108.2
Cycle IX – GA	128.8
Totals	**12,777.1**

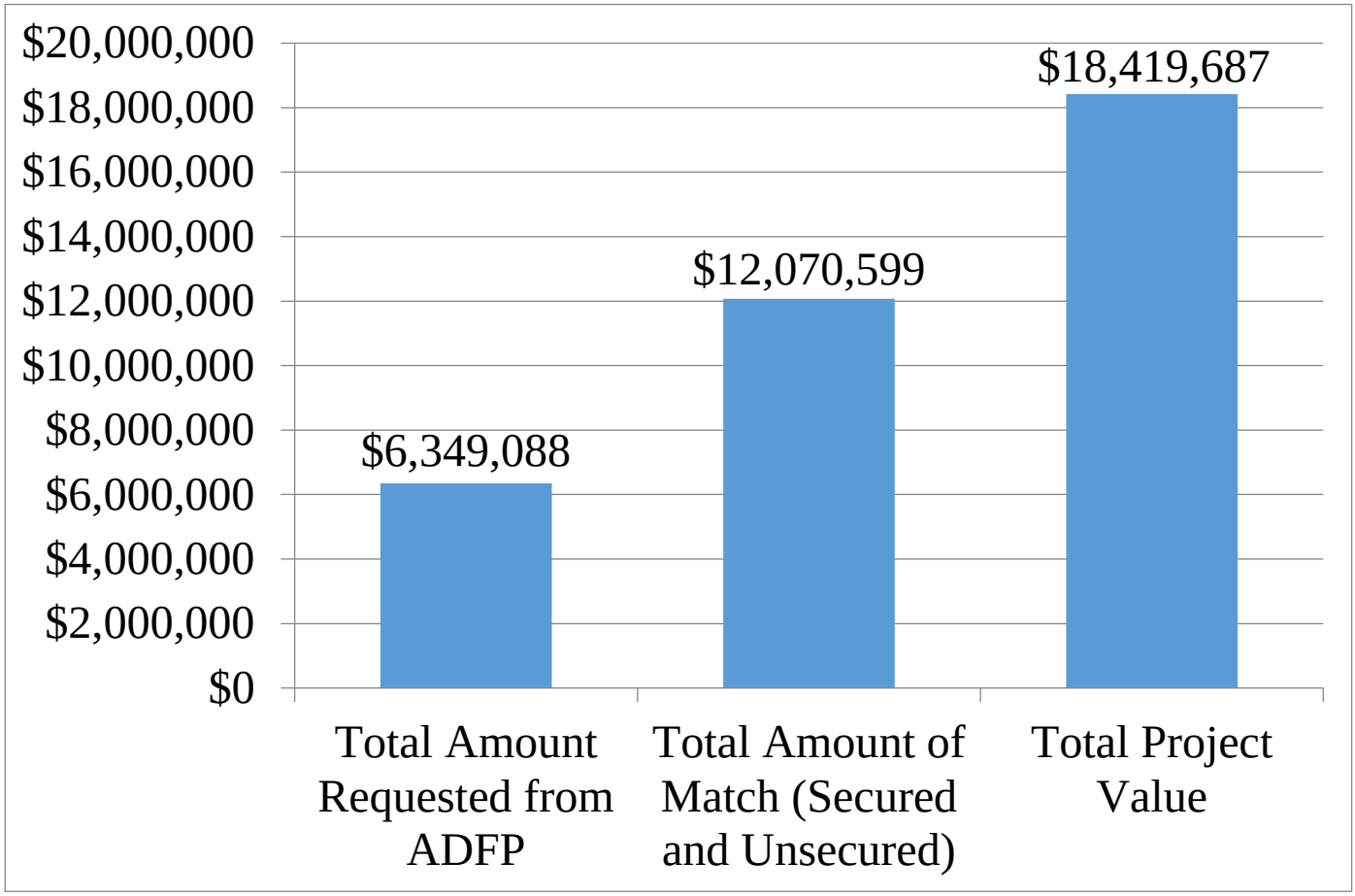
Cycle	Acres Under Contract for Easements
Cycle VII – GA	363.0
Cycle VIII – GA	670.2
Cycle IX – GA	1,040.2
Cycle IX – MIL	848.5
Totals	**2,921.9**

Cycle	New Contract Acres
Cycle X – GA	1,392

**4,130.7 farmland preservation acres were preserved in perpetuity prior to the establishment of the ADFP Trust Fund and the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services has third party enforcement rights.*

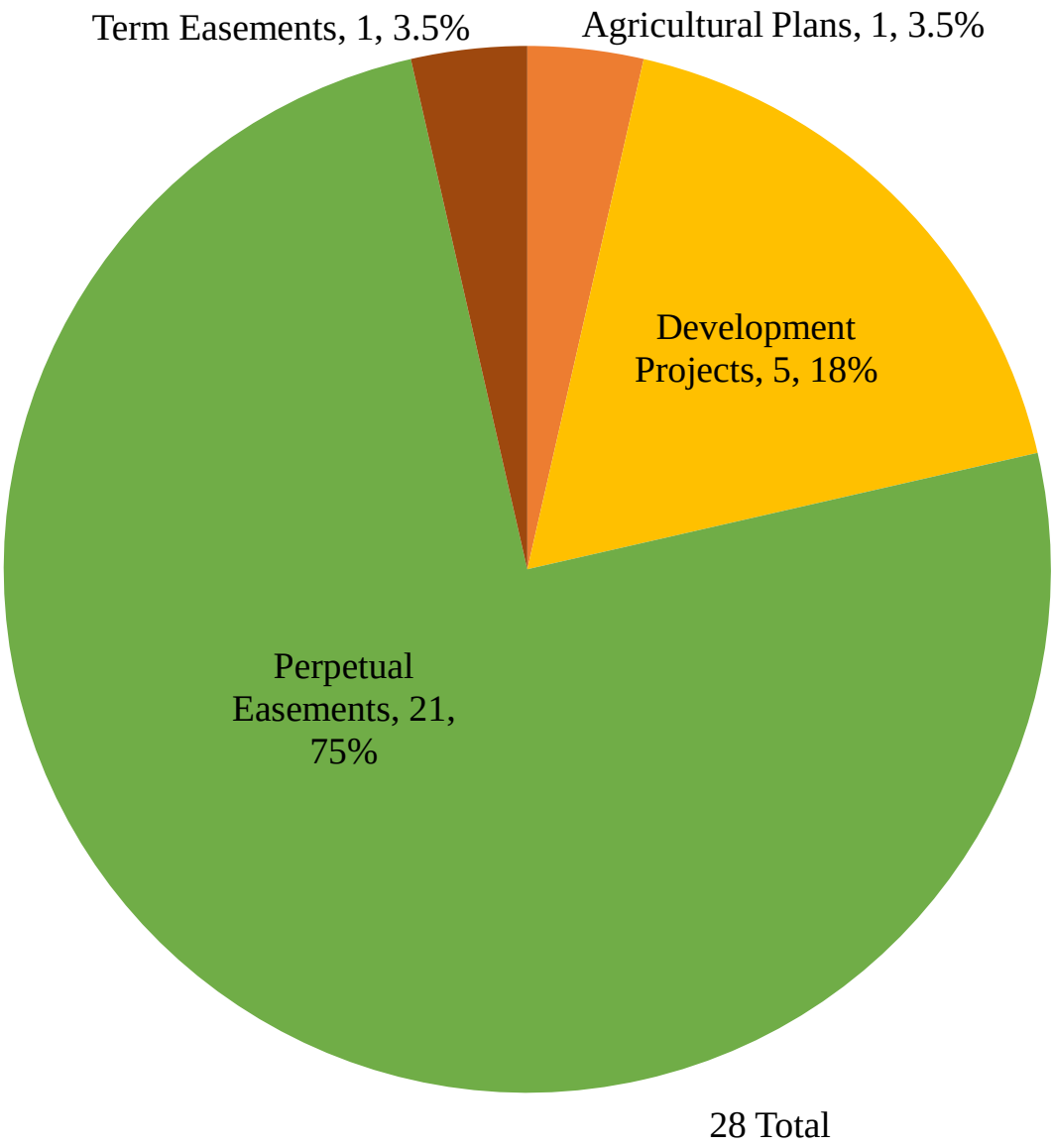
ADFP Trust Fund Cycle X Grant Requests

General Appropriation Requests:



ADFP Trust Fund Cycle X Application Summary

General Appropriations



ADFP Trust Fund Cycle X Application Summary

Agricultural Plans

Number of Projects	Total Amount Requested from ADFP	Total Secured Match	Total Unsecured Match	Total Project Value
1	$15,000	$0	$5,000	$20,000

Agricultural Development Projects

Number of Projects	Total Amount Requested from ADFP	Total Secured Match	Total Unsecured Match	Total Project Value
5*	$708,250	$1,114,247	$431,245	$2,253,742

*This includes one (1) local project (1-3 counties), three (3) regional projects (4-20 counties), and one (1) statewide project (21+ counties).

Conservation Easements

Number of Easements	Total Number of Acres	Total Amount Requested from ADFP	Total Secured Match	Total Unsecured Match	Total Project Value
21 Perpetual	2,661.7	$5,590,660	$5,820,956	$2,467,074	$16,091,589
1 Term	103.8	$35,178	$19,178	$0	$54,356
Totals	**2,765.5**	**$5,625,838**	**$5,840,134**	**$2,467,074**	**$16,145,945**

ADFP Trust Fund Cycle X Grant Awards Summary

General Appropriations Agricultural Plan

Project	Grantee	Scope	Headquartered County	ADFP Grant	Secured Match	Project Value
Ashe County Farmland Protection Plan	Ashe County	Local	Ashe	$14,000	$4,200	$18,200
Totals				**$14,000**	**$4,200**	**$18,200**

General Appropriations Agricultural Development Projects

Project	Grantee	Scope	Headquartered County	ADFP Grant	Secured Match	Project Value
Stanly County Farm Bureau Arena	Stanly County	Regional	Stanly	$200,000	$815,000	$1,015,000
Improving Pasture Management	NC Foundation for Soil & Water Conservation	Statewide	Wake	$114,000	$222,150	$336,150
Regional Grain Project	Cleveland County	Regional	Cleveland	$150,000	$61,250	$211,250
Expanding Triangle Farmer Market Opportunities	The Conservation Fund	Local	Wake	$5,000	$48,327	$206,961
Totals				**$469,000**	**$1,146,727**	**$1,769,361**

ADFP Trust Fund Cycle X Grant Awards Summary

General Appropriations Conservation Easements

Project	Grantee	Type	County	Acres	ADFP Grant	Secured Match	Project Value
Katalinic Farm Easement	Pender Soil and Water District	50 Year Term Easement	Pender	103	$32,678	$19,177	$51,855
Wright Farm Easement	Piedmont Lands Conservancy	Perpetual Easement	Randolph	114	$208,475	$202,475	$410,950
JW and Kathy Spencer Farm Easement	Hyde Soil and Water District	Perpetual Easement	Hyde	210	$540,611	$513,700	$1,054,311
Piedmont Jerseys Farm Easement	Catawba Lands Conservancy	Perpetual Easement	Lincoln	275	$183,461	$197,511	$380,972
Wood Farm Phase I Easement	Mainspring Conservation Trust	Perpetual Easement	Cherokee	104	$1,240,368*	$1,227,948	$2,468,316
Coltrane Dairy Farm Easement	Piedmont Lands Conservancy	Perpetual Easement	Randolph	94	$167,905	$167,905	$335,810
Edwin Rogers Farm Easement	Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy	Perpetual Easement	Haywood	215	$210,000	$430,000	$640,000
Best Farm Easement	Working Lands Trust	Perpetual Easement	Harnett	22	$17,101	$146,740	$163,841
Terry Rogers Farm Easement	Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy	Perpetual Easement	Haywood	115	$125,000	$260,000	$385,000
Boney Farm Easement	Pender Soil and Water District	Perpetual Easement	Pender	105	$17,705	$147,000	$164,705
Barrier Farm Easement	Cabarrus Soil and Water District	Perpetual Easement	Cabarrus	35	$60,146	$71,646	$131,792
Totals				**1,392**	**$2,803,450**	**$3,384,102**	**$6,187,552**

**This ADFP grant award is comprised of $1,226,231 of general appropriation funds and $14,137 of TVA funds.*