

How easements preserve farmland:

- Are designed to keep land available for farming and forestry
- Tailored to meet property owners goals and needs
- May allow home sites to be reserved for family members
- May permit new buildings related to farm operations
- May place minimal requirements on farming practices (using BMPs, etc.)

After putting land in conservation easement:

- Landowners retain ownership of land
- Landowners may be eligible for federal and state tax benefits
- Landowners remain eligible for present use property tax program
- Landowners can still farm, hunt and restrict public access to property
- Landowners may use land as collateral for loan and lease or sell the property
- Landowners are still eligible for federal and state farm programs.



Questions?

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Buncombe County Soil and Water District Office



CONSERVATION EASEMENTS

BUNCOMBE COUNTY FARMLAND PRESERVATION



The Farmland Preservation Program

The farmland preservation program encourages the voluntary preservation and protection of farmland from non-farm development. This is in recognition of the importance of agriculture to the economic and social life of North Carolina. This brochure focuses on the **Conservation Easement** component of the program.

What is a conservation agreement?

A conservation agreement is a written agreement between landowner and qualified land trust or public agency, in which:

- Landowner promises to keep the land in its natural condition without extensive disturbance
- The agency is granted the right to enforce the covenants of the agreement to monitor property in perpetuity.

Conservation Easements

Conservation agreement (sometimes called easement) is a very effective way to protect and conserve land in North Carolina. Conservation easements are used to protect farms, forests and mountains.

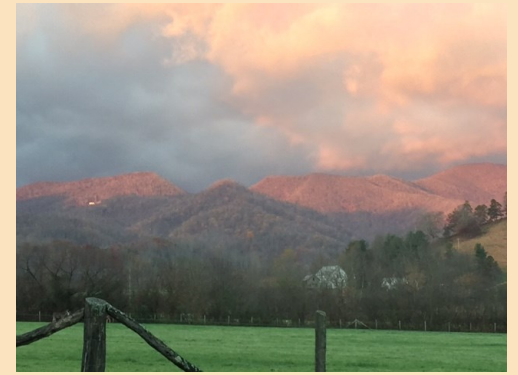
Conservation easement is a legal document restricting agreed upon property rights between a landowner and a land trust or public agency to protect the conservation values of the property.

One way to understand this restriction is to see what each landowner's property rights is a bundle of sticks. Each stick represents a right: commercial development, subdivision of property, hunting, mineral extraction, water usage, logging and construction of roadways and houses. Conservation easements protect the right to any addition development— and if additional development is desired, then it can be taken out of the easement.



What are the benefits?

- Protect precious family farmland for the future
- Protect property from development pressure.
- Protect natural resources and wildlife
- Protect open space and working lands



Is this right for you?

- Are you motivated by desire to conserve and preserve the land?
- Does your land not require intensive management?
- Are the current and future uses of the land compatible with preservation of the natural resources?
- Can you utilize tax advantages of income tax deduction, tax credit and/or the reduction of value of the property.

