



Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

Request for Board Action

Meeting Date: May 2, 2023

Consent Agenda

Department: Agriculture and Land Resources **Presenter(s):** John Hudson, Budget Director

Contact(s): Jennifer Harrison, Agriculture and Land Resources Director
Ariel Zijp, Farmland Preservation Manager

Subject: Establish Three Conservation Easement Projects and Increase an Existing Project

Brief Summary: The Buncombe County Agricultural Advisory Board (AAB) requests transaction costs for two new donation easement projects from FY23 Conservation Easement funds. The two projects consist of Tone Hollar Farm in Weaverville, and Soden Farm in Fairview and will be held by Buncombe County Soil and Water Conservation District. The existing Ramsey Farm project needs an increase to its existing budget due to grant related expenses.

The Land Conservation Advisory Board (LCAB) requests transaction costs for one new conservation easement project from FY23 Conservation Easement funds. The easement is at the Lake Eden Preserve in Black Mountain and will be held by Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy.

- Tone Hollar Farm, 23 Acres in Weaverville - \$34,000
- Soden Farm, 47 Acres in Fairview - \$45,000
- Ramsey Farm, 40 Acres in Weaverville - \$20,000
- Lake Eden Preserve, 336 acres in Black Mountain - \$45,200

This aligns with the Board of Commissioner's 2025 Strategic Plan Goal: Preserve farmland and environmentally sensitive tracts as well as the goal of protecting 20% of Buncombe County lands by 2030.

Buncombe County currently has 78,936 acres of land protected. With these additional 406 acres, Buncombe County will conserve 79,342 acres and will need 4,754 additional acres to achieve the 20% by 2030 conservation goal.

No new funding is required. Approving the budget amendment will allocate \$144,200 of the \$750,000 FY23 Conservation Easements allocation, leaving \$65,800 still available.

Recommended Motion & Requested Action: Approve budget amendment

County Manager's Comments & Recommendation: County Manager recommends as presented