



Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

Request for Board Action

Meeting Date: July 18, 2023

Consent Agenda

Department: Agriculture & Land Resources

Presenter(s): Heather Holsey, Budget Analyst

Contact(s): Jennifer Harrison, Agriculture and Land Resources Director
Avni Naik, Program Coordinator

Subject: Conservation Easements Budget Realignment

Brief Summary: Seven Conservation Easement Projects are complete with \$61,355 of remaining budget. \$32,500 is being moved to existing projects requiring additional funding, \$15,000 to a project to pay for pre-appraisals on potential Bond Conservation Easement Projects, \$10,000 to a project to pay for legal work associated with the Charitable Conservation Easement Program Integrity Act, and \$3,855 to Future Conservation Easements to be reallocated to new projects at a later date.

The Buncombe County Agricultural Advisory Board (AAB) requests \$10,000 for the legal work associated with the Charitable Conservation Easement Program Integrity Act passed in December 2022. This Act effectively shuts down a tax avoidance scheme that took advantage of the federal conservation easement tax incentive and allows the opportunity to record an amendment to ensure compliance with IRS Notice 2023-30.

The Buncombe County Agricultural Advisory Board (AAB) requests the reservation of \$15,000 to a pre-appraisal project to complete Restricted Use Appraisals. These appraisals will be used to determine estimates of easement purchase costs for potential Open Space Bond Conservation Easement projects before they complete board approval process. This would ensure the responsible and equitable use of Open Space Bond Conservation Easement funds.

Recommended Motion & Requested Action: Approve budget amendment

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