

Meeting Minutes
Buncombe County Agricultural Advisory Board
Buncombe Soil & Water Conservation District
49 Mount Carmel Road, Asheville, NC 28806 with optional Zoom
February 15, 2022, at 11 am – Virtual Meeting

Ag Advisory Board Members Present: Vice-Chair Bruce Snelson, Ed Bulluck, Terri Wells, Steve Duckett, Chase Hubbard, and Alan Lang.

Others Present: Ariel Zijp, Gillian Phillips, Avni Naik, Steven Clark, Andrew Berner, and Maureen Berner.

Meeting was called to order at 11:03 am by Vice-Chair Bruce Snelson.

Approval of the February 15, 2022, Meeting Agenda

- **Steve Duckett made a motion to approve the February 15, 2022, Meeting Agenda, seconded by Chase Hubbard, and the motion passed on the vote.**

Approval of the December 21, 2021, Meeting Minutes

- **Steve Duckett made a motion to approve the December 21, 2021, Meeting Minutes, seconded by Chase Hubbard, and the motion passed on the vote.**

Easement Project Presentations: Ariel Zijp introduced the newest Board Member, Chase Hubbard, to other Board Members, who also all briefly introduced themselves. Ms. Zijp then presented two new conservation easement projects that have been on the Program's waitlist. The two properties are directly opposite one another and have been grouped together to create the Martin's Creek Conservation Easement. Steven Clark and his husband, Marty Mattox, own one of the properties; Andrew Berner and his wife Maureen Berner own the second. The two properties are in proximity to three other conservation easements, two of which are held by Buncombe County's Farmland Preservation Program, and the third being held by Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy. This project will offer woodland habitat and water quality protection as both properties are in a water supply watershed and have creeks running through them.

After presentations of the projects, Board Member Terri Wells asked both landowners about their interest in conservation and what led them to apply for an easement on their properties; both landowners answered. Mr. Berner said that they have four children and was asked by Board Member Ed Bulluck if they are supportive of the project, Mr. and Mrs. Berner agreed that all their children are in support of the project.

A site visit was scheduled to both properties for Board Members to happen between now and the March meeting.

See attachment A for more details.

Board Member Reports: No reports.

VAD and EVAD Applications: No new VAD/EVAD applications.

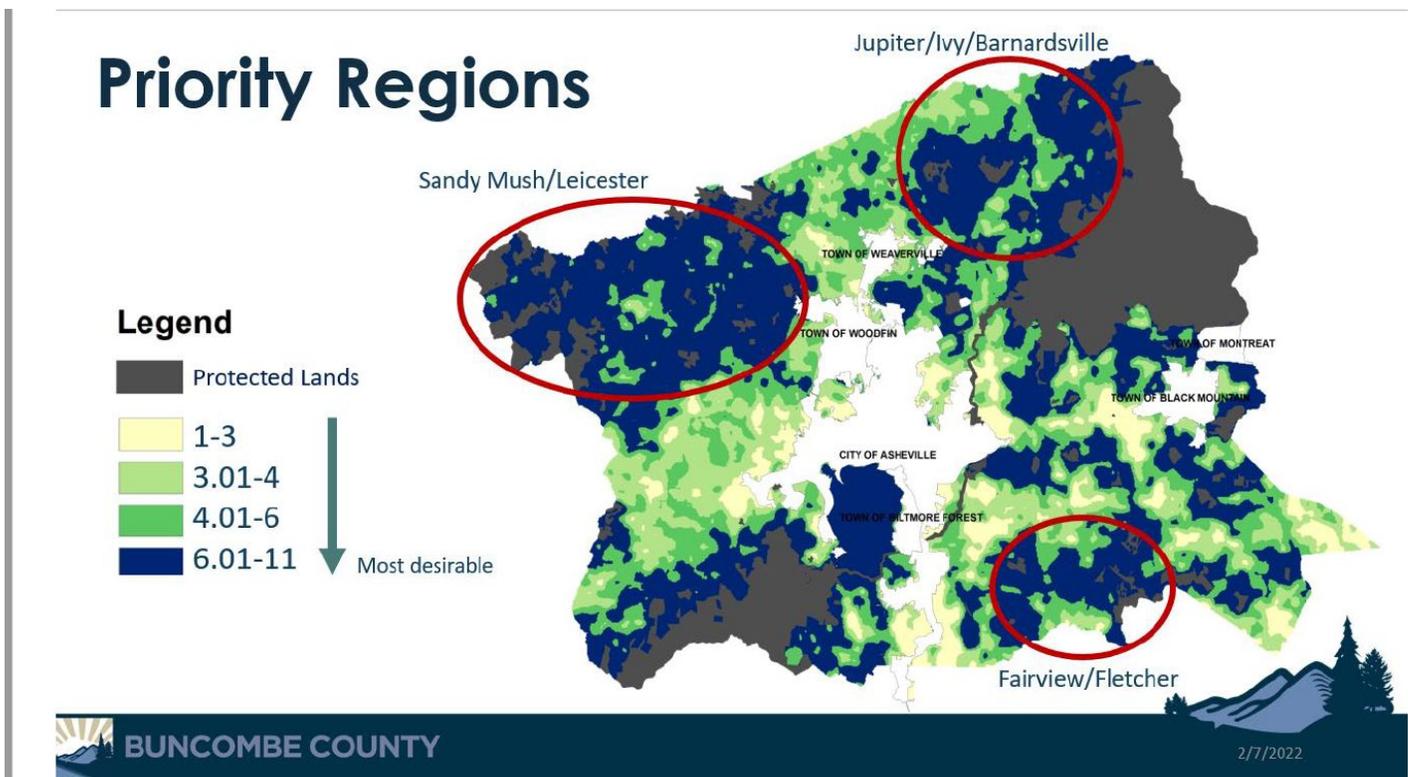
Farmland Preservation Report: Ariel Zijp presented the farmland preservation report:

- **Easement Project Updates**
 - Cole Family Farm Easement – submitted 4 NCDAs grant Applications
 - McCurry Easement – Survey in progress
 - Rosseter Easement – Survey in progress
 - Sneddon Easement – Starting survey Jan 2022
 - Harvey/O'Doherty Easement – Starting Survey April 2022
 - SAHC Teague Property Easement - Starting survey Jan 2022
 - SAHC Jenkin's Valley Easement – waiting until stream easement is complete
 - Burlison Easement – closed easement on December 29
 - Hart Easement - NRCS business tool software problem resolved
 - Currie Easement - NRCS business tool software problem resolved

- Sluder Easement – APPROVED FOR NCDA FUNDING 166,500, filed new USDA ALE application this week
- Ramsey Easement - APPROVED FOR NCDA FUNDING 224,000, filed new USDA ALE application this week
- Splendor Valley LLC Easement – APPROVED FOR NCDA FUNDING 53,000, but USDA easement funding approved 106,000
- **Budget Estimates for Easement Projects for FY23 for AAB and LCAB**
- **Joint LCAB/AAB Board Meeting on January 19th at 9am**
- **Conservation Easement Training with Foundation of Soil and Water**
- **Speaking at Organic Growers School Spring Conference on Agritourism March 19th**
- **Farmland Priority Regions and updating Ranking system**
- **Commissioners Environmental Subcommittee presentation on 1.21.22**
- **Reviewing rankings for grants, programs across the state and nation to create a customized update**
- **Criteria- Soils, Parcel Size, Proximity to conserved lands, VAD proximity, PUV, Water Supply Watershed,**
- **Sneak Peak of Farmland Priority Working Map below**

Stakeholder Organization Survey: Ms. Naik and Ms. Zipp went over the responses that were collected from Board Members that filled out the Survey. These responses were compiled together and will be submitted to the Planning Department for the Comprehensive Plan.

Ms. Phillips provided Board Members with an update regarding the Comprehensive Plan. They are hoping to have in-person meetings mid-end of March contingent on COVID numbers and guidelines.



Announcements and Discussion

With no other announcements, the meeting was adjourned at 11:47 am.



Martin's Creek Preservation

Presented by

Ariel Zijp

Buncombe Soil and Water Conservation

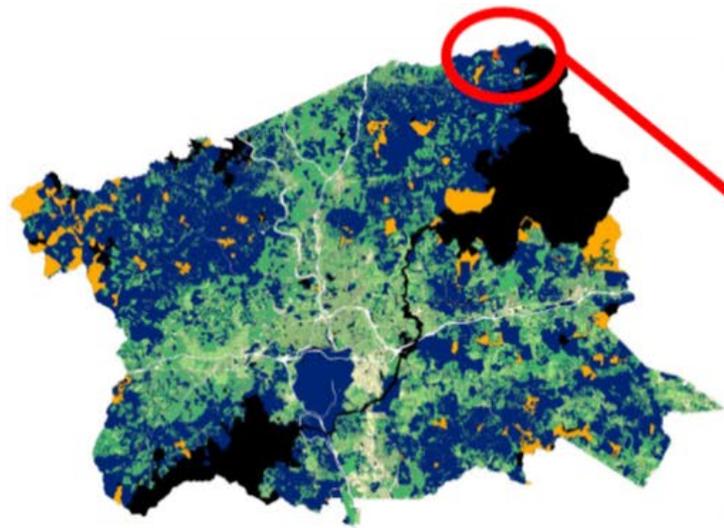


Martin's Creek Conserved Lands

- Maney Fields – SAHC- 42 Acres
- Carl and Holley Merschhat – BSWCD –118 Acres
- Jan Burleson – BSWCD – 28.1 Acres
- Andy and Maureen Berner – 19.4 Acres
- Steven Clark and Martin Maddox – 15 Acres



Overview: Proximity to Protected Lands and Priority Ranking

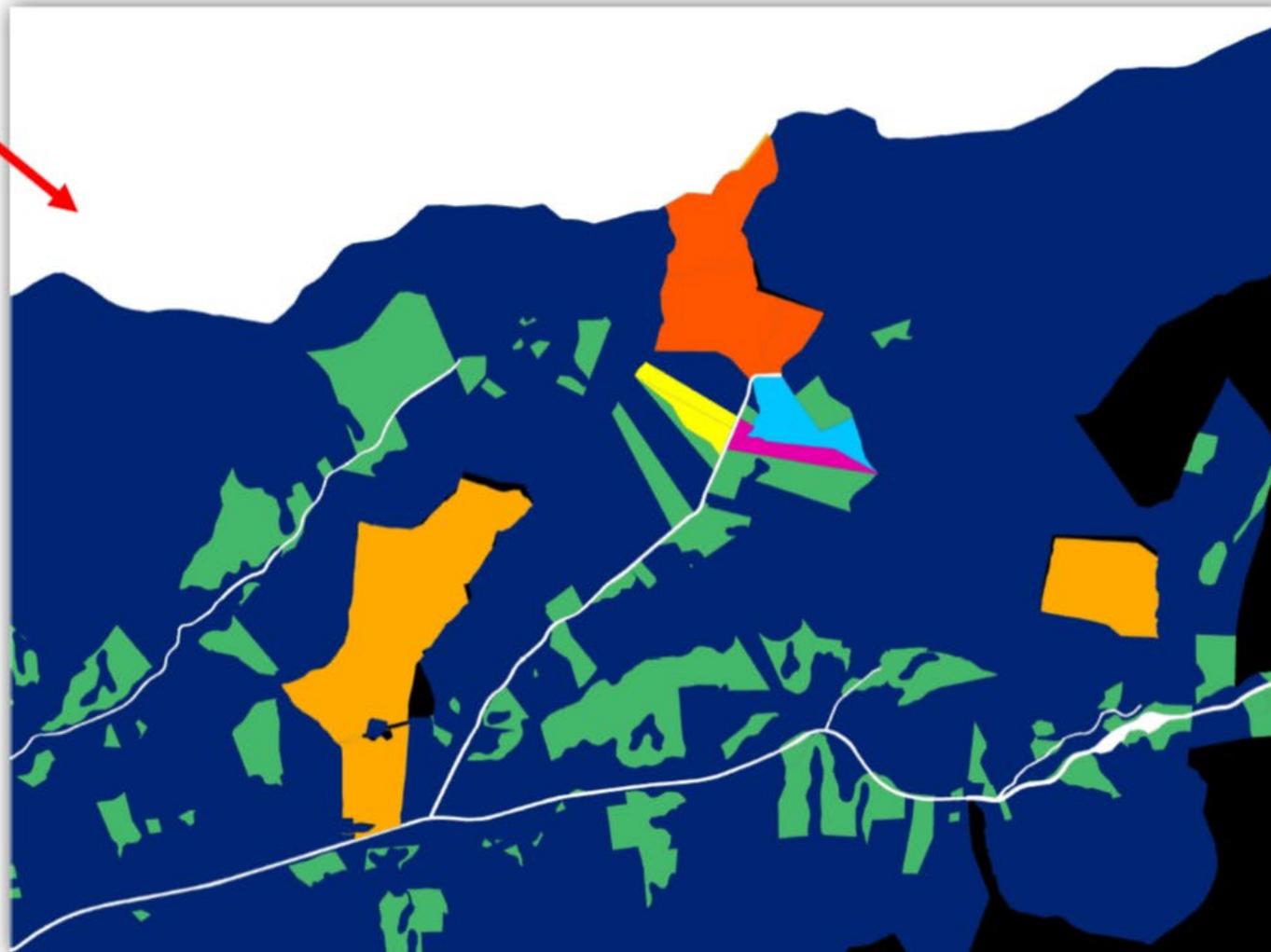


Legend

- Carl & Holly Merschat, 118 acres
- Jan Burleson 28.1 acres
- Andrew Berner, 19.36 acres (9.27 + 10.09)
- Steven Clark & Marty Mattox 14.9 acres (2.06 + 12.83)
- Other Privately Conserved Lands
- Public Protected Lands

Priority Ranking Scores

- 0 - 1
- 2 - 3
- 4 - 5
- 6 - 7
- 8 - 10

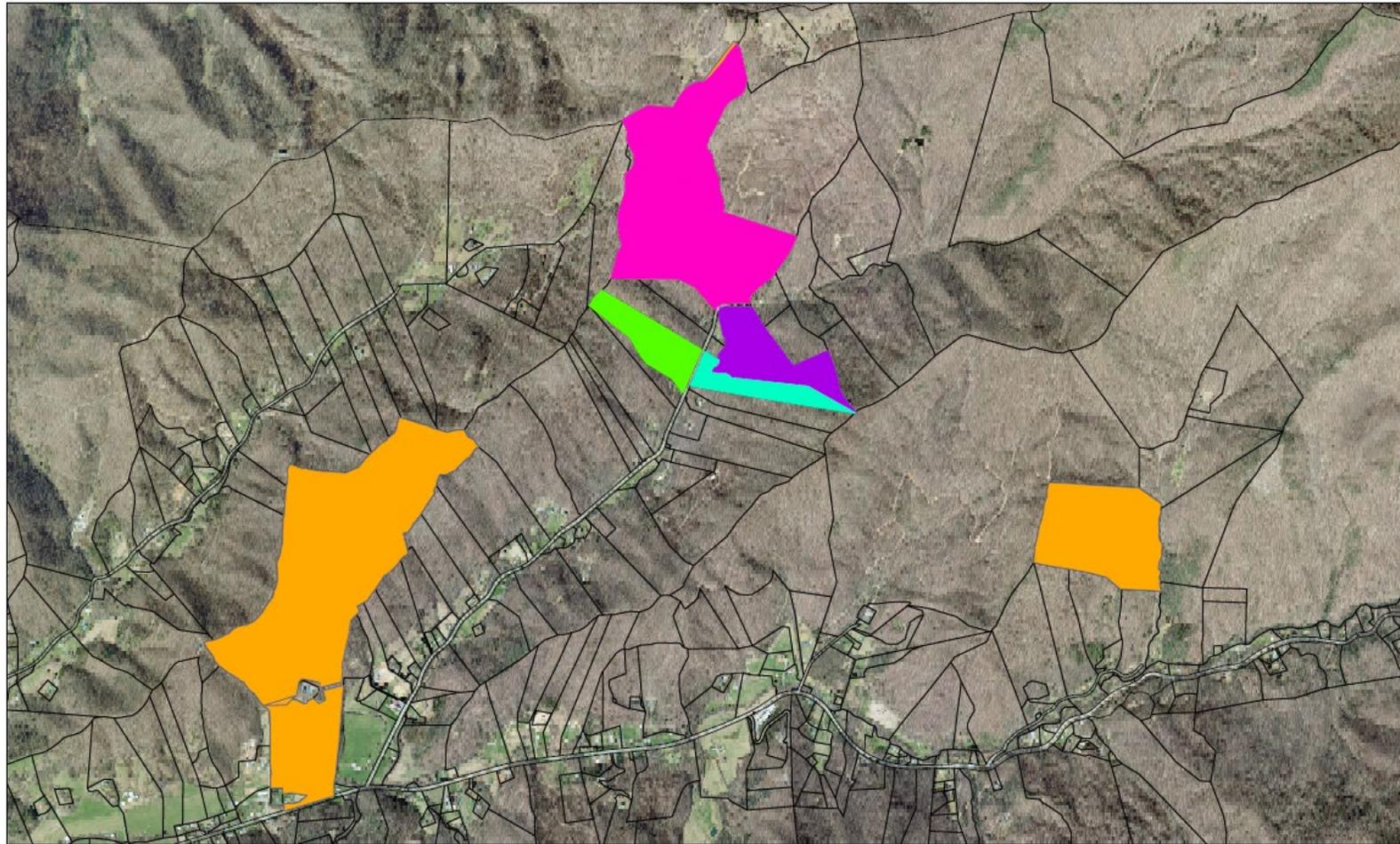


Legend

- Merschat
- Jan Burleson
- Andrew Berner
- Steven Clark & Mattox
- Other Privately Conserved Lands
- Property Boundaries



Berner & Clark Location & Proximity to Protected Lands

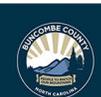


A lush green forest scene with a white circular graphic overlay. The text "Berner Property" is centered within the circle. The background shows a dense forest of tall, thin trees with vibrant green foliage.

Berner Property

Andrew (Andy) and Maureen Berner

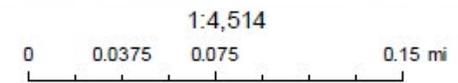
- 1-acre future house site planned to be built in the next 5 years
- Farmstead area
- Keeping it forested with a Forest Management Plan
- Landowner Objectives: woodland habitat, wildlife habitat, proximity to conserved lands



Andy and Maureen Berner Boundary Map



October 28, 2021



Andrew & Maureen Berner Conservation Easement Project

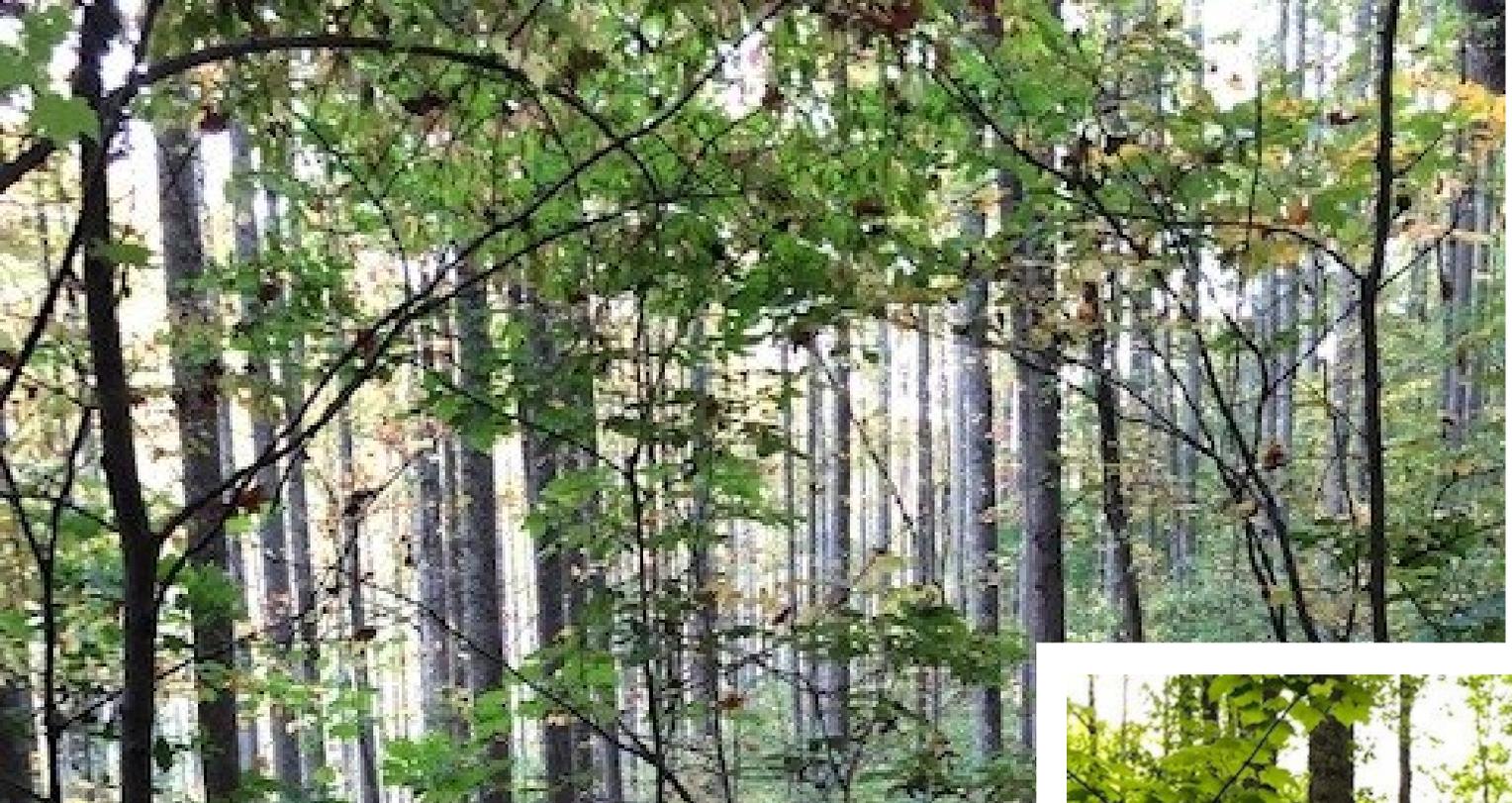


Berner_Land_Use

Land_Use

-  Future Farmstead Area, 1 acre
-  Future Housesite, 1 acre
-  Property Boundary, 19.4 acres
-  Steven Clarke & Martin Mattox Easement Boundary, 14.8 acres







A lush green forest with tall trees and dense undergrowth. A white circular graphic overlay is centered on the left side of the image, containing the text "Clark/Mattox Property".

Clark/Mattox Property

Steven Clark and Martin Mattox

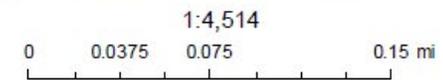
- 369 Martins Creek Road – opposite Andrew Berner’s property
- 15 acres of forested land with Martin’s Creek running through the property
- 1-acre House Site – residence building currently under construction; to be completed Summer 2022
- 1-acre - Reserve Farmstead Area for ag structures
- Landowner Objectives: protecting the natural beauty of the land and conservation resources
- Bobcat Canyon, Migratory Butterflies, water supply watershed



Steven Clark & Martin Mattox Boundary Map



October 28, 2021



Steven Clark & Martin Mattox Conservation Easement Project



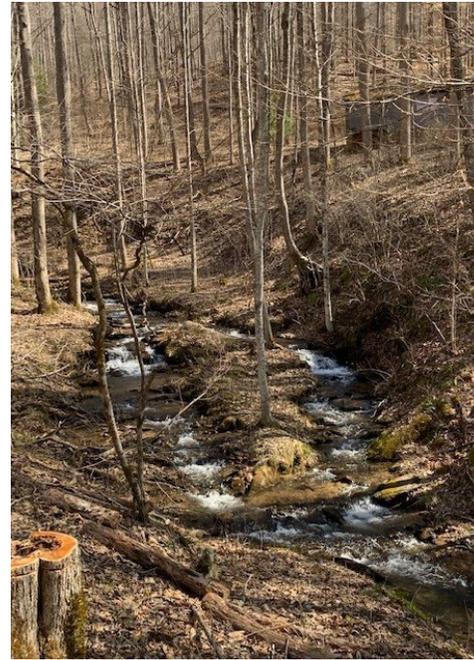
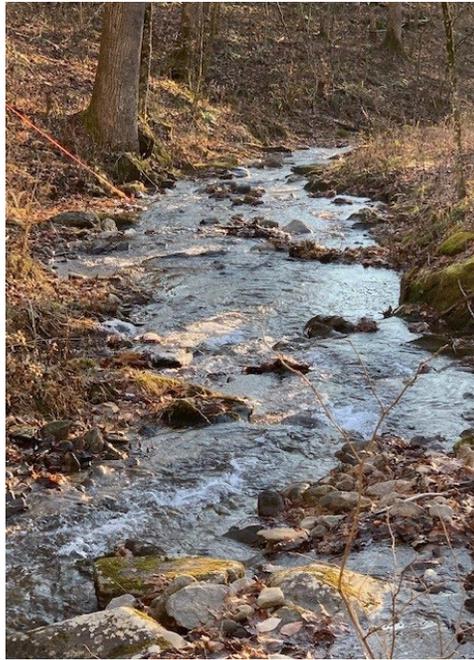
Clark_Land_Use

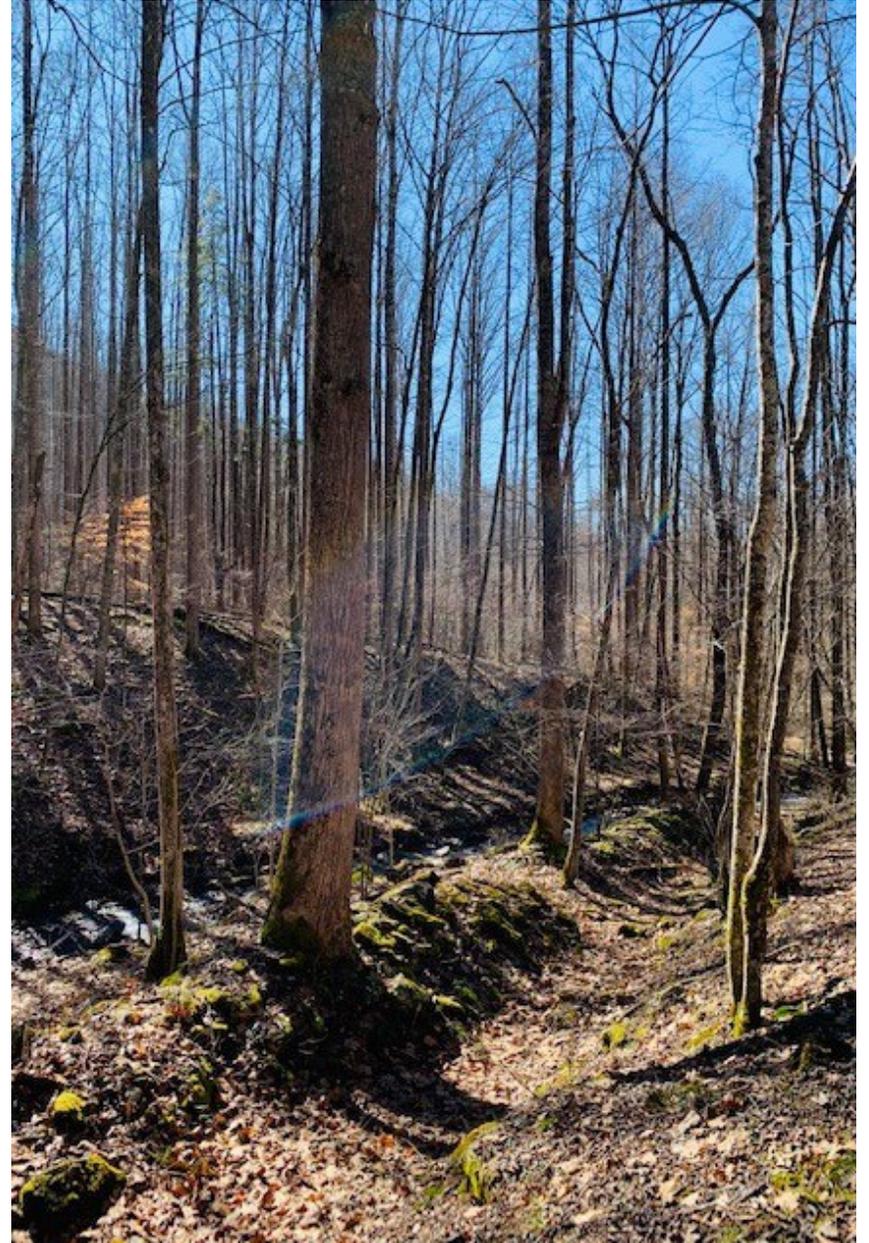
Land_Use

-  Current Housesite, 1 acre
-  Farmstead Area, 1 acre
-  Property Boundary, 14.8 acres



Clark/Mattox Farm







Questions?
