

**Buncombe County Land Conservation Advisory Board (LCAB)
Land Protection Grant Criteria**

The LCAB will make recommendations to the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners (BOC) for two types of projects:

- 1) Transaction Costs for Donations of Land or Conservation Easements
- 2) Bargain Purchases of Land or Conservation Easements

The criteria for the first type of project will be the same as for the second type of project. However, because donations make LCAB dollars go further to the County, the Advisory Board may allocate a certain percentage of appropriations from the County to encourage and expedite these projects. For instance, \$150,000 of the \$1 million in FY2007 might be dedicated to grants for transaction costs of donated easements.

Eligible applications for grants include qualified non-profit conservation organizations and units of government.

The LCAB will accept completed applications from eligible applicants three times a year – January 5th, May 1st and September 1st. Applications must be received or postmarked by application deadline and sent to:

Debbie Truempy, Planner
Buncombe County Planning & Development
46 Valley Street
Asheville, NC 28801
(828) 250-4830

Applications will be evaluated based upon:

- Conservation values to be protected by project
- Per acre cost to the LCAB of land protected
- Amount of value being donated by landowner and of matching funds being contributed to the project by other sources.
- Applicant organization's track record of successful conservation projects
- Plan for long-term protection of LCAB's investment in project
- Evidence of collaboration among conservation organizations and agencies
- Evidence of that project will be completed in a timely manner
- Whether the property lies in a county conservation focus area.
- Whether landowner has made a firm commitment to carry out the project.

**Buncombe County Land Conservation Advisory Board (LCAB)
Land Conservation Grant Request Form**

I. General Information

Name of Tract/Project: _____
 Property Location: _____
 Type of Project: Land Acquisition ___ Conservation Easement ___
 Total Acres to Be Conserved: _____
 Grant is Requested for: Transaction Costs Only ___ Land/CE Purchase ___

Applicant Organization/Agency: _____
 Street Address: _____
 City: _____ State: ___ Zip: _____
 Applicant Contact Person/Title: _____
 Phone: _____ Email address: _____

Name of Property Owner(s): _____
 Street Address: _____
 City: _____ State: ___ Zip: _____
 Phone: _____ Email address: _____

Funding Level and Duration

Funding sought from LCAB:	
Total Cost of Project (<i>refers to the specific project to which LCAB funds will be applied. Please include all funding sources.</i>):	
Duration (<i>refers to time in months to complete the project.</i>)	

Please complete sections II, III, IV, V & VI for each project being submitted for grant consideration.

II. Public Benefits/Conservation Values

Please Check to Indicate Public Benefits of Project Based upon Conservation Values Present on Property:

Buncombe County Priority Lands ___ Scenic/Viewshed Protection ___
 Natural Areas Protection ___ Water Quality Protection ___ Farmland Preservation ___
 Working Forest Protection ___ Recreation/Public Access Protection ___
 Historic/Cultural Resource Protection ___

Please answer corresponding sections for all items checked above.

1. Buncombe County Priority Lands

Is the tract identified in the December 2004 GIS Report on *Buncombe County Land Conservation* as a being a high priority parcel? The report prioritized large parcels in eight focus areas, as well as additional farmland parcels, and parcels near major waterways and the Blue Ridge Parkway. (75 words or less)

2. Scenic/Viewshed Protection

Please describe the scenic values of the property that would be protected under the proposed project. Make specific reference to presence and visibility of ridge tops on property. Also describe the visibility of property from public roadways, including NC scenic byways (see list of state designated byways at: http://www.ncdot.org/doh/operations/dp_chief_eng/roadside/scenic) and scenic overlooks, as well as from other federal, state, county or local public land (e.g. Blue Ridge Parkway). (75 words or less)

3. Natural Areas Protection

Please describe the significant biological values of the property, including the presence of native natural communities, as well as occurrence of threatened, rare or endangered species or habitats. In particular describe endangered or significant habitats such as mountain bogs or wetlands present. Consult with NC Natural Heritage Program for maps and records of natural heritage occurrences on or near property. (75 words or less)

4. Water Quality Protection

Please describe the water quality benefits to be gained from protection of the property. In particular, please describe the presence and extent (i.e. stream footage) of surface waters on the property. Approximately how many acres lie within 300 feet of surface waters? Is there an intact natural buffer present on streams and will project provide for permanent protection of vegetated riparian buffers of at least 50-feet in width on either side of streams? Does the property lie within a floodplain area? Are there wetlands present, or hydric soils that could be restored to natural wetlands? Would the project provide for or permit restoration of wetland or streams if needed? What are the state classifications of the streams present on the property or within the watershed where the property is located (refer to NC DWQ: <http://h2o.enr.state.nc.us/csu/swcfaq.html>)? Are there any aquatic species, particularly rare and endangered species that might benefit from protection of the property? (75 words or less)

5. Farmland Preservation

Please describe how protection of the property will help contribute to maintenance of a viable farm economy in the county. In particular, describe whether the property is currently in agricultural production. Describe property soil types – in particular note the presence of any soils identified as “prime soils” for Buncombe County by the UDSA Natural Resource Conservation Service (refer to Loring McIntyre, District Conservationist, 828-250-4790 and the *Soil Survey of Buncombe County*). Is the property located in a county voluntary agricultural district? Is the farm managed under the guidance of a USDA/NRCS-approved farm management plan, and in accord with that agency’s conservation best management practices? (75 words or less)

6. Working Forest Protection

Please describe the forest resources that would be protected by this project. In particular, note whether there is a NC Division of Forest Resources-approved forest management plan (refer to Buncombe County Ranger David Walker, 828-665-1593) that guides forest management on the property. How does the project contribute to maintenance of a viable forest resource economy in the county? (75 words or less)

7. Recreation/Public Access Protection

Please describe the recreational benefits to be provided by protection of the property. In particular, note whether property will be available for public access. Would public access trails help fulfill existing county greenways plans or other plans for public recreation? If not available for public access, will protection of the property enhance nearby or related public recreation – for instance, does protection of property help conserve water quality on nearby streams which are stocked for game fishing? Will the project provide benefits for hunting – either by permitting access for hunters or by protection of habitat for game species? Will there be the possibility of limited future access, such as guided hikes or access for school groups? (75 words or less)

8. Historic/Cultural Resource Protection

Please describe any historical or cultural resources to be provided by protection of the property. (75 words or less)

III. Rights to Be Reserved

Please describe all property rights to be reserved by the landowner that might affect protection of conservation values in the future. In particular, describe any rights that will be reserved for future residential development, roads/driveways/culverts, utilities and any other improvements. Will the landowner reserve the right for future tree-harvesting? Will the landowner reserve the right for future agricultural use, and if so, what rights for future agricultural out-buildings or facilities will be reserved? Please provide a map indicating locations of these potential future improvements. (75 words or less)

IV. Additional Information on Project Applicant, Resources, and Readiness

1. Briefly describe the organization's qualifications to accomplish the proposed project. Has the organization previously received a grant from LCAB? If yes, what is the status of the existing contract(s) with respect to completion of outputs, reporting, and extensions?

2. Is the proposed project strategically related to a long-term management plan or a regional or larger scale planning project? Briefly outline any ongoing or previous efforts to protect land or improve/restore water quality in or near the project. Describe how these and possible future efforts may complement the proposed project.

3. How will the organization guarantee the long-term maintenance and protection of LCAB's investment in the project?

4. In the case of a conservation easement, does the applicant have a plan for acquiring and setting aside sufficient stewardship endowment resources to insure its ability to monitor, enforce and defend the terms of the easement into the future? What amount of funds has been calculated as necessary for upholding these stewardship responsibilities (please provide a copy of the calculation sheet)? What is the anticipated source of the funds?

5. Does the organization have policies, procedures and experience to guide its stewardship program? Has the organization adopted the Land Trust Alliance Standards and Practices? Is the organization accredited with, or does it plan to pursue accreditation through, the national Land Trust Accreditation Commission?

6. In the case of land to be acquired outright, what is the applicant's plan for long-term management of the property? Will the property be conveyed to (another) public agency for long-term management. Will there be sufficient funds available to ensure protection of the property's conservation values into the future?

7. Partnership: by working collaboratively, organizations and agencies can help share costs and strengthen projects by contributing a variety of organizational resources and expertise. LCAB encourages applicants to partner on projects with other organizations and agencies that might have a shared interest in the success of a conservation project. Has the lead applicant been in touch with other potential partners for this project? Is there a plan for sharing expertise and experience to strengthen long-term conservation?

8. Project readiness: If the LCAB awards a grant for the project, how quickly can project be completed? Has the landowner signed an option, letter of intent, or other indication of their readiness to proceed under the terms of this grant request? What is the status of needed matching funds?

**Buncombe County Land Conservation Advisory Board (LCAB)
Land Conservation Grant Request Form**

V. Project Budget

Item	Requested LCAB Grant Amount	Matching Funds (*)	Total Project Cost
A. Property Acquisition (Provide one line item for each tract; list acreage and whether transaction is fee simple purchase or conservation easement purchase) **			
B. Appraisals (note that two appraisals are required if the value of the Property to be purchased is greater than or equal to \$250,000)			
C. Surveys and Legal Descriptions			
D. Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessments			
E. Baseline Documentation Report- Required for Land Trust applicants who intend to hold and monitor the easement			
F. Ad Valorem Taxes (if applicable)			
G. Title Insurance (if applicable)			
H. Legal Fees and Closing Costs			
I. Recording Fees			
J. Rollback Taxes (if applicable)			
K. Stewardship Expenses or Endowment ***			
L. Property Management Costs			
M. Project Management Costs			
Totals			
Total project cost expressed as cost/acre =			

The purpose of LCAB grant funds is for the purchase of property or conservation easements and conservation of the property only; funds may not be used for the purchase of any improvements or debris on the property.

(*) List sources and dollar amounts of matching funds here

(**) Briefly outline how the costs of the fee simple purchase or conservation easement were estimated and document as needed. How did you establish market price? *Please note that CWMTF can not pay in excess of appraised value. Please note that CWMTF can not pay in excess of appraised value.*

(***) Please provide documentation of how stewardship costs were calculated and the interest rate assumed. Include annual costs and hours for items such as monitoring, communications, data collection, maintenance, travel, and other costs (please specify).

VI. Attachments

Please Attach:

- Cover letter describing project
- Maps of Project
- Photos of Project