



**N.C. Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services**  
N.C. ADFP Trust Fund  
*Additional Conservation Easement Purchase Funds Information Packet*



## **Purpose**

The purpose of the Additional Conservation Easement Purchase Funds Application is to allow grantees with existing conservation easement grant contracts through the Standard Conservation Easement Appraisal Program to add funds to the conservation easement purchase line item if the existing contract has less than 50 percent of the estimated or appraised value of the conservation easement purchase. This is a one-time request.

Eligible applicants are existing conservation easement grant contract awardees. Before any grant awards are made, all applicant entities must be considered Low Risk according to the N.C. ADFP Trust Fund Grantee Risk Assessment Guide.

All applications are restricted to the conservation easement purchase line item. Grant awards cannot exceed 50 percent of the estimated or appraised value of the conservation easement purchase.

## **Description**

The ADFP Trust Fund grants for the purchase of the conservation easement are limited to 50 percent or less of the appraised value of the conservation easement purchase.

There are scenarios in which grantees apply for grant funds from federal, local, nonprofit, or private sources for additional funds for the purchase of the conservation easement, and those funds are not awarded.

Additionally, there are scenarios in which the appraised value is higher than the initial budget projections.

This application provides a one-time opportunity to add easement purchase funds to existing conservation easement contracts if the existing contract has less than 50 percent of the estimated or appraised value of the conservation easement purchase.

Final conservation easement values must be determined by a Certified Development Rights Appraisal and must be dated within the contract period and with an effective date of valuation dated less than 365 days before closing. If the appraisal falls outside of these dates one of the following options must be completed:

- An appraisal update that brings forward the effective date of appraisal by the appraiser. This update will validate the appraisal for an additional 365 days after the new effective date of valuation.
- An appraisal update that certifies the value but does not bring forward the effective date of valuation. This option will result in an additional 60 days of appraisal approval to reach closing.
- A recertification of value. A recertification of value does not change the effective date of the value opinion. Appraisers may perform a recertification of value to



**N.C. Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services**  
N.C. ADFP Trust Fund  
*Additional Conservation Easement Purchase Funds Information Packet*



confirm whether the conditions of a prior appraisal have been met. This option will result in an additional 60 days of appraisal approval to reach closing.

**NOTE:** All update options are considered “new assignments” for an appraiser and may incur additional costs. It is important to discuss appraisal requirements before engaging an appraiser to reduce confusion and subsequent fees.

## **Application**

The following items must be included in the application for Additional Conservation Easement Purchase Funds:

- Current Conservation Easement Grant Contract Number and ADFPTF Tracking Number
- Additional Conservation Easement Purchase Funds request
  - May not exceed 50 percent of the estimated or appraised value of the conservation easement purchase
- Documentation of Additional Conservation Easement Purchase Funds calculation
  - Certified Development Rights Appraisal during the open contract period or acceptable appraisal update or recertification of value.
- Justification for Additional Conservation Easement Purchase Funds
  - Rejection or deferment of a grant funds application from federal, local, nonprofit, or private sources
  - Results of a Certified Development Rights Appraisal determined the conservation easement purchase value is higher than the contracted line item
- Certification of same ownership as existing grant contract
- Certification of current working lands use
- Certification of up-to-date open contract reports and post-award monitoring reports
- Contract deliverables update

## **Evaluation**

All eligible applications are subject to an on-site farm visit or check-in call with the applicant during the evaluation period. The purpose of the on-site farm visit or call is to ensure that the information in the grant contract is current and accurate. Applicants are required to give an update on each due diligence deliverable as a part of their application. Projects that are closer to completion may be given priority.

Basic eligibility requirements, such as private ownership and minimum acreage, will be verified by ADFP Trust Fund staff.

If the variance is greater than 5 percent of the contracted acres and is less than the acres listed in the grant contract, the grant funds for conservation easement purchase will be reduced proportionally based on the new acreage.

If the land in the grant contract is under new ownership or is no longer in working lands use, the grant application will be denied.



**N.C. Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services**  
N.C. ADFP Trust Fund  
*Additional Conservation Easement Purchase Funds Information Packet*



## **Grant Funds**

This grant category will be limited to 15 percent of the available funding for the grant cycle. Additional funding may be available if there are unused funds from other grant categories for the cycle.

In the event there are not sufficient funds to cover all the requests, ADFP Trust Fund staff reserve the right to award additional funds up to a certain percentage of the request.