

VAD Program Record Keeping and Publicity and Outreach



North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

Farmland Preservation Division

Steve Troxler, Commissioner



Today's Presenters

- Loren Hendrickson
 - Farmland Preservation Coordinator
Wake SWCD
- Ariel Zijp and Avni Naik
 - Farmland Preservation Manager and Coordinator
Buncombe SWCD
- Ryan Manning and Lisa Shealy
 - Farmland Preservation Program Coordinator
NC Foundation for Soil and Water Conservation
 - Conservation Director and Conservation Associate
Working Lands Trust



Your Role as VAD Administrator

- Reviewing VAD applications for accuracy and completeness
- Verifying information in VAD applications
- Recordkeeping
 - Meeting minutes, including votes on applications
 - Submission of new VADs to GIS, Register of Deeds, and other departments
- Reporting
 - Annual report to NCDA&CS
 - Reports to the Board of Commissioners



Your Role as VAD Administrator

- Management of Conservation Agreements
 - Ensuring ongoing eligibility
 - Tracking of expiration dates
- Publicity and Outreach
 - Website, newsletters, workshops, events
- Administrative tasks
 - Order VAD signs



Wake County Agricultural Advisory Board Meeting Process

February 13, 2024

Loren Hendrickson, Farmland Preservation Coordinator
Wake Soil and Water Conservation District



@wakegov    

wakegov.com

Overview

1. History
2. New Farmland Preservation Program
3. Meeting Preparation
4. Meeting Procedure
5. Meeting Follow Up
6. Other Documentation Examples
7. Questions



- Agricultural Advisory Board (AAB) established with the Voluntary Agricultural District program in 2002.
- 7-member board under the control of the Wake SWCD Board of Supervisors.
- AAB held meetings on an as needed basis to review VAD applications.
- All written records including minutes and VAD applications kept in paper form in SWCD office.
- During this time, AAB approved the enrollment of ~10,500 acres into the VAD program.
- SWCD staff managed this work in addition to other job duties.

Another Beautiful
Wake County
Voluntary
Agricultural District





- June 2022 – County commissioners approved new Farmland Preservation Ordinance.
- 7-member Agricultural Advisory Board now a county advisory board, appointed by county commissioners.
- Established quarterly meeting schedule.
- Board began receiving a \$25 per diem for meetings.
- January 2023 – Launched the new Wake County Farmland Preservation Program.
- New program offers online application option and has a new database for managing all VAD/EVAD matters.



- Review online & paper applications received for the quarter.
- Coordinate with AAB members and SWCD staff to ensure attendance requirement will be met.
- Create event posting on the Wake SWCD webpage for the meeting containing virtual meeting information.
- Conduct site visits to assess applicant farms.
- Create agenda summarizing applications and other business topics.
- Prepare materials and other documentation for day of the meeting.



Application for Participation in the Wake County Farmland Preservation Program

■ **PROGRAM:** Voluntary Agricultural District Program Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural District Program
 Permanent Conservation Easement

■ **APPLICANT**

Name

Full Street Address

Mailing Address (if different)

Phone (home)

Phone (mobile)

Email address

■ **PROPERTY**

Street Address (ex: 7000 - 7500 Poole Rd.)	Tax Map / Pin # (ex: 9876543210)	Acres (ex: 100)	USDA Farm # / Tract # (Optional)	Land Use (Horticulture, Agriculture, Forestry)

Printed Name and Signature of Owner* / Applicant

Date

Printed Name and Signature of Owner* / Applicant

Date

*Please have all landowners on the deed sign.
If more signatures are needed, continue on the back.

Mail completed application to:
Wake Soil & Water Conservation District
4001-D Cary Drive, Raleigh, NC 27610

- Meetings are held in person and streamed live via Microsoft Teams.
- Chair of the AAB calls the meeting to order and works through the agenda.
- Farmland Preservation Coordinator presents Farmland Preservation Applications (VAD, EVAD or CE) to the board for approval.
- Board votes on each application individually, not the whole bundle of applications.
- Farmland Preservation Coordinator presents other business and discussion items.
- Relevant signatures from the board chair are collected and per diem paperwork completed.

Agricultural Advisory Board Meeting

AGENDA

10:00 AM on February 7, 2024
Hybrid Microsoft Teams Teleconference

- Call to Order/Welcome
- Approval of, February 7th 2024 Agenda
- Approval of November 15th Minutes
- Review VAD, EVAD and CE Applications

Landowner(s)	Land Use	Acres
Connie Mack Holder & Quida Fipps Holder	Agriculture	35.00
Donald & Janet Jackson	Horticulture	9.25
Terry Jackson	Agriculture	98.88
Richard Stone	Agriculture	10.35
William Robert Marshburn	Agriculture	12.76
Justin Baker	Agriculture	34.08
Elizabeth Stitt	Forestry	38.13
Elizabeth Moore	Agriculture	21.30
	Total:	259.75

- TLC Conservation Easement Application
- Request for MOU with Johnston County Soil and Water over VADs that Cross the County Line
- Discussion Items
 - Rollover Tax/Farmland Preservation Funding Update
 - Farmland Preservation Project Updates
 - Keeping the Farm Workshop – March 20th 2024
 - District Updates
- Adjourn



Wake County Agricultural Advisory Board Members:

Patrick Johnson – Chair
Joanie Bowden – Vice Chair
David Canady
Talmage Brown
William Upchurch
Eric Regensburger
Brittany Marshburn

Ex officio:
Evan Davis
– NC Dept. Agriculture
Katherine Williams
– Cooperative Extension
Leigh Ann Hammerbacher
– TLC

Staff Support:
Loren Hendrickson
– Wake SWCD
Winifred Dorer
– Wake SWCD
Teresa Furr
– Wake SWCD

February 2024 Applications

Landowner(s)	Land Use	Acresf
Connie Mack Holder & Quida Fipps Holder	Agriculture	35.00
Donald & Janet Jackson	Horticulture	9.25
Terry & Wanda Jackson	Agriculture	98.88
Richard & Jeanne Stone	Agriculture	10.35
William & Debra Marshburn	Agriculture	12.76
Justin Baker	Agriculture	34.08
Elizabeth Ray Stitt	Forestry	38.13
Elizabeth & John Moore	Agriculture	21.30
<i>Total</i>		<i>259.75</i>

Connie Mack Holder & Quida Fipps Holder

Location	2201 Bethlehem Rd. Raleigh, NC 27610
Pin #s	1752328970
Land Use	Agriculture
Acres	35



Application for Participation in the Wake County Farmland Preservation Program

PROGRAM: Voluntary Agricultural District Program Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural District Program
 Permanent Conservation Easement

APPLICANT
 Name: *Connie Mack Holder and Quida Fipps Holder*
 Pub Street Address: *2201 Bethlehem Rd. Raleigh, NC 27610*

Mailing Address (if different):
 Phone (home): *919-210-0393*
 Phone (mobile):
 Email address: *cmack7277@gmail.com*

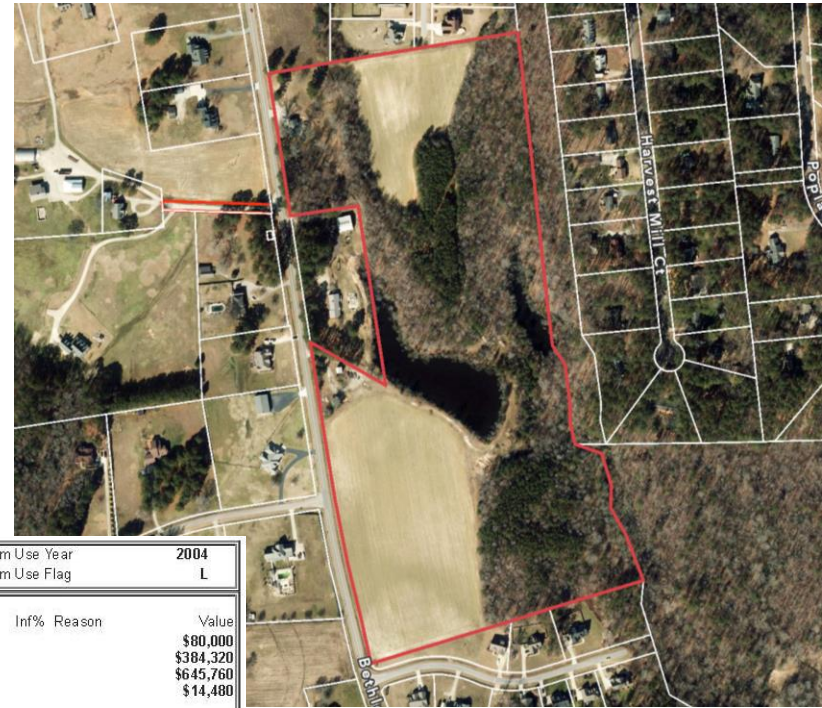
Street Address <small>(ex: 7000 - 7500 "pole Rd")</small>	Tax Map / Pin # <small>(ex: 9876543210)</small>	Acres <small>(ex: 100)</small>	USDA Fams # / Tract # <small>(optional)</small>	Land Use <small>(if different than Agriculture)</small>
<i>2201 Bethlehem Rd. Raleigh, NC 27610</i>	<i>1752328970</i>	<i>35</i>		<i>Agriculture</i>

Printed Name and Signature of Owner / Applicant: *Connie Mack Holder* Date: *12-15-23*
 Printed Name and Signature of Owner / Applicant: *Quida Fipps Holder* Date: *12-15-23*

*Please Place all signatures on the card sign. If two signatures are needed, continue on the back.
 Mail completed application to: Wake Soil & Water Conservation District, 4017 Caryville, Raleigh, NC 27610

Property Records: PIN# 1752328970

	Owner Name	Type	% Own	Stamps	Book	Page	Date
Current	HOLDER, CONNIE MACK TRUSTEE HOLDER, QUIDA FIPPS TRUSTEE THE HOLDER LIVING TRUST		GROUP ABOVE ABOVE		19321	0866	04-28-2023
1 Back	HOLDER, CONNIE MACK		ALL		09888	1305	02-03-2003
2 Back	SMITH, ROXIE H HEIRS		ALL		01802	0-E-	07-26-2002
3 Back	SMITH, ROXIE H		ALL	20.00	08753	2224	12-08-2000
4 Back	SMITH, ROXIE H		ALL		0		01-01-2000

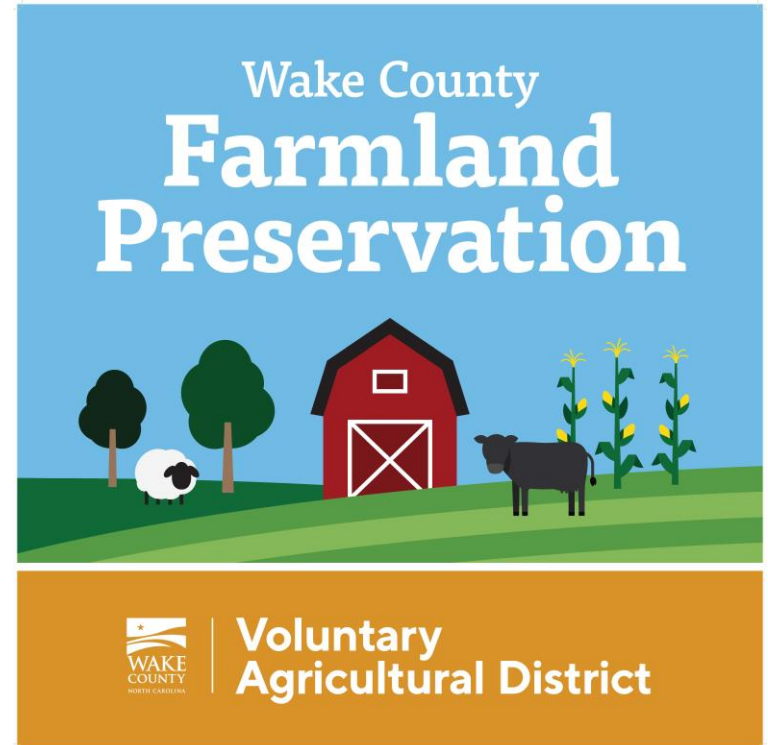


Owners	Connie & Quida Holder
Total Acres	35
Agri. Land Acres	12

Land Class	AGR-FARM	Deeded Acres	35.00	Farm Use Year	2004			
Soil Class	3	Calculated Acres		Farm Use Flag	L			
Land Value Detail - Market								
Sch	ETJ	Zoning	Description	Units	Rate	Cnd% Reason	Inf% Reason	Value
3	WC	R-30	BSITE1	1.00	\$80,000			\$80,000
3	WC	R-30	WOODLAND	12.01	\$32,000			\$384,320
3	WC	R-30	FLOOD	20.18	\$32,000			\$645,760
3	WC	R-30	FLOOD	1.81	\$32,000	25 FLOOD PLAIN		\$14,480
Total Land Value Assessed								\$1,124,560
Land Value Detail - Use Value								
Sch	ETJ	Zoning	Description	Units	Rate	Cnd% Reason	Inf% Reason	Value
3	WC	R-30	BSITE1	1.00	\$80,000			\$80,000
3	WC	R-30	WOODLAND	12.01	\$260			\$3,123
3	WC	R-30	FLOOD	20.18	\$260			\$5,247
3	WC	R-30	FLOOD	1.81	\$260			\$471
Total Use Value Assessed								\$88,841




- Once applications are approved in the meeting, the final step of the landowners signing the conservation agreement must be completed.
- Once landowners complete conservation agreement, coordinate pickup/delivery of new FPP sign.
- Communicate with GIS department to have new VAD/EVAD parcels added to county mapping system.
- Ensure completion of per diem payments for board members.
- Convert all application information to OnBase database.



Other Documentation Examples

Wake County
**Farmland
Preservation**



 **Voluntary
Agricultural District**

Wake County
**Farmland
Preservation**



 **Enhanced Voluntary
Agricultural District**

Wake County
**Farmland
Preservation**



 **Agricultural
Conservation Easement**

New Online Systems and Marketing

Home ▶ Departments & Government ▶ Farmland Preservation

Farmland Preservation Program



Wake County is losing farmland every year and that's why the Soil & Water Conservation District, with the full support of the Wake County Board of Commissioners, created the Farmland Preservation Program. As one of the fastest growing counties in the U.S., protecting family farms and forestland is a priority for Wake County.

In the last nine years, Wake County lost 22,964 acres of its farm and forest land – that's almost 20%. If the county continues at its current growth rate, all unprotected land will be developed in the next 25 to 50 years. A new Farmland Preservation Program aims to conserve Wake County's nearly 700 farms and help combat North Carolina's disappointing [ranking as the second highest state in the nation for farmland loss.](#)

- Applications can now be submitted online for VAD and EVAD.
- Online interest form application for conservation easements.
- New database behind the scenes greatly enhances ability to track and monitor old VADs as well as future applications.

New Online Systems and Marketing

The screenshot displays the OnBase (OnBaseProd) software interface. The top navigation bar includes 'File', 'Home', 'Workflow', and 'Document'. The 'Workflow' tab is active, showing a toolbar with icons for 'Close This Layout', 'Secondary Viewer', 'Primary Viewer', 'Refresh', 'Apply Filter', 'Auto Work', 'Override Auto-feed', 'Route Item', 'Take Ownership', 'Release Ownership', 'Execute Script Task', 'Name New Case', 'Create New Profile', 'Approve Application', 'Disapprove Application', and 'Table Application'. The 'Approve Application' icon is highlighted.

The left sidebar shows 'Life Cycles' with a search bar and a list of categories: 'Combined Inbox', 'FIN - Expense Reports', 'FIN - Food Authorization', 'FIN - Travel Authorizations', 'PC - Card Request', 'Soil and Water', 'Initial (0)', 'Staff Review (4)', 'Advisory Board Review (8)', 'Tabled Applications (0)', 'Renewals - Hold Queue (1)', and 'Renewals (0)'. The 'Staff Review (4)' category is selected.

The main content area shows an 'Inbox' table with the following data:

ic	Name	Entry Date
<input type="checkbox"/>	SWC - Application - 0	2/2/2023 4:38:05 PM
<input type="checkbox"/>	SWC - Application - 0	11/21/2023 3:10:36 PM
<input type="checkbox"/>	SWC - Application - 0	1/22/2024 12:04:43 PM
<input type="checkbox"/>	SWC - Application - 0	1/30/2024 7:51:28 AM

Below the table, the 'Staff Review' section shows '4 Items'. The 'Inbox' tab is selected, and the 'Secondary Viewer' and 'Primary Viewer' tabs are visible. The 'Primary Viewer' is active, displaying the details for 'SWC - Application - 0'.

The details view shows the title 'Soil and Water VAD and EVAD Application' and a section for 'Primary Owner Information'. The text reads:

The purpose of the [Voluntary Agricultural District \(VAD\) program](#) is to promote agricultural values and the general welfare of Wake County by increasing the identity of and pride in the agricultural community and its way of life. The program also encourages the economic and financial health of agriculture, horticulture and forestry through voluntary protection of non-farm development. Participating farms are subject to a conservation agreement between the county and owner for 10 years. VAD conservation agreements may be revoked by the landowner with written notice sent to the Wake County Agricultural Advisory Board.

The Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural District (EVAD) builds on the foundations of the VAD by requiring an [irrevocable](#) 10-year conservation agreement to keep the land in agriculture, horticulture and/or forestry production. The EVAD has additional benefits including the opportunity to receive up to 25% of

Questions?



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Buncombe County VAD & EVAD Program



Avni Naik, Farmland Preservation Coordinator

Ariel Zijp, Farmland Preservation Manager

Buncombe County Soil and Water Conservation District





Past System

- Soil and Water determined eligibility
- Planning Department brought applications to AAB
 - Kept records on Excel sheet
 - Mailed applications for renewals
- GIS department– updated GIS VAD layer annually
- Records were out of date with this method
- Intern updated the records and passed the program back to S&W



Process

1. Collect applications (mailed in or completed through Microsoft Forms)
2. Determine eligibility
3. Enter applicant info into Excel sheet monthly for Ag Advisory Board approval
4. Mail/email approval
5. Landowner picks up sign
6. Enter new VAD/EVAD member into GIS layer



Current System

- Primary management through geographic information systems (GIS)
- Updated:
 - Monthly as applications are approved by Ag Advisory Board
 - Annually for term renewals/removals
- Other tools used:
 - Microsoft Excel
 - Microsoft Forms/online application
 - Paper applications (scanned & saved)



Applicant	Township	Acres	Program	Determination	Appl. Date	Appl. No.	Phone Number	Tax Lot PIN	Mailing Address	Address of Property	Email	Notes
John C.	Leicester	88.5	VAD	Eligible - Renewal	11/22/2023	671	828-828-828	9.76361E+14	49 Mount Carmel Rd, Asheville, NC 28806	49 Mount Carmel Rd, Asheville, NC 28806	avni.naik@buncombecounty.org	change from parents to son
Jeremy C.	Leicester	109.22	EVAD	Eligible	12/4/2023	672	828-828-828	970089594300000; 970172021300000	49 Mount Carmel Rd, Asheville, NC 28806	49 Mount Carmel Rd, Asheville, NC 28806		change from VAD to EVAD
James C.	Black Mountain	120	VAD	Eligible	12/8/2023	673	828-828-828	6.26989E+13	49 Mount Carmel Rd, Asheville, NC 28806	49 Mount Carmel Rd, Asheville, NC 28806	avni.naik@buncombecounty.org	
Jack C.	Sandy Mush	46.79	EVAD	Eligible	12/11/2023	674	828-828-828	8.76292E+14	49 Mount Carmel Rd, Asheville, NC 28806	49 Mount Carmel Rd, Asheville, NC 28806		
Jane C.	Black Mountain	113.65	VAD	Eligible	11/27/2023	675	828-828-828	6.25328E+13	49 Mount Carmel Rd, Asheville, NC 28806	49 Mount Carmel Rd, Asheville, NC 28806		
478.16												
		VAD Totals		EVAD Totals		VAD/EVAD Combined Totals						
Totals as of November 2023		Number of Farms	320	Number of Farms	21							341
		Total Acreage	22615.7	Total Acreage	2258.58							24874.26
New totals for December 2023 (if proposed applications are approved)		Number of Farms	321	Number of Farms	23							344
		Total Acreage	22740.1	Total Acreage	2414.59							25154.7

Table

adm.DBO.VoluntaryAgriculturalDistricts

OBJ#	PINUM	LANDUSE	APPL_NO	APPLICANT	ADDRESS_ST	ADDRESS_CT	TOWNSHIP_F	ACREAGE_FP	DETERMINAT	APPROVAL_D	AGREEMENT	PHONE	APPLIED_DA	VAD_EVAD	ACT_INACT	DT_REM	REASON	PROP_ADRS	CALC_ACR
216	9609351599	A	437	BALL, LUTHER & BRENDA	1030 MEADOWSTOWN RD	MARSHALL, NC 28753	LEICESTER	9.93	APPROVED	9/2/2016	9/2/2016	828-683-3696	2/26/2002	VAD	ACTIVE	<Null>		152 MNK FARM RD, LEICESTER, NC 28748	9.42979
217	9765703407	A	438	HENSLEY, MICHAEL LYNN	289 SUGAR CREEK RD	WEAVERVILLE, NC 28787	IVY	18.29	APPROVED	12/28/2017	12/28/2017	626-2150	1/24/2003	VAD	ACTIVE	<Null>		289 SUGAR CREEK RD, WEAVERVILLE, NC 28787	18.5637
218	9695514547	A	440	SHOAF, TED B. REV TRUST	418 N MAIN ST	BLOOMINGTON, IL 61701	FAIRVIEW	40.26	APPROVED	8/12/2013	8/12/2013	309-287-0576	5/20/2003	VAD	INACTIVE	<Null>		135 B & B STABLES RD, FAIRVIEW, NC 28730	46.134998
529	9695522907	A	440.1	SHOAF, TED B. REV TRUST	418 N MAIN ST	BLOOMINGTON, IL 61791	FAIRVIEW	11.15	NOT ELIGIBLE-SD SOLD	7/15/2003	8/12/2013	309-287-0576	5/20/2003	VAD	REDUCED	<Null>		125 B & B STABLES RD, FAIRVIEW, NC 28730	11.1534
219	9676155909	F	441	JONES, ROBERT & LAURA	821 N ISLAND TER	ATLANTA, GA 30327	FAIRVIEW	33.36	APPROVED	6/30/2013	6/30/2013	404-255-5235	2/6/2002	VAD	INACTIVE	<Null>		333 WEBB CREEK RD, FAIRVIEW, NC 28730	34.128502
220	8772577453	A	442	LUCY, DONALD D. & CAROL A.	165 WORLEY COVE RD	LEICESTER, NC 28748	SANDY MUSH	58.9	APPROVED	12/1/2013	12/1/2013	683-9917	1/27/2003	VAD	INACTIVE	<Null>		99999 WORLEY COVE RD, LEICESTER, NC 28748	59.9618
530	8772574653	A	442.1	LUCY, DONALD D. & CAROL A.	165 WORLEY COVE RD	LEICESTER, NC 28748	SANDY MUSH	11.64	NOT ELIGIBLE-SD/SOLD	11/18/2003	12/1/2013	683-9917	1/27/2003	VAD	REDUCED	<Null>		165 WORLEY COVE RD, LEICESTER, NC 28748	11.6707
221	9733386492	A	444	GARRISON, RICHARD K.	1330 NEWSTOCK RD	WEAVERVILLE, NC 28787	REIMS CREEK	69.86	APPROVED	6/6/2014	6/6/2014	845-8613	1/28/2004	VAD	ACTIVE	<Null>		99999 NEW STOCK RD, WEAVERVILLE, NC 28787	70.6278
222	9685244496	H	445	PLOEGER, ROBERT A.	P.O. BOX 851	ARDEN, NC 28704	FAIRVIEW	20.45	APPROVED	6/26/2014	6/26/2014	628-1601	1/20/2004	VAD	ACTIVE	<Null>		65 WITCH HAZEL WAY, FLETCHER, NC 28732	19.226299
223	9623898848	A	446	ALEXANDER, GILBERT	273 AVERY'S CREEK RD	ARDEN, NC 28704	AVERY CREEK	44.86	APPROVED	4/20/2004	4/20/2004	687-9030	2/10/2004	VAD	REMOVED	<Null>		330 AVERY CREEK RD, ARDEN, NC 28704	45.561001
228	0635675326	F	448	KESSLER, MIRIAM S. TRUSTEE	13770 58TH ST N, SUITE 304	CLEARWATER, FL 33760	BROAD RIVER	139.46	APPROVED	4/20/2004	4/20/2004	727-536-5001	3/5/2004	VAD	REMOVED	<Null>		99999 STILL SPRING RD, BLACK MOUNTAIN, NC 28711	123.473999
229	9794441651	F	449	JARRETT, HELEN D.	1387 DILLINGHAM RD	BARNARDSDVILLE, NC 28709	IVY	42.09	APPROVED	5/18/2004	5/18/2004	626-2327	1/22/2004	VAD	REMOVED	<Null>		1389 DILLINGHAM RD, BARNARDSDVILLE, NC 28709	42.99002
230	0636451829	F	450	BARBASH, DOUGLAS & P. MCCROSK	2377 NC HWY 9	BLACK MOUNTAIN, NC 28711	BROAD RIVER	62.44	APPROVED	7/1/2014	7/1/2014	669-5540	1/30/2004	VAD	ACTIVE	<Null>		99999 NC 9 HWY, BLACK MOUNTAIN, NC 28711	68.833603
231	8752250631	A	451	JAYNE, FAIRMAN R. & KATE L.	316 SURRETT COVE RD	LEICESTER, NC 28748	SANDY MUSH	428.75	APPROVED	9/6/2014	9/6/2014	683-2014	5/9/2004	VAD	ACTIVE	<Null>		316 SURRETT COVE RD, LEICESTER, NC 28748	417.953003
232	9678607333	F	452	WARD, HAROLD & MARY	2150 FAWSETT RD	WINTER PARK, FL 32789	SWANNANOVA	122.17	APPROVED	9/9/2014	9/9/2014	407-649-4857	5/16/2004	VAD	ACTIVE	<Null>		99999 JIMS BRANCH RD, SWANNANOVA, NC 28778	117.599998
233	8695470266	A	453	ROBERSON, DEWAYNE E. & MELODY	P.O. BOX 212	ENKA, NC 28728	UPPER HOMINY	69.5	APPROVED	8/8/2014	8/8/2014	665-3685	1/28/2004	VAD	ACTIVE	<Null>		99 GILBERT B CROOK RD, CANDLER, NC 28715	65.710197
234	8685281809	A	454	ELLIOTT, EVA MAREE B.	37 LADYBIRD LN	CANDLER, NC 28715	UPPER HOMINY	77.88	APPROVED	9/7/2014	9/7/2014	282-253-0081	1/21/2004	VAD	ACTIVE	<Null>		37 LADYBIRD LN, CANDLER, NC 28715	74.297401
235	973503336793	A	455	SPRINKLE, DON A	729 JUPITER RD	WEAVERVILLE, NC 28787	FLAT CREEK	33	APPROVED	7/20/2004	7/20/2004	645-3627	5/21/2004	VAD	REMOVED	<Null>		11 ELLER FORD RD, WEAVERVILLE, NC 28787	24.665501



Annual Renewals - 1

- Filter dates in GIS for properties nearing term expiration
- Select and export to Excel file -> Print names & addresses on labels & mail out renewals
- Recently updated VAD/EVAD Renewal letter and created Microsoft Forms version for landowners who prefer online renewals



Soil and Water Conservation Department

Avni Naik
Farmland Preservation Coordinator

Dear Buncombe County Landowner,

I am contacting you on behalf of the Buncombe County Soil and Water Conservation District (VAD) because your property is nearing the end of the 10-year Voluntary Agricultural District (VAD) Program agreement. To stay in the program, your application will need to be renewed.

You may renew by one of three ways:

1. Fill out the application included in this letter and drop it off or mail it to our office: 49 Mount Carmel Rd, Suite 101, Asheville NC, 28806.
2. Type in the following link to submit an online application: <https://forms.office.com/g/RnUnM9LRSS>
3. Scan the QR Code below with your phone to submit an online application.



Benefits of the Voluntary Agricultural District Program:

- Increased protection from farming nuisance lawsuits by providing information in county land record systems.
- Public hearings for proposed condemnation of enrolled land.
- Water and sewer assessments may be suspended or waived if land is in VAD but no connected to the utility in question.
- Possible signage to publicize the land's enrollment in the program.
- Greater public awareness of the local agricultural community and increased pride in our family farms.
- No Charge to join the program.



Soil and Water Conservation Department

Avni Naik
Farmland Preservation Coordinator

Community Benefits of the VAD program:

- Providing a voluntary way to support the conservation of rural land and communities.
- Supporting each community's rural heritage, economy and providing local jobs
- Maintaining scenic views and tourism-based economic activity
- Providing fresh food, flowers, and other local farm products for residents and visitors.
- Supporting clean air and water
- Providing wildlife habitat
- Maintaining lower levels of traffic and noise
- Minimizing the infrastructure burden and local government.

By joining the Voluntary Agricultural District program, the landowner is agreeing that no non-farm use or development will occur on the property for 10 years. This agreement may be revoked by the landowner at any time by a written letter to the Ag Advisory Board, with a 30-day notice. Revoking the VAD agreement will result in the property no longer qualifying for the VAD program and its benefits.

I have attached the VAD brochure and application to this letter; please take a look and give me a call if you have questions. If you are interested in joining the Voluntary Ag District, please fill out the VAD agreement attached to this letter. If you do not submit the application, you will be removed from the program.

Please note this is not the Present Use Value Tax program – in order to apply for that contact Whitney Meadows at the Buncombe County Tax Office at 828-250-4959.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you,
Avni Naik
Farmland Preservation Coordinator
avni.naik@buncombecounty.org
office: 828.250.4792
cell: 828.273.3842
49 Mount Carmel Rd. Suite 101
Asheville, NC 28806



Voluntary Agricultural District Farm Sign

Recordkeeping using GIS

- Renewal in GIS – list old property as “INACTIVE”
- Create new polygon/boundary and update ownership etc. if changed. List new polygon as “ACTIVE”
- Hope to be able to see all records and boundary changes this way
 - Editing the same feature removes history of record
- Before making renewal changes in GIS, export entire table as Excel sheet and save as that year (ex. VAD/EVAD 2024)



Why GIS over other methods:

- Easier to filter out/search for data
- Easier to visualize changes in parcel (ex. boundaries/subdivision) over time
- Easier to maintain historical data
- Required to push VAD/EVAD data to the public anyways, using GIS as primary method streamlines process





Successes

- Filling out PINs and acreages in applications mailed out – higher response rate
- Easier to print/mail out addresses through GIS export to Excel
- Records updated monthly

2/13/2024





Challenges

- Consistency in data input to ensure accuracy over time and when exporting/filtering data
- Guidelines into Layer Properties for consistency regardless of user
- Permitting software – notifying if landowner is in program

2/13/2024



Outreach

- Mailout every few years
- Use landowner contact info from PUV records
- Remove properties already enrolled in VAD/EVAD
- Informational handout + application
- Presented program info to realtor associations, community meetings, etc.



Questions?



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Questions?



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