



N.C. Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services
N.C. ADFP Trust Fund
Agricultural Development Project Monitoring Policy and Guidelines



I. Purpose

The N.C. Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation (ADFP) Trust Fund, administered by the Farmland Preservation Division of the N.C. Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, provides grants for agricultural development projects throughout the state of North Carolina.

The ADFP Trust Fund will “hold grantees accountable for the expenditure of State funds by performing monitoring and oversight functions,” in accordance with Administrative Code 09 NCAC 03M “Uniform Administration of State Grants” and Subsection .0400, pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143C-6-22 & 23. The ADFP Trust Fund will work with the grantee to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of the contract. Monitoring is necessary to make certain the agricultural development projects are maintained while ensuring a productive relationship between the funding source (ADFP Trust Fund) and grantee (counties or private nonprofit conservation organizations, according to N.C.G.S. 106-744).

II. Definition of Agricultural Development Projects

According to N.C.G.S. 106-744, agricultural development projects are defined as “public and private enterprise programs that will promote profitable and sustainable family farms through assistance to farmers in developing and implementing plans for the production of food, fiber, and value-added products, agritourism activities, marketing and sales of agricultural products produced on the farm, and other agriculturally related business activities.”

III. Involved Parties

The ADFP Trust Fund, administered by the Commissioner of Agriculture, is the funding source for agricultural development projects. The ADFP Trust Fund has full-time staff located in Raleigh, North Carolina. Part-time field staff members are located throughout the state. The ADFP Trust Fund Monitoring and Stewardship Coordinator is the monitoring program manager, unless otherwise designated by the Farmland Preservation Division Director. ADFP Trust Fund Field Staff and the Monitoring and Stewardship Coordinator will conduct on-site monitoring. On-site monitoring visits are assigned by the Monitoring and Stewardship Coordinator. In-office monitoring reviews are the responsibility of the Monitoring and Stewardship Coordinator.

The ADFP Trust Fund Advisory Committee is administratively located within the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. The Advisory Committee will advise the Commissioner on the prioritization and allocation of funds, the development of criteria for awarding funds, guidelines for monitoring easements and projects, program planning, and other areas where monies from the ADFP Trust Fund can be used to promote the growth and development of family farms in North Carolina.

Grantees are counties or private nonprofit conservation organizations. **Grantees are required to monitor the project at least once a year and complete annual monitoring reports for the length of the monitoring term.**

IV. ADFP Trust Fund Monitoring Roles and Responsibilities

Agricultural development projects will be monitored for five (5) years after the closing of the contract, unless otherwise directed by the Program Director or Commissioner of Agriculture. If an agricultural development project is complete, and no further activities are taking place inside the monitoring period, the assigned field staff or Monitoring and Stewardship Coordinator may recommend termination of monitoring activities to the Program Director (see termination request protocol below).

The ADFP Trust Fund monitoring methods include, but are not limited to:

- Site visit: ADFP Trust Fund field staff member and/or Monitoring and Stewardship Coordinator will accompany the grantee to visit a physical location where the agricultural development project is established. This method will be required when ADFP Trust Fund money is used for the following expenditure categories: site development, construction, or equipment. A site visit may be used for the following expenditure categories if the agricultural development project is part of a larger operation: special program supplies, consultant and specialized services, or promotional materials.
- In-office: ADFP Trust Fund staff will review any materials pertaining to the project, e.g. website, promotional materials, news etc. The ADFP Trust Fund field staff will conduct a conference call with the grantee.

Site visit protocol for ADFP Trust Fund staff:

- Contact grantee about site visit. ADFP Trust Fund staff and grantee will coordinate annual monitoring visits to the extent possible.
- Review completed “Grantee Monitoring Report – Agricultural Development Project.”
- Compile documentation, including, but not limited to, photographs and data.
- Complete “ADFP Trust Fund Staff Monitoring Report – Agricultural Development Project.”
- Complete “ADFP Trust Fund Staff Monitoring Termination Request – Agricultural Development Project or Agricultural Plan” if appropriate.
- A site visit will be conducted within one (1) year of the contract closing. Site visits will then occur during the third and fifth years. The fifth site visit will occur before the date of the contract closing five years prior. Example: If a contract is closed on 12/31/14, the first site visit will occur prior to 12/31/15. The third site visit will occur in the year 2017. The fifth site visit will occur prior to 12/31/19. This schedule will be used unless otherwise directed by the Program Director or Commissioner of Agriculture.

In-office monitoring protocol for ADFP Trust Fund staff:

- Review completed “Grantee Monitoring Report – Agricultural Development Project.”
- Review the most current data available (e.g. website, promotional materials, news etc.).
- Conduct a conference call with the grantee.
- Complete “ADFP Trust Fund Staff Monitoring Report – Agricultural Development Project.”
- Complete “ADFP Trust Fund Staff Monitoring Termination Request – Agricultural Development Project or Agricultural Plan” if appropriate.
- In-office monitoring will be completed in the years when site visits do not occur.

Monitoring termination request protocol for ADFP Trust Fund staff:

- An “ADFP Trust Fund Staff Monitoring Termination Request – Agricultural Development Project or Agricultural Plan” can be submitted if the field staff member or Monitoring and Stewardship Coordinator determines that the agricultural project does not need to be monitored for the full monitoring period.
- The completed “ADFP Trust Fund Staff Monitoring Termination Request – Agricultural Development Project or Agricultural Plan” will be submitted to the Program Director for review.
- If the Program Director approves the request, the appropriate NCDA&CS staff will notify the grantee that monitoring has been completed for the project. Neither the grantee nor ADFP Trust Fund Staff will be required to submit monitoring reports for the remainder of the monitoring period.

V. Grantee Monitoring Responsibilities and Expectations

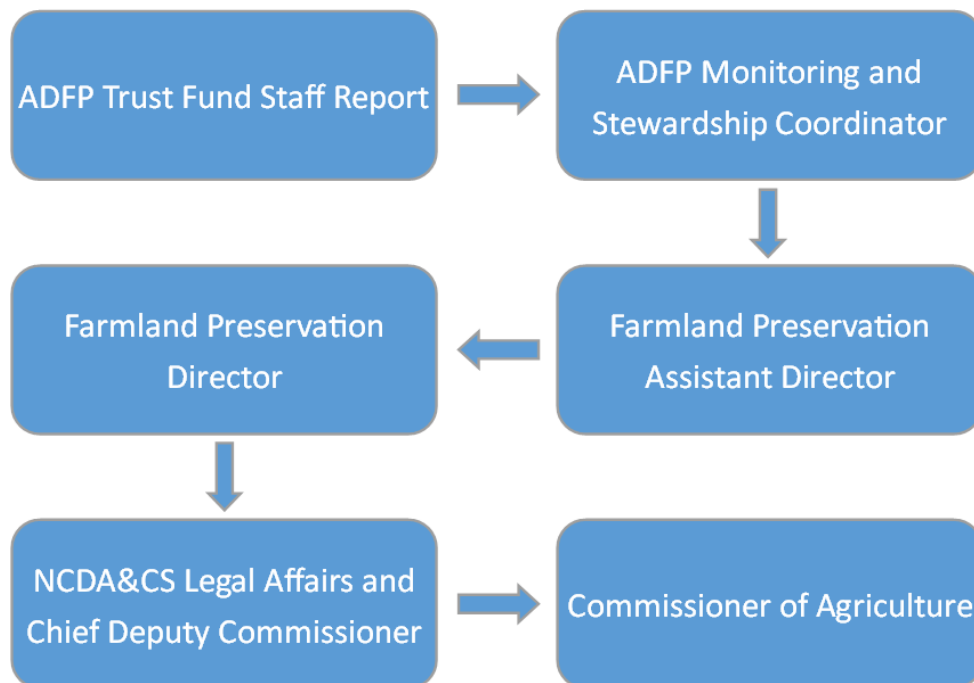
After the approval of final budget and progress reports and the closeout of the contract, Grantees will complete and submit the online “Grantee Monitoring Report – Agricultural Development Project” to the ADFP Trust Fund office annually on or before December 31. The “Grantee Monitoring Report – Agricultural Development Project” is accessed through NC ADFP Trust Fund’s website. For the direct link to the portal, click [here](#). Grantees will be required to create a Formsite account to access the report portal. Grantees should follow the prompts in the online portal to complete and submit their report.

Failure to file annual monitoring reports on or before December 31 of each year shall constitute a violation of the grant contract.

In January, ADFP Trust Fund staff and grantees will coordinate to the extent possible the annual monitoring visit schedule for projects due for a site visit that year. Grantees are encouraged to submit a tentative site visit schedule to the ADFP Trust Fund office ninety (90) days prior to the first scheduled site visit. As subsequent site visits are scheduled throughout the year by the grantee, the ADFP Trust Fund office will be notified in a timely manner of site visits due for that calendar year.

VI. Additional Guidance and Reference- Potential Violations

For issues in dispute or potential violations, the ADFP Trust Fund Staff will report such differences to the ADFP Monitoring and Stewardship Coordinator, who will then initiate an internal review with division and department leadership. See chart below.



ADFP Trust Fund Staff are to follow approved ADFP Trust Fund Policies and Guidelines as directed by the ADFP Trust Fund Advisory Committee and the Commissioner of Agriculture, i.e. ADFP Trust Fund Grantee Eligibility Classification.

VII. Monitoring Documents

The following documents will be used for the monitoring of agricultural development projects:

- Grantee Monitoring Report – Agricultural Development Project
- ADFP Trust Fund Staff Monitoring Report – Agricultural Development Project
- ADFP Trust Fund Staff Monitoring Termination Request – Agricultural Development Project or Agricultural Plan

VIII. Document Filing, Retention, and Disposal

All completed reports, including photographs and supplemental documentation from grantees, will be scanned for electronic storage and printed for paper files. Electronic copies of monitoring documents will be stored on the ADFP Trust Fund server and SharePoint page.

All monitoring documents will be filed, retained, and disposed of pursuant to the ADFP Trust Fund records retention schedule.