



# OPEN SPACE BOND CONSERVATION EASEMENT CRITERIA AND PROCESS

*Presented by*

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# Advisory Boards for Land Conservation

## Two Boards oversee the Process:

- Land Conservation Advisory Board (LCAB)
- Agricultural Advisory Board (AAB)



# Agricultural Advisory Board Process

- **Eligible Funding Recipients:** County-led Farmland Preservation Program
- **Focus Areas:** farm and forestland



# BOC Comments & Revisions on AAB Bond Ranking System

1. Encourage Leveraged funding from other sources
2. Encourage charitable landowner donations
3. Remove factoring in development pressure into the ranking system in order to not compete with affordable housing & comprehensive plan



# AAB Project Evaluation Ranking System

## A. Land evaluation (40%)

### 1. Farmland Soils Assessment (20 pts)

- Prime Soils
- Unique Soils
- Local and Statewide Important Soils

### 2. Forestland Soils Assessment (20 pts)

- High Index Soils
- Medium Index Soils
- Low Index Soils

## B. Site Assessment (60%)

### 1. Clustering Potential (35 pts)

- Tract Size
- Contiguous Land Preservation
- Proximity to ag preservation district

### 2. Farmland Potential (20 pts)

- Priority ranking score
- % of tract in ag
- Land stewardship
- Historic/scenic/env qualities
- Century family farm

### 3. Funding and Donation Leveraged (5 pts)

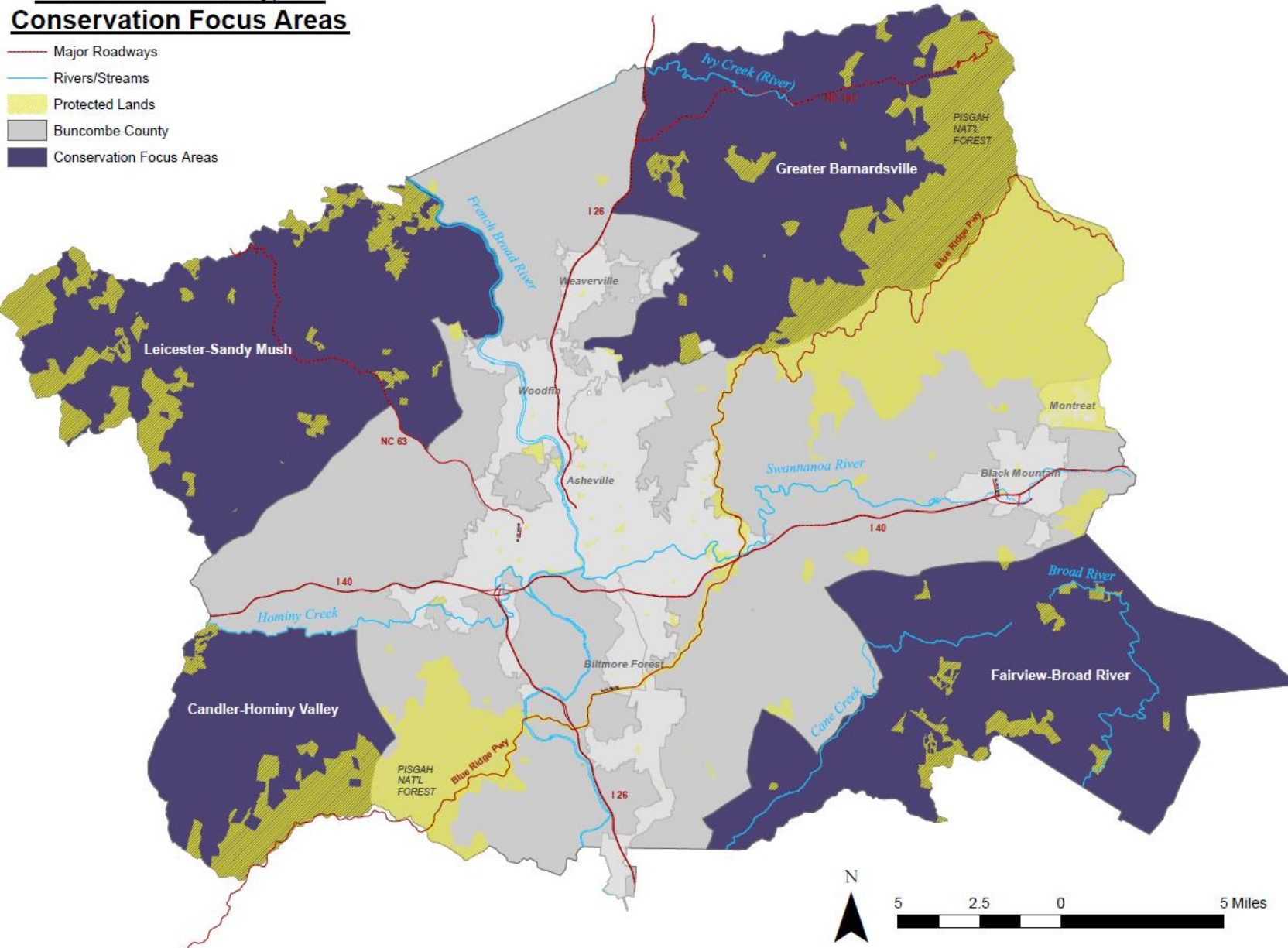
- Landowner Donation
- Funding Leveraged

Ranking points total is a weighted sum



**Buncombe County, NC**  
**Conservation Focus Areas**

- Major Roadways
- Rivers/Streams
- Protected Lands
- Buncombe County
- Conservation Focus Areas



# Conservation Focus Areas Align with the Comprehensive Plan



# AAB Bond Easement Purchase Requirement

**Must meet at least 2 of the following conditions:**

- Is this in one of our designated farmland priority regions?
- Is this property in proximity to other protected lands?
- Does this property have prime, unique, local, or statewide important agricultural soils?
- Is this a project with a significant environmental, or scenic importance ?
- Is this an active working farm or century farm?
- Is the size of the property significant?
- Is this a time sensitive project? (Elderly landowner, Financial hardship, Forced sale)

**If at least 2 conditions are met:**

- **The Bond can fund up to 50% of the easement value after other funding sources have been explored/exhausted.**
- **Landowners are required to donate a minimum of 25% of their easement value in a Bond funded project.**



# Land Conservation Advisory Board Process

- Eligible Funding Recipients: Nonprofit land trusts
- Focus Areas: wildlands, viewsheds, farmland, forestland, stream/riparian, and/or public benefit





# LCAB Project Evaluation Ranking System

## A. Land Trust Partner Evaluation – (meets criteria or does not)

- Applicants Organization track record
- Long-term protection of county's investment
- Evidence of collaboration among conservation organizations
- Previous project completion
- Value of project
- Integrity of easement

## B. Conservation Value of the Project – 100 points

- Scenic viewshed protection - 10 pts
- Natural Areas Protection/biological values – 10 pts
- Water Quality Protection/Restoration – 10 pts
- Farmland Preservation – 10 pts
- Public Benefit – 10 pts
- Historic/Cultural Resource Protection – 10 pts
- Funding Leverage – 15 pts
- Value added to the project – 15 pts



# LCAB Bond Easement Purchase Requirement

## Must meet at least 2 of the following conditions:

- Is this in an LCAB priority region?
- Is this a project with significant environmental and/or scenic importance
- Are there significant recreational opportunities, water quality or open space benefits of the project?
- Is this a time sensitive project? (Elderly landowner, Financial hardship, Forced sale).

## If at least 2 conditions are met:

- **The Bond can fund up to 50% of the easement value after other funding sources have been explored/exhausted.**
- **Landowners are required to donate a minimum of 25% of their easement value in a Bond funded project.**





# Questions?

