



Cumberland County Agricultural Land Preservation Board 2020 Annual Report

Cumberland County Planning Department
310 Allen Road
Carlisle, PA 17013
717-240-5362

*Page Intentionally
Left Blank For Printing Purposes*

ABOUT US

The Cumberland County Agricultural Land Preservation Board (Board) is comprised of seven volunteer members who serve three year terms. Appointments to the Board are made by the County Board of Commissioners. Representation includes three active farmers, one contractor/developer, one township supervisor and two at large members. The Board also has advisory members representing the Board of Commissioners, Conservation District, Cumberland Area Economic Development Corporation and Penn State Cooperative Extension. The Board meets the second Wednesday of each month at 7:30 am at 310 Allen Road, Conference Room B, Carlisle, PA. Due to COVID-19, numerous meetings were held via Zoom in 2020. Staff support for the Board is provided through the Cumberland County Planning Department.

PURPOSE

The Board is responsible for overseeing the Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchase Program (Program). The purpose of the Program is to protect viable agricultural lands by purchasing agricultural conservation easements that preserve the land for agricultural production in perpetuity.

Further, it is the purpose of this Program to:

- Encourage landowners to make a long-term commitment to agriculture by offering them financial incentives and security of land use;
- Protect normal farming operations in agricultural security areas from incompatible non-farming uses that may render farming impracticable;
- Protect farming operations from complaints of public nuisance against normal farming operations;
- Assure conservation of viable agricultural lands in order to protect the agricultural economy of this Commonwealth;
- Provide compensation to landowners in exchange for their relinquishment of the right to develop their private property; and
- Maximize agricultural easement purchase funds and protect the investment of taxpayers in agricultural conservation easements.
- Encourage financial partnerships between State, local governments and nonprofit entities in order to increase the funds available for agricultural conservation easement purchases.

BOARD MEMBERS & STAFF

Board Members

Diane Stamy (F), *Chair*
Gary Martin (T), *Vice-Chair*
Denny McCullough (F),
Secretary
Michael Klinepeter (CD)
Kyle Kotzmoyer (AL)
Kate McGraw (AL)
William Piper (F)

Advisory Members

Vince DiFilippo, *Board of Commissioners*
Shireen Farr, *Cumberland Area Economic Development Corp*
Carl Goshorn, *Conservation District*
Samantha Robison-Gahrett, *Penn State Cooperative Extension*

(F) Farmer Member
(AL) At Large Member
(T) Township Supervisor Member
(CD) Contractor/Developer Member

Staff

Kirk Stoner, AICP
Stephanie Williams
Melissa Piper Nelson
(Retired March 2020)
Elizabeth Grant
Steven Hoffman
BarbaraSue Hershey

Solicitor

Robert G. Frey

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Program was developed to strengthen Pennsylvania's agricultural economy and to protect prime farmland. The Program incorporates the use of county, state, federal and local funds to purchase agricultural conservation easements on prime agricultural land from willing landowners. The Program works by paying the farmer to place certain restrictions upon the land to maintain and permanently preserve high quality, working farmland. The land continues to be the farmer's private property and the farmer retains all privileges of land ownership, except the ability to sell the land for non-agricultural development or to develop the land for non-agricultural purposes. Participation in the Program is completely voluntary and very competitive. In order to be eligible for the Program, the farm must contain at least 52 acres, be enrolled in an Agricultural Security Area and have an up to date conservation plan. Then, farms are ranked using a Farmland Ranking System, each property is given a numerical score, and the farms with the highest score receive funding for easement purchase.

PROGRAM FUNDING

Funding for the Program totaled over \$3.1 million in 2020. This amount is derived from a variety of sources including county, state, local and private funds and is detailed below. In 2020, \$38 million was available from the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture for distribution statewide. State funds are derived from cigarette tax revenues and the Environmental Stewardship Fund.

Source of Funds	
General Fund	\$750,000.00
Hornbaker IPA	\$41,827.00
Clean & Green Rollback Interest	\$69,900.00
Private Donations	\$8,100.00
<i>Total 2020 County Certification</i>	<i>\$869,727.00</i>
State Grant	\$790,976.00
State Match	\$1,188,198.00
Redistributed Funds	\$47,161.00
<i>Total 2020 State Allocation</i>	<i>\$ 2,026,336.00</i>
<i>Total 2020 County & State</i>	<i>\$2,896,063.00</i>
<i>2019 Carryover funds</i>	<i>\$228,000</i>
<i>Grand Total</i>	<i>\$3,124,063.00</i>

2020 APPLICATION ROUND

Applications for the 2020 round of funding were received by staff between January 1, 2019 and December 31, 2019. Thirty-two applications, totaling 2,819 acres of farmland, were submitted for consideration. Of the 32 applications, thirteen farms totaling 1,032 acres were selected by the Board for appraisal and easement purchase consideration.

Ten of the thirteen selected farms, totaling 750 acres, are expected to proceed to closing. Farms #3, 16 and 28 declined to proceed with an appraisal and withdrew their application from consideration. Landowners were offered 90% of the full easement value up to the program cap of \$4,000 per acre. The average offer per acre was approximately \$3,580. The table below summarizes the Board's 2020 offers.

Rank	Township	Acreage Offered	Landowner	Board Offer/Acre	Easement Purchase Price
1	Upper Allen	61	Strock	\$ 3,753.00	\$ 227,394.27
2	Southampton	116	Weaver	\$ 3,676.50	\$ 427,135.77
3	West Pennsboro	100	Fickes	NA	NA
4	Monroe	137	Deckman Trust	\$ 3,636.00	\$ 497,259.36
5	Penn	24	Bream	\$ 3,069.00	\$ 72,735.30
6	Dickinson	92	Williams	\$ 3,906.00	\$ 360,523.80
7	Southampton	68	Martin	\$ 3,424.50	\$ 232,660.53
8	North Newton	53	Nealy	\$ 3,712.50	\$ 198,099.00
9	Penn	80	Tritt	\$ 3,667.50	\$ 293,033.25
10	Penn	25	Halteman	\$ 2,947.50	\$ 75,102.30
11	Southampton	94	Crider	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 374,760.00
16	Silver Spring	112	Moyer	NA	NA
28	Silver Spring	70	Moyer	NA	NA
			Average Offer/Acre	\$ 3,579.25	
	Total Acres Selected	1,032		Total Easement Purchase Price	\$ 2,758,703.58
	Total Acres Pending Settlement	750		Incidental Expenses	\$ 80,000.00
				Total Program Cost **	\$ 2,838,703.58
			** Total program costs are estimates until settlement is finalized on all farms.		
			Approximately \$285,000 in unused funds are expected to be directed to the 2021 program.		

COUNTY PROGRAM STATUS

Between 1989 and December 2020, 20,583 acres of farmland have been preserved countywide through 187 easements. An additional 12 easements, containing 1,377 acres of farmland, are pending settlement. A total investment of \$55 million in federal, state, county and local funding was utilized to purchase these easements with an additional \$4 million pending settlement. Preserved farmland by municipality is outlined below. Refer to Figure 1 for a map all final and pending easements.

Municipality	Number of Preserved Farms	Acres of Preserved Farmland
Dickinson	28	2,949
Lower Frankford	3	171
Middlesex	8	626
Monroe	26	2,286
North Middleton	3	295
North Newton	10	1,236
Penn	25	3,293
Silver Spring	5	487
South Middleton	14	1,632
South Newton	1	103
Southampton	27	3,086
Upper Allen	5	345
West Pennsboro	32	4,073
Totals	187	20,583

In 2019, County officials enacted a goal of preserving 30,000 acres of farmland by 2030. To get involved, call 717-240-5383 or visit our website!

FOR MORE INFORMATION

The Cumberland County Agricultural Land Preservation Board website and social media accounts provide more detailed information on the activities of the Board. Visit us at www.ccpa.net/farmland or search for “Cumberland County Planning” on Facebook.

FIGURE 1

