• Farmland Preservation Program is housed within the SWCD in the Dept. of Ag & Land Resources
• SWCD budget and easement budget funded by the County
• Agricultural Advisory Board oversees easement process & project approval process
JOB RESPONSIBILITIES

- Farmland Preservation Program job duties:
  - Conservation easements acquisition
  - Conservation easement annual monitoring
  - Grant applications for easement funding
  - Coordinate Agricultural Advisory Board
  - Coordinate Land Conservation Advisory Board
  - Facilitate VAD/EVAD program
  - Agritourism programs

- 2 full-time staff members devoted to program
  - Ariel Zijp, Farmland Preservation Manager
  - Avni Naik, Farmland Preservation Coordinator
FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

- Buncombe finances managed within the County Finance department
- Two types of costs: Transaction costs & Easement Purchase costs
- Timeline of Financial Progress
  - **2005-2016** – no budgeted amount – requests were from the general fund typically $60,000/board.
  - **2017** – $120,000 on a first come first serve basis (planning department’s budget)
  - **2018–2019** - $150,000/year (split between two boards)
  - **2020** – $240,000 (split between two boards held in special project fund)
  - **2021** – $750,000 (between two boards held in special project fund)
  - **2022** – projected increase
TRANSACTION COSTS

Typical Transaction Costs

• **Appraisal** – needed to determine funding
• **Survey** - boundary survey, planning future uses on property
• **Baseline Documentation Report** – snapshot in time of conditions on property
• **Environmental Assessment** - Phase I or II studies
• **Legal Fees** – deed work, title search/insurance, closing agent
• **Closing Costs** – cost of recording the easement deed
See the chart below for the ADFP Trust Fund maximum reimbursements by region.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grant Cycle XV Cost Estimates</th>
<th>Appraisal</th>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>BDR</th>
<th>EA</th>
<th>Legal Fees</th>
<th>Closing Costs</th>
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<td>1-Mountains</td>
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<tr>
<td>3-Southwest</td>
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<td>7-Southeast</td>
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<td>$1,600.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STEWARDSHIP & MONITORING

- Annual Monitoring Visits – no cost other than employee time
- Drone Monitoring – allows you to see entire property in reduced time
- Stewardship Fund – fund set up to ensure district can defend legal disputes into perpetuity
COUNTY LIABILITY

• Buncombe County has no stewardship fund
  • County-wide Contingency Fund for financial costs
  • County Attorney for legal representation
• Liability of non-compliance of the district to easements
• County Attorney Discussions to ensure management and county attorney understands the responsibilities of holding easements.
• Backup holder – local land trust
QUESTIONS?

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