



FARMLAND INFORMATION CENTER

FACT SHEET

STATUS OF LOCAL PACE PROGRAMS



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DESCRIPTION

As of January 2008, at least 57 independently funded, local purchase of agricultural conservation easement (PACE) programs in 18 states had acquired funding and/or easements. This table displays the status and summarizes important information about these local farm and ranch land protection programs. For a program to be included, the protection of agricultural lands must be one of its core purposes, accomplished primarily by compensating landowners for the value of the easement.

EXPLANATION OF COLUMN HEADINGS

Locality

Name of the locality the program serves. When a land trust or soil and water conservation district administers the program, it is listed next to the locality.

Year of Inception / Year of First Acquisition

“Year of Inception” is the year in which the ordinance creating the PACE program was passed. “Year of First Acquisition” is the year in which the program acquired its first easement.

Total Easements / Restrictions Acquired

Number of agricultural conservation easements or conservation restrictions acquired to date. This number includes joint projects with state and/or county programs and independent projects completed by the local program. This number does not necessarily reflect the total number of farms/ranches protected because programs may protect a property in stages and may hold multiple easements on the same farm/ranch.

Total Acres Protected

Number of acres protected by the program through independent and joint projects to date.

Independent Easements / Restrictions Acquired

Number of agricultural conservation easements or conservation restrictions acquired through independent projects to date. This number excludes easements/restrictions

acquired through joint projects with county and/or state programs, which may represent the majority of local activity. This number does not necessarily reflect the total number of farms/ranches protected because programs acquire a property in stages and may hold multiple easements on the same farm/ranch.

Independent Acres Protected

Number of acres protected through independent projects. This number excludes acres protected through joint projects with county and/or state programs, which may represent the majority of local activity.

Independent Program Funds Spent to Date

Dollars spent by each program to acquire easements/restrictions on farms/ranches through independent projects. This number excludes dollars spent on joint projects with county and/or state programs. Amounts may include unspent funds that are encumbered for installment payments on completed projects. Unless otherwise noted, this figure does not include incidental land acquisition costs—such as appraisals, insurance and recording fees—or the administrative cost of running the program. These figures do not include additional funds contributed by federal programs, municipal governments, private land trusts, foundations, individuals or the value of landowner donations.

Additional Funds Spent to Date

Funds contributed by local governments, state governments, private land trusts, foundations or individuals, and/or federal programs (see “Funding Sources” below). The value of landowner donations is not included.

Program Funds Available

Program funds available for the current fiscal year to acquire easements on agricultural land.

Outstanding Applications

Backlog of applications reported by program administrators.

PURCHASE OF AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION EASEMENTS

Locality	Year of Inception/ Year of First Acquisition	Total Easements/ Restrictions Acquired	Total Acres Protected	Independent Easements/ Restrictions Acquired	Independent Acres Protected
New York					
East Hampton, Town of *	1982/1982	18	351	15	202
Pittsford, Town of X	1995/1996	9	1,060	7	653
Southampton, Town of	1998/1999	29	811	27	743
Southold, Town of *	1984/1986	94	1,976	77	1,523
Suffolk Co. ~(2007)	1974/1976	172	8,943	154	8,943
Warwick, Town of *	2001/1997	15	2,294	8	1,108
Watershed Agricultural Council *	1998/2001	81	16,237	81	16,237
North Carolina					
Buncombe Co. *	2001/2005	10	1,238	10	1,238
Forsyth Co. *	1984/1987	27	1,256	22	935
Orange Co.	2000/2001	11	1,088	10	1,018
Oregon					
Yamhill Co. - Soil and Water Conservation District ~(2007)	2003/2003	4	944	3	896
Pennsylvania					
Buckingham Township *	1991/1991	49	3,810	34	1,397
Bucks Co. * ♦	1989/1990	115	10,216	17	1,500
Chester Co. * ♦	1989/1990	255	23,575	47	4,034
Lancaster Co. * ♦	1980/1984	698	58,485	118	7,757
Plumstead Township * ♦	1996/1997	40	1,945	25	854
Solebury Township ~(2005)	1996/1998	34	1,941	28	1,298
Virginia					
Albemarle Co. *	2000/2002	21	4,079	21	4,079
Chesapeake, City of * ♦	2003/2006	2	170	2	170
Clarke Co. *	2002/2003	37	2,185	37	2,185
Fauquier Co. *	2002/2004	28	6,205	28	6,205
James City Co. *	2001/2003	4	366	4	366
Loudoun Co. X	2000/2002	5	1,007	5	1,007
Rappahannock Co. *	2004/2006	1	346	1	346
Virginia Beach, City of * ♦ +	1995/1997	131	7,347	131	7,347
Washington					
King Co. ~(2007)	1979/1984	220	13,265	220	13,265
San Juan Co. ~(2007)	1990/1994	13	1,156	13	1,156
Skagit Co. *	1996/1998	104	6,078	104	6,078
Thurston Co. X	1996/1998	18	942	18	942
Whatcom Co. *	2001/2002	8	571	8	571
Wisconsin					
Bayfield, Town of - Bayfield Regional Conservancy	2002/2003	4	193	4	193
Dunn, Town of *	1996/1997	23	2,822	23	2,822
LOCAL TOTALS				2,527	326,457

STATUS OF LOCAL PACE PROGRAMS

Funding Sources Used to Date

Sources of funding for independent projects. “Transportation funding” refers to federal money disbursed under The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act of 2005 and its predecessors for “transportation enhancements.” Easement acquisitions that protect scenic views and historic sites along transportation routes are eligible for these funds.

The federal Farmland Protection Program (FPP), established in the 1996 Farm Bill provides matching funds to state, local and tribal agricultural easement acquisitions programs. The 2002 Farm Bill expanded the program to include certain non-governmental organizations. In addition to these sources of funding, several programs reported financial contributions from private sources. The 2008 Farm Bill authorized \$743 million for the FPP through fiscal year 2012.

NOTES

[~] Figures are carried forward from the year indicated in parentheses.

[#] Figures for Marin County, Calif., represent the activity of the Marin Agricultural Land Trust (MALT) using Proposition 70 (a \$776 million land protection bond) funds received by the county. In 1988, Marin County received \$20 million in state funds and directed \$15 million to MALT. This money funded easement acquisitions through June 1999. After June 1999, MALT acquired easements without county assistance. This activity is not included in this table.

[*] Program figures are more current than January 2008.

[♦] These programs enter into installment purchase agreements (IPAs) with landowners. IPAs are structured so that landowners receive semi-annual, tax-exempt interest over a term of years (typically 20 to 30). The principal is due at the end of the term. Landowners can convert IPAs into securities that can be sold to recover the

principal at any time. Programs often purchase U.S. zero-coupon bonds to cover the final balloon payment. The interest payments are generally funded by a dedicated revenue source, such as a real estate transfer tax. Therefore, “Program Funds Spent to Date” may appear relatively low for these jurisdictions.

[‡] In Maryland, Carroll and Frederick Counties offer “critical farms” programs. The programs allow landowners to sell to the county options to buy their easements for 75 percent of the appraised easement value. In exchange, landowners apply to the state PACE program. If the state approves the application, the landowner must repay the county from the proceeds. If the state application is not approved within five years, the county owns the easement, unless the landowner repays the program, with interest. Figures for Carroll and Frederick Counties include critical farm projects that have not yet been approved by the state.

[Δ] Total program activity includes fee simple acquisitions. The state PACE program requires grant recipients to resell land acquired in fee subject to a conservation easement.

[X] Program has terminated or is no longer acquiring agricultural conservation easements.

[+] “Total and Independent Easements/Restrictions Acquired” represents the number of parcels protected. Program staff track individual parcels, rather than number of easements or restrictions acquired.

[^] “Independent Program Funds Spent to Date” includes incidental land acquisition costs and/or personnel costs.

For additional information on farmland protection and stewardship contact the Farmland Information Center. The FIC offers a staffed answer service, online library, program monitoring, fact sheets and other educational materials.

www.farmlandinfo.org

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