



## Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

### Request for Board Action

**Meeting Date: February 18, 2025**

#### New Business

**Department:**

Agriculture and Land Resources

**Presenter(s):**

John Hudson, Budget Director

**Contact(s):**

Jennifer Harrison - Agriculture and Land Resources Director  
Ariel Zijp, Farmland Preservation Program Manager

**Subject:**

Purchase Costs for Three Conservation Easements, and  
Agricultural Growth Zone Grant Match

**Brief Summary:**

The Agricultural Advisory Board (AAB) requests 50% of purchase costs for three conservation easement projects totaling \$1,394,500. The projects consist of:

Kestrel Herb Farm, +/- 70 acres in Sandy Mush - \$259,000  
Sandy Hollar Farm, +/- 150 acres in Sandy Mush - \$760,000  
Battle Forest, +/- 167 acres in Candler - \$375,500

The Board of Commissioners have previously approved transactions costs related to these three easements out of the annual Conservation Easements funding in the Special Projects Fund.

The County has also been awarded \$1,945,443 from the North Carolina Department of Agriculture for conservation easement transaction and purchase costs. This grant has a required match of \$2,345,443 which will be obligated by ordinance. All projects funded by this grant will come to the Board of Commissioners at future meetings for individual approval.

These items align with the 2025 Strategic Plan Goal: Preserve farmland and environmentally sensitive tracts.

**Recommended Motion & Requested Action:**

Approve purchase costs budget amendment  
Approve grant match budget amendment

**County Manager's Comments & Recommendation:**

County Manager recommends as presented