



**North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services**  
NC ADFP Trust Fund  
*Agricultural Plan Monitoring Policy and Guidelines*



## **I. Purpose**

The N.C. Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation (ADFP) Trust Fund, administered by the Farmland Preservation Division of the North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, provides grants for agricultural plans on family farms throughout the state of North Carolina.

The ADFP Trust Fund will “hold grantees accountable for the expenditure of State funds by performing monitoring and oversight functions,” in accordance with Administrative Code 09 NCAC 03M “Uniform Administration of State Grants” and Subsection .0400, pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143C-6-22 & 23. The ADFP Trust Fund will work with the grantee to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of the contract. Monitoring is necessary to make certain the agricultural plans are maintained while ensuring a productive relationship between the funding source (ADFP Trust Fund) and grantee (counties or private nonprofit conservation organizations, according to N.C.G.S. 106-744).

## **II. Definition of Agricultural Plans**

Farmland Protection Plans, Cost of Community Services Studies and the Voluntary Agricultural Districts program are considered agricultural plans.

N.C.G.S. 106-738 (b) defines Voluntary Agricultural Districts. It includes “the purpose of such agricultural districts shall be to increase identity and pride in the agricultural community and its way of life and to increase protection from nuisance suits and other negative impacts on properly managed farms. The county or city that adopted an ordinance under this Part may take such action as it deems appropriate to encourage the formation of such districts and to further their purposes and objectives.”

N.C.G.S. 106-744 (e) defines Farmland Protection Plans. It includes “a list and description of existing agricultural activity in the county,” “a list of existing challenges to continued family farming in the county,” “a list of opportunities for maintaining or enhancing small, family-owned farms and the local agricultural economy,” “describe how the county plans to maintain a viable agricultural community and shall address farmland preservation tools,” and “a schedule for implementing the plan and an identification of possible funding sources for the long-term support of the plan.”

A Cost of Community Services Study is a study that determines the fiscal contribution of existing local land uses and evaluates working and open lands with residential, commercial, and industrial land uses. These studies examine both the tax revenues generated by different land uses and the costs to local government of providing services to those same uses. The fiscal consequences of keeping land in agriculture or as open space versus developing land for other purposes are defined.

## **III. Involved Parties**

The ADFP Trust Fund, administered by the Commissioner of Agriculture, is the funding source for agricultural development plans. The ADFP Trust Fund has full-time staff located in Raleigh, North Carolina. Part-time field staff members are located throughout the state. The ADFP Trust Fund Monitoring and Stewardship Coordinator is the monitoring program manager, unless otherwise designated by the Farmland Preservation Division Director. In-office monitoring reviews are the responsibility of the Monitoring and Stewardship Coordinator.

The ADFP Trust Fund Advisory Committee is administratively located within the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. The Advisory Committee will advise the Commissioner on the

prioritization and allocation of funds, the development of criteria for awarding funds, guidelines for monitoring easements and projects, program planning, and other areas where monies from the ADFP Trust Fund can be used to promote the growth and development of family farms in North Carolina.

Grantees are counties or private nonprofit conservation organizations. **Grantees are the first point of contact for monitoring agricultural plans and discussing potential violations of contracts. Grantees are required to monitor the project at least once a year and complete annual monitoring reports for the length of the monitoring term.**

#### **IV. ADFP Trust Fund Monitoring Roles and Responsibilities**

Agricultural plans will be monitored for five (5) years after the closing of the contract, unless otherwise directed by the Program Director or Commissioner of Agriculture. If an agricultural plan is complete and no further activities are taking place inside the monitoring period, the assigned field staff or Monitoring and Stewardship Coordinator may recommend termination of monitoring activities to the Program Director (see termination request protocol below).

The ADFP Trust Fund monitoring methods include, but not limited to:

- In-office: ADFP Trust Fund staff will review any materials pertaining to the plan, e.g. website, promotional materials, news etc. The ADFP Trust Fund field staff member or Monitoring and Stewardship Coordinator will conduct a conference call with the grantee.

In-office monitoring protocol for ADFP Trust Fund staff:

- Review completed “Grantee Monitoring Report – Agricultural Plan.”
- Review the most current data available (e.g. website, promotional materials, news etc.).
- Conduct a conference call with the grantee.
- Complete “ADFP Trust Fund Staff Monitoring Report – Agricultural Plan.”
- Complete “ADFP Trust Fund Staff Monitoring Termination Request – Agricultural Development Project or Agricultural Plan” if appropriate.
- In-office monitoring will be completed each year for the length of the monitoring term.

Monitoring termination request protocol for ADFP Trust Fund staff:

- An “ADFP Trust Fund Staff Monitoring Termination Request – Agricultural Development Project or Agricultural Plan” can be submitted if the field staff member or Monitoring and Stewardship Coordinator determines that the agricultural plan does not need to be monitored for the full monitoring period.
- The completed “ADFP Trust Fund Staff Monitoring Termination Request – Agricultural Development Project or Agricultural Plan” will be submitted to the Program Director for review.
- If the Program Director approves the request, the appropriate NCDA&CS staff will notify the grantee that monitoring has been completed for the plan. Neither the grantee nor ADFP Trust Fund Staff will be required to submit monitoring reports for the remainder of the monitoring period.

#### **V. Grantee Monitoring Responsibilities and Expectations**

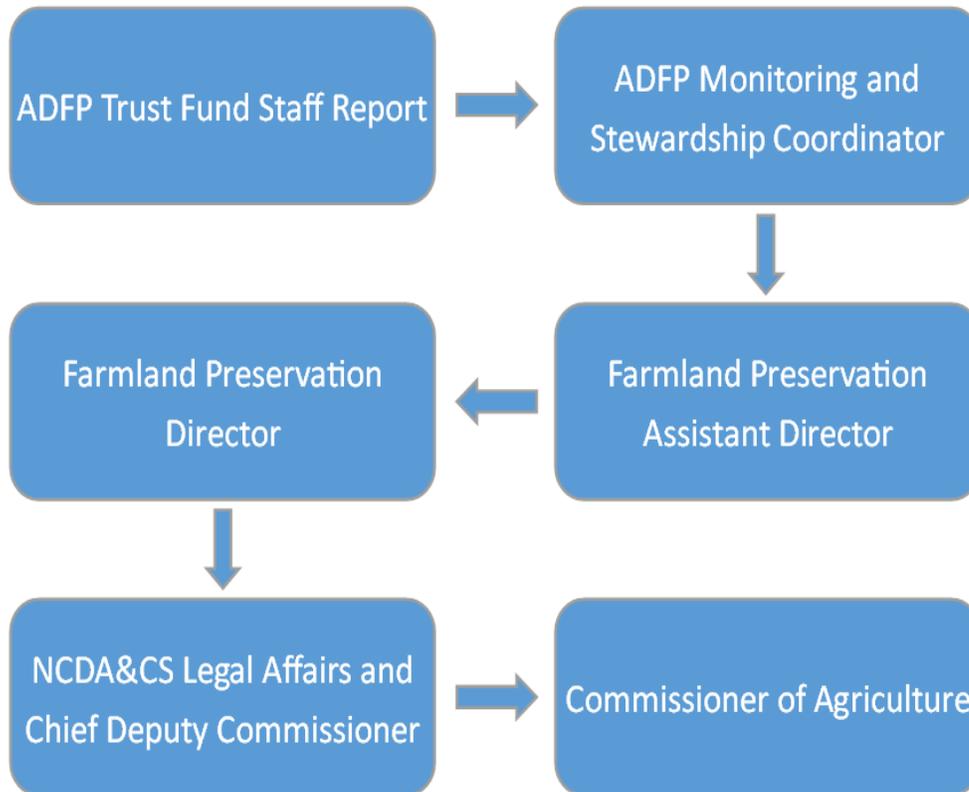
After the approval of final budget and progress reports and the closeout of the contract, Grantees will complete and submit the online “Grantee Monitoring Report – Agricultural Plan” to the ADFP Trust Fund office annually on or before December 31. The “Grantee Monitoring Report – Agricultural Plan” is accessed through NC ADFP Trust Fund’s website. For the direct link to the portal, click [here](#). Grantees will be required to create a Formsite account to access the report portal. Grantees should follow the prompts in the online portal to complete and submit their report.

**Failure to file annual monitoring reports on or before December 31 of each year shall constitute a**

**violation of the grant contract.**

**VI. Additional Guidance and Reference – Potential Violations**

For issues in dispute or potential violations, the ADFP Trust Fund Staff will report such differences to the ADFP Monitoring and Stewardship Coordinator, who will then initiate an internal review with division and department leadership. See chart below.



ADFP Trust Fund Staff are to follow appropriate approved ADFP Trust Fund Policies and Guidelines as directed by the ADFP Trust Fund Advisory Committee and the Commissioner of Agriculture, i.e. ADFP Trust Fund Grantee Eligibility Classification.

**VII. Monitoring Documents**

The following documents will be used for the monitoring of agricultural plans:

- Grantee Monitoring Report – Agricultural Plan
- ADFP Trust Fund Staff Monitoring Report – Agricultural Plan
- ADFP Trust Fund Staff Monitoring Termination Request – Agricultural Development Project or Agricultural Plan

**VIII. Document Filing, Retention, and Disposal**

All completed reports, including photographs and supplemental documentation from grantees, will be

scanned for electronic storage and printed for paper files. Electronic copies of monitoring documents will be stored on the ADFP Trust Fund server and SharePoint page.

All monitoring documents will be filed, retained, and disposed pursuant to the ADFP Trust Fund records retention schedule.