



## **LAND *for* TOMORROW**

### **Q&A**

#### **What is Land for Tomorrow?**

Land for Tomorrow is a commitment to preserve and protect North Carolina's critical land and historic places. Backed by a diverse partnership of businesses, preservationists, farmers, environmental groups, health professionals and community groups, Land for Tomorrow is North Carolina's best chance to ensure that future generations continue to enjoy the benefits of the goodliest land.

#### **Who created Land for Tomorrow?**

The founding nonprofit partners of the organization are American Farmland Trust, The Conservation Fund, Conservation Trust for North Carolina, Land Loss Prevention Project, North Carolina Chapter of The Nature Conservancy, NC Community Development Initiative, NC Public Interest Group, NC Recreation and Park Association, Preservation NC and The Trust for Public Land. Land for Tomorrow continues to add organizations to its growing list of partners. For an up-to-date list, visit [www.landfortomorrow.org](http://www.landfortomorrow.org).

#### **Who funds Land for Tomorrow?**

Funders include Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation, Blumenthal Foundation, Cemala Foundation, Marion Stedman Covington Foundation, Crosland Inc., Educational Foundation of America, Hillsdale Fund and individual donors.

#### **What is the goal for Land for Tomorrow?**

The goal is to increase public awareness for the need to protect additional land and historic places that are critical to the economic well being and quality of life in North Carolina. Through public education, Land for Tomorrow wants to help the state reach its goal of conserving a million acres, and ensure that the goodliest land will be there to provide clean air and drinking water, strengthen our communities, promote job growth and enhance the quality of life for generations to come.

#### **Why a million acres and why now?**

The North Carolina General Assembly has said it wants to preserve a million acres of the goodliest land. North Carolina has one of the fastest growing populations in the country. It is projected to be more populated than Michigan, Ohio and New Jersey within the next 25 years. That population growth is putting pressure on these important natural and economic resources.

Each year North Carolina loses 100,000 acres to population pressures. Timber companies are selling large tracts of land. The break-up of the tobacco industry is forcing many farmers to make tough choices about farming or selling their land. For the first time since the 1930s, forest acreage is down, and according to the latest survey, North Carolina is losing more prime farmland than any other state except Texas and Ohio.

Once those acres are lost, they are gone forever. There are no second chances. There is some funding in place, but nowhere near the amount we need to keep up. Every year it becomes harder and more expensive to protect the state's special places. We must act now.

### **How much money would be needed?**

Saving the Goodliest Land recommends that the state spend an additional \$200 million annually for five years on conservation projects.

### **How would that money be spent?**

The money would be spent to protect nine different land types. These include:

1. Stream banks and floodplains
2. Working farms
3. Working forests
4. Urban forests
5. Local parks and recreation
6. State parks
7. Game lands
8. Historic places
9. Land visible from scenic highways

For farmland and forests, the money would primarily be spent on conservation agreements. The landowners agree to continue their existing use of the property rather than develop it and they are paid for the value of agreeing to those restrictions. For parks and game lands, the money would be used to purchase property. For stream banks and natural areas, the money may be used for a combination of agreements and purchases.

### **How will the state pay for the conservation projects described in the Land for Tomorrow plan?**

The most likely source of funds would be a bond that would be authorized by the General Assembly and require approval by the public in a statewide referendum. Currently North Carolina uses appropriations and fees to pay for land and water conservation projects. Other states have used a variety of sources to pay for land and historical conservation.

### **Why is protecting and preserving critical land important?**

Protecting and preserving critical land provides for the following:

- Protecting drinking water quality
- Farming and forests
- Hunting and fishing
- Exercise and enjoyment
- Health and safety
- Historic, ecological and economic value
- Preserving our heritage
- Strengthening our communities
- Jobs and a healthy environment

### **Doesn't the state already have programs underway to protect these properties?**

In the 1980s and '90s the state created the Clean Water Management Trust Fund, Farmland Preservation Trust Fund, Natural Heritage Trust Fund and Parks and Recreation Trust Fund to conserve these types of properties. There have been significant successes in every county in North Carolina. But the funding has been insufficient.

Last fiscal year, the Clean Water Management Trust Fund had \$350 million in applications for the \$62 million available. The Farmland Preservation Trust Fund has not been funded for two years in a row. Funds available for protecting working forests are minimal. It is imperative that the state invest in protecting and preserving our critical land. It is one of the most important investments North Carolina can make.

### **Will this help the economy?**

Land for Tomorrow is not only about land conservation. It is also about job conservation. North Carolina's economy is dependent upon clean drinking water. Jobs in rural areas are increasingly dependent upon tourism generated by scenic beauty, historic places and quality outdoor recreational opportunities. Land conservation will help families to continue working in forestry and farming. Experience shows the types of properties to be protected are important for attracting and keeping knowledge workers.

### **What does losing more than 100,000 acres each year mean for North Carolinians?**

Our state is losing its goodliest land – the special places that are the heritage and foundation of our great state. We are losing working farms and forests. Land that could become greenways and parks. Land that protects our drinking water. Historic places. Land that strengthens our communities and our economy. We need land for our growing population, but critical places must be protected for all of us.

### **Why is preserving and protecting the goodliest land a good investment for North Carolina's future?**

Land for Tomorrow is about investing in land now, for future generations. It's about protecting land and drinking water from damage that will harm our health and our quality of life. It's about a North Carolina that will continue to create jobs by being a healthy and attractive place for business. It's about preserving historic places and the land that borders our state's major military bases. It's about fulfilling the true promise of the goodliest land.