

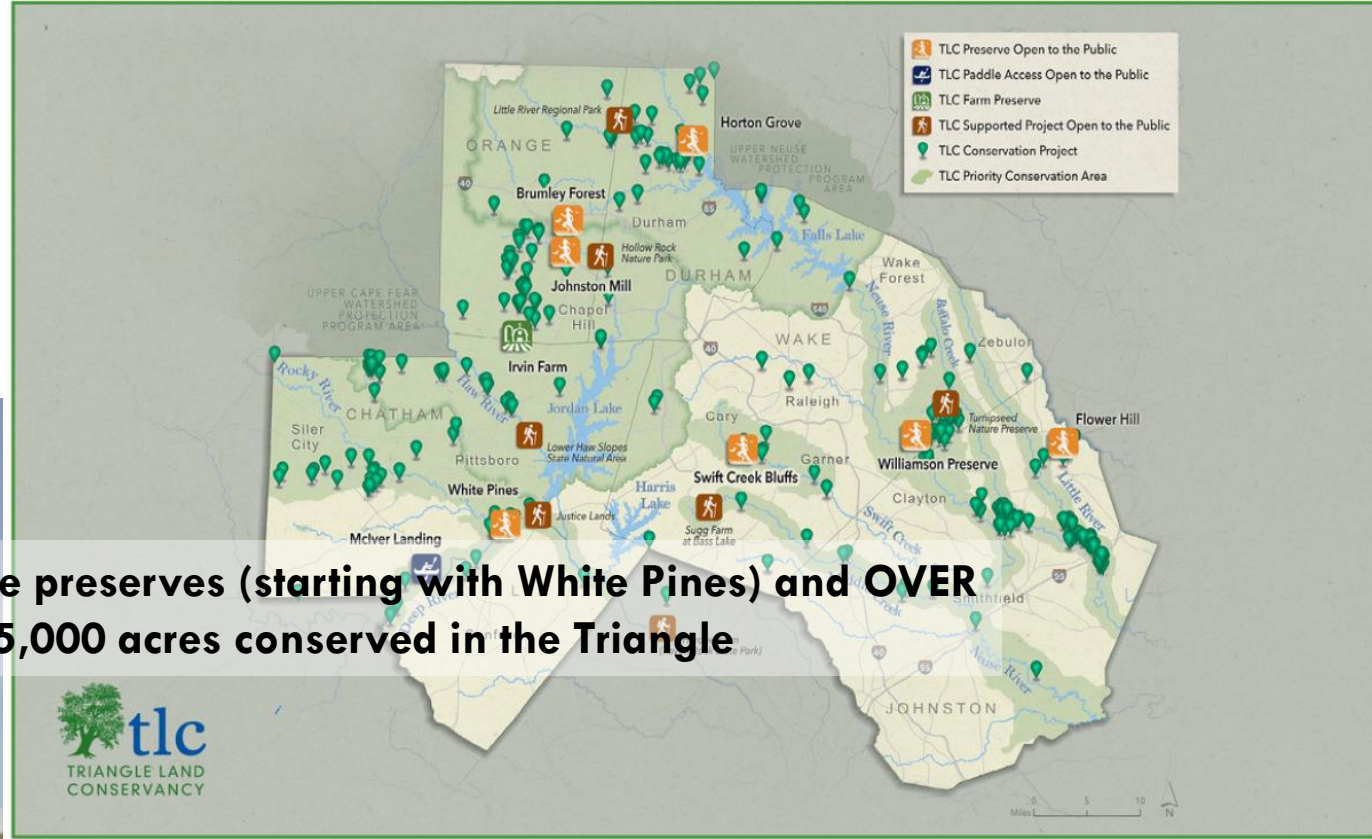
# Chatham County Agricultural Preservation



Associate Director of Land Protection West,  
Margaret Sands  
Good Ground Manager,  
Kierra Hyman



Preserving working lands for the future



**8 public nature preserves (starting with White Pines) and OVER 25,000 acres conserved in the Triangle.**



TLC strives to create a healthier and more vibrant Triangle region by safeguarding clean water, protecting natural habitats, supporting local farms and food, and connecting people with nature through land protection and stewardship, catalyzing community action, and collaboration.

# Supporting Local Farms and Food



- TLC works with willing landowners to acquire **conservation easements** on working farms and forests
  - Voluntary legal agreement that limits uses inconsistent with agricultural production and conservation values
  - Landowners **still own** the land and can use, sell or pass land on to heirs
  - Conservation easements do **not** allow public access
- TLC typically acquires conservation easements using some combination of federal, state, and local dollars plus landowner donation (a “bargain sale”)
- TLC staff monitor conservation easements annually to ensure they are followed and continue landowner relationships



# Conservation Easement Benefits



## Benefits to Community

- Conservation easements preserve working lands for open space, food security, and communities' livelihoods
- Prime soils are protected for future agricultural use
- Properties with conservation easements have a reduced value, so it's easier for farmers to start or expand operations
- Agricultural lands generate more money than they use—more protected farms means more net providers of tax dollars
- Farms and forests provide flood resilience and wildlife habitat in addition to food and fiber

# Chatham Comprehensive Plan



“Preserving rural character was identified as the most important goal during the planning process. Rural character means different things to different people. For some, it is clean water, forests, and wildlife. For others, it is scenic beauty for a lifestyle that includes privacy peace and quite. For many, it is simply the ability to farm.”

*-Chatham Comprehensive Plan*

2<sup>nd</sup> fastest growing county in the state at the time of the plan. An 85% population increase in 25 years.



## Strategy 1.1

Assist operators of existing farms that are contributing to the economy to remain in operation even when faced with pressures to develop the land for other uses.

Partner with land trusts to provide technical assistance to those who demonstrate interest in establishing agricultural conservation easements.

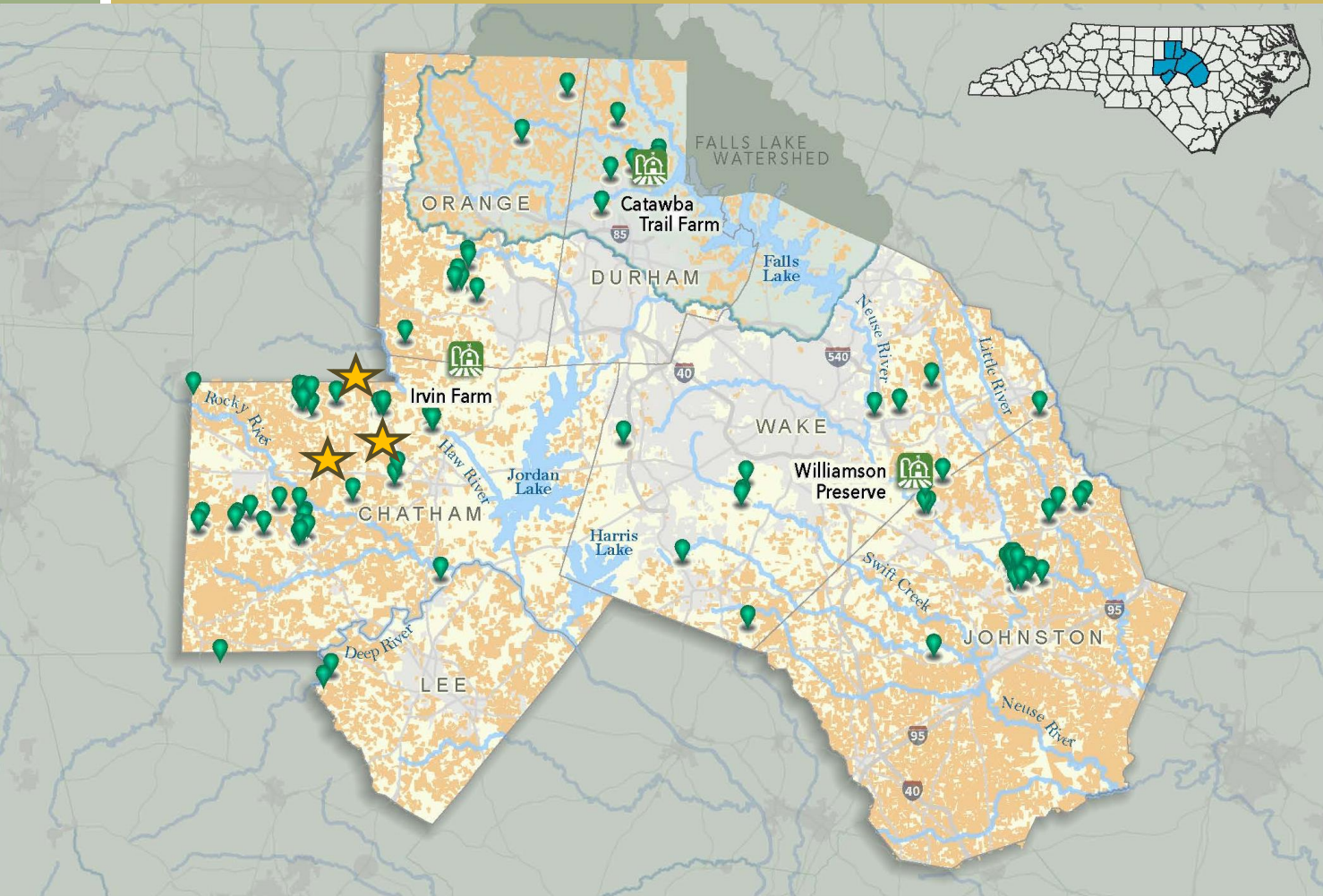
*-Chatham Comprehensive Plan*

**Our Goal:** Protect the agricultural community, soil, water resources and economic viability of farmers and farmlands in western Chatham County.

*-TLC Chatham Working Lands Initiative*

Above: Lindale Farm owners (the Lindley family) used part of the proceeds from their easement sale to fund their organic farm certification on their 5<sup>th</sup> generation 182 acre property.

# TLC Working Lands Conservation



TLC holds  
 ~3,000 acres of  
 working lands  
 easements in  
 Chatham County

~Nearly half the  
 land in the county  
 is enrolled in the  
 Present Use Value  
 (or Working  
 Lands Tax Status)  
 program



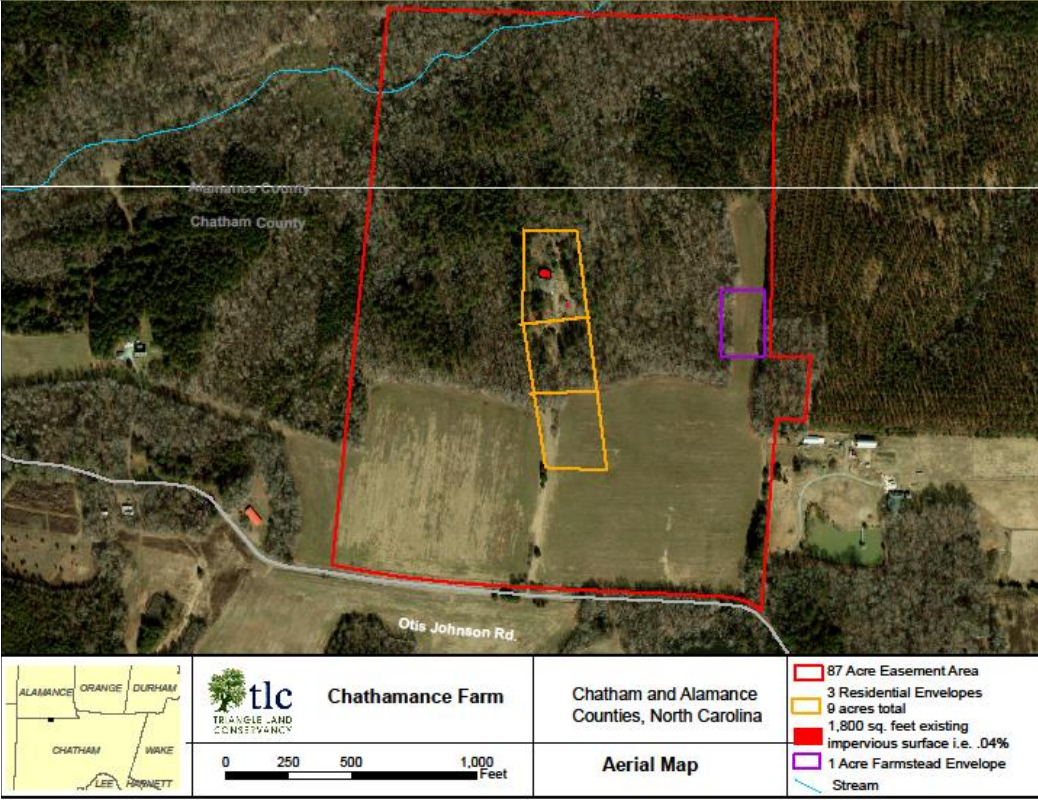
Currently seeking  
 Chatham County  
 funding for three  
 projects totaling  
 287 acres

- TLC farm preserves
- TLC agricultural easements
- Parcels with Working Lands Tax Status

**Triangle Working Lands Initiative  
 Benchmark Map**  
 98 agricultural easements held on 8,090 acres



# Chathamance Farm

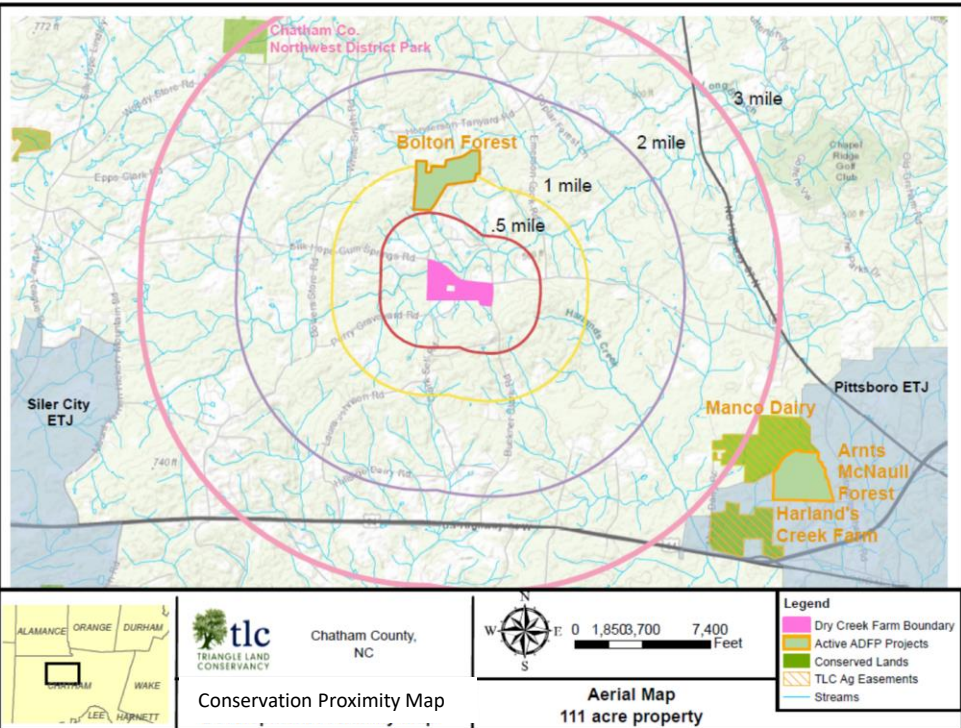


Jerry Johnson, well established Silk Hope family Forest Stewardship Plan

Neil Lindley harvests certified organic hay

Submitted to NC Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund, seeking stewardship funds from Chatham

# Dry Creek Farm



Michael Buckner currently manages this multigenerational Silk Hope farm raising beef cattle

80 acre proposed conservation easement

Submitted to NC Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund, seeking matching funds from Chatham County



# Granite Springs Farm



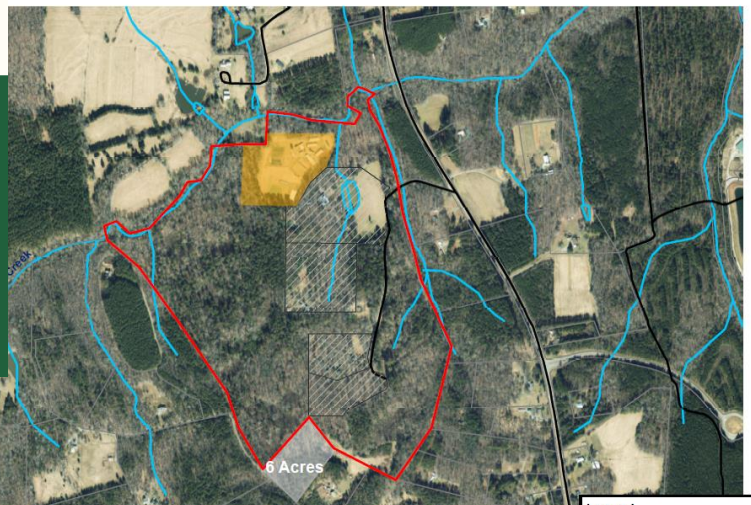
Meredith Leight runs a well established market farm with a large following and stellar reputation



Chatham County, NC Market Farm & CSA  
Well fed people can do amazing things!

Well researched regenerative practices with strong educational component

**Locally Grown Vegetables, Microgreens, Ginger, Turmeric, & Mushrooms**  
16 years of growing vegetables using organic practices on our farm in Chatham County NC.



120 acre conservation easement  
Mixed forest, habitat, stream and farm property.  
Seeking majority of funding from Chatham County

			<p><b>Legend</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Easement Area</li> <li>Potential Envelope Area</li> <li>Exclusion Area</li> <li>Subdivided Parcels</li> <li>Streams</li> <li>Roads/Right of Ways</li> </ul>
<p><b>Granite Springs Farm Easement Area</b></p>		<p><b>Aerial Map 126 acre property</b></p>	

# Good Ground Initiative



Rapid loss of  
prime farm,  
forest, and  
recreational  
lands

High costs of land

Historic inequities  
in land ownership  
and retention

Lack of direct  
pathways from  
education to land  
ownership

Triangle Land Conservancy strives to turn organizational resources and power into equitable land distribution by empowering partners and investing resources in education and land access for historically underserved land seekers

# Land Access, Conservation, Equity




## Community Collaboration



## Conservation Tools



# Chatham Conservation Opportunities

Acquisition Method	Property Interests	Status	Counties 	Conservation Size	Started On
Bargain Sale	Conservation Easement	Active	Chatham County	166.6134	Mar 3, 2022
Bargain Sale	Conservation Easement	Active	Chatham County	146.23	Nov 11, 2021
Bargain Sale	Conservation Easement	Active	Alamance County, Chatham County	87.5155	Jun 5, 2023
Purchase	Fee Simple	Active	Chatham County	108	Nov 18, 2022
Bargain Sale	Conservation Easement	Active	Chatham County	70.5064	May 22, 2023
Bargain Sale	Conservation Easement	Active	Chatham County	58.3515	Jun 27, 2023
Bargain Sale	Fee Simple	Active	Chatham County	106.0254	Jun 12, 2023
Purchase	Fee Simple	Active	Chatham County	36.0715	Aug 10, 2023
Purchase	Fee Simple	Active	Chatham County	48.1916	Jul 17, 2023
Bargain Sale	Conservation Easement	Active	Chatham County	126	Nov 28, 2022
Bargain Sale	Conservation Easement	Active	Chatham County	33.1539	Sep 29, 2023
Bargain Sale	Conservation Easement	Active	Chatham County	62.9248	Jan 6, 2023
Purchase	Conservation Easement	Active	Chatham County	191.6117	Mar 22, 2021
	Conservation Easement	Active	Chatham	80	Apr 10, 2024
Purchase	Fee Simple	Active	Chatham County	72.0395	Oct 2, 2023
Purchase	Fee Simple	Active	Chatham County	114.0662	Aug 10, 2023
Purchase	Conservation Easement	Active	Chatham County	221.3968	Mar 2, 2022
Purchase	Conservation Easement	Active	Chatham County	26.7941	Aug 2, 2023
Purchase	Fee Simple	Active	Chatham County	902.1316	Mar 22, 2023
Purchase	Fee Simple	Active	Chatham County	166.863	Aug 10, 2023

## 20 Active TLC Land Projects in Chatham County

2,824.4869

### ***Consider Committing Rollback Taxes to the Chatham Agricultural Preservation and Development Trust Fund***

- Wake and Johnston Counties have already contributed PUV rollback taxes to conserving working lands
- Lee County votes on this policy tonight!



An aerial photograph of a farm. At the top, a paved road with yellow double lines runs horizontally. Below the road is a large green field. In the center, a rectangular greenhouse with a white frame and translucent covering is visible. Below the greenhouse, there are several rows of crops, some covered with black plastic mulch. To the left of the crops, there are several buildings, including a large white structure and a smaller brown one. A white car is parked on the right side of the field. The background is filled with dense green trees.

**Thank You!**

**Margaret Sands-Associate Director of Land Protection, West**  
**Kierra Hyman-Good Ground Manager**

**[msands@triangleland.org](mailto:msands@triangleland.org)**

**[khyman@triangleland.org](mailto:khyman@triangleland.org)**