



Kentucky Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program

Customer Focus

In 2000, David and Rose Leibundguth, owners of Lynnwood Farm in Mercer County, enrolled 311 acres in Kentucky's farmland preservation program. Development pressure is intense in the area around the farm as it is located near three towns and is only 35 miles from the city of Lexington. Ninety-seven percent of the farm is covered by prime soils, and the property also includes historical resources, which are targeted for preservation by USDA's Farm and Ranchland Protection Program (FRPP).

The main house on Lynnwood Farm is a Greek Revival House, and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Kentucky's Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement (PACE) Corporation purchased the conservation easement with the help of FRPP funds.

David is such a believer in the PACE program that he has volunteered his time to speak at farmland preservation meetings in neighboring counties. He said, "Without the PACE program my family would have lost the farm, but now the debt has been reduced to where the farm can support itself, and keep my family on the farm."

To make a strong personal statement about farmland preservation, the Leibundguths petitioned the Kentucky Soil and Water Commission to create an Agricultural District that includes their farm. This would allow their property to remain classified as agricultural land for tax purposes. The petition was recently approved by the Commission.

David and Rose follow an NRCS conservation plan and have implemented a number of conservation practices to protect natural resources on their farm. They have also planted approximately 30 acres of hardwood trees. The Leibundguths have been doing their part to improve water quality in the Herrington Lake watershed, which is listed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as an impaired water body.

Overview:

The USDA Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP) helps farmers and ranchers keep their productive land in agriculture. The program partners with States, Tribes, local governments and non-profit organizations to purchase conservation easements for the purpose of protecting topsoil by limiting non-agricultural uses of the land. NRCS provides up to 50% of the fair market value of the easement to the cooperating entity, which acquires, manages, and enforces the easement. Landowners participate voluntarily, and protected farms remain in private ownership.

Conservation plans are developed on all highly erodible cropland. Nationally, over \$101.3 million have been obligated to state and local entities since establishment of the program in 1996. The 2002 Farm Bill produced some changes in the program, including the addition of a provision providing for the protection of historical and archaeological resources on farm and ranchlands, and the inclusion of nongovernmental organizations as eligible entities. The Farm Bill also significantly increased the amount of financial assistance available under FRPP, authorizing nearly \$600 million through Fiscal Year 2007. Sixty-seven million dollars was allocated to states to purchase easements in FY 2003.

Accomplishments:

Cooperating entities' proposals are selected through a competitive process designed to protect parcels that will help accomplish FRPP and local land use goals. FRPP easements protect entire working farms, woodlands, wetlands, important natural areas, and historical and cultural resources. Through FY 2002, \$5.24 million in FRPP funds have been awarded to purchase easements on approximately 8,548 acres of valuable agricultural land in Kentucky. Due to increasing development pressure throughout the state, requests for FRPP funds have increased dramatically in recent years, far outpacing the program's funding capacity. In FY 2003, partners in Kentucky requested \$11,500,000 in FRPP funds. This request represents 17.6 percent of the total amount of FRPP funds available nationwide in FY 2003. Kentucky was allocated \$2,430,000 to purchase conservation easements in FY 2003.

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Outlook:

Although Kentucky is still predominantly an agricultural state with approximately 42 percent of the state's 25.8 million acres used for farming and livestock operations, development pressure is increasing each year. According to the National Resources Inventory (NRI), it is estimated that 47,400 acres of farmland were converted to non-agricultural uses each year from 1992 to 1997. Put another way, about 130 acres per day of agricultural land are being developed in Kentucky. If this rate of development remains unchanged, between 1997 and 2020, it is expected that another 10 percent of the state's total farmland will be lost. Farmland under the heaviest development pressure is found in areas near the metropolitan areas of Louisville, Northern Kentucky (Cincinnati), Lexington, and Bowling Green.

Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program - Kentucky Easements as of June 2003 Number, Acres, Easement Costs by County

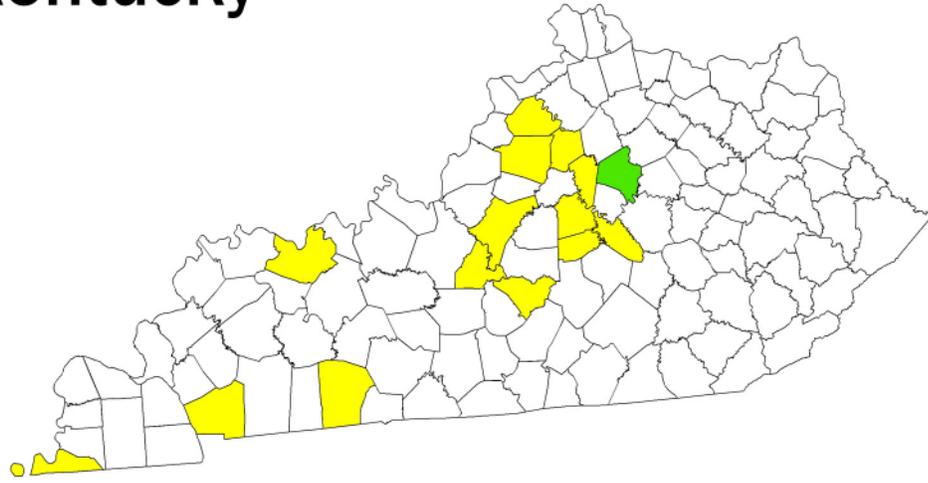
Kentucky					
County	Acres	Easement Cost		Federal Payment	
		Total (\$)	Avg. (\$/acre)	\$	%
Boyle	86	85,800	1,000	42,900	50%
Daviess	51	38,471	750	19,236	50%
Fayette	249	806,199	3,238	150,000	19%
Franklin	285	285,780	1,003	142,890	50%
Fulton	272	40,226	148	15,878	39%
Garrard	261	235,566	903	117,783	50%
Henry	424	437,404	1,032	132,523	30%
LaRue	390	299,774	769	149,887	50%
Logan	497	465,739	937	232,870	50%
Mercer	1,420	1,402,121	987	701,061	50%
Mercer/Boyle	312	280,350	899	140,175	50%
Nelson	120	101,847	850	50,924	50%
Shelby	1,626	2,202,685	1,355	912,990	41%
Taylor	154	76,750	500	38,375	50%
Trigg	721	572,682	794	286,327	50%
Woodford	90	90,100	1,001	45,050	50%
Total*	6,957	7,421,494	1,067	3,178,868	43%
*Totals do not include FY 2002 pending easements					
Taylor**	220	677,000	3,077	677,000	100%
** Congressional Earmark					

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Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program - Kentucky Easements as of June 2003

Counties with Acquired and Pending FRPP Easements

Kentucky



-  Counties with acquired FPP acreage
-  Counties with both acquired and pending FPP acreage



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Resource Assessment Division
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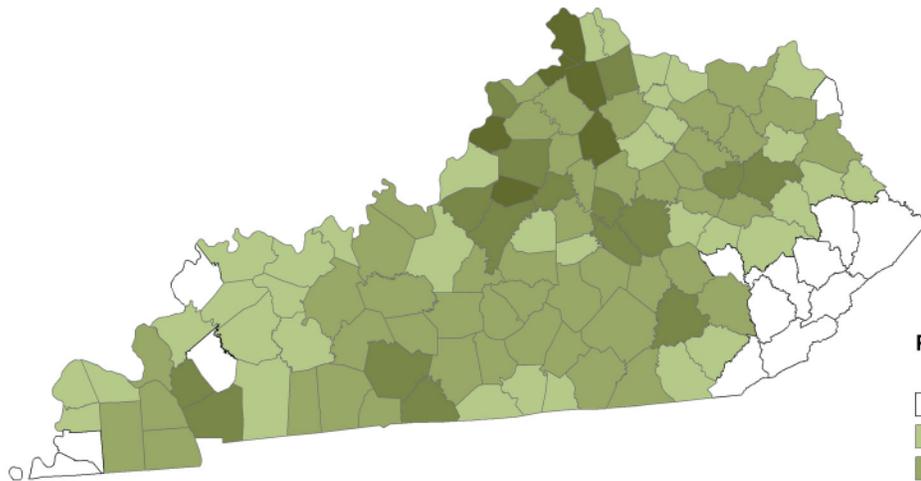
Map ID: 7384

Source: Farmland Protection Program, NRCS/USDA

Trends in Population by County - Kentucky 1990 to 2000 (Census Data)

Percent Change in Population between 1990 and 2000

Kentucky



Percent Change in Population

-  -9.2 to 0.0
-  0.1 to 8.0
-  8.1 to 18.0
-  18.1 to 35.0
-  35.1 to 75.0



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Map ID: 7399

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census, Census of Population 2000