

JEFFERSON COUNTY  
**FARMLAND**  
PROTECTION BOARD



# ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 1, 2018  
JUNE 30, 2019

**Jeremy LaRue**  
Windy Knoll Farm  
Summit Point, WV



# THE JEFFERSON COUNTY FARMLAND PROTECTION BOARD

The Farmland Protection Board is committed to keeping Jefferson County's farmland available to grow food and to protect clean water, wildlife habitats and our historic countryside. Farmland protection directly benefits you, your neighbors and the many visitors who appreciate this special place we call home. Today, almost half of Jefferson County's land is still in farms. Yet we can't ever take it for granted.

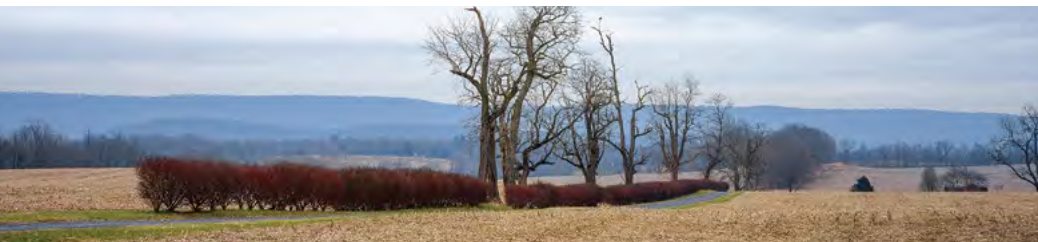


Photo credit: Mark Muse

## WHY PROTECT FARMLAND?

Agriculture has sustained Jefferson County's people and economy for more than 300 years. Our scenic and productive working lands contribute to a diverse economy, support local businesses and employ local labor. Our open fields, woodlands, streams and historic rural landscapes make the county a desirable place to live, work and visit.

Since the 1990s, over one-third of Jefferson County's fertile farmland has vanished, permanently lost to buildings and pavement. In 2000, concerned farmers, townspeople and public leaders founded the Jefferson County Farmland Protection Board to protect and preserve the county's working farmland through a voluntary conservation program.

Protecting farmland keeps land available and affordable for future farmers. Now more than ever, our county's valuable farmland must be secured to feed a growing and increasingly urbanized world at our doorstep.

## HOW DOES THE BOARD PROTECT FARMLAND?

The Board is empowered by the West Virginia Voluntary Farmland Protection Act (WV Code §8A-12 et. seq.) to protect agricultural land. It does so by entering into a legal agreement with landowners to place a permanent conservation easement on qualifying properties. Landowners may sell the easement to the Board or donate all or part of the easement value.

## WHAT IS AN EASEMENT?

A Deed of Conservation Easement is a flexible legal tool that landowners can use to retire development rights permanently on all or part of their land to protect its natural, agricultural, scenic and historic values. Property owners retain full use and title to their land, subject to the easement terms. Because a deed of easement is perpetual, future owners also will be bound by its terms. The Farmland Protection Program also can help families meet financial goals, expand their operations, reduce debt or fund retirement.

*The Jefferson County, West Virginia "Envision Jefferson 2035 Comprehensive Plan" ("Comprehensive Plan") adopted February 19, 2015 recognizes the county "as a place of natural beauty and historic value"; and requests that the County find ways to balance the desire of property owners to benefit fiscally from their lands with the desire of property owners to be stewards of the County's historic, cultural, and natural resources so future generations can enjoy the resources that County residents hold dear."*

The Farmland Protection Board is composed of seven volunteer county residents appointed by the County Commission. Each is a voting member, except for the Jefferson County Commissioner, who serves in an advisory capacity.

**Robert E. Glenn, Esq., President**  
Jefferson County Resident at Large

**Nicholas Kercheval, Vice President**  
Farmer, Member of the Eastern Panhandle Soil Conservation District

**Gavin Perry, Treasurer**  
Jefferson County Resident at Large

**Russell Quinn, Secretary**  
Farmer, Member of the Jefferson County Farm Bureau

**Vacant**  
Executive Director of the County Development Authority

**Catharine Johnson**  
Farmer, Jefferson County Resident

**Jane Tabb,**  
Farmer, County Commissioner (non-voting)

### STAFF

**Elizabeth B. Wheeler**  
Director

**James Walker**  
Assistant

## JEFFERSON COUNTY FARMLAND PROTECTION BOARD

PO BOX 731  
CHARLES TOWN, WV 25414

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JEFFERSON.WVFP.ORG  
JEFFERSON@WVFP.ORG

**f** JEFFERSONCOUNTYFARMLANDPROTECTIONBOARD

# THE BOARD THANKS

THE MANY PEOPLE WHO HAVE GIVEN THEIR TIME, TALENT AND FUNDS FOR FARMLAND PROTECTION.

John C. Allen, Jr.  
Jennifer Allen  
Dr. & Mrs. Richard Avioli  
John & Patricia Bain Bachner  
Hillary Banachowski  
A. Neil & Alice T. Barkus  
Trevor Barnett  
Robert R. Barrat  
Chip & Debbie Bennett  
Dr. Keith Berkeley, DVM  
Jules Bodwell & Patrick Rizzo  
Laura Bowman  
Marion Buckner, in memoriam  
Martin Burke  
Linda Carter  
Matthew Coffey  
Chris Colbert  
Tom Conant  
James Lee & Emily Cooper  
Phil Cox  
Jill N. Daniel  
Henry & Faye Davenport  
David & Dana DeJarnette  
Christopher & Susan Donham  
R.T. & B.C. Donham  
William Donley, in memoriam  
Samuel & Edwina Donley  
William Drennen  
Jack & Emma Eggleston  
Eileen Taylor Davis  
John Doyle  
Bill Drennen  
Matthew Dunn  
Joan & Erdem Ergin  
Josephine Frazier  
Peter & Linda Fricke  
Randy & Clissy Funkhouser  
Heather H. Gibson  
Maurice Gladhill  
Robert E. Glenn  
Jeffrey Gustafson  
Beth Haney  
Debra Henshaw  
Paul Herrup  
Randy Hilton  
James C. & Mary G. Holland  
Nancy Hooff & Jim Campbell  
Mary & Joseph Horky  
Archibald R. Hoxton III  
Barbara Humes  
Jack R. Huyett  
Judy Jenner  
Marty & Carol Kable

Euphemia Kallas & David Hammer  
June & Dixon Hemphill  
Debra Lee Hovatter  
Nick & Shari C Kercheval  
Richard Latterell  
James Leathers  
Lisa, Gina & Eugene Lefferts  
Eric Lewis  
Niels & Alice F. Lium  
Col Edward A. & Barbara J. Lloyd  
Ralph & Rosemarie Lorenzetti  
John & Renee Lowe  
Christina Lundberg  
John R. Maxey  
Nancy C. McCormick  
Liz McDonald  
Phil & Becky McDonald  
Bob & Tia McMillan  
Noah Mehrkam  
G. Warren & Reva N. Mickey  
William & Deloris Nicewarner  
Michael & Rosemary Nickerson  
Carlos Niederhauser  
Jane Dieter Nuland  
Bridget O'Brien  
Sylvie O'Brien  
Margaret Olcott  
Sandra Osbourn  
Pam & Ren Parziale  
Gavin Perry & Patricia Perry  
Jane Peters  
David Pill  
Russell & Victoria Quinn  
Jane F. Rissler  
Mark Schiavone & John Restaino  
John Schley, in memoriam  
Keri Shaner  
Linda Shea  
Harold Shotwell  
Amy Silver  
Bill Senseney & Angela Sosdian  
Susan Robertson  
Dorolyn Smith  
Peter & Vicki Smith  
Grant Smith  
Timothy Smith  
Sylvia Sorkin  
Michael & Nancy Spensley  
Robert Stark  
Kathryn Bragg-Stella

Eric Stine  
Oscar C. & Janet B. Stine,  
in memoriam  
William Strider  
Scott Sudduth  
Neil Super  
J. Frank Supplee IV  
Stephen & Lucinda Swartz  
Jane & Lyle C. Tabb  
Hali Taylor  
Robin Huyett Thomas  
Brenda L. Villard  
Terry Lee & Margaret Walker  
Linda & Shawn Walker  
Lisa & Paul Welch  
Elizabeth B. Wheeler  
Ron & Lyn Widmyer  
Henry K. Willard II,  
in memoriam  
Henry A. Willard III  
John Brooks Willard  
Dennis Wilson  
Roy Winkel  
Julia & Greg Yuhasz  
Linda Zwobota

## ORGANIZATIONS

Bank of Charles Town  
Bennett Agency  
Berkeley County Farmland Protection Board  
CCBC Essex Math Department  
City National Bank  
Charles Town Farmers Market  
The Claymont Society  
Horsemen's Benevolent & Protective Association  
Land Trust of the Eastern Panhandle  
Lyle C. Tabb & Sons, Inc  
Jefferson County Development Authority  
Jefferson County Farm Bureau  
Jefferson Security Bank  
Skinner Law Firm  
USDA/Natural Resources Conservation Service  
NPS/American Battlefield Protection Program

## THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDING PARTNERS

### CONSERVATION PARTNERS

- Berkeley County Farmland Protection Board
- American Battlefield Trust
- Land Trust Alliance
- Land Trust of the Eastern Panhandle
- National Park Service/ American Battlefield Protection Program
- Potomac Conservancy
- The Nature Conservancy
- USDA/Natural Resources Conservation Service,
- West Virginia Agricultural Lands Protection Authority
- West Virginia Association of Farmland Protection Boards
- West Virginia Rivers

### JEFFERSON COUNTY PARTNERS

- Eastern Panhandle Conservation District
- Jefferson County Development Authority
- Jefferson County GIS Office
- Jefferson County Historic Landmarks Commission
- Jefferson County Planning and Zoning Office
- Jefferson County Prosecuting Attorney's Office
- The many County employees who have assisted us during the year.



# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

JANUARY 1, 2019 – DECEMBER 31, 2019

## The Farmland Protection Program is funded locally through the county's real estate transfer tax and by private donors.

The Board receives matching funds from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA/NRCS) and the National Park Service's American Battlefield Protection Program (NPS/ABPP).

The Board manages its resources carefully. Operations and personnel costs in 2019 totaled \$88,744, or 9% of income. Easement costs totaled \$40,834 or 4% of income. The Board committed a reserve of \$1.8 million for pending conservation easements on 853 acres on three farms, with a pending match of \$822,540 from NRCS and \$547,000 from the American Battlefield Protection Program. The Board's books are audited by external auditors and reviewed by the State Auditor's Office annually. The audit passed successfully in 2019 and in all previous years.

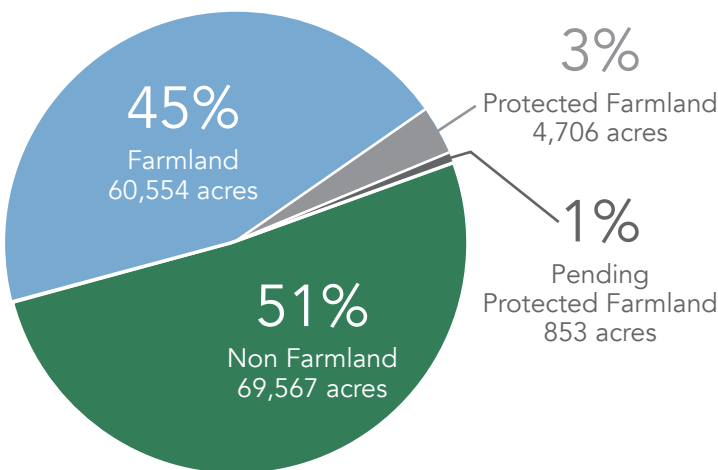
As of December 31, 2019, the Board has invested a total of \$8.8 million to protect farmland with a development value of \$29.9 million. Each local dollar has been matched with \$1.02 of federal money and \$1.37 of donated value from landowners. Since 2002, generous landowners have donated \$12.1 million through bargain sales. These substantial donations help the Board to stretch its limited funds to assist others seeking to protect their land.

Visit [www.jefferson.wvfp.org](http://www.jefferson.wvfp.org) to view our audited financial statements.

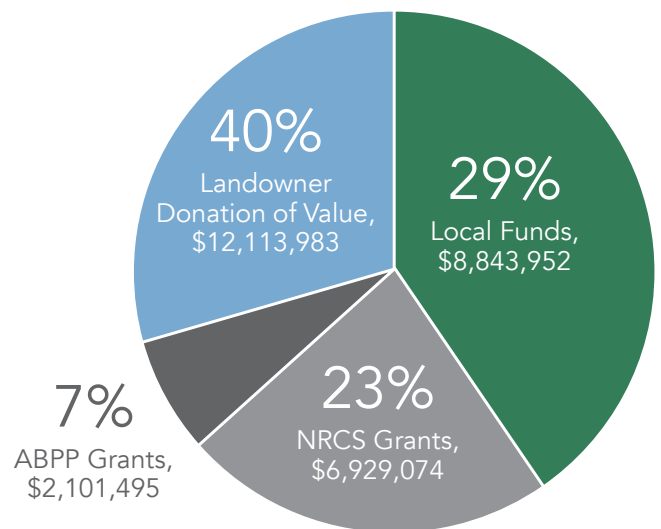


Latterell Farm, protected in 2004  
Photo credit: Mark Muse

## TOTAL LAND, FARMLAND & PROTECTED FARMLAND, JEFFERSON COUNTY, WV, FY 2019



## STEADY PROGRESS SINCE 2002



## EASEMENT FUNDING SOURCES 2002-2019

Total Funds Invested: **\$17,874,521**  
Total Appraised Value of Easements: **\$29,988,504**

## OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### Increasing Protected Lands

Since 2002, the Board has helped landowners protect 45 working farms with over 4,700 acres of land. Day by day, and farm by farm, we help landowners keep their family land intact.

In 2019, Jefferson County welcomed two new farms to the Farmland Protection Program. In November, **Timothy Smith** protected 83 acres in Harpers Ferry, funded by the Farmland Protection Board and the Natural Resources Conservation Service. In December, **Hank Willard** and **John Willard** made an extraordinary contribution to the county by donating a conservation easement on their 93-acre family property in Shepherdstown. Both properties contain more than 95% prime and important soils and are actively farmed. Currently the Board is working to complete conservation easements on three additional farms totaling 858 acres.

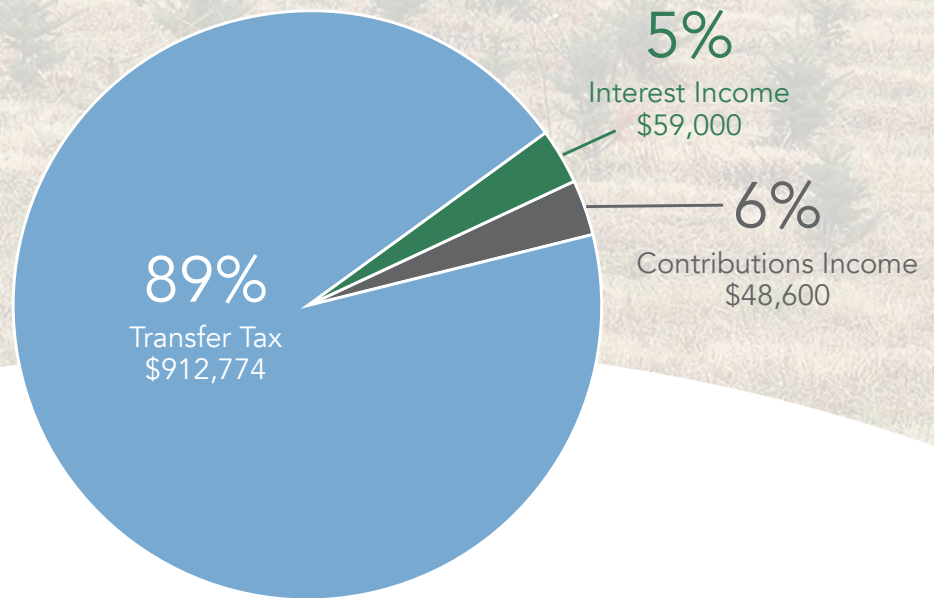
### A Visionary Bequest

This summer, a native-born Jefferson County resident surprised the Board with a generous \$44,000 donation. The donor, who wishes to remain anonymous, also pledged a bequest to protect farmland in the Kabletown area. The Board is honored to accept this heartfelt gift for Jefferson County.

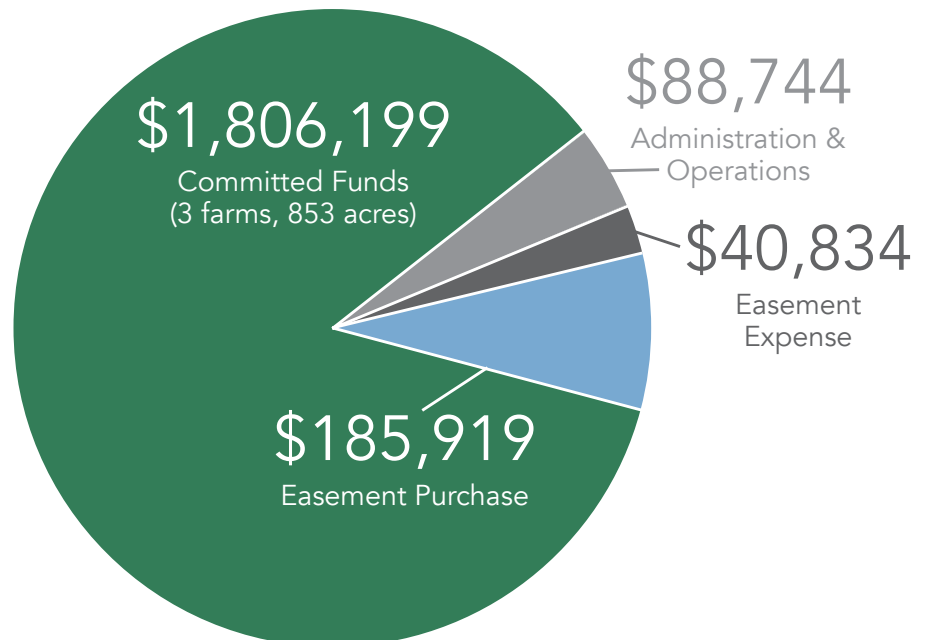
"My brother and I are immensely proud to donate this easement to the Jefferson County Farmland Protection Board. The land is productively farmed and it also is a uniquely beautiful piece of land that we felt must be preserved intact."

— HANK WILLARD

## 2019 SOURCES OF COUNTY FUNDS



## 2019 USES OF COUNTY FUNDS \$2,121,696





## BOARD PROGRESS

### New GIS technology

Our work has been transformed by sophisticated map-making software from Esri, a geographic information system company, allowing us to quickly analyze a property's soils, water resources, geology, and land use.

### Board Strategic Plan

In August, the Board renewed its Strategic Plan for the next three years. As the county faces the loss of more farmland the Board will focus on outreach and advocacy, planning for board and staff leadership transition and improving stewardship of properties in the program.

### Safe Water Conservation Collaborative

The Board participated with West Virginia Rivers and other local conservation groups to develop a plan to protect drinking water sources in Jefferson County.

## YOU CAN HELP PROTECT LAND NOW.

Every dollar you give is dedicated to the Farmland Protection Fund, and will be matched by public grants.

GIVE ONLINE:

[www.jefferson.wvfp.org](http://www.jefferson.wvfp.org),

OR MAIL YOUR GIFT TO

**PO Box 731**

**Charles Town, WV 25414.**

**Leave a legacy through a bequest:** A gift through your will or living trust for farmland protection will be a lasting memorial for future generations. Donations to the Farmland Protection Board, a 501(c)3 charitable organization, are tax-deductible.

Tax ID No. 55-0779838



Photo credit: Mark Muse

## A FARM PROTECTED FOR THE NEXT GENERATION

In 2018, the Boyd family protected their 216-acre Windy Knoll Farm in Summit Point through a conservation easement with the Farmland Protection Board and USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service. The farm lies within a swath of rich farmland and active orchards in the southern part of the county. **Edward L. Boyd**, who farmed the land for over 40 years said, "My father bought our farm in 1939. Our land is the top producer in the county. The soil is too good to dig it up and put houses on it."

In January 2019, after completing the conservation easement, Mr. Boyd sold the farm at an affordable price to **Jeremy LaRue**, a young farmer and family friend who had been leasing the land. The farm produces grain crops, and several saddle horses enjoy its pastureland.

"Our families have worked together for generations. I am very grateful for the opportunity to own this land and keep it in farming. It's a dream come true." — JEREMY LARUE



Photo credit: Elizabeth Wheeler

### NEW BOARD MEMBER: CATHARINE JOHNSON

**Catharine Johnson** joined the Board in February 2019 as a Farmer-at-Large member. She brings to the Board 32 years of experience as a biologist for the US Fish and Wildlife Service and for 24 years has managed Southwood Farm Forge in Kearneysville with her husband Eric.

"Eric and I have long been proponents for agricultural preservation and conservation practices. Serving on the Farmland Protection Board is one way I can help keep farms in our community."

— CATHARINE JOHNSON