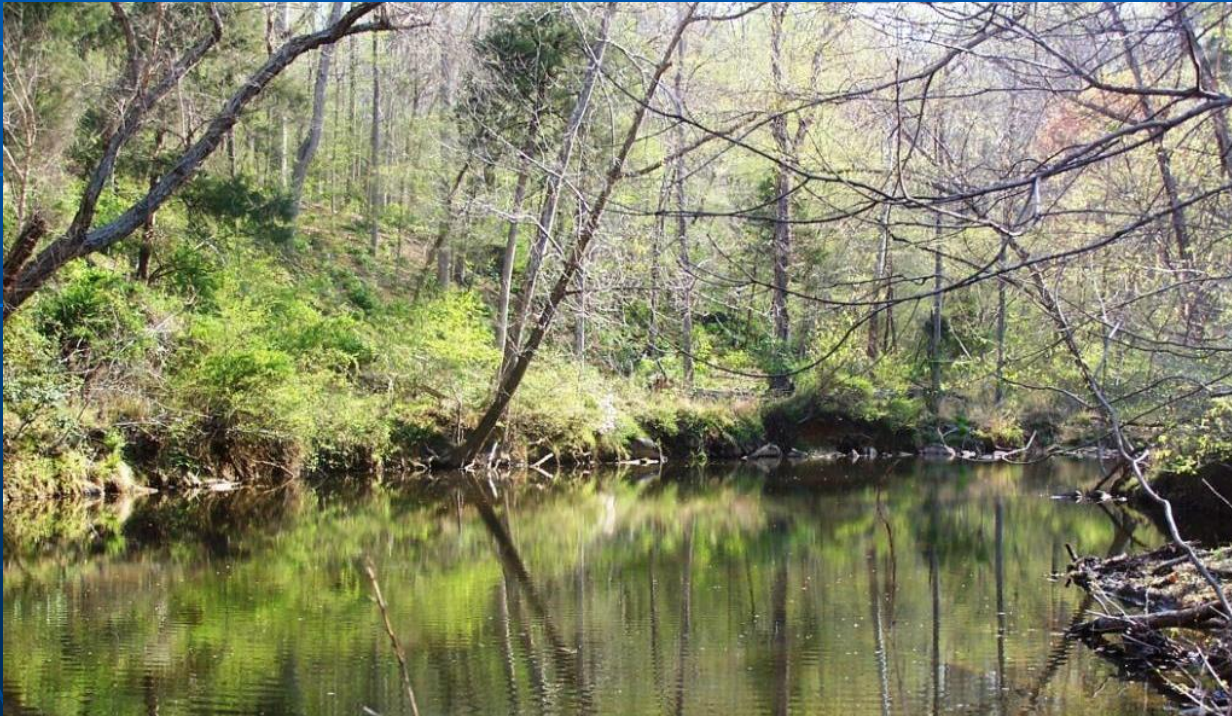




Durham County Open Space Program



Durham County Open Space Program

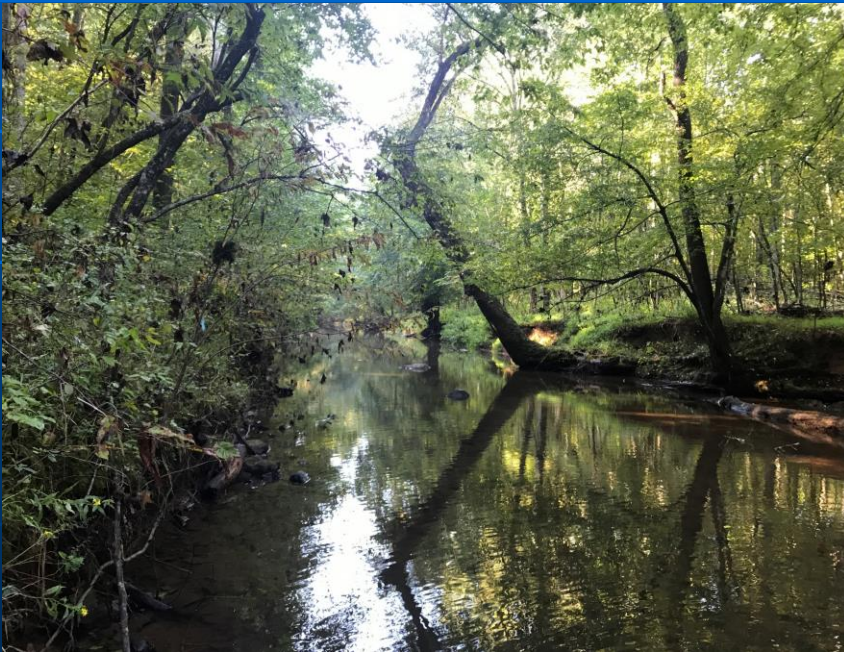
The Durham County Open Space Program works to enhance the quality of life and sustainability of current and future generations by:

- protecting scenic, natural and historic landscapes
- conserving significant habitats, working lands, and cultural and natural resources
- providing natural areas for public enjoyment



Durham County Open Space Program

- 3,462 acres preserved to date –
 - 1,286 acres owned in fee simple by County
 - 2,176 acres protected w conservation easements



Open Space Partners

(in addition to grant agencies)

■ Local Governments:

- Orange County, Town of Chapel Hill
- City of Durham
- Durham Soil and Water Conservation District

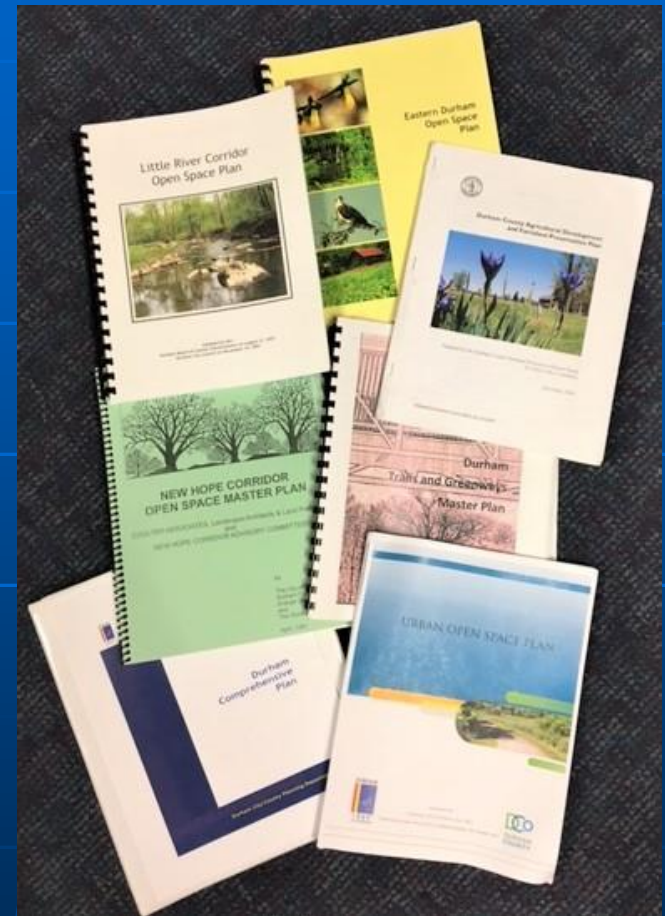
■ Land Trusts and non-profits:

- Triangle Land Conservancy
- Ellerbe Creek Watershed Association
- Eno River Association



Adopted Plans Provide Project Direction

- Plans provide a vision, a game plan, and formal policy direction
- Plans involve citizens and related agencies to create a shared vision
- Plans are produced by the Planning Dept and implemented by City and County Dept's and other agencies



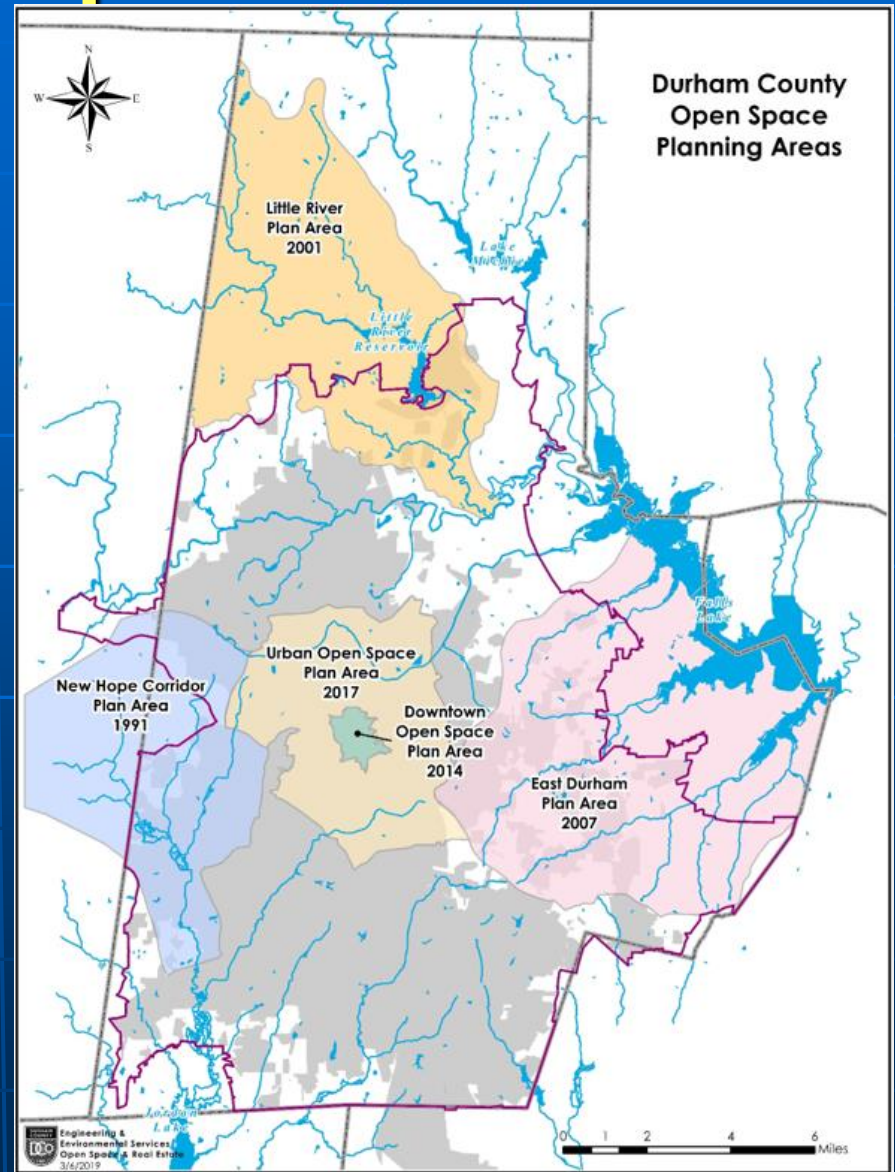
Durham's Open Space Plans

Adopted OS Plans:

- New Hope Creek (1991)
- Little River (2001)
- Eastern Durham (2007)
- Urban OS (2017)

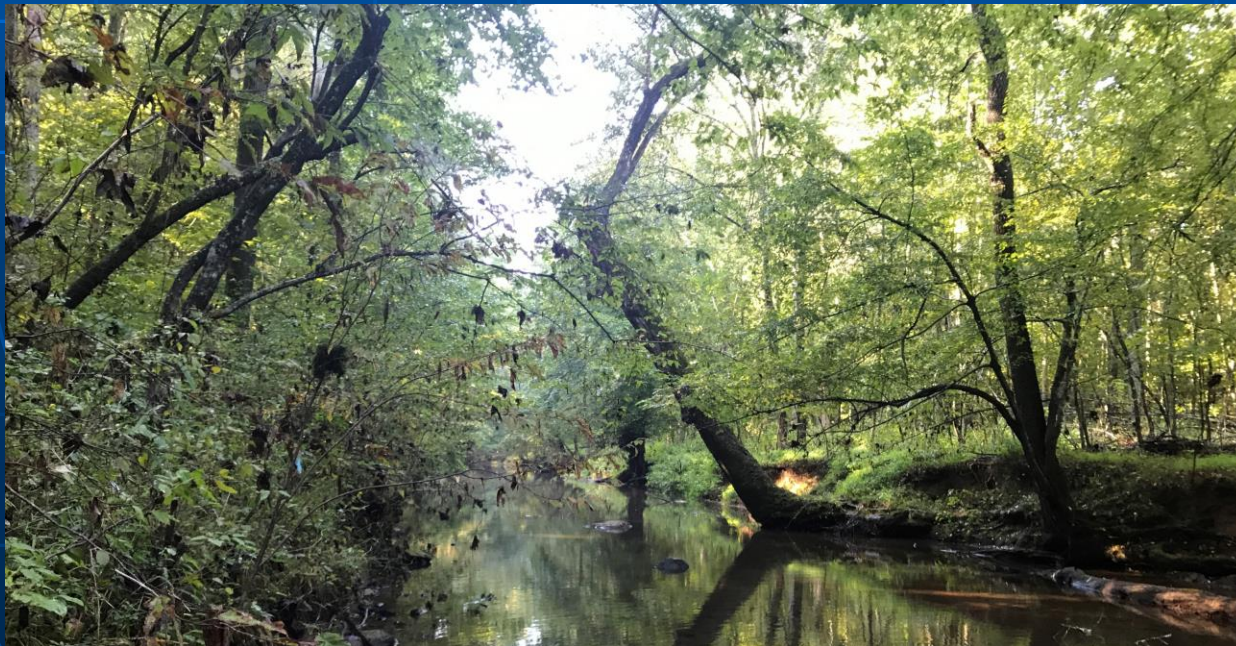
Most OS Plans are resource based:

- Major river and watersheds as the planning focus;
- Protection of natural habitats
- Urban OS Plan is tier-based



Little River Watershed OS Plan

- Open Space Plan adopted in 2001
- 790 acres preserved
(618 acres in fee, 172 acres in easements)
- Little River Regional Park (a partnership project of Durham County, Orange County, ERA and TLC)



Farmland Protection Basis

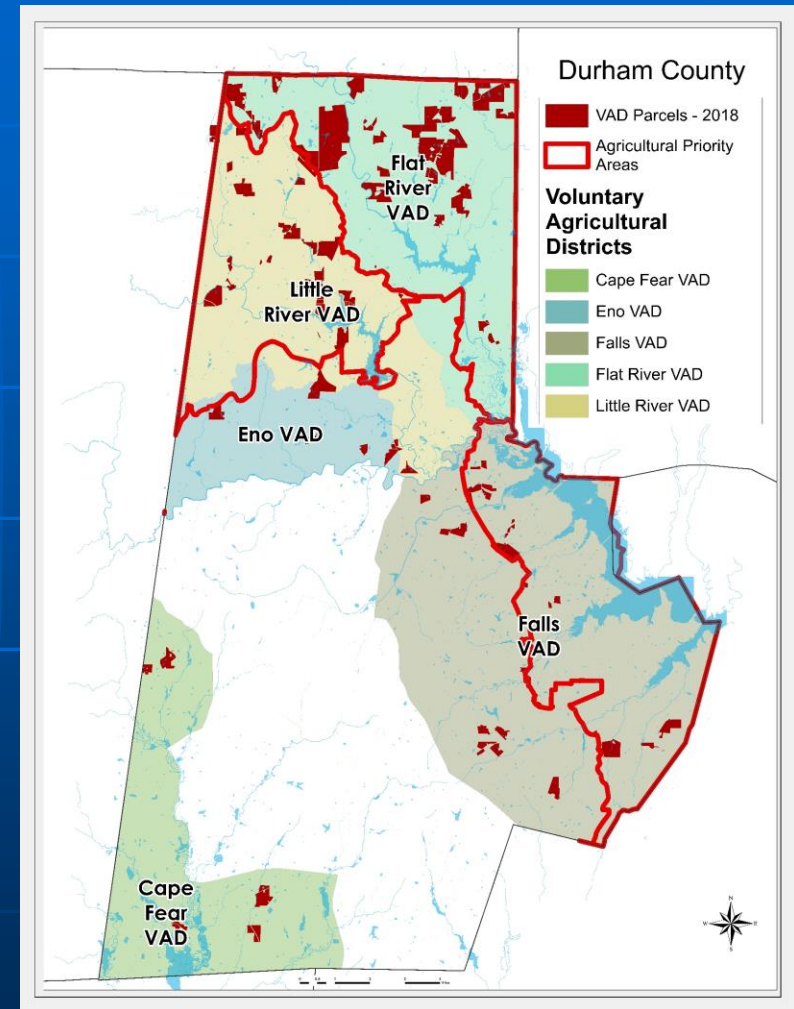
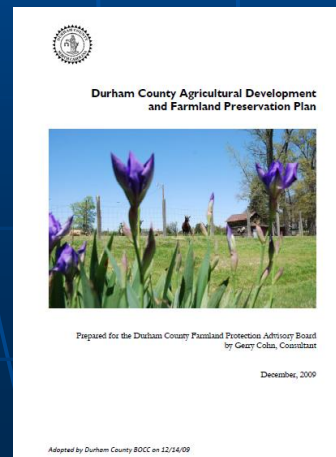
Comprehensive Plan indicates farmland is important to preserve for:

- Water quality
- Wildlife habitat
- Quality of life
- Rural heritage
- Reducing sprawl
- Scenic views



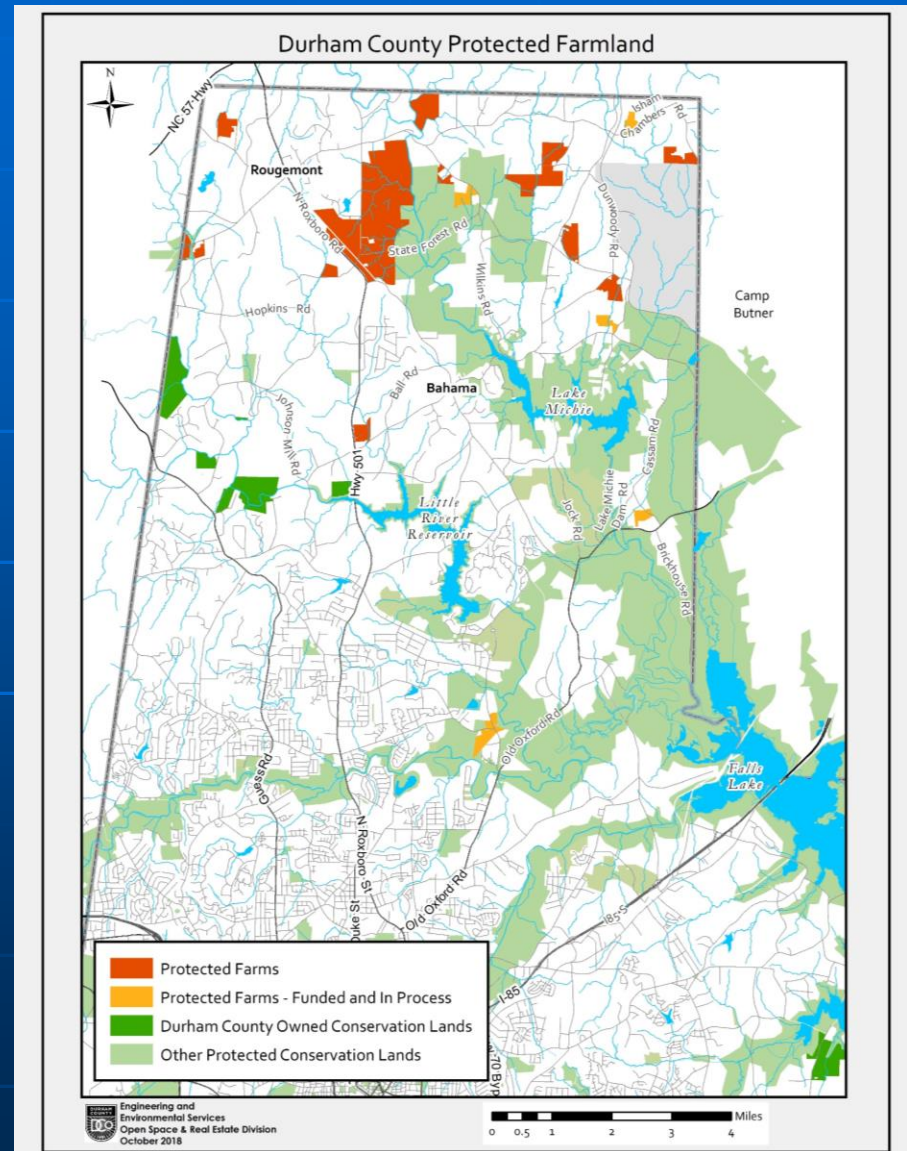
Durham's Farmland Protection Focus

- Guided by Farmland Protection Advisory Board (DOST has rep to ensure coordination)
- DCo Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation plan adopted in 2009
- Durham has 5 Voluntary Agricultural Districts
- 3 “Agricultural Priority Areas”, which are outside the Urban Boundary



Durham County Farmland Protection

- 15 Farm easements completed (14 in northern Durham)
- 2,131 total acres
- 5 more fully funded and underway
- Several more in various discussion stages



Benefits of Conservation Easements



- Allows agricultural and forestry uses for future generations
- Land remains in private ownership while preventing future development
- Property remains taxable
- Reduces farmland costs for future farmers

Conservation Easement Basics

- No further subdivision of the property is permitted
- Legally recorded document that permanently restricts development
- Easements can be purchased, donated, or a combination, often called a “bargain sale”



Steps in the Land Protection Process

- Landowner meets with staff to discuss land, goals, plans and interests
- Identify significant values of the property
- Obtain funding
- Details can take up to 2 years after funding determined

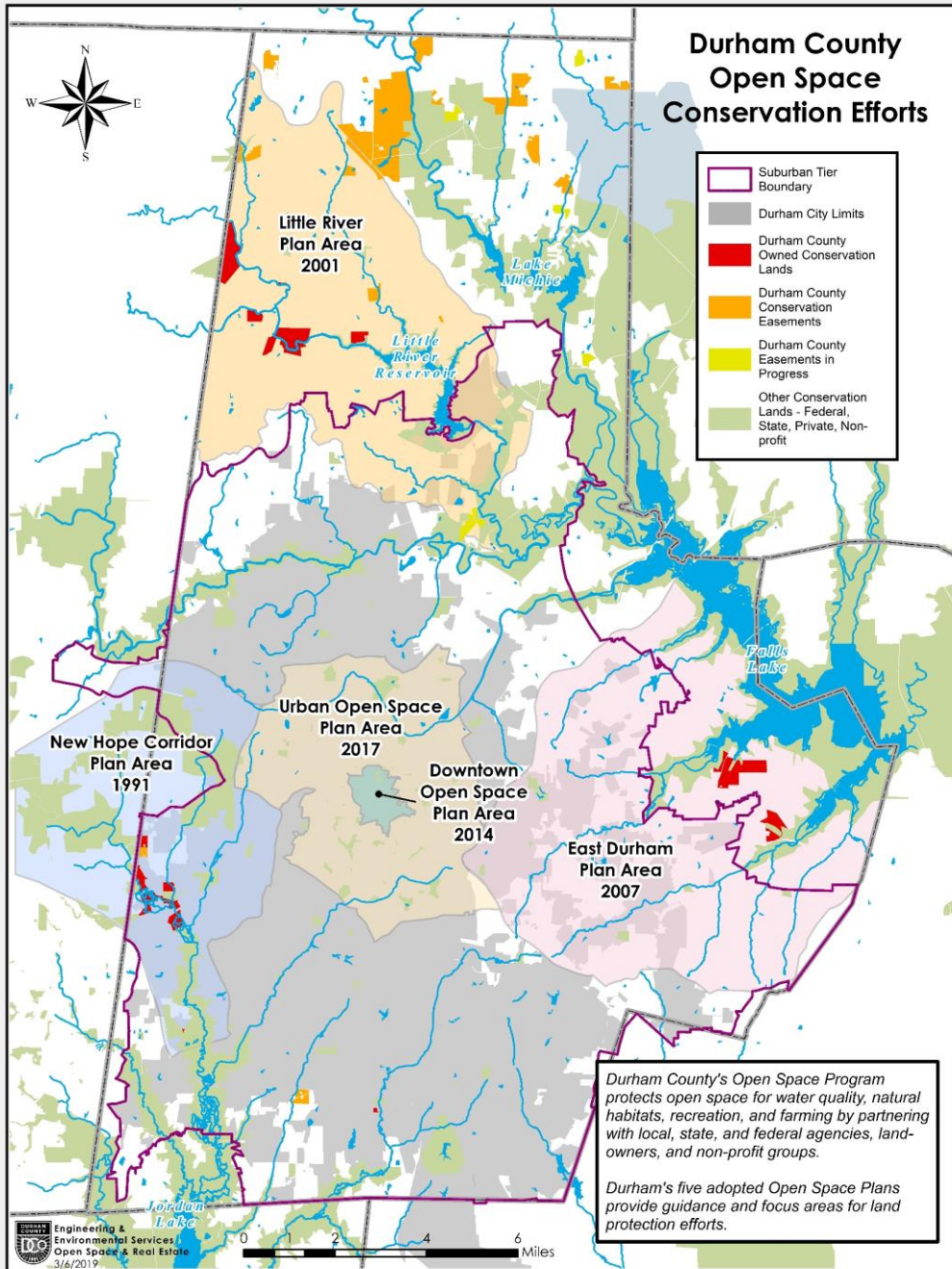


Farmland Easement Funding

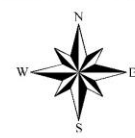
Combination of:

- County funding (annual allocations)
- \$\$'s leveraged by state and federal grant programs:
 - Federal Agriculture Lands Easement (ALE) Grants (formerly FRPP grants), 10 years totaling \$6.67 million
 - State ADFPT Trust Fund (2 for \$537,500)
 - Clean Water Mgt Trust Fund Grants
- Partial donations have helped significantly

Durham County Open Space Conservation Efforts



- Suburban Tier Boundary
- Durham City Limits
- Durham County Owned Conservation Lands
- Durham County Conservation Easements
- Durham County Easements in Progress
- Other Conservation Lands - Federal, State, Private, Non-profit



0 2 4 6 Miles

Engineering & Environmental Services
 Open Space & Real Estate
 3/6/2019

Durham County's Open Space Program protects open space for water quality, natural habitats, recreation, and farming by partnering with local, state, and federal agencies, land-owners, and non-profit groups.

Durham's five adopted Open Space Plans provide guidance and focus areas for land protection efforts.

Questions / Discussion



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