ANNUAL REPORT
FISCAL YEAR 2018

The Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation
Dear Stakeholders,

I am very pleased and honored to introduce myself as the new Executive Director of the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF). Upon former Executive Director Carol West’s retirement, I assumed this new position in July 2018. Previously serving as an administrator for MALPF since 2011 and with over 18 years of experience in land conservation, I am confident that with the help from our dedicated staff, MALPF will continue to succeed and remain a national leader in agricultural land preservation.

This past year has been exceptionally busy for the program. We are working towards completing the FY 2017/2018 application cycle, with only a handful of easement offers left to settle. In July 2018, a total of 189 applications were accepted and submitted to the Department of General Services to be appraised for the FY 2019 application cycle. As of the end of FY 2018 we have preserved 2,302 properties that represent approximately 312,800 acres at a public investment of over $728 million.

2018 also brought incredible news for MALPF, as for the first time in 10 years full funding for the program was restored! MALPF is now, once again, able to return to single-year application cycles beginning in fiscal year 2019. MALPF staff has worked diligently with our sister agencies and county partners to prepare for the changes necessary to move back to an annual application cycle. We anticipate funding levels to remain steady, enabling MALPF to sustain single-year application cycles for the foreseeable future.

With the return to an annual application cycle, the MALPF program will be able to increase the rate at which we are able to protect Maryland’s agricultural lands, and I look forward to being able to report on MALPF’s accomplishments for years to come.

Sincerely,

Michelle Cable

MICHELLE CABLE
MALPF, Executive Director
What is MALPF?

MALPF is an acronym that stands for the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation. The program has been in existence since 1977. It is one of the most successful programs of its kind in the country.

MALPF’s primary purpose is to preserve sufficient agricultural land to maintain a viable local base of food and fiber production for the present and future citizens of Maryland. The program purchases perpetual agricultural conservation easements on eligible farmland throughout the state. In other words, the program pays landowners to continue what they have done for years, decades, or sometimes a century or more – continue to farm their land.

Below are the eligibility criteria and procedures for the sale of an easement.

**SIZE:** The minimum easement size is 50 contiguous acres. If a property is less than 50 acres, a landowner may still be eligible to apply and should visit our website to review Fact Sheet 12, “Small Properties in the Agricultural Land Preservation Program,” or confer with the local program administrator.

If a property is contiguous to an existing easement, the landowner may apply to sell an easement regardless of the acreage.

**PRODUCTIVITY:** An easement is purchased on land that is either currently being used for producing food or fiber or has the capability to do so. Woodland management and harvesting operations are eligible to join this program. The productivity of the soil as measured by the USDA’s Soil Conservation Service Land Classification System is a major criterion. Soil requirements for the property to qualify to participate in the program are:

- At least 50% of the land I classified as Class I, II or III soils; or
- If the land is wooded, 50% of the land is classified as Woodland Group 1 or 2 soils; or
- If the reason the land could not meet the above conditions was because of flood-plain or wetland soils, those areas could be excluded as a percentage of land; or
- If there is an insufficient percentage of Class I, II or III soils alone and there is an insufficient percentage of Woodland Groups 1 and 2 soils alone, the land would qualify if the combination of the two exceeded 60%; or
- Land with lower soil capabilities may qualify under certain conditions.

**LOCATION:** Land that lies within the boundaries of a 10-year water and sewer service area plan is generally not eligible unless it has extraordinary productive capability and is of significant size.

**DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS:** A property must have at least one unused development right associated with the property to sell an easement.

**LOCAL CRITERIA:** The criteria listed above are the minimum eligibility standards set by the state. The program is administered jointly by county and state. The county may impose criteria which could be in addition to or more stringent than the state criteria.
Report on the Program for Certification of Local Agricultural Land Preservation Programs for FY 2018

The program for Certification of Local Agricultural Land Preservation Programs (Certification Program) was created by the Maryland General Assembly in 1990 and is jointly administered by the Maryland Department of Planning and the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation.

The goals of the Certification Program are the following:

- Preserving the important role agriculture plays in maintaining the state’s high environmental quality;
- Encouraging development of county agricultural preservation programs which complement MALPF’s preservation efforts; and
- Employing agricultural land preservation as a tool to manage growth.

Counties able to demonstrate that they have an effective program to preserve productive farmland and forests are eligible to participate in the Certification Program. Local preservation programs consist of a combination of preservation tools such as low-density agricultural zoning, purchase or transfer of development rights programs, right-to-farm policies, support for agricultural businesses, the designation of agriculture as the best use of certain lands, etc.

To qualify for and retain certified status, counties are required to designate a Priority Preservation Area (PPA). Counties concentrate their preservation efforts and program funding into their PPAs in order to preserve large contiguous blocks of agricultural and forested land.

Participation in the Certification Program by interested counties is voluntary. Certified counties enjoy the benefit of retaining 75% of their locally generated agricultural transfer tax revenue, while non-certified counties retain 33%. All retained revenue must be spent or encumbered for qualifying land preservation expenditures within three years of collection, or those collected funds revert to MALPF. The increase in participating counties’ share of the agricultural land transfer tax helps to support and enhance their preservation programs in ways that best meet local goals and needs.

As of June 30, 2018, 16 counties are certified: Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Calvert, Caroline, Carroll, Cecil, Frederick, Harford, Kent, Montgomery, Prince George’s, Queen Anne’s, St. Mary’s, Talbot, Washington, and Worcester.
HB1351 – Agriculture – Easements – Special Occasion Events

The passage of this legislation added a permitted use to those uses allowable on MALPF-eased properties, potentially allowing landowners to generate supplemental income to augment their agricultural operations. Subject to local planning and zoning requirements, and local and MALPF approval, if a property has been subject to a MALPF easement for a minimum of 10 years, the landowner may request that up to 2.0 acres of the land be used to hold special occasion events for commercial purposes. The request shall include the location of the special events area. If approved, the area shall be identified and delineated on a map prepared by a licensed surveyor. Events may be held within the approved area only in structures existing at the time of approval of the request, or in temporary structures such as canopies or tents.

SB1140 – Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation – Definition of a Child

This legislation clarifies and extends the designation of a landowner’s child to include “…a biological child, an adopted child or a stepchild; and (2) does not include a foster child, a grandchild, or a descendant more remote than a grandchild.”

SB571/HB1229 – Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation – Use of Land – Signs and Outdoor Advertising Displays

Since the program’s inception, the terms of MALPF’s deeds of easement have always limited signage in terms of size and purpose. Over time, the signage provisions have changed, permitting landowners more latitude in allowable outdoor advertising displays. This legislation provides a retroactive, affirmative right for all landowners of MALPF-eased properties to display signage in the same manner. The size restriction has not changed.

HB43 – Income Tax – Subtraction Modification – Perpetual Conservation Easements

This legislation allows for the subtraction of the first $50,000 of compensation received for a perpetual conservation easement during the taxable year in which the exchange for the sale of the easement occurred. Landowners who have questions about this new law should contact an accountant.

HB198 – Inheritance Tax – Perpetual Conservation Easement – Arming Purposes – Exemption

This legislation adds a niece or nephew of a decedent to be exempted from inheritance tax for real property subject to a perpetual conservation easement that passes to her or him from the decedent.
SB885 – Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation – Condemnation of Land Under Easement

This legislation only applies to MALPF easements acquired by the Foundation by purchase or donation after July 1, 2018. The legislation concerns compensation to MALPF for condemned easement property insofar as it may affect MALPF from partnering with other preservation programs, resulting in the loss of potential additional funding that would stretch the program’s dollars and ability to acquire more acreage. Prior to the passage of this law, MALPF’s reimbursement on condemnation requirements were inconsistent with the requirements of many other conservation programs. Per statute, MALPF required reimbursement for condemned, MALPF-eased property on a per-acre basis in an amount equal to the amount paid for the easement at the time the easement was acquired. Many other conservation and preservation programs require reimbursement for condemned properties on a per-acre basis in an amount equal to current fair market value. This inconsistency has prevented MALPF’s collaboration with these other programs, resulting in a loss of potential funding. The new law has changed the reimbursement requirement to reflect that MALPF easements acquired on or after July 1, 2018, will receive compensation for condemned MALPF-eased property in an amount equal to current fair market value. This law is not retroactive; it does not change the compensation for condemned property on any easements acquired by MALPF prior to July 1, 2018.

HB620 – County Agricultural Land Preservation Programs – Recertification and Remittance of Unexpended Funds – Extensions

This new law clarifies that a certified county seeking to renew its certification is a “recertification” of its current (certified) status, and not a new certification request. This distinction allows for expanding the period for which a recertification is effective from three years to five years, bringing the recertification timeline in sync with counties’ comprehensive plan updates, which generally occur every five or 10 years statewide.

The legislation also extends the period of time during which counties may spend or commit to spend their retained, collected agricultural transfer tax revenue. By law, certified counties retain 75% of the collected tax, and non-certified counties retain 33%. The retained tax revenue is required to be spent or committed to be spent on qualifying land preservation expenditures. If the retained tax revenue is not spent or committed within the prescribed time period, the funds are remitted to the State Comptroller, and placed in the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Fund. With the passage of this law, the time period in which counties must spend or commit to spend the retained tax revenue has been extended from three years to six years. Expanding the retention period not only allows counties more time to spend or commit the retained tax revenue; it also provides counties with the ability to preserve more agricultural acres, and to leverage this revenue stream for use in other qualifying preservation programs.
Discussed below are changes in policy and regulation regarding documents that impact MALPF easement properties. Such documents constitute “overlays” to the existing MALPF deed of easement. The terms of the overlay will be memorialized by recording the overlay document in the land records of the county in which the deed of easement is recorded. 

Please contact your County Program Administrator or the Foundation if you are considering granting an overlay easement of any kind.

Overlay Easements and Rights-of-Way:

During fiscal year 2018, the Guidelines for Granting Overlay Easements and Rights-of-Way proceeded through the regulatory process and can now be found at COMAR 15.15.16.01 et seq. After a farm is protected with an agricultural preservation easement held by the Foundation, landowners may not grant an easement, right-of-way, or other restriction on that land without the Foundation’s approval, which may be given in the following situations:

A. If it is to service a lot released from the preservation easement restrictions under Agriculture Article, §2-513, Annotated Code of Maryland (family lots);

B. If it is to service a lot or land permitted to be withheld from the agricultural preservation easement at the time of sale of the agricultural preservation easement to the Foundation;

C. If it is to service an adjacent farm, provided however, that its use is restricted to the movement of farm equipment or other items associated with farming;

D. If it is a forest overlay easement that meets the criteria described in COMAR 15.15.13.01 et seq.;

E. If the overlay easement documents a use existing at the time the agricultural preservation easement was sold to the Foundation;

F. If the overlay easement serves telephone, television, gas, or other similar utility lines (but not access) to service the easement property or lots created under §A or B in this regulation;

G. If the overlay easement enhances a public road or bridge for the public health, safety, or welfare, where a minimal amount of land is required for such project, and the grantee of the proposed overlay easement has condemning authority;

H. If the overlay easement is used to install a utility easement for electricity, telephone, cable, oil, gas, or similar utility and the grantee of the proposed overlay easement has condemning authority; or
I. If the overlay easement is for another purpose not named in this regulation, and if failure to grant approval as determined by the Foundation would result in significant detrimental impact to the conservation values on an adjacent property. For purposes of this section, “conservation values” means critical natural habitat for native plant and wildlife species including, but not limited, to forests, riparian forested areas, wetlands, and greenways to buffer the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries from pollution runoff.

Forest Easement Overlays:

Changes to the Guidelines for Forest Easement Overlays also proceeded through the regulatory process in fiscal year 2018 and can be found at COMAR 15.15.13.01 et seq. The main change gives the Foundation the authority to approve a larger size of the overlay easement area, in certain circumstances.

Water Resource Easement Overlays:

MALPF’s fiscal year 2017 Annual Report reported that proposed regulation entitled “Guidelines for Wetland Easement Overlays and Stream and Streamside Easement Overlays” was adopted as Foundation policy while simultaneously being reviewed by the Governor’s Office for codification in COMAR. After the proposed regulations were submitted to the Governor’s Office, MALPF received several inquiries and requests regarding potential stream and/or wetland mitigation projects on MALPF-eased properties. Due to these inquiries, it became clear to the Foundation that the proposed regulation would not adequately serve MALPF landowners in accomplishing their water resource goals. To better serve MALPF landowners, the Foundation pulled the proposed regulation from the Governor’s Office to revise the draft to provide a clearer and more detailed structure that would address a wider range of water resource goals without compromising the terms of MALPF easements. The updated draft, now called “Water Resource Easement Overlays,” is currently in committee and the Foundation anticipates the updated policy to be finalized early in 2019.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTY</th>
<th>TOTAL EASEMENTS ACQUIRED</th>
<th>PERCENT OF TOTAL</th>
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**AS OF JUNE 30, 2018**
## EASEMENT SETTLEMENTS - FY18

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<tr>
<th>COUNTY</th>
<th>NUMBER OF EASEMENTS</th>
<th>TOTAL NUMBER OF ACRES</th>
<th>ACQUISITION COST</th>
<th>AVERAGE FARM SIZE IN ACRES</th>
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<td><strong>AVERAGE PER ACRE</strong></td>
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<td>Harford</td>
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<td>Howard</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prince George's</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td><strong>7,402</strong></td>
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**AS OF JUNE 30, 2018**
## EASEMENT ACQUISITION COSTS - FY18

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FISCAL YEAR</th>
<th>NO. OF FARMS</th>
<th>ACQUISITION COST</th>
<th>ACRES</th>
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<td>56</td>
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<td>7,402</td>
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*Corrected numbers from FY 2017 Annual Report

### AS OF JUNE 30, 2018

10
Appointed Board Members:

- Michael Calkins, Chair, Young Farmer Representative
- William Allen, Vice Chair, Member At-Large
- Tom Mason, Maryland Farm Bureau Representative*
- J. Bruce Yerkes, Maryland Grange Representative
- Taylor B. Huffman, MD Agricultural Commission Representative
- Bernard L. Jones, Sr., Member At-Large
- Catherine Cosgrove, Member At-Large
- Ralph Robertson, Member At-Large
- Joseph W. Wood, Member At-Large

Ex-Officio Board Members

- Honorable Nancy K. Kopp, State Treasurer
- Honorable Peter Franchot, State Comptroller
- Honorable Joseph Bartenfelder, Secretary, Maryland Department of Agriculture
- Honorable Robert McCord, Secretary, Maryland Department of Planning

Foundation Staff

- Michelle Cable, Executive Director
- Diane Chasse, Administrator
- Chana Turner, Administrator
- Kim Hoxter, Administrative Officer
- Amanda C. Wilson, Administrative Specialist
- Jonathan Gott, Office Secretary

*Tom Mason served as the Maryland Farm Bureau representative through FY 2018, but the position is currently open as of the end of the 2018 calendar year.
Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Fund Easements

MALPF Easements (current as of October 2018)
ALLEGANY
Siera Wigfield
Division of Planning Services
701 Kelly Road, Suite #112
Cumberland, MD 21502
(301) 876-9546
Chair: Ben Sansom

ANNE ARUNDEL
Barbara Polito
Dept. of Recreation & Parks
1 Harry S Truman Pkwy, Suite #3225
Annapolis, MD 21401
(410) 222-7317
Chair: Maureen Heimbuch

BALTIMORE
Wally Lippincott, Jr.
Balt. Co. Dept. of Planning
105 West Chesapeake Ave, Suite #101
Towson, MD 21204
(410) 887-3480
Chair: Gail Ensor

CALVERT
Ronald Marney
Dept. of Planning & Zoning
150 Main Street, Suite #304
Prince Frederick, MD 20678
(410) 535-1600 x-2336
Chair: Hagner Mister

CAROLINE
Kathleen Freeman
Dept. of Planning & Codes
403 South 7th Street, Suite #210
Denton, MD 21629
(410) 479-8100
Chair: Eric Cheezum

CARROLL
Deborah Bowers
County Office Building
225 North Center Street
Westminster, MD 21157
(410) 386-2214
Chair: Jerry Russell

CECIL
Stephen O’Connor
Planning & Zoning
200 Chesapeake Blvd, Suite #2300
Elkton, MD 21921
(410) 996-5220
Chair: Robert W. Miller

CHARLES
Charles Rice
Department of Planning & Growth Management
Post Office Box 2150
La Plata, MD 20646
(301) 645-0651
Chair: Charles E. Bowling

DORCHESTER
Rodney Banks
Planning & Zoning
Post Office Box 107
Cambridge, MD 21613
(410) 228-3234
Chair: Trent Jackson

FREDERICK
Anne Bradley
Planning & Permitting
30 North Market Street, 3rd Floor
Frederick, MD 21701
(301) 600-1474
Chair: Richard Grossnickle

GARRETT
Deborah A. Carpenter
Office Of Planning & Land Management
203 South 4th Street, Room 210
Oakland, Md 21550
(301) 334-1920
Chair: George Bishop

HARFORD
William Amoss
Planning & Zoning
220 South Main Street
Bel Air, MD 21014
(410) 638-3235
Chair: John Stump

HOWARD
Joy Levy
Planning & Zoning
3430 Courthouse Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21043
(410) 313-4382
Chair: Mickey Day

KENT
Amy Moredock
Planning, Housing And Zoning
400 High Street
Chesterstown, MD 21620
(410) 810-2220
Chair: David Hill

MONTGOMERY
Mike Scheffel
18410 Muncaster Road
Derwood, MD 20850
(301) 590-2856
Chair: Michael Jamison

PRINCE GEORGE’S
Jeanine Nutter
SCD Field Service Center
5301 Marlboro Race Track Road
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772
(301) 574-5162 x-3
Chair: Stephanie DeVille-Eugene

QUEEN ANNE’S
Donna K. Landis-Smith
Queen Anne’s County SCD Office
211 E. Water Street
Centreville, Md 21617
(443) 988-4178
Chair: David Denny

ST. MARY’S
Donna Sasscer
Dept. of Econ. & Com. Dev.
211 E. Water Street
Leonardtown, Md 20650
(240) 309-4021
Chair: Steve Reeves

SOMERSET
Gary Pusey
Planning & Zoning
Somerset County Office Complex
11916 Somerset Ave
Princess Anne, MD 21853
(410) 651-1424
Chair: John Murray

TALBOT
Martin Sokolich
Dept. of Planning & Permits
215 Bay Street, Suite #2
Easton, MD 21601-2782
(410) 770-8032
Chair: Robert Saathoff

WASHINGTO
Eric Seifarth
Washington Co. Planning Dept.
100 W. Washington Street
Hagerstown, MD 21740
(240) 313-2445
Chair: Jeremiah Weddle

WICOMICO
Gloria Smith
Gov’t Office Bldg, Room #203
Post Office Box 870
Salisbury, MD 21803-0870
(410) 548-4860
Chair: Eugene Lowe, III

WORCESTER
Katherine Munson
Natural Resources Division
Worcester County DRP
Room #1306
Snow Hill, MD 21863-1070
(410) 632-1220 x-1302
Chair: vacant