Welcome. Thank you for attending
This session is 90 minutes
We will begin with speaker introductions
Each state (MI, WI, OH) will have 22 minutes to make their presentation/s
20 minute questions & answer period following all presentations
PANEL

- **Brian Bourdages**, Farmland Protection Specialist, Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy, MI
- **Denise Franz King**, Executive Director, Office of Farmland Preservation, Ohio Dept. of Agriculture
- **Erica Schmitz**, Land Use Manager and Deputy Clerk Treasurer, Town of Dunn, Wisconsin
- **Alison Volk**, Wisconsin Department of Trade and Agriculture

OHIO’S PROGRAM: PRESERVING LAND & PROVIDING CAPITAL

*Artist: Carol McClain Cosgrove*
ORIGINS OF OHIO’S PROGRAM

1998 Farmland Preservation Office established
2000 Clean Ohio Conservation Bonds passed by voters by 59%
Provided $50 million/year for conservation projects including $6.25 million a year for agricultural easement purchases
2008 Clean Ohio Bond Fund renewed by 69%
Originally driven by rapid suburbanization

OHIO FARMLAND PRESERVATION LAWS

ORC Sec. 901.21 defines terms, creates authority to acquire easements, sets terms for extinguishment (no longer possible to farm); creates operating fund;
ORC 901.22: lays out how the program operates
ORC 901.23: creates an advisory board
MEMBERS & ROLE OF THE ADVISORY BOARD

Representatives of:
- active farmers (4)
- Soil & Water Districts
- County Commissioners
- Township Trustees
- Environmental Interest
- Development Interests
- Universities rep
- Planning interests

Role:
- Develop consensus on policy issues
- Educate their members about the program
- Make recommendations to the ODA Director on criteria for selecting easements for purchase

WHAT OHIO’S PROGRAM DOES

- Purchases permanent agricultural easements from landowners who compete to sell them
- Pays up to 75% of points based appraisal for difference between ag production value and development value
**OHIO AG EASEMENTS**

- Are voluntary
- Land remains in private ownership and continues to pay taxes
- If land is sold, land must remain in ag production
- Easement runs with the land in perpetuity
- Do not have a 2% impervious surface clause

Mark Gingerich, Winter Glow

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**EASEMENTS SUPPORT RURAL ECONOMIES**

Easements may be used for any purpose. Most common:

1. expand farm operations,
2. pay off debt,
3. purchase new equipment,
4. purchase an annuity,
5. install conservation practices
6. college education

Proceeds circulate in the rural economy and support Ohio’s #1 industry: food and agriculture

Grain storage & new equipment are popular investments
Ashtabula County Ohio
OHIO FARMLAND PRESERVATION STATISTICS
* FROM 2014 AFT PACE REPORT FOR ODA ONLY

- Easements acquired: 315
- Acres protected: 54,212
  (includes Tobacco & donated but not easements owned exclusively by private land trusts)
- State funds spent: $36.5 M
  (ops & personnel excluded)
- FRPP funds spent: $38.2 M
- Total Actual spent: $74.8 M
- Landowner donation value: $88M
- Average payment $1000/acre
- Average easement size: 120 acres

Logan County Ohio Preserved Farm

Ohio Farmland Preservation Map
Includes Agricultural Easements held by ODA and Agricultural Security Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>No. of Easements</th>
<th>Acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ohio's Ohio Agricultural Easement Purchase Program</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>45,956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State-Funded Farmland Protection Program</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>2,940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco Agricultural Easement Purchase Program (2015)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3,923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>84,221</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ohio Agricultural Security Areas
41
5,118,089
As of 12/31/12

**OHIO PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

- Farm must be and remain in agricultural production
- Minimum of 40 acres, 10 if adjacent to permanently protected property
- Easement maximum $500K/yr
- Maximum of 1000 acres
- Points for: soil productivity, specialty soils, medium development pressure, local commitment to farmland preservation, etc.

Lake County Ohio grapes
### OHIO PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS II

- All land in single ownership must be applied at the same time.
- Strongly encourage estate planning before entering the program.
- Zero to one home per farm.
- One time split allowed if farm is over 400 acres & split is requested and approved before landowner applies.
- Otherwise, no subdivision. Period. Purpose is to build blocks of preserved farms.
- If preserved farm has restrictions a potential buyer does not prefer, encourage the buyer to purchase from 11 million acres in farm land not under easement.

### OHIO PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS III

- Annual easement monitoring by local sponsor.
- Customary rural enterprises allowed on homestead (2-5 acres).
- Oil and gas development allowed:
  - Has always been a part of Ohio farms.
  - Land must be restored to original productivity.
  - Pipeline & utility easements must be approved by ODA.

Mark Gingerich, An Ohio Impressionist Artist
LOCAL AGRICULTURAL EASEMENT PROGRAM

- Ohio Dept. of Agriculture works through Local Sponsors:
  - Counties (4), townships (2), cities (0)
  - Soil & Water Conservation Districts (10)
  - Land Trusts (9)
- Local Sponsors:
  - Conduct outreach to local landowners
  - Complete on-line, self scoring application for landowners
  - Obtain resolutions of support from local governments
  - Send Notice of Selection, Purchase Agreement and Closing
  - Conduct annual monitoring and send reports to state

Mark Gingerich, Ohio Impressionist Artist

AGRICULTURAL SECURITY AREAS

- Landowners with at least 500 acres enroll in ASA for 10 year period
- Land in ASA is protected from non-farm development and utility assessments
- ASAs create blocks of farmland for 10 years
- Can be renewed

Artist: Carol McClain Cosgrove
LOCAL AG EASEMENT PURCHASE PROGRAM (LAEPP)

- ODA conducts annual Local Sponsor Certification
  - Local Sponsors (LS) demonstrate ability to operate local agricultural easement purchase program
  - Local Sponsors are ranked by experience of their organization and personnel & degree of local government support for farmland preservation
- ODA awards funding to local sponsors based on above and the cost of easements in their area
- 17 LS representing 45 of 88 counties certified for 2014 with allocations from $174,037 to $665,016
- Total of $6 million for ag easement purchases

LOCAL SUPPORT IS REWARDED IN LS ALLOCATIONS
POINTS AWARDED FOR:

- County comprehensive plans prioritize keeping land in agricultural production and identify priority ag zones
- County agricultural economic development plans that prioritize food production or manufacturing
- Agricultural Districts
- Ag Security Areas

Abigail Joseph, Autumn Hillside
CHALLENGES

- Areas of the state served by mature land trusts strong, but areas with low easement values do not participate;
- Pockets of anti easement fervor driven by anti Agenda 21 rhetoric
- Less emotional intensity for farmland preservation (could be short term)  
  - Greater interest in living downtown vs countryside
  - 2012 Ag census showed Ohio gained 4,000 acres of farmland
  - Less pressure to convert farmland due to high crop $

CHALLENGES - CONTINUED

- Ag production values close to development values in some areas, making easements less $ attractive
- Need for attorney education on easements & estate planning
- Pipeline easements:  
  - Explosion of requests;
  - Need for agreement with the industry on access and reclamation standards
- As program matures and farms with easements pass to less committed owners: growing need for
  - Landowner education
  - Legal action
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WEBSITE:  www.agri.ohio.gov/divs/Farmland/Farmland.aspx
FARMLAND FOREVER YOUTUBE VIDEO:  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4MIezvN9Qy8

ARTISTS WEBSITES

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