



Pennsylvania Farmland Preservation

“If Pennsylvania Agriculture and America are to remain strong, we must preserve our farmland. We must be able to feed, clothe, and shelter ourselves.”

- Sam Hayes

Secretary of Agriculture



Background Information

- ⌘ Farmers are faced with increasing competition for land from residential, industrial, commercial, and public uses. (sprawl)
- ⌘ In 1987, voters of PA passed a referendum to allow \$100 million bond issue to preserve farmland. The PA Legislature enacted Act 148 in 1988 to allow counties to tap the fund to purchase agricultural easements.
- ⌘ In 1994, the Sullivan County Commissioners established the **Sullivan County Farmland Preservation Board.**



Sullivan County Farmland Preservation Board

- ⌘ Three farmers
- ⌘ Two government officials
- ⌘ Three citizens at large
- ⌘ One contractor

Developing an Easement Purchase Program

- ⌘ The board devised an administrative manual that met the state regulations to purchase development rights (easements) from farmers.
- ⌘ The State Farmland Preservation Board approved the county program. (15 member board located in Harrisburg)
- ⌘ Funds are then distributed using a complex equation using each County's census and tax data.



Purchase Procedure

⌘ Check eligibility Requirements

☑ program copy cost \$5.00

⌘ Submit application

☑ filing fees cost \$100.00

⌘ Meeting with administrator





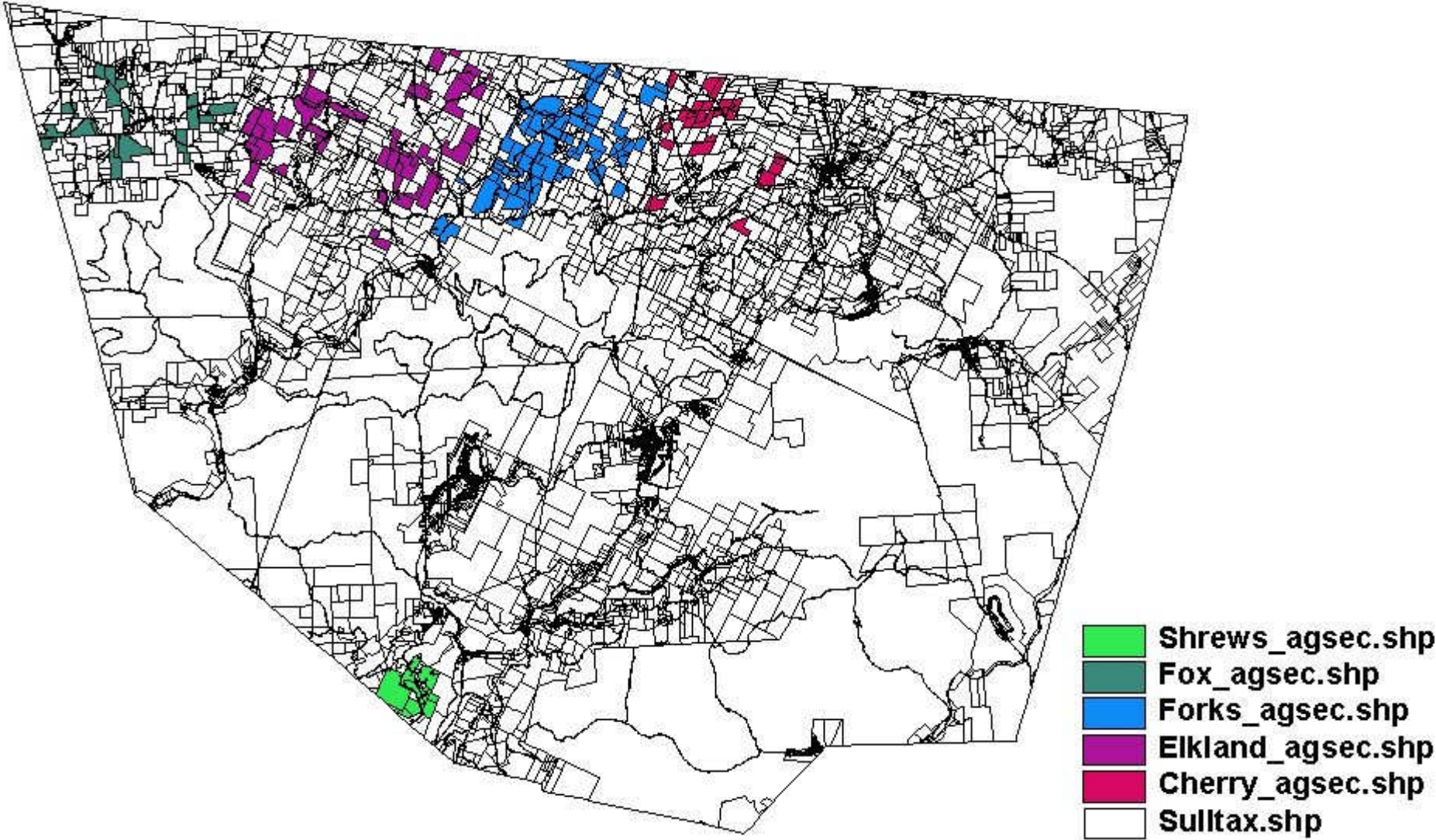
Minimum Eligibility Requirements

- ⌘ Farm must be located in an agricultural security area which has at least 500 acres enrolled.
- ⌘ 50 contiguous acres (or 10 acres adjoining previous easement)(or 10 acres w/ a unique crop to the area)
- ⌘ 50% of the soils for ag production are in capability classes I - IV.
- ⌘ 50% of the farm is cropland, pasture or grazing land.





Sullivan County - Ag Security Areas



Ag Security Enrollment

Township	Total acres enrolled
Shrewsbury	1,034
Fox	1,519
Forks	4,496
Elkland	3,954
Cherry	1,598
Grand Total	12,601



What do Ag Security Areas do?

- ⌘ protects farmers from nuisance complaints.
- ⌘ protects land owners from land acquisition by township or state.
- ⌘ protects areas from waste facilities and/or processing sites.
- ⌘ provides eligibility for the Farmland Preservation Program.

If minimum requirements are met by the applicant:

- ⌘ A Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) is conducted on each farm. Priority is given to the highest LESA score.
- ⌘ An appraisal is then performed on the highest ranking farm. The appraisal sets the agricultural value of the land (cost/acre), based on comparable sales.

Accomplishments in PA

- ⌘ over 344,000 acres preserved
- ⌘ 3,000 Farms in 53 counties



Accomplishments in Sullivan County

- ⌘ We have over 275 acres preserved
- ⌘ with 3 easements
- ⌘ average cost per acre: \$892.37



Info



[Http://www.agriculture.state.pa.us](http://www.agriculture.state.pa.us)

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