

# National Agricultural Land Network



American Farmland Trust's **National Agricultural Land Network, or NALN**, works to strengthen the collective capacity of public agencies, planning entities, and land trusts working to protect agricultural land by providing **opportunities to network, learn, and collaborate around tools and strategies to save the land that sustains us.**

Agricultural land in the United States is under threat. Conversion of farmland and ranchland is escalating, with nearly 31 million acres of agricultural land irretrievably lost to development between 1992 and 2012 alone, 11 million acres of which were some of the country's most productive. Additionally, 371 million acres of agricultural land owned by aging landowners is likely to change hands over

the next 15 years, putting its future use for agriculture at risk. And climate change threatens agricultural productivity at a time when demands on agricultural land to provide food, fiber, energy, and climate solutions continue to grow.

This threat demands new energy, continued innovation, and strengthened connections among public and private entities working across the country to save this irreplaceable resource. Entities of all types —from well-established public farmland protection programs and agricultural land trusts to state and county agencies and land trusts considering agricultural land protection policies, programs, and projects—have shared with AFT their interest in more information sharing, peer learning and professional development opportunities,

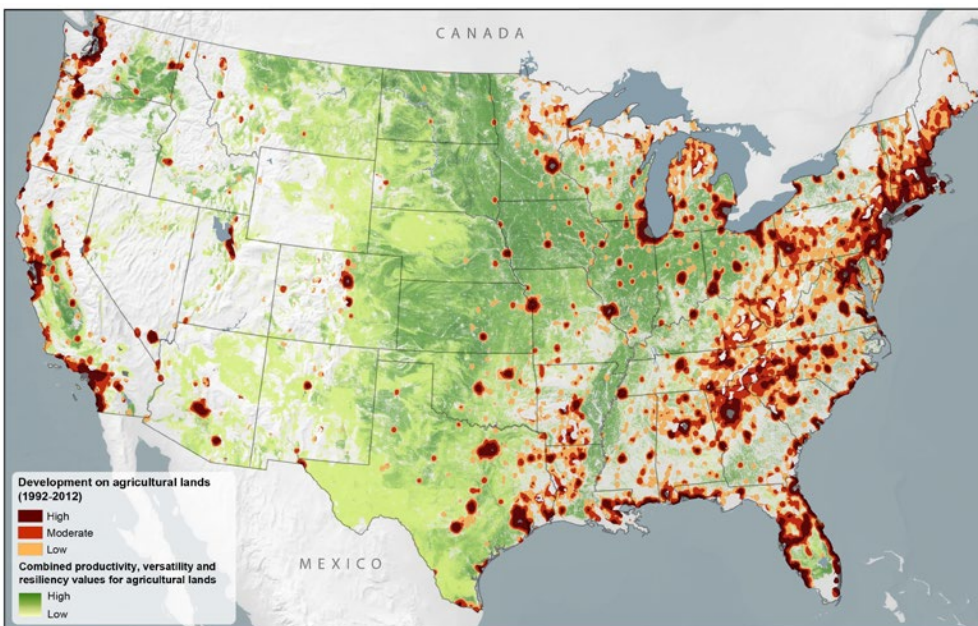
policy updates, and training on agricultural land planning and protection tools and strategies.

For much of its history, AFT has provided a broad array of support to the growing agricultural land protection community—whether through regional events and national conferences, cutting-edge research and communications insights, or technical expertise and policy innovation.

**In 2020, AFT launched the National Agricultural Land Network, or NALN, to further strengthen the collective capacity of public agencies, planning entities, and land trusts working to protect agricultural land.**

The NALN seeks to provide a high level of professional networking and support to organizations/entities and individuals directly engaged in retaining and protecting agricultural land, and those whose programs, services or public policy advocacy help to advance agricultural land protection and planning. The NALN is a learning and knowledge exchange network; it offers policy education and updates but will not promote or take positions on specific legislation.

We welcome organizational members such as public Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement programs, private land trusts, and state and county government or quasi-governmental agencies with jurisdiction over agriculture, conservation, and/or planning. Other eligible organizational members include farm and conservation organizations, coalitions, trade associations, and service providers.



Conversion of agricultural land to urban and low-density residential development between 1992 and 2012 from AFT's *Farms Under Threat: The State of America's Farmland* (2018)

When organizations join the NALN they are added to the roster on the NALN webpages. All staff of organizational members are eligible for NALN products and services.

We also welcome individuals who are not affiliated with an organizational member and whose work is focused on advancing agricultural land retention and protection. Individual members may be researchers, planners, legislators, public agency staff, nonprofit organization staff, or individuals serving on public or nonprofit boards and committees that address aspects of agricultural land retention and protection.

There is no cost for membership or to participate in the online community platform or most programming. Some select services, programming, or events may require a fee. Organizational members directly engaged in agricultural land protection or planning may receive preference for certain workshops and events where participation may be limited. **To join the NALN, find the membership form on the NALN webpage.**

## NALN PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

- **Informational Webinars:** Webinars offer basic training on agricultural land protection and planning tools and techniques, relevant national research, agricultural land protection, planning and policy innovations, and updates on Agricultural Conservation Easement Program-Agricultural Land Easements (ACEP-ALE) implementation. They are recorded and housed on the NALN and Farmland Information Center webpages.
- **Agricultural Conservation Easement Program-Agricultural Land Easements (ACEP-ALE) Resources and Support:** Resources and support for entities applying to ACEP-ALE and for

landowners interested in protecting their land through the program are available through the Farmland Information Center. Webinars, the NALN community platform, and regional roundtables will provide opportunities for information sharing on ACEP-ALE implementation.

- **Workshops:** The NALN will periodically survey NALN members on topics and needs relevant to their work. These surveys will inform workshops to facilitate deep dive learning, explore policy concepts, seek solutions around identified challenges and needs, and identify opportunities for research and program collaboration. Workshops will be limited in size to facilitate conversation. Some may be restricted to staff from organizational members.
- **State, Regional, and Topical Roundtables:** Roundtables are designed to facilitate networking within states and regions and identify opportunities for collaboration to expand and improve program, planning, and policy work.
- **Online Community Platform & Library:** The NALN community platform is a virtual space where conversation channels allow members to share successes, challenges, and information by topic, state/region, or experience level. A shared document library will allow members to post relevant materials such as sample easements and easement deed terms, stewardship plans and management contracts, and land use plans and zoning ordinances.
- **Network News and Technical Bulletins:** NALN members receive the Network News on the fourth Monday of every month. It conveys announcements about webinars, workshops, and grant opportunities, as well as federal and state legislative updates. Technical bulletins focus on hot topics, providing information and insights on specific issues.

## NALN CONTACTS

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**NALN webpages:** [farmland.org/project/national-agricultural-land-network](http://farmland.org/project/national-agricultural-land-network)

## STEERING COMMITTEE

**Ebonie Alexander**, Black Family Land Trust (Nat'l)

**Jessie Wilder**, Bluegrass Conservancy (KY)

**Keali'i Bright**, CA Department of Conservation (CA)

**Erik Glenn**, CO Cattlemen Agricultural Land Trust (CO)

**Dee Perry**, GA Agricultural Land Trust (GA)

**Laura Rigan**, Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy (MI)

**Janice Hill**, Kane County (IL)

**Adam Bishop**, Maine Farmland Trust (ME)

**Kathryn Lyddan**, Marin Agricultural and Trust

**Michelle Cable**, MD Agriculture and Preservation Foundation (MD)

**Susan Payne**, NJ State Agriculture Development Corp (NJ)

**Jim Johnson**, OR Department of Agriculture (OR)

**Becky Huttenga**, Ottawa Cty. (MI)

**Doug Wolfgang**, PA Dept. of Agriculture (PA)

**Susan Buchanan**, Tall Pines Land Conservancy (WI)

**Krista Magaw**, Tecumseh Land Trust (OH)

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**Bob Wagner**, American Farmland Trust *emeritus*

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