

Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources



www.Mass.gov/AGR



This Presentation Will Discuss:

✓ APR Program Update

✓ APR Regulations Update

✓ Other Key FY09 Program Priorities



APR Program Statistics

- APR Program has 30 (+)year history:
 1. Established in 1977; Considered one of the first volunteer Farmland Preservation Programs in the United States.
 2. Through 2008, 726 APRs acquired, with 61,855 acres protected in approximately 150 towns, representing 13 counties across the Commonwealth.



FY09 APR Program Funding

- **A Total of \$13.3 Million for the APR Program**
 1. **\$11.8 Million APR Restriction Closings**
 - **Land Acquisitions**
 2. **\$1.0 Million in APR Stewardship**
 - **Baseline/ Monitoring**
 - **APR Improvement**
 3. **\$500,000 for Associated Land Costs**
 - **Appraisals**
 - **Attorneys**
 - **Surveys**

APR Regulation Process Overview

- ✓ Drafting of APR Regulations
 - Original APR Regulations
 - Department Staff
 - Stake-holdersTwo (2) Years

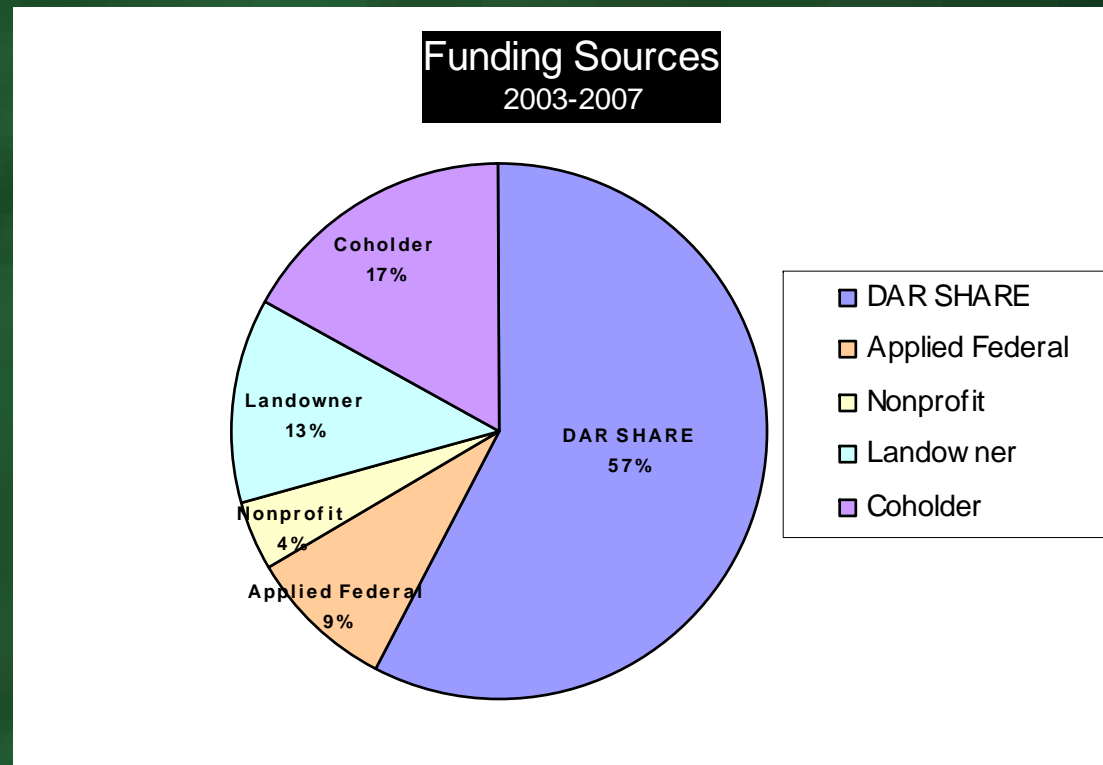
- ✓ Regulation Submittal Procedures
 - EOEEA Review
 - A&F Review
 - LDAC Notification
 - Secretary of State24-38 days

- ✓ Public Hearing and Comment Procedures
 - Public Hearing Notice
 - Hearing Deerfield
 - Hearing Waltham
 - Written Comments21-28 days
April-May 2008
April-May 2008

- ✓ Post – Public Hearing and Comment Procedures
 - Response to Comments
 - EOEEA Final Review
 - Secretary of State Filing
 - Publication In Registry6 – 8 Months

APR's Funding Sources

- Approximately 33-34% Local Contributions by Municipalities, Non-Profits and landowner bargain sales
- Federal FRPP Funds represented 9-10%
- Commonwealth's share towards APR acquisitions was approximately 57%.



Local Match Requirement

- Communities with no historical ability to provide a financial match can still receive a 5% discount for implementing APR – Muni principles.
- Changes as Result of the Economic Downturn:
 1. MDAR will be temporarily waiving the historical requirements.
 2. Communities with an average % historical match for the past three or more years, multiple APR project closings in one-fiscal-year, or multiple projects over several recent fiscal-years can consider a reduced match based on the following sliding scale:

<u>APR Project Closing with in the Current or Consecutive Fiscal Years</u>	<u>Financial Match Requirement (cannot reduce below 5%)</u>
First Project	Historical Financial Match minus 5%
Second Project	Historical Financial Match minus 10%
Third (+) Project(s)	5% Financial Match



Other APR Priorities: *APR Per Acre Cap*

■ To be reviewed at next ALPC meeting:

1. Standards to qualify for Over-Cap Spending
2. Adequacy of \$10,000 per acre limit.



Other APR Priorities:

APR Policies

■ To be reviewed at ALPC meeting:

1. Determine which Policies are deficient
2. Determine which policies are no long needed



Other APR Priorities: *APR Improvement Program*

- Dairy Farm Preservation Act -APR Viability Program- Chapter 310, Section 1
- Extends farm viability implementation funds to farms with APRs provided that the owner of the APR farm demonstrates that:
 - 1) improve the economic viability of the farm;
 - 2) retain or create private sector jobs and tax revenue either directly or indirectly associated with a farm business;
 - 3) improve farm productivity and competitiveness;
 - 4) expand farm facilities as part of a modernization or business plan;
 - 5) support renewable energy or environmental remediation projects on farms;
 - 6) or expand and support markets and infrastructure to strengthen the farming industry.
- The department shall adopt regulations



W&W and Wykowski Farms, Whately, MA. Photo: Whately Land Conservation Website