



GROWING FORWARD

Cultivating a Legacy of Farmland Preservation

Ontario Farmland Trust



www.ontariofarmlandtrust.ca

OFT'S MISSION



Our mission is to preserve Ontario farmland and associated agricultural, natural, and cultural landscapes of the countryside.

Farmland Protection Program

- Farmland Conservation Easements
- Donations of Farmland
 - Land Access Program

Education and Community Engagement Program

- Policy advocacy, presentations, etc.

Grey County Farmland Loss between 2006 and 2021

	% Change
MPAC	-4.42%
StatsCan	-18%

MPAC Data = Lands in Crop

**StatsCan Data = Total Farm Area less Woodland,
Wetland and Other Land**



Grey County Farmland Value 1991 to 2021

	1991	2021	% Change Prices
Grey County	\$1,530	\$11,987	+684%

StatsCan Data, Estimated value of land and buildings per acre 1991-2021



FARMLAND ISSUES

Ontario is losing farmland at a rate of 319 acres per day. Meanwhile, we see challenges such as:

- Agricultural Knowledge in Land Use Planning
- Competing land uses (urbanization, aggregate extraction, other land conversion)
- Increasing land prices and other inputs (+22% in 2021 and +19% in 2022, 11% in 2023)
- Consolidation of farmland (fewer, larger farms, avg. 250 acres)
- Aging Demographics (56.7 years)
- Consumer awareness and behaviour



TOOLS FOR LAND PROTECTION

CURRENT METHODS

1. Federal or Provincial Parks

2. Provincial Policies and Plans (ex. Greenbelts)

3. Municipal Official Plans

4. LAND TRUSTS



Farmland Protection – HOW?

Conservation Easement Agreements

Conservation Land Act (1990)

An owner of land may grant an easement to or enter into a covenant with one or more conservation bodies,

- (a) for the conservation, maintenance, restoration or enhancement of all or a portion of the land or the wildlife on the land;

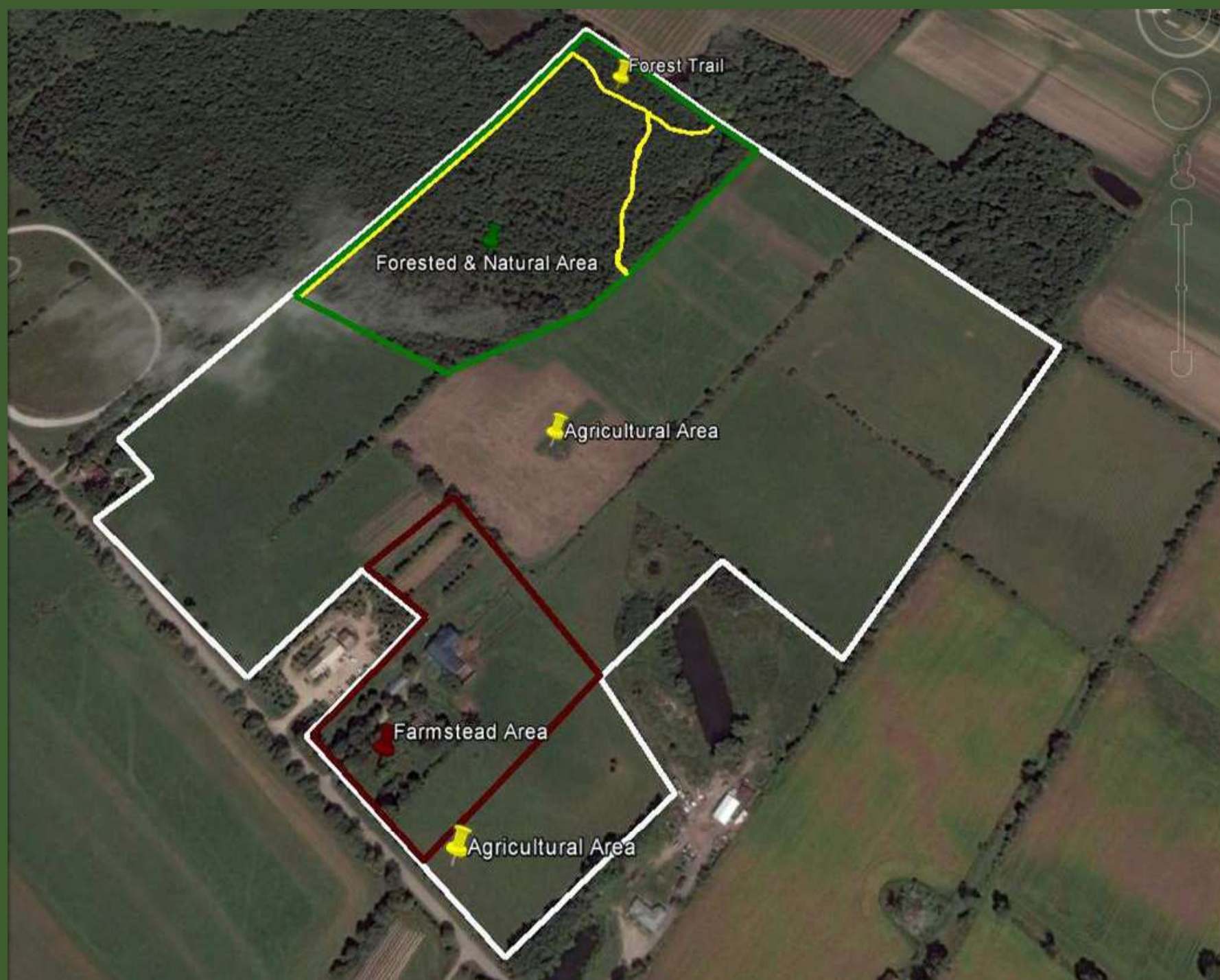
- (b) for the protection of water quality and quantity, including protection of drinking water sources;

- (c) for watershed protection and management;

- (d) for the conservation, preservation or protection of the land for agricultural purposes;**



OFT'S Easements



- Fundraising
- Determine protected areas on the property
 - Property Survey
- Writing the agreement
 - Negotiating content and getting legal advice
- Appraising the easement
 - Property appraisal
 - Issuing a tax receipt
- Baseline Documentation Report
- Annual Monitoring Visits

What's next?



Land Protection

- Conservation Easements and Land Donations (40 New Farms)
- Land Access Program
- Local Agricultural Preserves

Education and Community Engagement

- Farmland Protection Resource Centre

OFT'S Farmland Access Program



The need for land access:

- Retiring farmers
- Mentorship and training
- Cost of land
- Size of farm parcels
- Short-term leases

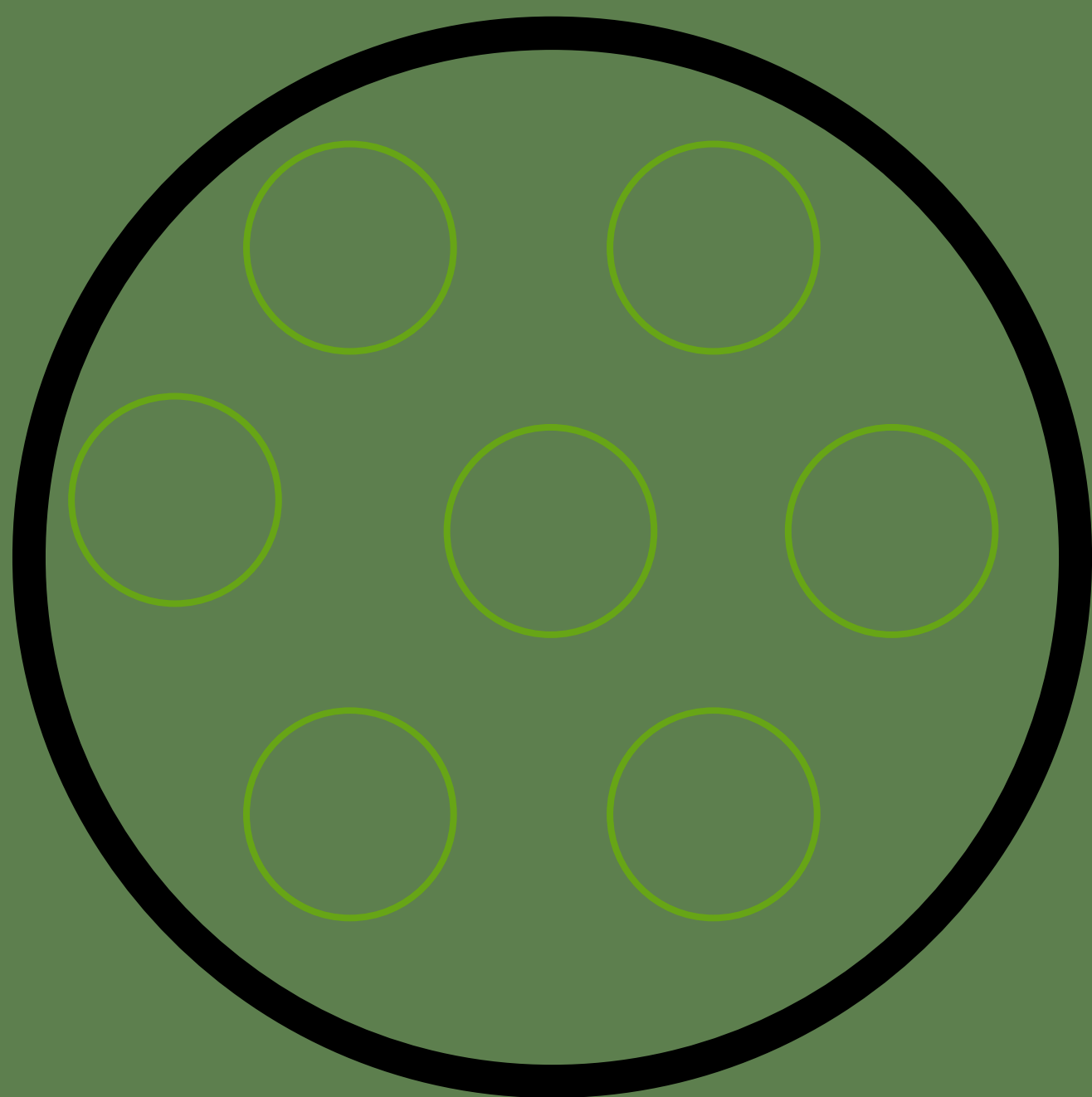
Opportunities:




- Land donations = more protected farmland
- OFT purchases and lease-to-own model

OFT'S Ag Preserve



Develop a collaborative, multistakeholder approach to create local farmland preserves through a concentration of protected properties.



-  Agricultural Land
-  Policy Area In Municipal Official Plans
-  Properties with CEAs

Farmland Protection Resource Centre



A centralized resource centre to support municipal planners, farmers, grassroots organizations, and community members to engage in farmland protection.

Topics:

- Understanding Land Use Planning
- Agricultural System Planning
- Specialty Crop Areas
- Establishing Farmland Access Programs
- Data and Factsheets on Farmland Loss
- Farmland Easement Information

THANK YOU

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