TO: Members, Board of Supervisors
FROM: Staff, Community Development Department
DATE: October 14, 2026
SUBJECT: **Review Addition Request – Gold Mine Creek Agricultural and Forestal District**
Monday, November 2, 2026 – 6:00 p.m.

This is to advise that the Louisa County Community Development Department has received the following request for review and consideration of an addition, totaling 341.082 acres, to the existing Gold Mine Creek Agricultural and Forestal District, as follows:

OWNER'S NAME	TAX MAP PARCEL #	ACREAGE	ZONING	VOTING
Martha Evans Lowry Harlow Trustee	28-126	1.262	A-2	Mineral
Martha Evans Lowry Harlow Trustee	44-8-1	333.11	A-2	Mineral
Martha Evans Lowry Harlow Trustee	44-8-6	6.71	A-2	Mineral

Location
The proposed district addition is located 3.2 miles southeast of the existing Gold Mine Creek Agricultural and Forestal District. The parcels are located south of Route 720 (Hensley Road), east of Route 522 (Zachary Taylor Highway), and northwest of Route 700 (Johnson Road) in the Mineral Voting District. The 2040 Louisa County Comprehensive Plan designates this area of Louisa County as "Rural Area."

Zoning
The parcels proposed to be included in the Gold Mine Creek Agricultural and Forestal District are zoned Agricultural (A-2). In summary, the stated purpose of the A-2 zoning district is to allow for the compatible mixture of agricultural uses and limited residential development in rural areas and protect and retain the rural, open character of the countryside. Very low-density residential uses are allowed along with agricultural uses that are compatible with residential activity to provide for community cohesion in the rural areas and encourage land use interdependence.

Sec. 86-151. - Statement of intent; policy guidance.
(a) The agricultural (A-2) district is provided to allow for the compatible mixture of agricultural uses and limited residential development in rural areas and protect and retain the rural open character of the countryside. Very low-density residential uses are allowed along with agricultural uses that are compatible with residential activity to provide for community cohesion in the rural areas and encourage land use interdependence. Zoning standards are also included to ensure the co-existence of these uses with each other. The creation of lots fronting on existing state roads or federal highways is strongly discouraged.

(b) Agricultural (A-2) district uses range from agricultural to neighborhood oriented commercial and community services. The use of development setbacks, shared access, reverse-front lots and roadside buffers are encouraged to retain the rural character of the county along-side the open farm activities prevalent in the county.

2040 Comprehensive Plan

The 2040 Louisa County Comprehensive Plan designates this area of Louisa County as "Rural Area."

The Vision Statement for the 2040 Comprehensive Plan states:
"We strengthen our sense of community by providing resources for residents, promoting agriculture and forestry, ensuring environmental stewardship, establishing reasonable growth areas, and maintaining our rural character."

This Plan addresses and amplifies the vision statement above, with the following eight (8) supporting goals:

- Preserve and protect our rural heritage and natural resources
- Encourage open space retention
- Safeguard historic resources
- Maintain community characteristics
- Ensure compatibility between land uses
- Manage growth by concentrating development activity
- Encourage high quality development
- Maximize returns on the investment of public resources

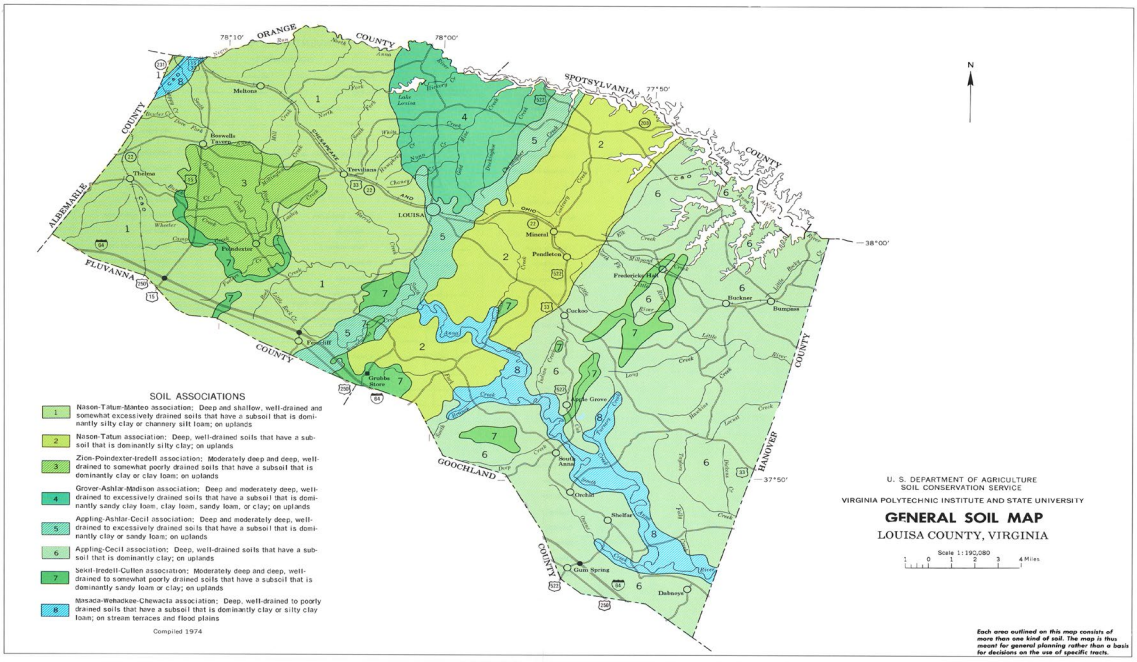
The creation of agricultural and forestal districts and subsequent additions to those districts, complements the goals identified in the Vision Statement by preserving and protecting natural resources, retaining open space, ensuring compatibility between land uses, and managing growth by concentrating development activity to the designated growth areas.

Existing Uses

Based on information provided by the property owner, the subject parcels are used for timber and pasture.

Soils

Based on the 1976 Louisa County Soil Survey from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service, the soils in this area are primarily made up of the Nason-Tatum association. In summary, these soils are described as "deep, well-drained soils that have a sub-soil that is dominantly silty clay; on uplands."



State Code of Virginia – Agricultural and Forestal Districts Act

§ 15.2-4302. Definitions.

"Agricultural products" means crops, livestock and livestock products, including but not limited to: field crops, fruits, vegetables, horticultural specialties, cattle, sheep, hogs, goats, horses, poultry, furbearing animals, milk, eggs and furs.

"Agricultural production" means the production for commercial purposes of crops, livestock and livestock products, and includes the processing or retail sales by the producer of crops, livestock or livestock products which are produced on the parcel or in the district.

"Agriculturally and forestally significant land" means land that has recently or historically produced agricultural and forestal products, is suitable for agricultural or forestal production or is considered appropriate to be retained for agricultural and forestal production as determined by such factors as soil quality, topography, climate, markets, farm structures, and other relevant factors.

"Forestal production" means the production for commercial purposes of forestal products and includes the processing or retail sales, by the producer, of forestal products which are produced on the parcel or in the district. "Forestal products" includes, but is not limited to, saw timber, pulpwood, posts, firewood, Christmas trees and other tree and wood products for sale or for farm use.

§ 15.2-4305. Application for creation of district in one or more localities; size and location of parcels.

"…..any owner or owners of land may submit an application to the locality for the creation of a district or addition of land to an existing district within the locality. Each district shall have a core of no less than 200 acres in one parcel or in contiguous parcels. A parcel not part of the core may be included in a district:

(i) if the nearest boundary of the parcel is within one mile of the boundary of the core,

(ii) if it is contiguous to a parcel in the district the nearest boundary of which is within one mile of the boundary of the core, or

(iii) if the local governing body finds, in consultation with the advisory committee or planning commission, that the parcel not part of the core or within one mile of the boundary of the core contains agriculturally and forestally significant land.

No land shall be included in any district without the signature on the application, or the written approval of all owners thereof…."

§ 15.2-4306. Criteria for evaluating application.

Land being considered for inclusion in a district may be evaluated by the advisory committee and the planning commission through the Virginia Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) System or, if one has been developed, a local LESA System. The following factors should be considered by the local planning commission and the advisory committee, and at any public hearing at which an application that has been filed pursuant to § 15.2-4303 is being considered:

1. The agricultural and forestal significance of land within the district or addition and in areas adjacent thereto;

2. The presence of any significant agricultural lands or significant forestal lands within the district and in areas adjacent thereto that are not now in active agricultural or forestal production;

3. The nature and extent of land uses other than active farming or forestry within the district and in areas adjacent thereto;

4. Local developmental patterns and needs;

5. The comprehensive plan and, if applicable, the zoning regulations;

6. The environmental benefits of retaining the lands in the district for agricultural and forestal uses; and

7. Any other matter which may be relevant.

In judging the agricultural and forestal significance of land, any relevant agricultural or forestal maps may be considered, as well as soil, climate, topography, other natural factors, markets for agricultural and forestal products, the extent and nature of farm structures, the present status of agriculture and forestry, anticipated trends in agricultural economic conditions and such other factors as may be relevant.

(For additional information refer to the attached information from the Department of Conservation and Recreation and the Virginia Department of Forestry.)

§ 15.2-4307. Review of application; notice; hearing.

Upon the receipt of an application for a district or for an addition to an existing district, the program administrator shall refer such application to the advisory committee.

The advisory committee shall review and make recommendations concerning the application or modification thereof to the local planning commission….

Conclusion

While the proposed addition is over one mile from the core, the parcel meets the statutory requirements for agricultural and forestally significant because the landowners are currently use the properties for pasture and timber.

In part, § 15.2-4305, states:

A parcel not part of the core may be included in a district:

(iii) if the local governing body finds, in consultation with the advisory committee or planning commission, that the parcel not part of the core or within one mile of the boundary of the core contains agriculturally and forestally significant land.

§ 15.2-4302. Definitions provides the definition for "Agriculturally and forestally significant land," as "means land that has recently or historically produced agricultural and forestal products, is suitable for agricultural or forestal production or is considered appropriate to be retained for agricultural and forestal production as determined by such factors as soil quality, topography, climate, markets, farm structures, and other relevant factors." ." It further provides that "agricultural products" means crops, livestock and livestock products, including but not limited to:.. field crops,…cattle,..."

Staff recommends approval of the application for addition to the existing Gold Mine Creek Agricultural and Forestal District, as consistent with the current zoning of the properties.

Recommendations of the Agricultural, Forestal, and Rural Preservation Committee

The Agricultural, Forestal and Rural Preservation Committee met to review this application on October 1, 2026. The Committee forwarded a favorable recommendation to the Planning Commission for an addition to the Gold Mine Creek Agricultural and Forestal District, as described.

Recommendation of the Planning Commission

At a regular meeting of the Louisa County Planning Commission held October 8, 2026, the Planning Commission voted to forward a recommendation of approval to the Board of Supervisors on an amendment to Section 86-501 Districts Described of the Louisa County Land Use Regulations to amend the existing Gold Mine Creek Agricultural and Forestal District, as described above.