



Public Information

County of Ventura • Resource Management Agency • Planning Division
800 South Victoria Avenue, Ventura, CA 93009 • 805 654-2466 • www.vcrma.org/divisions/planning

Land Conservation Act (LCA) Contract Frequently Asked Questions

How do I know if I am eligible for an agricultural LCA contract?

A variety of eligibility criteria determine whether you can apply for an LCA contract. The most significant requirements are that your land must: (1) be zoned “Agricultural Exclusive” or “Coastal Agriculture” (or be in process for a zone change to either of the aforementioned zoning designations); (2) be designated “Agricultural” or “Open Space” by the Ventura County General Plan; (3) meet the lot size, land use, and agricultural utilization requirements outlined in the LCA Guidelines; and (4) have been utilized for commercial agricultural production with an income of at least \$500/acre per year for three of the previous five years. Please consider these criteria and review the Ventura County Land Conservation Act Guidelines (www.vcrma.org/land-conservation-act-lca-program) prior to contacting the County’s LCA Program Planner.

Is there anything I’m limited from doing when my property is under an agricultural LCA contract?

During the term of the contract, the uses within the contract area are limited to agricultural and agriculturally-related uses and structures. As long as you meet the requirements of the Coastal or Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance (the applicable ordinance depends on your location) and are keeping the required percentage of land in commercial agricultural production, the structures and uses on your property will likely be in compliance with the LCA contract.

How do I apply for an LCA contract, and what is the cost?

To determine if you are eligible to apply, review the Ventura County Land Conservation Act Guidelines available on the Planning Division website. If you believe you are eligible, contact the LCA Program Planner, Justin Bertoline, via email at Justin.Bertoline@ventura.org or by phone at (805) 654-2466 to request an

application. The LCA application includes a \$1,000 deposit for each contract requested. However, the total cost will ultimately depend on the time spent by the LCA Planner to process your contract request. The current Planning Fee Schedule is available at www.vcrma.org/planning-permit-fees

What are the deadlines to apply for a new LCA contract or a Notice of Non-Renewal?*

New Contracts

First Friday in June, annually

Rescission of Existing Contracts and Re-entry into New Contracts

First Friday in June, annually

Notice of Non-Renewal for a Portion of a Contract

First Friday in June, annually

Notice of Non-Renewal for the Entire Contract Area

October 1st, annually, or the following Monday if October 1st falls on a weekend

* This is the typical timeline to obtain an LCA contract if no contingencies (such as a subdivision) exist.

What is the process for obtaining an agricultural LCA contract, and how long does it take?

Applications must be submitted by the first Friday in June, and processing must be completed by the annual recording deadline of December 31st in order for the contract to be effective the following calendar year.

You must submit a thorough application that provides details on zoning, types of crops (unless the contract is for grazing), lot size, number of acres in agriculture, average income per acre over the past

five years and, if required, a zone change application. The LCA Program Planner will analyze your application materials and will determine if all the eligibility criteria have been met. The Agricultural Policy Advisory Committee (APAC) then reviews the contract proposal and provides a recommendation to the Planning Commission, and ultimately the Board of Supervisors. APAC is an advisory body to the Board of Supervisors that is convened through the Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner's office. See the Agricultural Commissioner's website (www.ventura.org/agricultural-commissioner) for more detailed information.

If there are no contingencies associated with your contract, it will record before December 31st in order to be effective the following calendar year. In the case of a related subdivision, the subdivision must be already in process or applied for concurrent with the LCA application and must record simultaneously with the contract when all contingencies have been met.

If I purchase a property that is currently under an LCA contract, what happens to the contract?

An LCA contract runs with the land. The contract will remain in effect unless the current owner or the County files a Notice of Non-Renewal or requests a cancellation that is approved by the Board of Supervisors.

When does my LCA contract expire?

An LCA contract is self-renewing and is always in the first year of its 10-year or 20-year term, unless non-renewal is initiated by either party to the contract. Therefore, there are always 9 or 19 (for 10 and 20 year contracts, respectively) unexpired years remaining on the contract following the recording of a Notice of Non-Renewal.

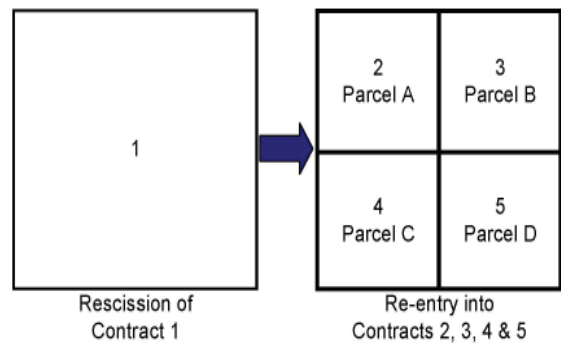
What is a Notice of Non-Renewal?

A contract self-renews each year – there is no expiration date. If a landowner wishes to remove a contract from the property, a Notice of Non-Renewal must be filed with the Planning Division ([see deadlines listed on first page](#)). Once a Notice of Non-Renewal is filed and recorded, the property taxes increase each year on January 1st as the contract period “winds down” for the remainder of the 10-year or 20-year term, until the taxes reach the regular tax rate (i.e. the standard tax rate for an unrestricted property) after the final year. The contract expires on December 31st of the expiration year.

What is a rescission/re-entry?

Typically, rescission/re-entries are processed with a related subdivision. If you own land under contract and propose to adjust a parcel boundary with a neighbor or subdivide your property, you must apply for a simultaneous rescission of the existing contract(s) and re-entry into new contract(s) so that the LCA contract boundaries are consistent with the new parcel configurations and the number of acres under contract does not decrease, as shown in the graphic below.

Sample Rescission/Re-entry



How much will my property taxes be reduced if I enter into an LCA contract?

There are many factors that determine the precise amount of the tax reduction. Reductions range from 10% to 35%. For more information, view the County Assessor's LCA webpage or review the public information brochure entitled “Your Property Assessment Under the Land Conservation Act” provided by the Assessor's Office (<http://assessor.countyofventura.org/>). For more information, contact the Assessor's Office at (805) 477-1544.

Note: All of the general LCA information in this brochure is geared toward agricultural contracts. Specific details may or may not apply to open space/wildlife contracts.
