



News from Livingston County and the Genesee Valley Conservancy



Genesee Valley
Conservancy

MEDIA CONTACT:

GENESEE VALLEY CONSERVANCY – Matthew Halladay (243-2190)

LIVINGSTON COUNTY – Julie Barry, Grants & Public Information Coordinator (243-7051)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Livingston County and the Genesee Valley Conservancy Announce the Availability of Farmland Protection Applications

Geneseo, NY, January 25, 2021 – Livingston County and the Genesee Valley Conservancy have announced that the Livingston County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Board will be accepting pre-applications from landowners interested in being considered for the next New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets Farmland Protection program or other state and federal farmland protection initiatives that may become available in the future.

The Farmland Protection program buys conservation easements on the State's most productive farmland. The program is completely voluntary, and the seller retains title to the land and can continue farming the property. However, the land will have permanent restrictions on commercial, residential and industrial uses in perpetuity. To date in Livingston County, 27 conservation easements have been completed protecting over 10,000 acres through the State PDR program.

The State PDR competitive program reimburses farmers up to 87.5% of the value of the development rights on their land. The process of choosing the Livingston County farms to be submitted to the State will begin with a pre-application. All farmers wishing to apply to the State PDR program must complete the pre-application. These will be scored using criteria including amount of development pressure, quality of soils to be protected and farm viability. The highest scoring pre-application(s) will be invited to have full applications submitted to the program. These pre-applications may be used to select eligible farms for other future state and federal farmland protection programs. The Livingston County Planning Department, the Genesee Valley Conservancy, and the Livingston County Soil and Water Conservation District in Geneseo work cooperatively to manage the pre-application phase.

Prior to submitting the pre-application, farmers must meet all eligibility requirements as specified on the pre-application. Eligibility requirements include having at least 50% USDA Prime Soils, Prime if drained, or Soils of Statewide Importance; being in good standing with local tax authorities; attending a mandatory virtual pre-application workshop in February, and other requirements.

JOINT PRESS RELEASE – Livingston County, January 25th, 2021

Two workshops will be held to provide landowners with information about the program. Attendance at one of the workshops is required by all landowners prior to submitting a pre-application. Workshops will be held via video conference on:

Saturday, February 13: 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 pm

Thursday, February 18: 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

The pre-application can be downloaded from the County's website at:

<https://www.livingstoncounty.us/215/Purchase-of-Development-Rights-Program>.

To obtain a paper copies of the pre-application, please contact the Genesee Valley Conservancy or the Livingston County Planning Department at the phone numbers listed below.

The pre-application deadline is March 12, 2021. The full application deadline to the New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets has not yet been announced, and there is no guarantee the State will release a funding opportunity this budget year. However, establishing a pipeline of interested farms is crucial to demonstrating funding needs and critical to leveraging other non-State funding.

For more information, please contact: Matt Halladay at the Genesee Valley Conservancy at 243-2190; the Livingston County Soil and Water Conservation District in Geneseo at 243-0043; or the Livingston County Planning Department at 243-7550.

For more information on the New York State Farmland Protection program, visit:

<https://www.agriculture.ny.gov/AP/agservices/farmprotect.html>

###