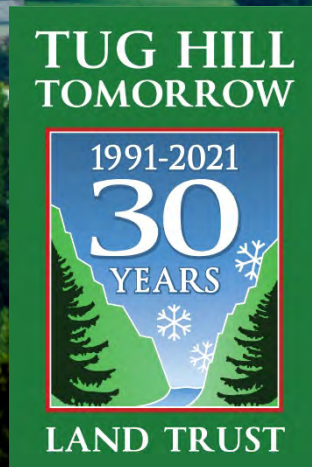


Farmland Conservation

Wednesday, February 10, 2021

Online Zoom Webinar



Poll Question #1: How would you describe yourself?

Answer 1: Town Board Member

Answer 2: Planning Board Member

Answer 3: Agricultural landowner

Answer 4: Active farmer

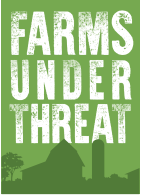
Answer 5: Agency Staff

Answer 6: Just Interested



FARMS UNDER THREAT: THE STATE OF THE STATES

NEW YORK



American Farmland Trust

SAVING THE LAND THAT SUSTAINS US



PROTECT FARMLAND

We lose 2,000 acres of farmland a day across the US: this has serious implications for food production, our environment, and the next generation of farmers. In the time it takes to binge an episode of your latest show...we've lost another 64 acres.



PROMOTE SOUND FARMING PRACTICES

We help farmers with the difficult transition to more regenerative farming practices that rebuild soil health, sequester carbon, protect our waterways, and boost income.



KEEP FARMERS ON THE LAND

A seismic transfer of farmland is looming. More than 40% of American farmland is owned by seniors aged 65 and older. We provide the know-how, tools, and partnerships that connect current landowners with new farmers to ensure a sustainable farming future.

What is Farms Under Threat?

AFT's multi-year initiative to document the status of and threats to America's agricultural land while offering policy solutions to save that land.



Our Approach

Identify
Threats to
Agricultural
Land



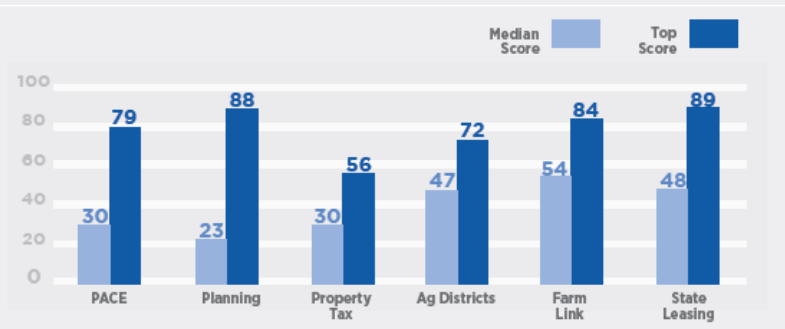
Inform
Policymaking

AND

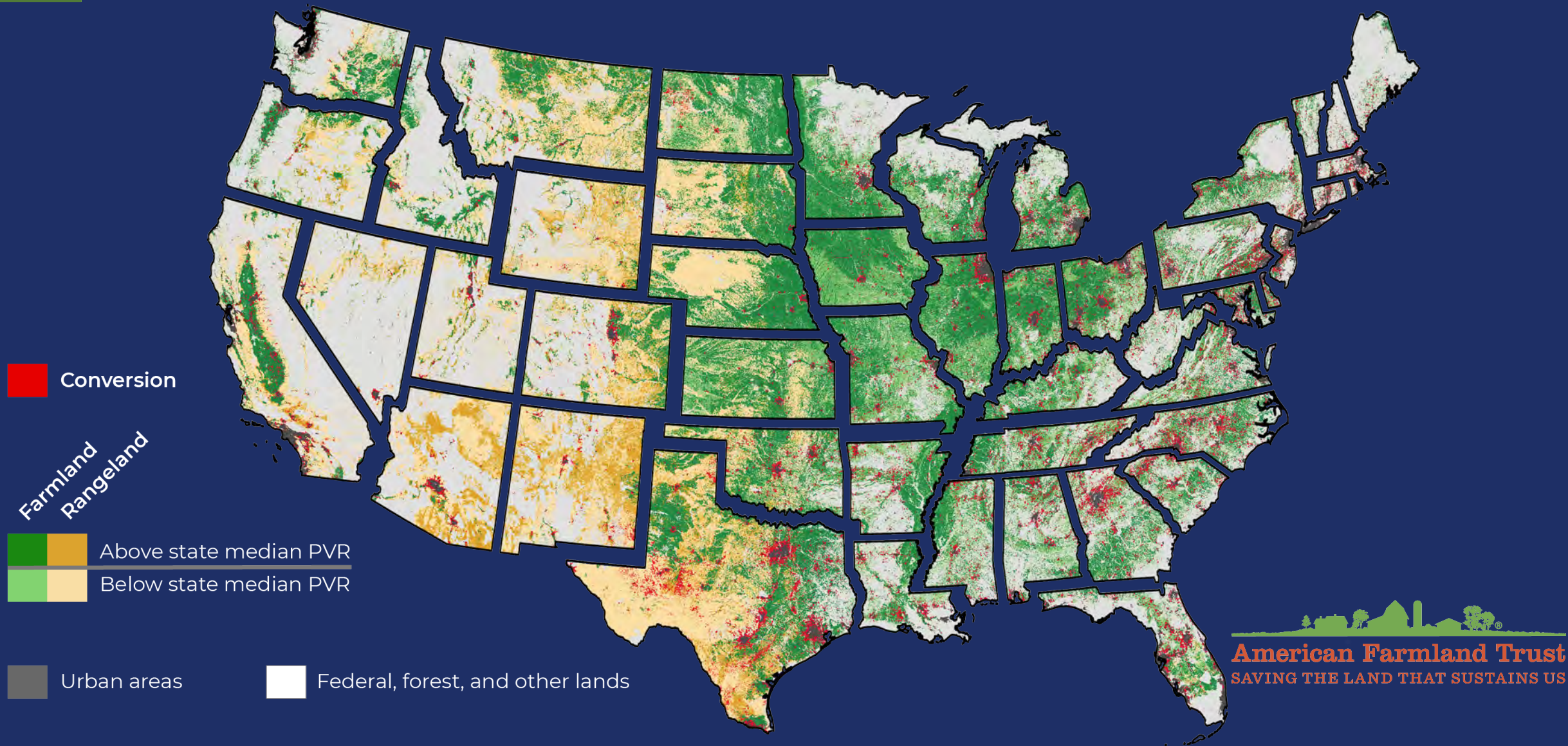
Protect More
Farmland and
Ranchland



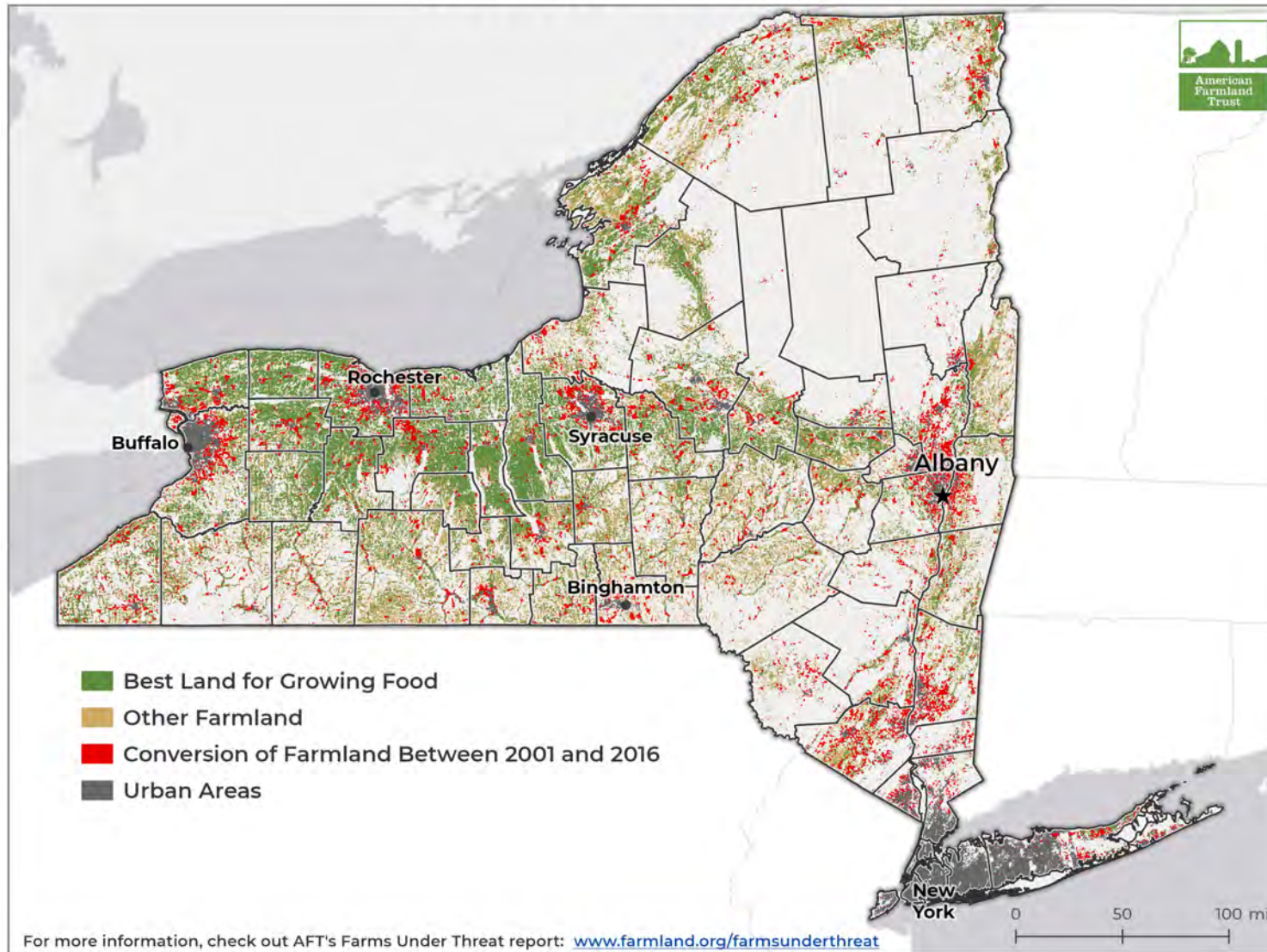
Analyze
State Policy
Responses



11 Million Acres Converted, 2001-2016



New York's Farmland



New York lost **253,500 acres** of farmland between 2001-2016

51% of which was nationally significant

In the Tug Hill Region
Jefferson and Oneida Counties

- Top 20 Statewide for Conversion
- Top 20 Nationally for Acres of Best Farmland

Poll Question #2:
What do you think the biggest threat to farming is
where you live?

Answer 1: Lack of profit or markets

Answer 2: Transferring farms to the next generation of farmers

Answer 3: Residential subdivisions

Answer 4: Solar energy proposals

Answer 5: Climate change

Answer 6: Something else (please type in the chat)

New York's Farmland is Increasingly Vulnerable to Conversion



**Intergenerational
Farmland Transition**



Solar Development



**Continued Development
Pressure**



Urban and Highly Developed



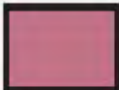
Low-Density Residential

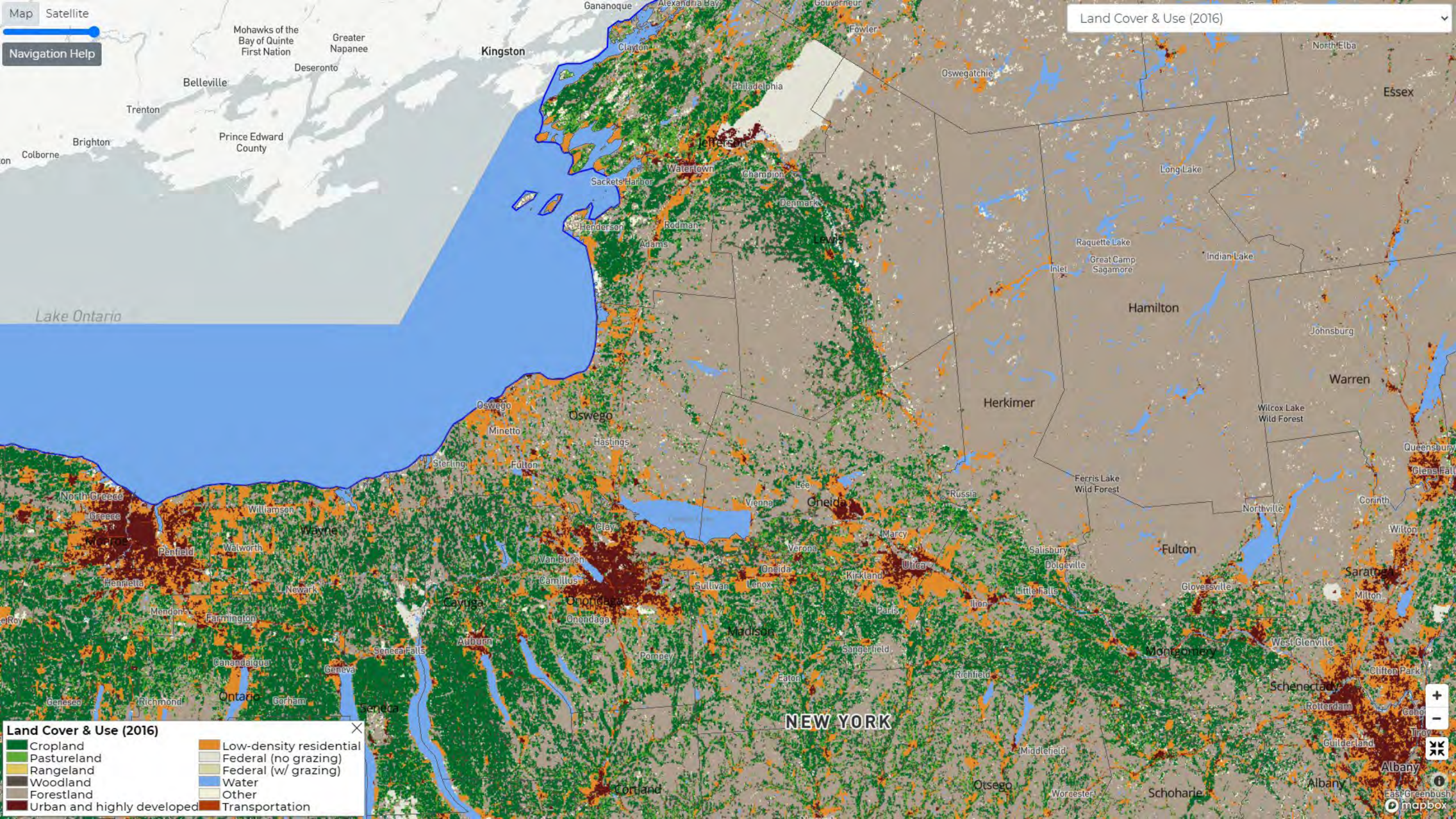
An aerial photograph showing a suburban neighborhood with numerous houses and a large, open field. The houses are clustered in the lower half of the image, while the field occupies the upper half. The text "10 times more likely" is overlaid in the center of the image.

10 times more likely

Spectrum of Low-Density Residential Land Use



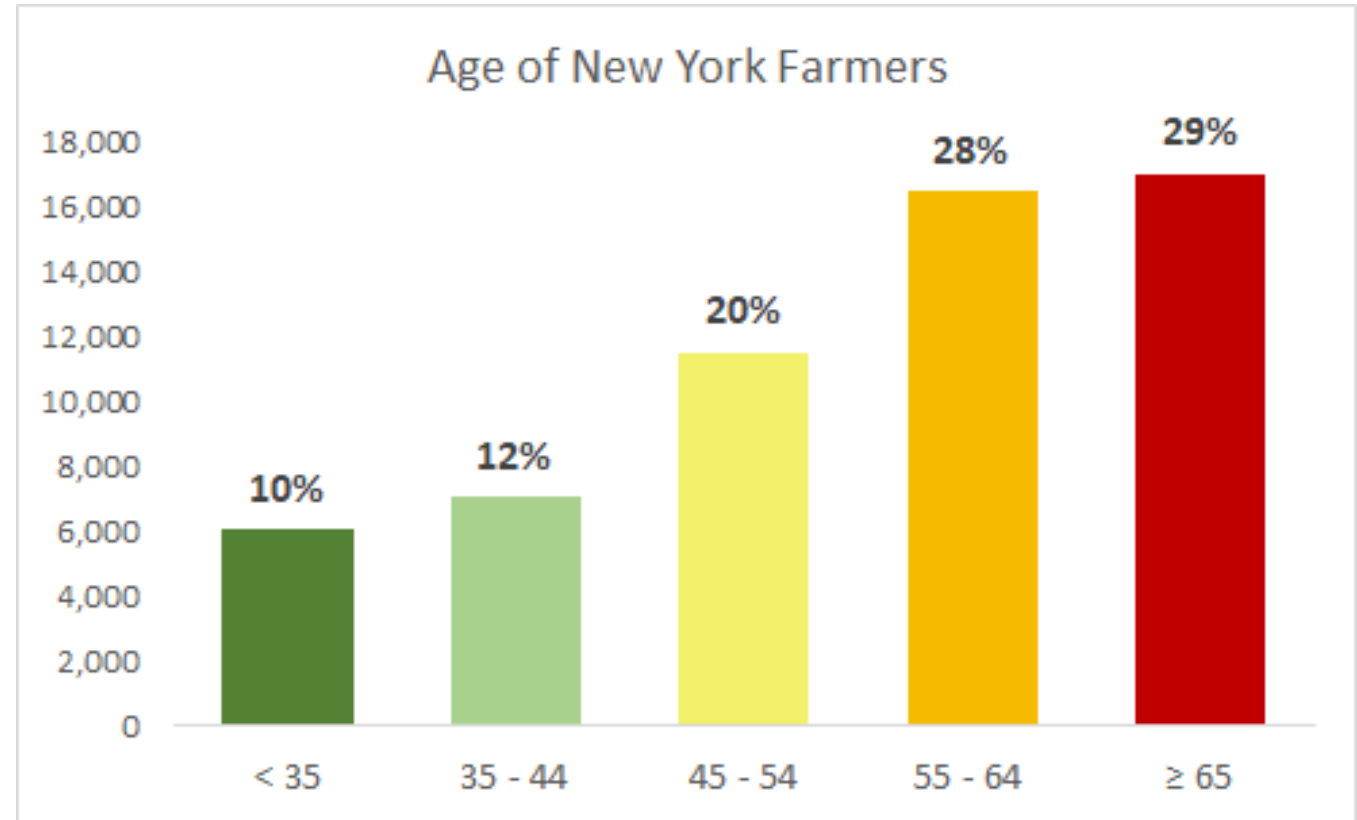
 Land shown in this color was recently converted to LDR land use (2001-2016).



Farmers in New York are Aging

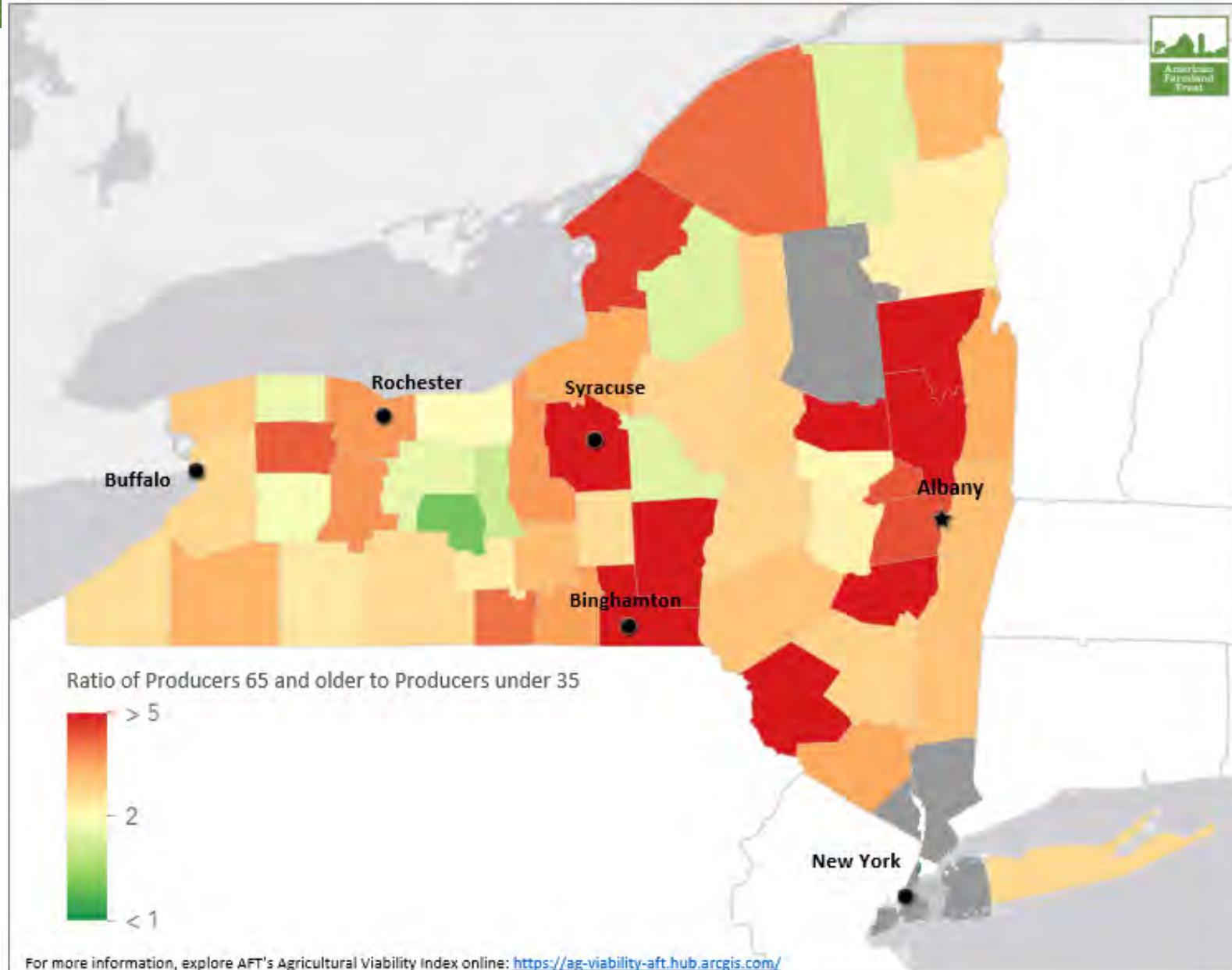
Nearly **one third** of New York farmers are over 65

These senior farmers own or operate **1.7 million acres** vulnerable to being lost as it changes hands in the coming years



*Young and new farmers, and Black, Indigenous, and farmers of color face enormous challenges finding **affordable land** that will enable them to launch successful farm businesses*

Ratio of New York Farmers 65 and older to Farmers under 35

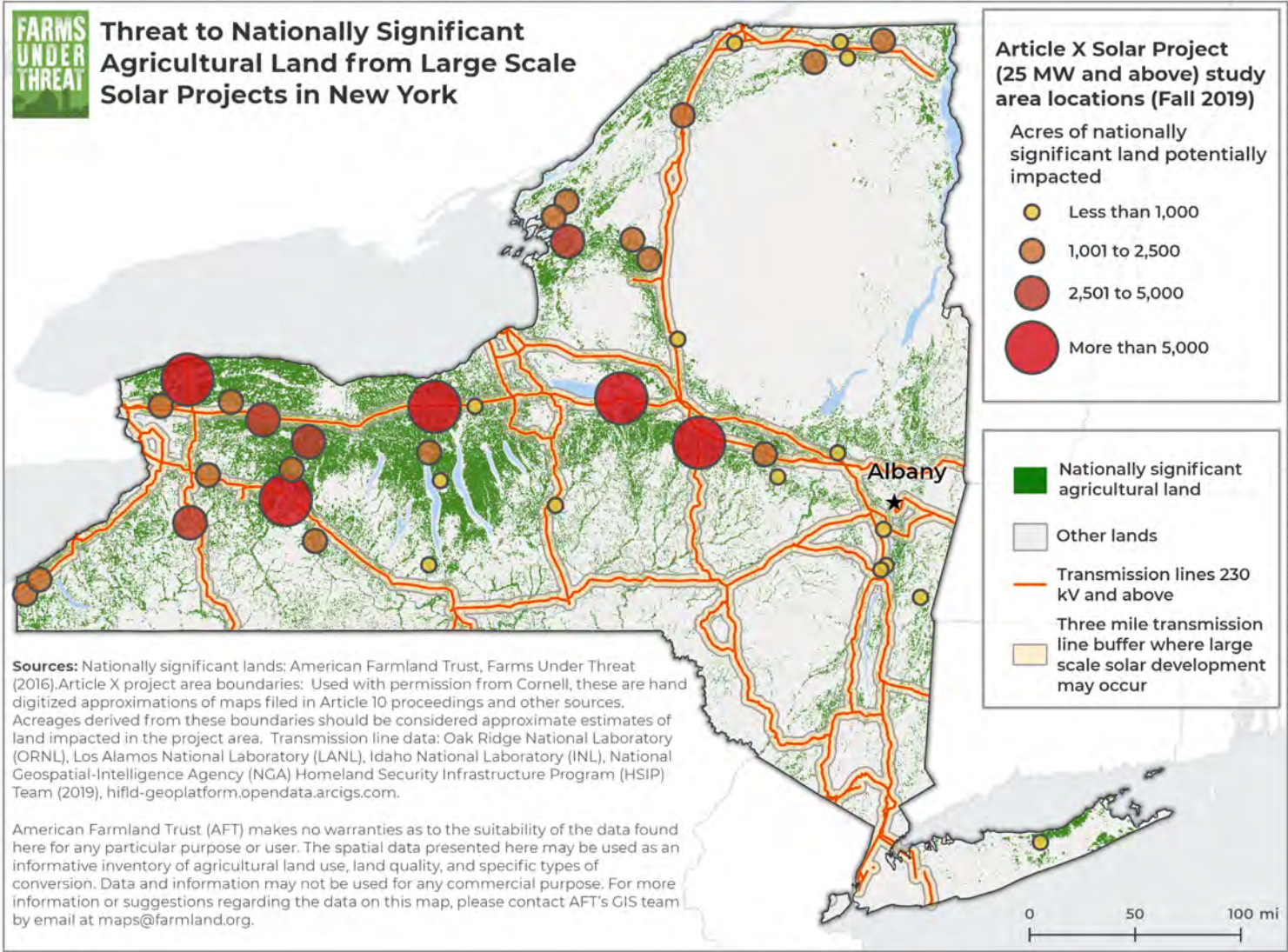


On average, farmers over 65 outnumber farmers under 35 at a rate of 4:1 in New York state

In the Tug Hill region, senior farmers outnumber younger farmers at a rate of 3:1

Smart Solar Siting on Farmland

- Seeking Solutions to Keep our Best Land in Farming as we Build out Renewable Energy
- Policies to Avoid Best Farmland
- Require Developers to Follow NYSDAM Guidelines
- Research and Incentivize Agrivoltaics

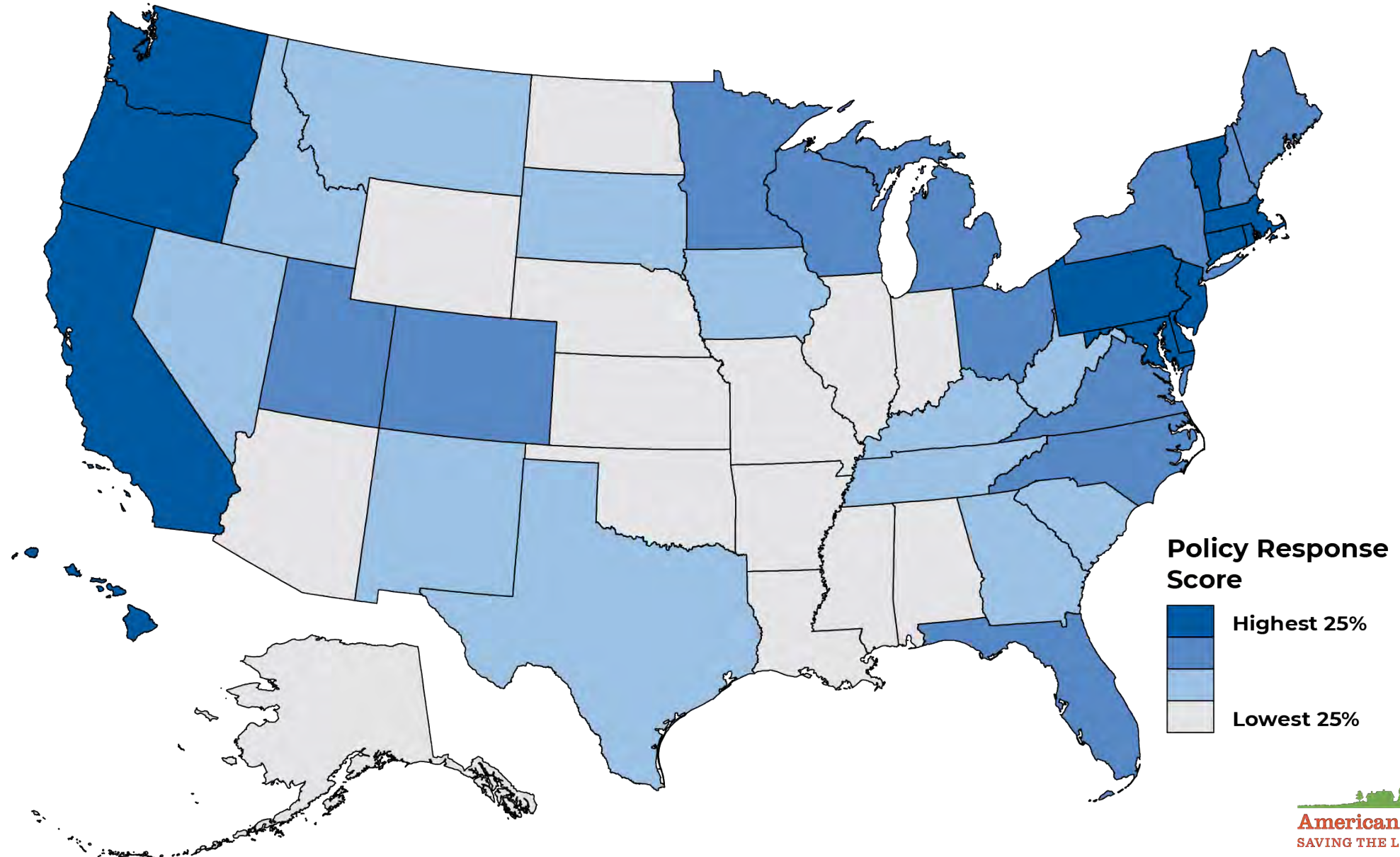




Policies & Programs

- Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easements (PACE)
- Land-Use Planning
- Agricultural Districts
- Property Tax Relief
- Farm Link
- State Leasing

The Agricultural Land Protection Scorecard

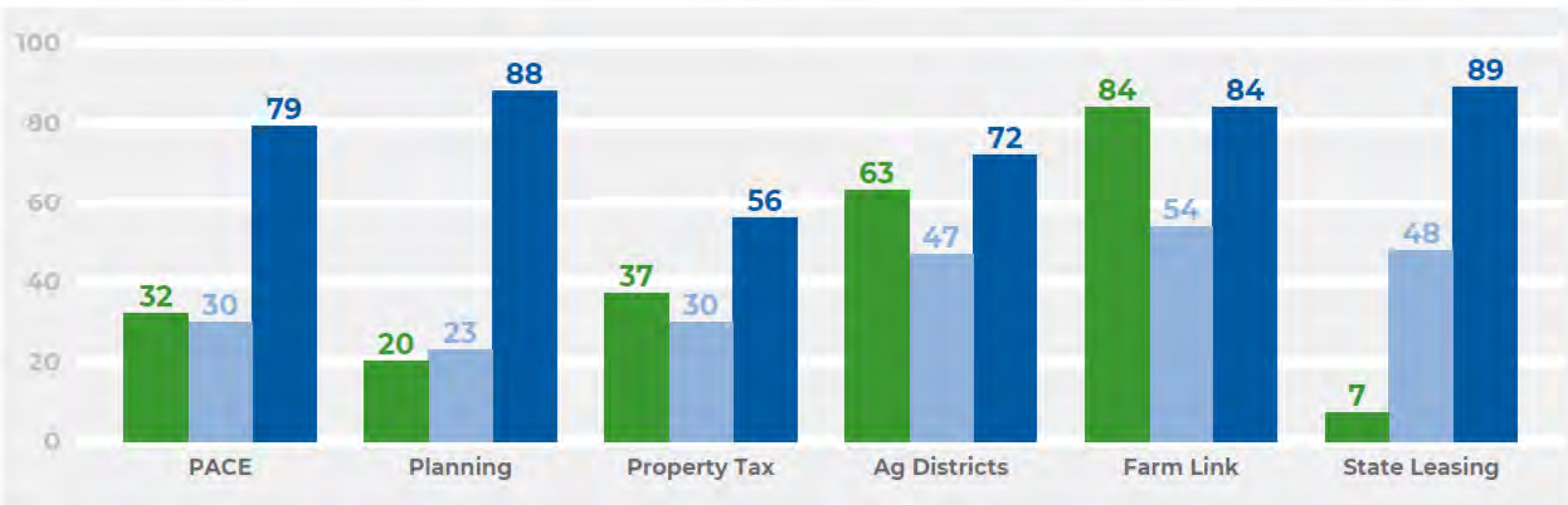


HOW NEW YORK STACKS UP

New York
Score

Median
Score

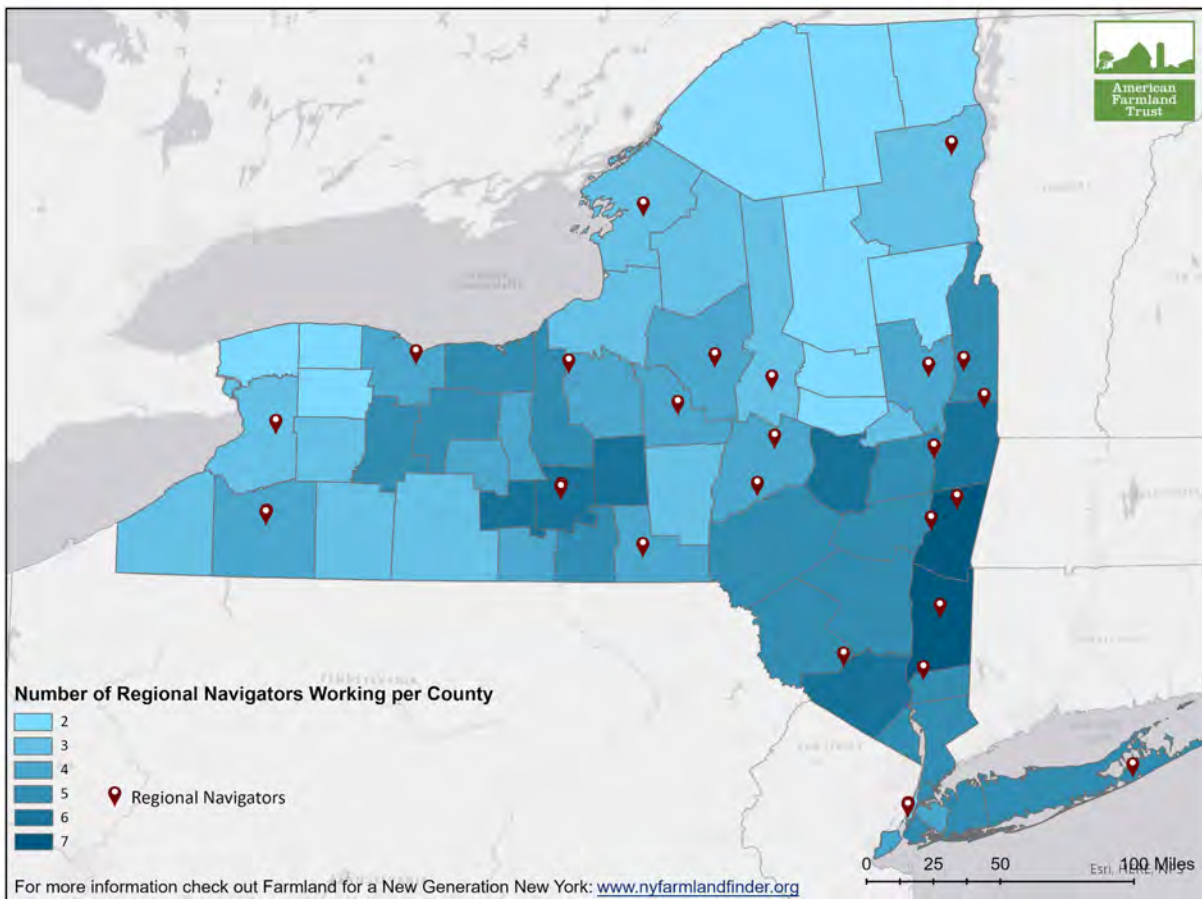
Top
Score



Policy scoresheet scores: Final policy scores compared to the median and the highest scores achieved by all states that have implemented each policy. Even among high-response states, no state received a perfect score for any individual policy; every state has the potential to do more.



Where FNG-NY Regional Navigators Work with Farmers



This statewide publicly-funded program is a partnership between NYSDAM, AFT, CCE, land trusts and other organizations to bring a new generation of farmers onto the land.

FNG-NY offers a Resource Center (www.nyfarmlandfinder.org) and first point of contact, and 27 regional navigator organizations work one-on-one to support senior and new farmers and landowners across the state.

Since its launch in 2018, over 5,000 farmers have received one on one assistance, and 68 matches spanning 2,613 acres have been reported.



Questions?



Explore the maps and scorecard at:
www.farmland.org/farmsunderthreat

Erica Goodman, New York Regional Director
egoodman@farmland.org



www.farmlandinfo.org



**National
Agricultural
Land
Network**

A PROJECT OF
AMERICAN FARMLAND TRUST

www.farmland.org/NALN

Is Your Town Planning for Agriculture?

*Establishing Local Public Policy
to Support and Protect
Agriculture*

Jeff Kehoe 518-457-4626

Division of Land and Water Resources
Agriculture Protection Unit



Poll Question #3:
Does your town address agriculture in its
comprehensive plan or zoning law?

Answer 1: Yes

Answer 2: No

Answer 3: I'm not sure

Poll Question #4:

When was the last time your town modified land use regulations to accommodate agricultural practices?

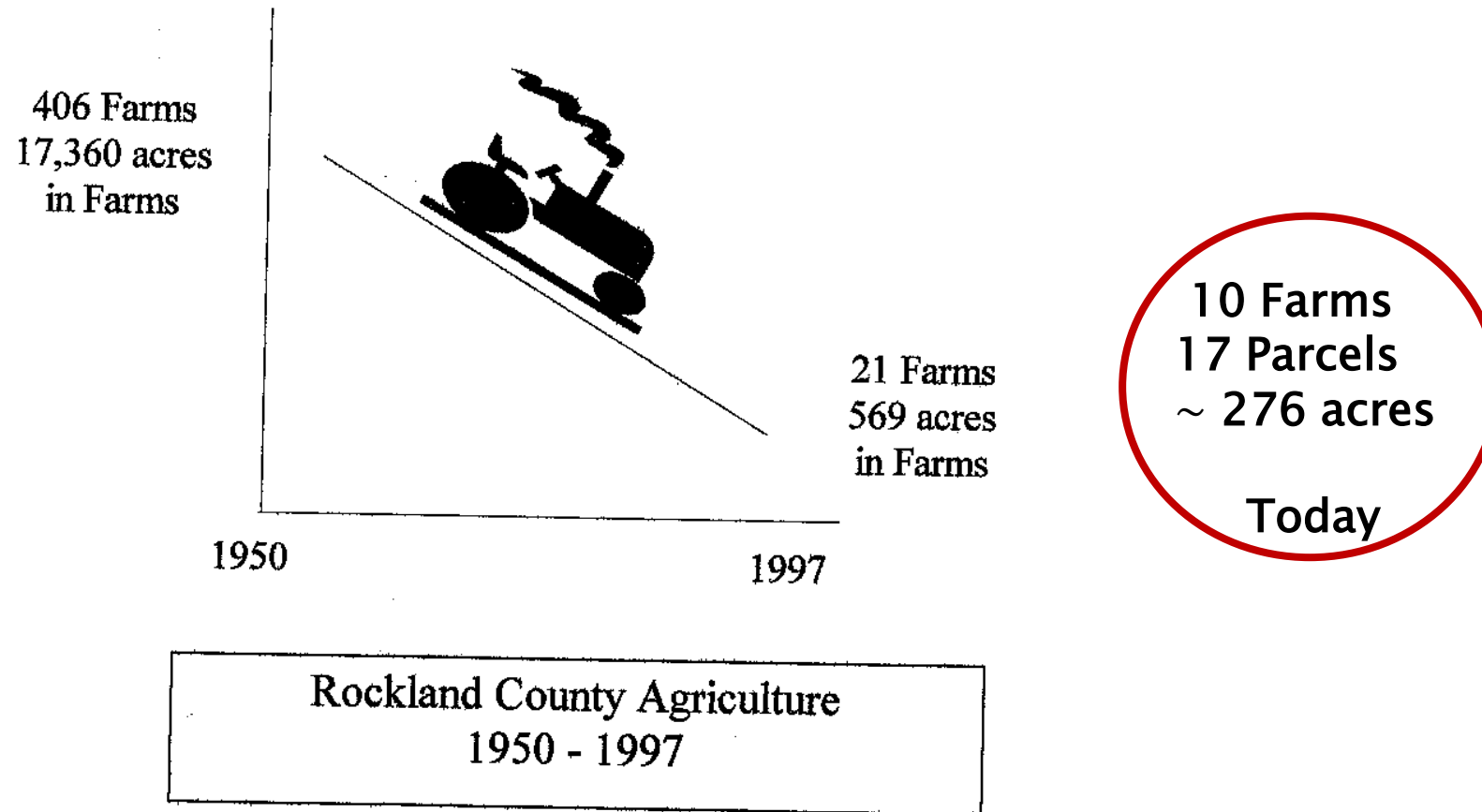
Answer 1: Within the last five years

Answer 2: In process

Answer 3: More than five years ago

Answer 4: I'm not sure

“Agriculture: If you ignore it will go away.”



Is Your Town Planning For Agriculture?

Does your town...

Have a vision for Agriculture?

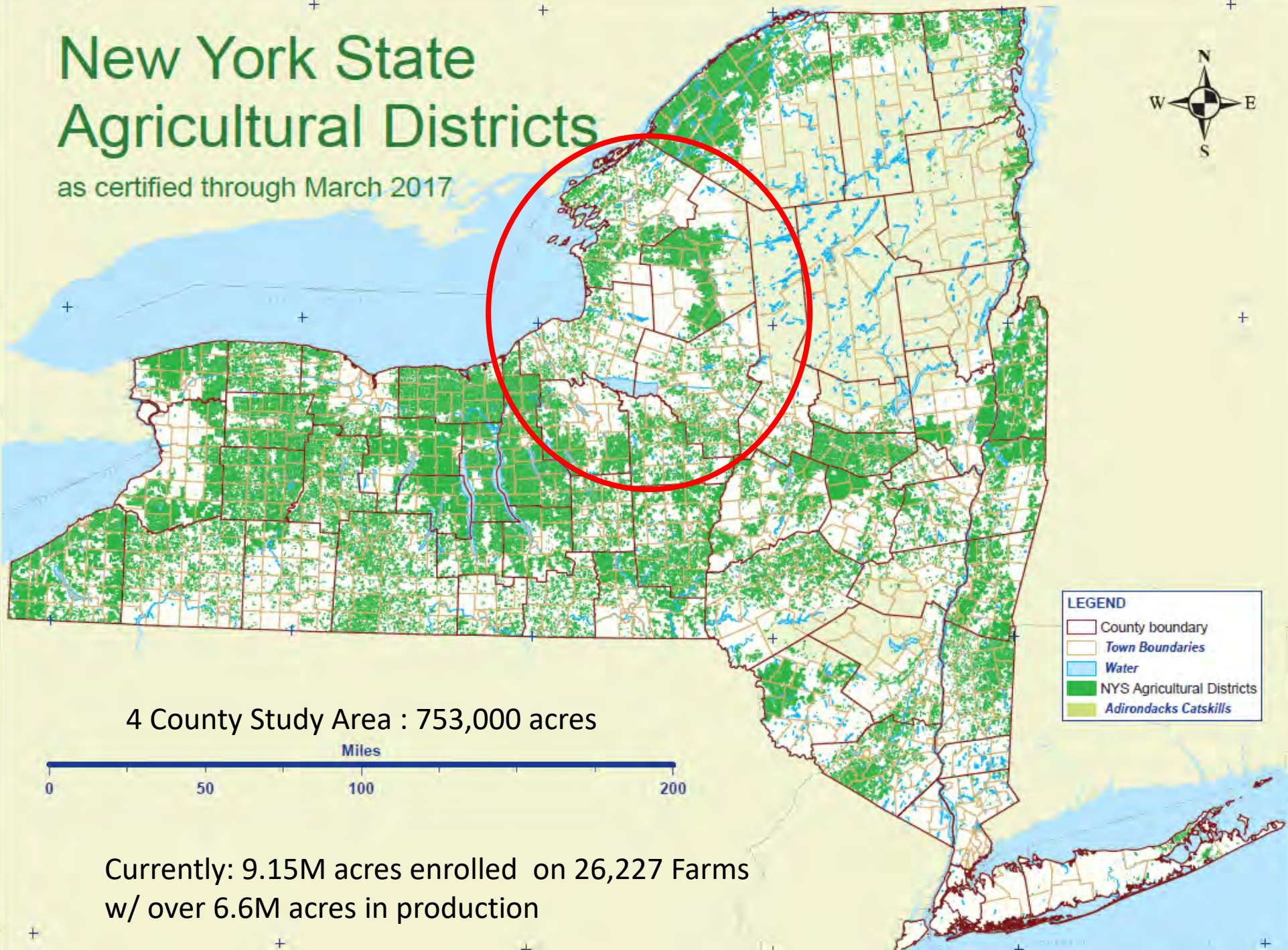
Identify areas where it wants to protect agriculture?

Have a strategy for protecting its best farmland?
(What Planning Tools are in your Toolbox?)

Where is my Town's best Farmland?

New York State Agricultural Districts

as certified through March 2017



Currently: 9.15M acres enrolled on 26,227 Farms
w/ over 6.6M acres in production

Is Your Town Planning For Agriculture?

Has your Town defined and zoned for...

- Agri-Tourism

(Tourism v. Direct Marketing of Agricultural Products)

- Industrial Scale Solar Arrays

(NYS Solar Guidebook: NYSERDA.ny.gov)

- Farm Brewery/Distillery/Winery

(State Liquor Authority: ABC Laws)

- Industrial Hemp/ Cannabis

Farm Friendly Zoning

Does your town...

...allow agriculture uses in more than one zoning district?

...allow ag. marketing in Ag. Zone?
(farm stands, farmers markets, equipment dealers)

...have an agricultural zone that limits the impacts of non-farm uses and encroaching development?

Prioritized Ag. Lands

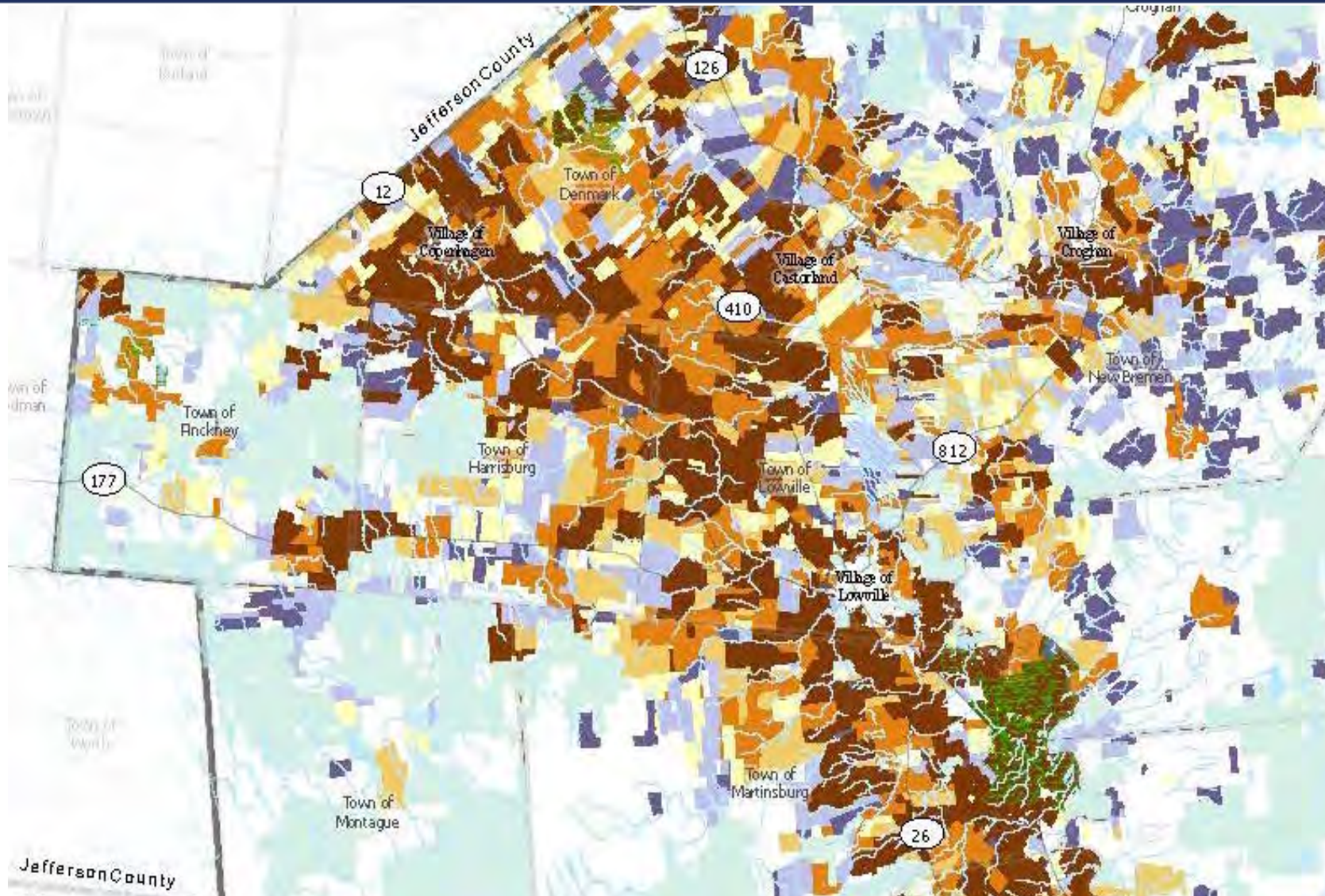


Image: Lewis County Ag. Protection Plan 2021

Ag & Farmland Protection Plan

Up to \$25,000 Grant:

\$1,700 Cash Match (Town)

\$6,700 In-Kind

Consultant(s) typically receive \$26,700

In-Kind Contributions of \$6,700 from
Project Partners

- Cornell Cooperative Extension
- County Soil & Water Conservation District
- County Planning/ Real Property
- Farm Bureau/ NRCS/ Land Trusts/ Ag. Colleges/
Grange/ Rotary/ Beginning & Veteran
Farmers....Who else?

TOWN OF OSSIAN AGRICULTURE AND FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN



Adopted • _____ 2017

Prepared by:

CC Environment & Planning
23 Jackson Street, Suite 201
Batavia, New York 14020
www.ccenvironment.com
(585) 219-4030



Why Ag Protection Planning?

- Poor planning or no planning has led to a significant loss of active farmland.
- Traditional zoning tools do not protect agriculture
- Multiple mechanisms needed to protect agriculture (*smart growth*)
- Extension of sewer/water to non-farm uses in ag zones is a *major* threat to farm viability.
- Ag protection is best done at local level. (... How?)

Simple Local Actions to Protect Agriculture

- Update Agriculture Definitions to Accommodate Ag.
- Adopt a Right to Farm Law (*local conflict mediation*)
- Agricultural Zoning (*limit growth inducing land uses*)
- Include Ag in Comp Plan
- Lateral Restrictions
- Ag Data Statement
- Draft an Ag Plan!



Questions?

Thank You!

Jeff Kehoe

(518) 457-4626

Agriculture Protection Planner

jeffrey.kehoe@agriculture.ny.gov

Division of Land and Water Resources

10B Airline Drive, Albany, NY 12235

<http://www.agriculture.ny.gov>



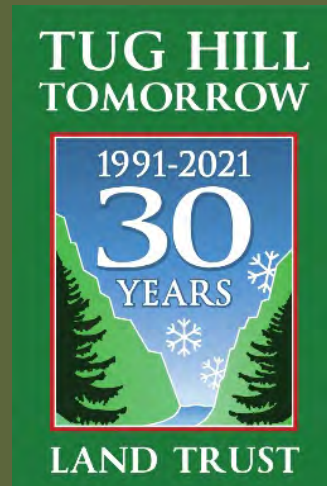
**Agriculture
and Markets**



Farmland Conservation on Tug Hill

What is Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust?

- Regional, private, nonprofit organization
- Founded in 1990 by group of local citizens
- Incorporated as a 501(c)3 in 1991 (celebrating 30 years in 2021!)
- Serves Tug Hill portions of Jefferson, Lewis, Oswego and Oneida Counties



Mission

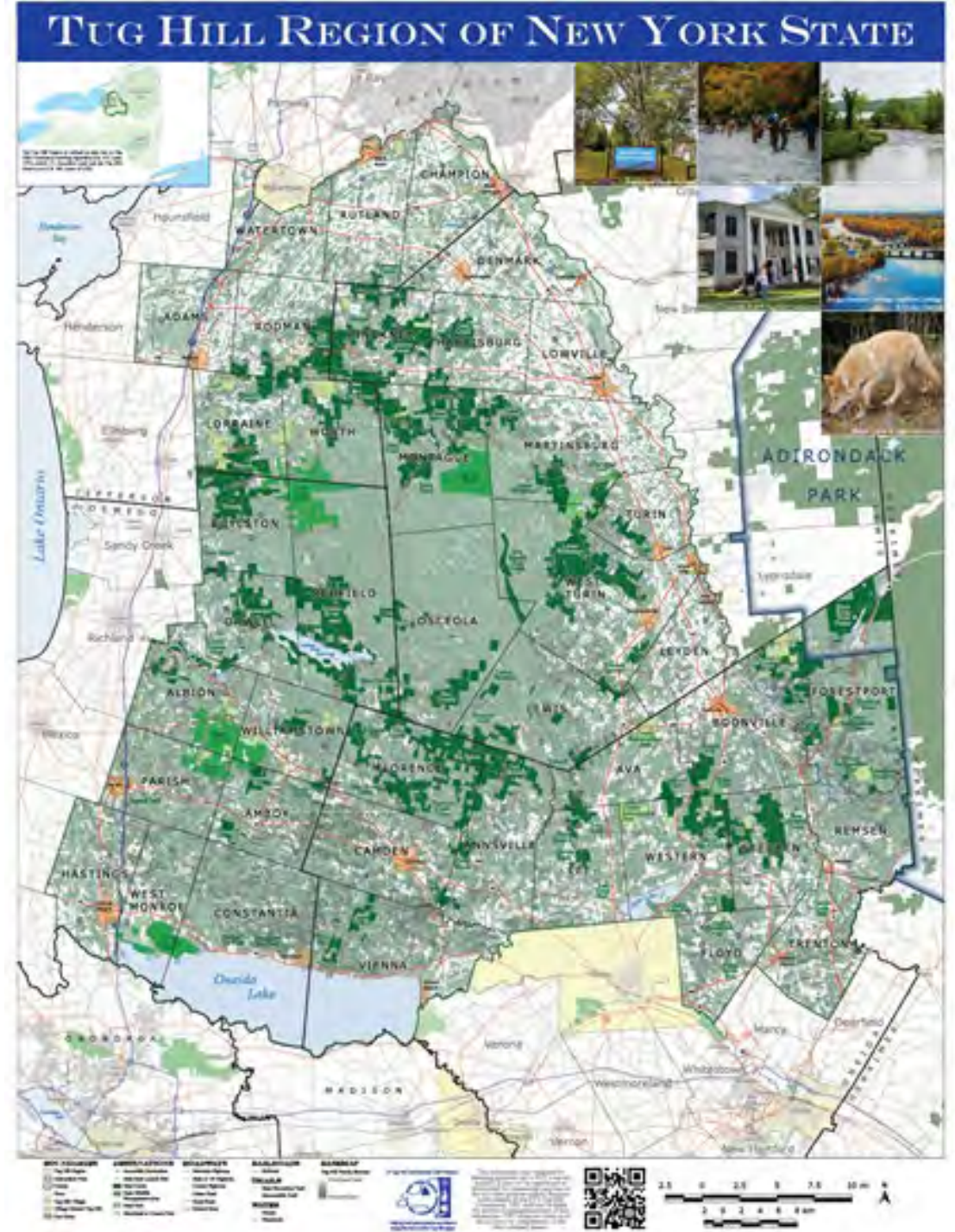
Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust's mission is to protect the wildlands, working forests and farms of the Tug Hill region and surrounding areas, and to promote appreciation of the region's natural and cultural heritage, for present and future generations.

We do this through

*Land Protection
Outreach & Education*



Mickey Dietrich, NYS Tug Hill Commission



THTLT Protects Farmland Through

- Purchasing Development Rights – Agricultural Conservation Easement
- Accepting Donated Conservation Easements
- Working with Towns and County Agriculture & Farmland Protection Boards

Purchasing Development Rights Programs

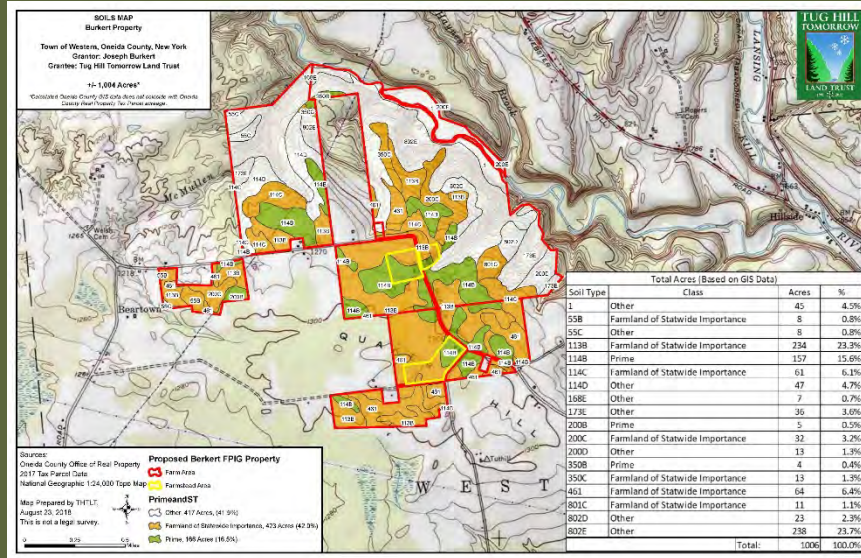
- NYS Ag & Markets Farmland Protection Implementation Grants
- NYS Ag & Markets Dairy Transition Grants
- Army Compatible Use Buffer Program
- Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) –
Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)–
Agricultural Land Easements(ALE)

NYS Farmland Protection Implementation Grants



Central Region

- **Work with County to select projects**
- **Based on soils, size, viability, location**
- **Looking for most competitive projects**
- **Applications very time consuming**
- **Competing with projects from Middle part of NYS**



- Land trust, town or SWCD must apply behalf of farmer
- Town Board and County Farmland Protection Board must approve project
- THTLT completes application
- Farmer gets paid to give up development rights
- Keeps land available for farming
- FOREVER



NYS Dairy Transition Grants



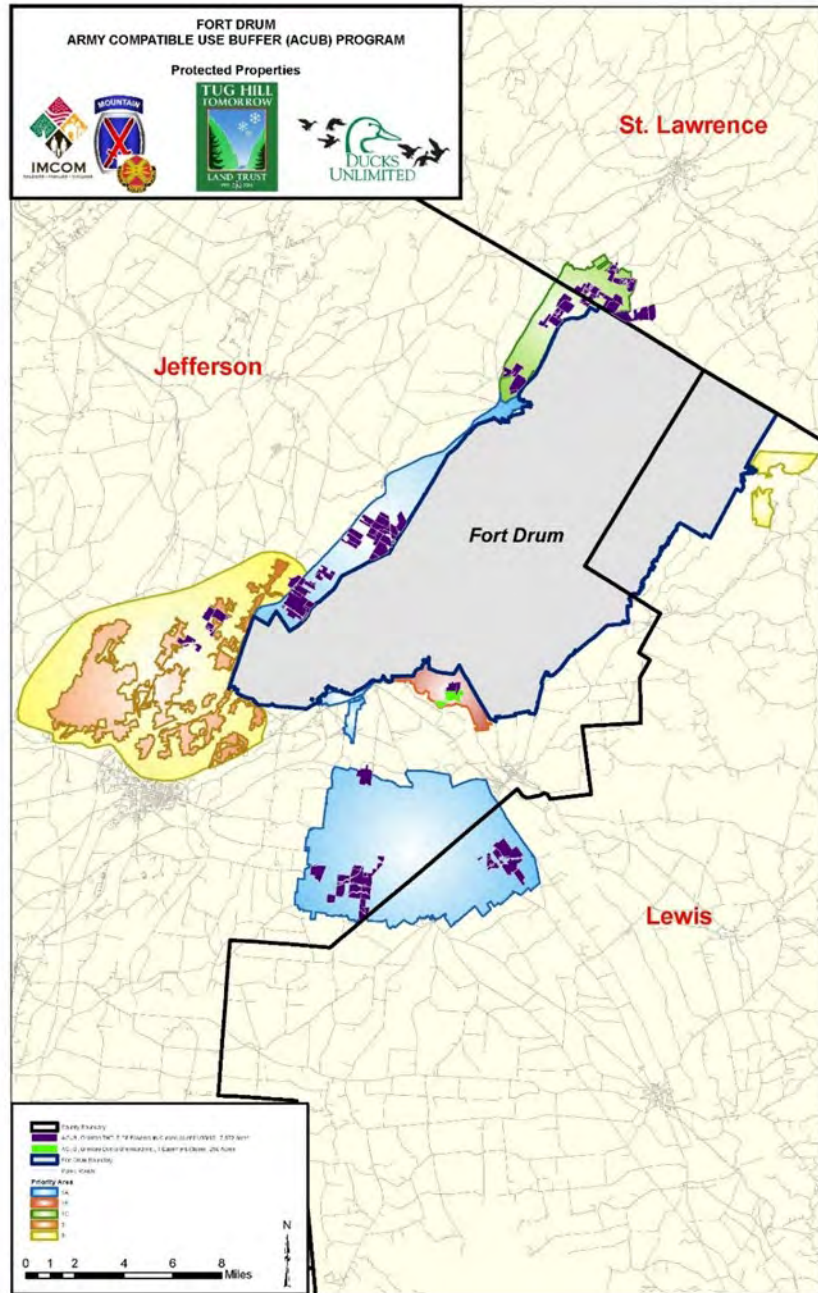
Groeslon Farm - Remsen

- Like the FPIG but specifically for Dairy Farms transitioning to new owner or next generation or diversifying operation
- Town Board and County Farmland Protection Board Approval
- First come first serve
- Not sure of future grants

Army Compatible Buffer Program



- Partnering with Ft. Drum and Ducks Unlimited
- Specifically for around Ft. Drum
- Army sets priority
- Very similar to State Farmland Protection Grants
- Funding both Federal and State



- 29 Farm Families
- 8,451 acres

Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) – Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)– Agricultural Land Easements(ALE)



- Federal Program
- 50% cost share
- Similar to state program
- THTLT has not utilized this program to date



Donated Agricultural Conservation Easements



- Usually for the love of the land
- Peace of Mind
- Tax Benefits
- Income Tax Deductions
 - ~ *Federal Income Tax Deduction*
 - ~ *NYS Income Tax Credit*



Working with Towns and County Planning and Agriculture & Farmland Protection Boards

- County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plans
- Towns Comprehensive Planning
- Providing information about importance of Farmland Conservation
- Currently working on a region-wide agricultural protection plan



Thank for joining us tonight.

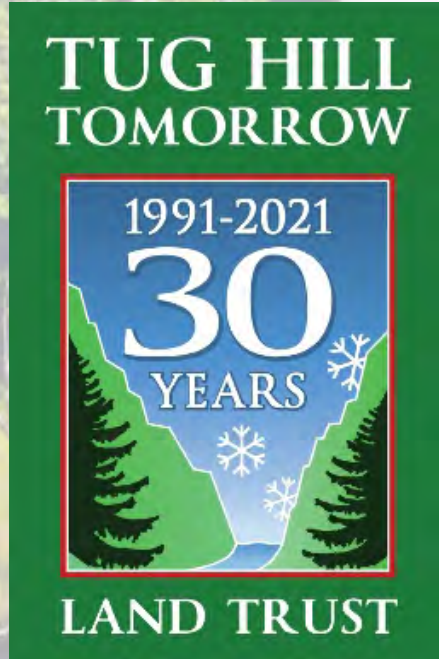
One last webinar!



Wednesday, March 10, 7:00 p.m.
FOREST CONSERVATION

Register at www.tughill.org

Questions?



For more information
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PO Box 6063
Watertown, New York 13601
(315)779-8240
lgarrett@tughilltomorrow.org
www.TugHillTomorrowLandTrust.org