



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Mark Grisanti

Land Conservancy Awarded \$49,700 from Conservation Partnership Program Grants

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On Thursday, April 24, Governor Cuomo announced \$1.4 million in Conservation Partnership Program grants for 50 nonprofit land trusts across the state. Representatives of the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and the Land Trust Alliance unveiled the grantees at an event at Indian Ladder Farms in Albany County as part of a weeklong celebration of Earth Day. The grants, funded through the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF), will be matched by nearly \$1.1 million in private and local funding and will support projects to enhance public access and recreational opportunities, protect farmland, and conserve open space.

“Land trusts continue to make a difference in local communities, maximizing public and private dollars to protect and preserve our state’s natural resources for generations to come,” said Governor Cuomo.

“Through partnerships like these, New York is utilizing the Environmental Protection Fund to provide critical support for many environmental and open space programs, generating revenue, creating jobs, and ensuring a cleaner and healthier New York.”

The Western New York Land Conservancy was awarded \$49,700 – one of the largest awards to any land trust in the state – in two separate grants. The first grant will help reimburse the Land Conservancy for costs related to protecting the Mill Road Scenic Overlook, a 60-acre property in Aurora with spectacular views and important wildlife habitat. The second grant will help the Land Conservancy “catalyze” land protection work along the Niagara River and Niagara Escarpment, two of our region’s most iconic natural areas.

The Executive Director of the Western New York Land Conservancy, Nancy Smith, said, “Past awards from this program have helped the Land Conservancy build its capacity. Completing the \$650,000 Mill Road Scenic Overlook project and embarking on the ambitious \$3.2 million Stella Niagara Preserve project in Lewiston would not have been possible without previous funding. These current grants will strengthen our conservation efforts for the Niagara River, Niagara Escarpment, and the rest of the region.”

Congressman Brian Higgins (NY-26), said, “Western New York is home to some of the world’s most important natural assets, including two Great Lakes and Niagara Falls. The Land Conservancy is to be commended for its determined leadership and commitment to helping protect these resources and enhancing connections to our waterfront and other conservation areas so vital to our future prosperity.”

Congressman Chris Collins (NY-27), said, “Our region’s rural areas, open spaces, and farmland are an important part of our heritage, and our economy. The Land Conservancy, with funding from the Conservation Partnership Program, will help us preserve the character of our communities and create economic opportunities for generations to come.”

Senator Mark Grisanti, chair of the Senate Environmental Conservation Committee, said, “I am pleased that we were able to secure an additional \$9 million for the EPF this year because we need that money to support the work of environmental stewards like the Land Trust Alliance. These Conservation Partnership Program grants will go a long way in protecting farm land from development and providing New Yorkers with more recreational opportunities.”