

MINUTES: Agricultural Lands Preservation Committee Meeting
Thursday, September 5, 2024

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Commissioner, Ashley Randle, Department of Agricultural Resources
Rita Thibideau, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Non-Voting Member
Kurt Gaertner, EOEEA
Becca George, EOHLC
Kathy Orlando, Sheffield Land Trust
Warren Shaw, Farmer Representative
Clem Clay, UMass Center of Agriculture
Susan Flaccus, Farmer Member
Fred Dabney, Farmer Member

ALSO PRESENT:

Winton Pitcoff, Department of Agricultural Resources
David Viale, Department of Agricultural Resources
Ron Hall, Department of Agricultural Resources
Michele Padula, Department of Agricultural Resources
Jay Rosa, Department of Agricultural Resources
Jill Ward, Department of Agricultural Resources
Chris Chisholm, Department of Agricultural Resources
Dorothy Du, Department of Agricultural Resources
Tyler Maikath, Department of Agricultural Resources
Julie Weiss, Department of Agricultural Resources
Tina Smith, Department of Agricultural Resources
Delia Delongchamp, Department of Agricultural Resources
Jill Banach, Department of Agricultural Resources
Nathan Moyer, Department of Agricultural Resources
Margaret Callanan, Department of Agricultural Resources
Cory Fox, Department of Agricultural Resources
Taylor Arsenault, Department of Agricultural Resources
Jake Lehan, Department of Agricultural Resources
Kathleen Doherty, American Farmland Trust
Robert and Jaqueline Chamberlain, APR Landowners

I. Updates:

Acquisition Coordinator, Ron Hall, provided APR program updates to the members of the ALPC. The APR program has acquired five APR projects during FY24. These five projects protected roughly 145-acres with an APR value of \$3,266,000.

The Department's most recent APR closing was the Edward Andrews farmland parcel in Richmond, Massachusetts. This was MDAR's first closing with NRCS as a certified entity with the ACEP-ALE Program. The historic Shaker farm protected 7.582 acres and is currently used by the abutting Malnati APR owner for hay production. MDAR contributed \$206,911 towards this property with an appraised APR value of \$338,000. The landowner received a Conservation Land Tax Credit to help offset their bargain sale.

A new component to the APR program's update is stewardship related activities. During FY 24 the stewardship team accomplished 551 APR monitoring service reports and 191 of those were on site visits. During FY25 the APR program is entering its third contract year with the Massachusetts Association of Conservation Districts for monitoring and baseline services, during which eight acquisition and six post-subdivision baseline reports are estimated to be completed.

David Viale explained the tiered system for Department Approvals involving Certificate of Approval (COA) requests. Stewardship Planners are likely to review and approve minor requests for Tier One, such as a well. Tier Two might be a barn, while a Tier Three might be a subdivision request. The higher the Tier number reflects a more complex request and will involve a comprehensive decision-making process.

Ron Hall indicated that there were 36 COA's issued and one denial, nine Special Permits issued and two denials, 12 Waivers were issued for the Option to Purchase at Agricultural Value (OPVA) or Right of First Refusals (ROFR), one ROFR was exercised, and four Waiver requests were withdrawn by the landowner(s).

Regarding State Bond Funding, Ron reported that program funding levels remaining in the 2014 Environmental Bond is \$4,991,246.24 and the 2018 Environmental Bond \$19,800,000.00. The combined balance remaining in the 2014 and 2018 Bonds is \$24,791,246.24. Ron also indicated that to date the program has acquired 962 farm properties, while protecting approximately 75,818 acres. A summary of

pending projects includes 17 Vote of Interest projects, with roughly 1,461 acres to be protected. Further, there are nine pending Final Voted projects with approximately 688 acres at an APR value of \$8,338,650, a MDAR cost of \$7,603,790, with an estimated \$808,033 in local contributions and landowner Bargain Sales of roughly \$142,727. Combined, that means the APR program currently has 26 active projects that have been voted on by the ALPC. Over the past year there were ten Unresolved Projects where nine landowners did not accept MDAR's offers on Vote of Interest projects, and one where the family wanted more time to consider other options. Also, there was one Final Voted project for which the landowner has an environment matter to resolve.

Rita Thibodeau gave an update on activities with NRCS. As noted above, the Department recently closed the Edward Andrews ACEP-ALE project as a Certified Entity and the federal reimbursement is anticipated soon for \$157,500. The Massachusetts NRCS office has reimbursed two 2022 ALE parcel contracts for the Cotter – Maloney project for \$52,500 and Michael Ferry project for \$470,000. Rita indicated an email blast will be coming out for earlier application cutoff deadlines [SINCE THERE ARE TWO DATES AT THE END OF THE SENTENCE. IF THE DECEMBER DATE IS NOT EARLIER THEN MODIFY THE SENTENCE TO REFLECT THAT INSTEAD.] this year for IRA funding on October 4 and December 20. Also, the application deadline for the typical easement related program is October 20.

II. VOTE:

The minutes from the May 30, 2024, meeting had been sent to the ALPC members in advance of the meeting, so the Commissioner asked for a motion for approval. Motion made by Warren Shaw second by Kurt Gaertner. The motion was approved with Becca George abstaining.

III. Discussion:

APR parcel evaluation form update: Ron Hall gave an update and referred to the memorandum share with the committee. He explained that ALPC members had asked for an opportunity to review the form at the last meeting, to view details that have changed with the form. Also, ALPC members had suggested including some sort of scoring on the form, so a portion of the parcel evaluation form now has a ranking range like the prior form. Staff is proposing a narrative method for each property, so that staff comments can further explain the attributes, benefits or

challenges for this project. The added narrative approach would provide staff's professional input and insight that a ranking score alone may not make clear.

Ron Hall asked for comments, questions and feedback. He indicated that staff would like to begin using this new form to evaluate our next round of applications or as a trial. Susan Flaccus asked who is the form made for? Is it for the staff or the applicant. Ron said it is a form for the staff to aid them in evaluating an application and then to present to the ALPC members. Susan suggested that the form could be confusing for applicants but its ok if it's for the staff. Fred Dabney asked if staff has run any of our previous approvals through this form as a test. Ron indicated that staff has run some tests with the form, but not anything official until the ALPC has provided their feedback. David Viale revealed that the scoring criteria has not really changed from the last scorecard, so in essence we will be utilizing a comparable ranking, and just a narrative is added to provide the staff assessment, because while scoring can be a helpful tool, it can paint an inaccurate picture of the overall assessment of the project. Chris Chisholm said that adding the narrative to the form gives us a more thorough evaluation of a project. Michele Padula mentioned that there are times when staff presents a project that scored high however, the recommendation is for no approval. It gives a more holistic approach to approvals or denials. Jay Rosa said that the form also gives more score flexibility, where a fixed score is inflexible. For instance, all pastures are not assessed the same, some are managed much better than others. Warren Shaw has questions about how certain categories on the form are not directly concerning the agricultural resource and asked if that effects how we evaluate a farm property. Ron indicated that the Community Priorities and Statewide Conservation Priorities sections within the new form were previously added to staff project narratives. David Viale said that throughout the document there are essentially explanatory footnotes which in part reflect Community and Statewide priorities. Jay Rosa commented that the scoring is more focused on the resource, land use, and business operations. Susan Flaccus expressed concern with giving weight to the business operation, when she feels that the issue is the land, and everything else is secondary. Kathy Orlando agreed with Susan that ownerships and management change over time and should not prevent protection of important land, and suggest we need to protect as much land as possible to be available for farmers and made the point that we should be treating the small farm properties the same as we do with large farm parcels. Kurt Gaertner asked about what was being considered today and recommended that the narrative be implemented and any score modification be considered in the

future. Ron Hall indicated that the narrative portion of the form was the primary request and that flexible scoring versus a fix score be used. Warren Shaw wanted to make a final point that staff's input is trusted and valued in his assessment of a project and a change in the form may not be necessary.

Commissioner Randle indicated that she believed that the topic did not need a formal vote for the staff to utilize the narrative approach, and that the purpose for today's discussion was to bring forward the methods by which staff are evaluating projects.

IV. VOTES: Amended Final Votes

1. *Muriel L. Krebs and Diane J. Lauzier – South Hadley*: The presentation and recommendation was given by Ron Hall and is attached to these meeting minutes. A motion to approve the project was made by Warren Shaw and seconded by Kathy Orlando. The motion was unanimously approved.

V. VOTES: Final Vote

1. *Galenski – Whately*: The presentation and recommendation was given by Michele Padula and is attached to these meeting minutes. A motion to approve the project was made by Clem Clay and seconded by Susan Flaccus. The motion was unanimously approved.
2. *Pine Island Partnership – Sheffield*: The presentation and recommendation was given by Jay Rosa and is attached to these meeting minutes. A motion to approve the project was made by Warren Shaw and seconded by Clem Clay. The motion was approved with Kathy Orlando abstaining.
3. *Thomas – Sheffield*: The presentation and recommendation was given by Jay Rosa and is attached to these meeting minutes. A motion to approve the project was made by Warren Shaw and seconded by Clem Clay. The motion was approved with Kathy Orlando abstaining.
4. *Hubbard- Sunderland*: The presentation and recommendation was given by Michele Padula and is attached to these meeting minutes. Michele mentioned that an area of junk has been removed from the property. A motion to approve the project was made by Warren Shaw and seconded by Susan Flaccus. The motion was unanimously approved.

VI. VOTES: Votes of Interest

1. *Crescent Farm Trust-Bradford*: The presentation and recommendation was given by Chris Chisholm and is attached to these meeting minutes. A motion to approve was made by Warren Shaw and seconded by Fred Dabney. Clem Clay asked at what point in the process does NRCS approve the assessment of Farmland of Locally Important soil on a property. Rita Thibodeau explained if there is an interest in participating with ALE, the project can be submitted at any time. If the parcel needs to be ground truth, that happens after the initial assessment of the soils. The motion was unanimously approved.
2. *Joyce P Silvia Revocable Trust-Westport*: The presentation and recommendation was given by Chris Chisholm and is attached to these meeting minutes. A motion to approve was made by Clem Clay and seconded by Kathy Orlando. The motion was unanimously approved.
3. *Letendre LLC-Ware*: The presentation and recommendation was given by Chris Chisholm and is attached to these meeting minutes. A motion to approve was made by Sussan Flaccus and seconded by Clem Clay. The motion was unanimously approved.
4. *Melnik Family Trust-Deerfield*: The presentation and recommendation was given by Chris Chisholm and is attached to these meeting minutes. A motion to approve was made by Fred Dabney and seconded by Clem Clay. The motion was unanimously approved.

VII. VOTES: Votes of No Interest

Commissioner Randle informed the ALPC members that the Soderburg recommendation in Rutland is the only vote of no interest in today's meeting.

1. *Soderburg-Rutland*: The presentation and recommendation was given by Michele Padula and is attached to these meeting minutes. A motion to approve staff recommendation was made by Warren Shaw and seconded by Clem Clay.

Members Kathy Orlando and Susan Flaccus spoke about the importance for protecting small farmland properties and potential for small farmland seekers. Members Clem Clay and Warren Shaw spoke to the assessment process of the proposed farmland and the balance when determining the potential viability and when choosing a project. Michele Padula indicated that staff suggest other alternative methods of land protection with the

landowners to align with their plans, as well as assisted with outreach with local partners.

Motion passed with six members voting in favor and two members against. Kathy Orlando and Susan Flaccus had voted No.

Commissioner Randle called for a five-minute break at 11:10 AM before the ALPC hearing.

Commissioner Randle requested that the ALPC go back to the earlier discussion on the APR evaluation form and although the topic was not on the agenda as a vote, she recommended that the ALPC considered taking a vote. Ron Hall proposed language to utilize the parcel evaluation form as presented for future project nominations.

A motion to approve the evaluation form as presented was made by Warren Shaw and seconded by Becca George.

Members asked if there would be a comparison trial bases, and David Viale clarified that the request was only for use of the evaluation form as presented. Warren Shaw indicated he would like to revisit some categories on the form in the future, but this should not prevent this vote from happening.

The motion was unanimously approved.

VIII. Hearing:

1. *Chamberlain-Berkley*: Warren Shaw chaired the hearing and read the adjudicatory informal hearing procedures into the record. Hearing Officer Shaw explained that a hearing request was made by the Chamberlain family on August 14, 2024, regarding an APR Special Permit denial. An official record of the hearing has been assembled and that the hearing was also video recorded and are on file with the Department

A final decision of “the Agricultural Lands Preservation Committee (the “Committee”) upon a unanimous vote of all members present, hereby adopts the Recommended Decision of the Hearing Officer to confirm the

Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (the “Department”) denial of Robert and Jaqueline Chamberlian’s (the Chamberlains”) application for a Special Permit to store metal electric poles on their APR property in Berkley and Freetown, MA. An appeal of this final agency decision to Superior Court may be made within 30 days after receipt, pursuant to G.L. 30A, § 14.”

The Committee indicated that the Chamberlain family can submit a new Special Permit application with added information for consideration.

Warren Shaw handed off the meeting to Commissioner Randle at the conclusion of the hearing.

Commissioner Randle asked if there was any other business to come before the ALPC, and if there were none, she would entertain a motion to adjourn.

A motion to adjourn was made by Fred Dabney, second by Clem Clay. The motion was unanimously approved.

Adjourned at 12:23pm

Meeting minutes were submitted by Jill Ward and Ronald Hall

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION RESTRICTION

NARRATIVE FOR AMENDING FINAL VOTE

Muriel L. Krebs and Diane J. Lauzier

South Hadley

Hampshire

The 210 (+/-) acres property is located on Alvord Street in South Hadley. On 11/18/2022 the ALPC final voted this project as having two areas excluded, a 5 (+/-) acres homestead lot along Alvord Street and 45 (+/-) acres backland parcel to be donated as a CR or APR. Currently there is just one excluded 5 (+/-) acre homestead lot along Alvord Street. Roughly 204.9 acres of farm and wood land will be protected as a unified easement restriction with an ACEP-ALE parcel of 158 (+/-) acres and 46.9 (+/-) acres of wood land being protected as donated APR.

A supplemental appraisal report (SAR) was done by O'Connor Real Estate Associates, Inc., for the ACEP-ALE 158-acre parcel yielding an unrestricted full market value of \$2,925,000, or \$18,513 per acre. The restricted (agricultural value) is \$940,000 or \$5,949 per acre. The resulting APR value is \$1,985,000 or \$12,563 per acre.

The landowners agreed to MDAR's offer of the Commonwealth paying \$1,710,000; and the Town of South Hadley and the Kestrel Land Trust contribution of \$190,000 using the municipality's Conservation Funds and a successful joint fund-raising campaign. The landowners have accepted a bargain sale of \$85,000 based on the SAR.

The farmland has been rented to Barstow Longview Farm and McCray Farm for forage corn and hay production. Currently, Muriel L. Krebs and Diane J. Lauzier have a Purchase and Sales Agreement with Barstow Longview Farm, Inc. ('Barstow Farm'), for the transfer of the property following the purchase of the APR by the Commonwealth. The combined restriction of 158 (+/-) acre ACEP-ALE parcel and 46.9 (+/-) back wood land to be protected by an APR are to be purchase at agricultural value.

Staff Recommendation:

This 204.9 - acre parcel represents a valuable agricultural resource and is a critical parcel to the local farm operation. Staff recommends that the 11/28/2022 final vote be amended at the SAR's APR value of \$1,985,000 less a local contribution of \$190,000 and bargain sale of \$85,000 which equals a Commonwealth share of \$1,710,000 subject to the following conditions:

,

- 1.) Available funding
- 2.) The town and/or parties must provide the aforementioned match at or before closing
- 3.) All parcels to be excluded must conform to the layout as appraised, surveyed and as approved by the municipal zoning body.
- 4.) The Department has completed a recordable survey of the APR property, the cost of which will be shared according to an agreement with the owner, in formats suitable for the purposes of the Department prior to closing
- 5.) Affirming any lowered value as a result of the final survey will result in the difference being deducted from the state share of the APR, and any higher number may result only in an increase in the local contribution/ bargain sale.
- 6.) The owner(s) must execute the current approved and un-amended APR contract in effect at the time of closing with the Department.
- 7.) Acknowledging the transfer of the 158 (+/-) acre ACEP-ALE parcel and 46.9 (+/-) back wood land farmland between Muriel L. Krebs and Diane J. Lauzier and Barstow Longview Farm, LLC., and recommend a Waiver of Option to Purchase at Agricultural Value to occur within one-year of its execution by the Commissioner of MDAR.

Project Name: Lauzier Yvonne - Land Cover
South Hadley, MA



Land Cover	Acreage	% Land Cover
Open Agriculture	90.77	44.3%

APR Project = 204.9 acres

Data Provided by MassGIS, MDAR, Maxar 2023 imagery, and LCLU (2016)


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 APR Application

 Excluded from application

 Feet

0 500 1,000

Center: 72.60645°W 42.243328°N





**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES
AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION RESTRICTION PROGRAM**

Narrative for Final Vote 9/5/2024

Galenski – Whately - Franklin County

Jonathan Galenski and his brother Justin farm nearly 600 acres in the CT River Valley including land that they own (one APR parcel) as well as leased land. Their major crops are sweet corn, winter squash and pumpkins which are sold to local supermarket chains. The brothers purchased this 52-acre property on River Road in Whately several years ago. It contains 20 acres of cropland and 22 acres of eligible soils. An 11-acre wooded parcel was excluded for evaluation and eligibility purposes and was not included in the appraisal but will be included in the restriction at closing. This parcel is located in a large block of productive farmland and abuts the Nourse APR and Sadoski APR.

Appraised values of the 41-acre parcel (wooded parcel excluded) established by Bob O'Connor are as follows:

Market Value Before Restriction - \$485,000 (\$11,830/acre)

Market Value After Restriction (agricultural value) - \$215,000 (\$5,244/acre)

APR value - \$270,000 (\$6,585/acre)

The owners have accepted a Commonwealth offer of \$256,500 (\$6,256/acre). The Town of Whately is very supportive of the APR Program and has already agreed to contribute \$13,500 (5%) towards the project.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends final voting this property for \$256,500 from the Commonwealth with the remaining value (\$13,500) in the form of a local contribution from the Town of Whately.

The Final Vote is conditioned on:

- 1.) Available funding
- 2.) The town and/or parties must provide the aforementioned match at or before closing
- 3.) All parcels to be excluded (if any) must conform to the layout as appraised, must be surveyed out and must be approved as required by the municipal zoning body.
- 4.) The Department will complete a recordable survey of the APR property, the cost of which will be shared according to an agreement with the owner, in formats suitable for the purposes of the Department prior to closing

- 5.) Any lowered value as a result of the final survey will result in the difference being deducted from the state share of the APR, and any higher number may result only in an increase in the local match.
- 6.) The owner(s) must execute the current approved and unamended APR contract in effect at the time of closing with the Department.

**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES
AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION RESTRICTION PROGRAM**

Final Vote Summary Sheet

APPLICANT: Jonathan and Justin Galenski

ACRES: 52+/- (including ineligible woodland)

PROPERTY LOCATION: River Road, Whately

COUNTY: Franklin

ALPC DATE: September 5, 2024

APPRAISED VALUES (41 acres appraised)

MARKET VALUE BEFORE APR: \$485,000 (\$11,830/acre)

MARKET VALUE AFTER APR: \$215,000 (\$5,244/acre)

APR VALUE: \$270,000 (\$6,585/acre)

APPRAISER: Bob O'Connor

LOCAL CONTRIBUTION \$13,500 from Town of Whately – already committed

BARGAIN SALE: none

COMMONWEALTH'S SHARE: \$256,500 (\$6,256/acre)

COMMENTS: Excellent soil resource being used by successful farm operators. Located in a large block of intensively farmed APR land.

Project Name: Galenski Farm - Landcover Whately, MA



Land Cover	Acreage	% Land Cover
Open Agriculture	19.71	48.3%

APR Project = 40.84 acres

0 145 290 580 Feet

Center: 72.599152°W 42.457948°N

Data Provided by MassGIS, MDAR, and LCLU (2016)

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- Existing APR
- APR Applicant
- Exclusion



**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES
AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION RESTRICTION PROGRAM**

Narrative for Final Vote 9/5/2024

Aragi – Sheffield – Berkshire County

The 448.55-acre property located on Silver Street and Cooper Hill Road in Sheffield was acquired by Louis Aragi and Louis Aragi Jr. (Pine Island Farm Partnership) in February of 2024 after farming the land for nearly 30 years in agreement with the prior owner. The farmland is utilized for rotation production of corn and hay to support Pine Island Dairy Farm's nearly 1,500 dairy cows. Acquisition and preservation of the land has been facilitated by the Sheffield Land Trust and the Trustees of Reservations in partnership with the landowners and MDAR.

Existing infrastructure including a large barn, storage structures, and residential structures also acquired by the Aragis are excluded from APR consideration. The property is accessible from both Cooper Hill Road and Silver Street with both driveway access and direct field access. The Trustees of Reservations and Sheffield Land Trust are pursuing an 8.37-acre private APR and expansion of the Bartholomew's Cobble conservation area in parallel with this APR proposal.

Appraised values of the parcel established by O'Connor Real Estate Associates are as follows:

Market Value Before Restriction - \$4,445,000 (\$9,909.7/acre)

Market Value After Restriction (agricultural value) - \$370,000 (\$824.8/acre)

APR value - \$4,075,000 (\$9,084.8/acre)

The Trustees of Reservations and the Sheffield Land Trust were awarded an FY25 Landscape Partnership Grant that includes budget allocation to support a 5% local contribution of \$203,750. The Commonwealth's offer of \$3,871,250 (\$8,630.58/acre) was accepted by Pine Island Farm Partnership; therefore, the combined paid consideration for the property to be protected by an APR is \$4,075,000

Staff Recommendation:

This property represents a valuable agricultural resource and is a critical farm parcel for the southern Berkshire region. The property has been purchased by the long-time farmer to support one of the largest dairy farm operations in the state. The Town of Sheffield, Trustees of Reservations, and Sheffield Land Trust are highly supportive of the land's protection as a working farm with additional conservation resources (wetlands, natural habitat, land protection connectivity, etc).

The Final Vote is conditioned on:

- 1.) Available funding
- 2.) The town and/or parties must provide the aforementioned match at or before closing
- 3.) All parcels to be excluded (if any) must conform to the layout as appraised, must be surveyed out and must be approved as required by the municipal zoning body.
- 4.) The Department will complete a recordable survey of the APR property, the cost of which will be shared according to an agreement with the owner and the Sheffield Land Trust, in formats suitable for the purposes of the Department prior to closing.
- 5.) Any lowered value as a result of the final survey will result in the difference being deducted from the state share of the APR, and any higher number may result only in an increase in the local match.
- 6.) The owner(s) must execute the current approved and unamended APR contract in effect at the time of closing with the Department.

**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES
AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION RESTRICTION PROGRAM**

Final Vote Summary Sheet

APPLICANT: Louis Aragi and Louis Aragi Jr. (Pine Island Farm Partnership)

ACRES: 448.55

PROPERTY LOCATION: Silver Street and Cooper Hill Road, Sheffield

COUNTY: Berkshire

ALPC DATE: September 5, 2024

APPRAISED VALUES

MARKET VALUE BEFORE APR: \$ 4,445,000 (\$9,909.7/acre)

MARKET VALUE AFTER APR: \$ 370,000 (\$824.8/acre)

APR VALUE: \$ 4,075,000 (\$9,084.8/acre)

APPRAISER: O'Connor Real Estate Associates

LOCAL CONTRIBUTION \$ 203,750

BARGAIN SALE: \$ 0

COMMONWEALTH'S SHARE: \$ 3,871,250 (\$8,630.58/acre)

COMMENTS: Great farmland resource in a very supportive community. The APR land was recently acquired by farmer in support of well-established Pine Island Dairy Farm. Project will be completed in partnership with Sheffield Land Trust, Trustees of Reservations, and EEA as part of larger Cooper Hill Conservation Project (538 acres). APR land also directly abuts 466 acres of existing protected APR land.



Photo #	Waypoint #	Description	Direction
1		Recently cut hay field	W



Photo #	Waypoint #	Description	Direction
2		Corn Field West of Silver Street	NE

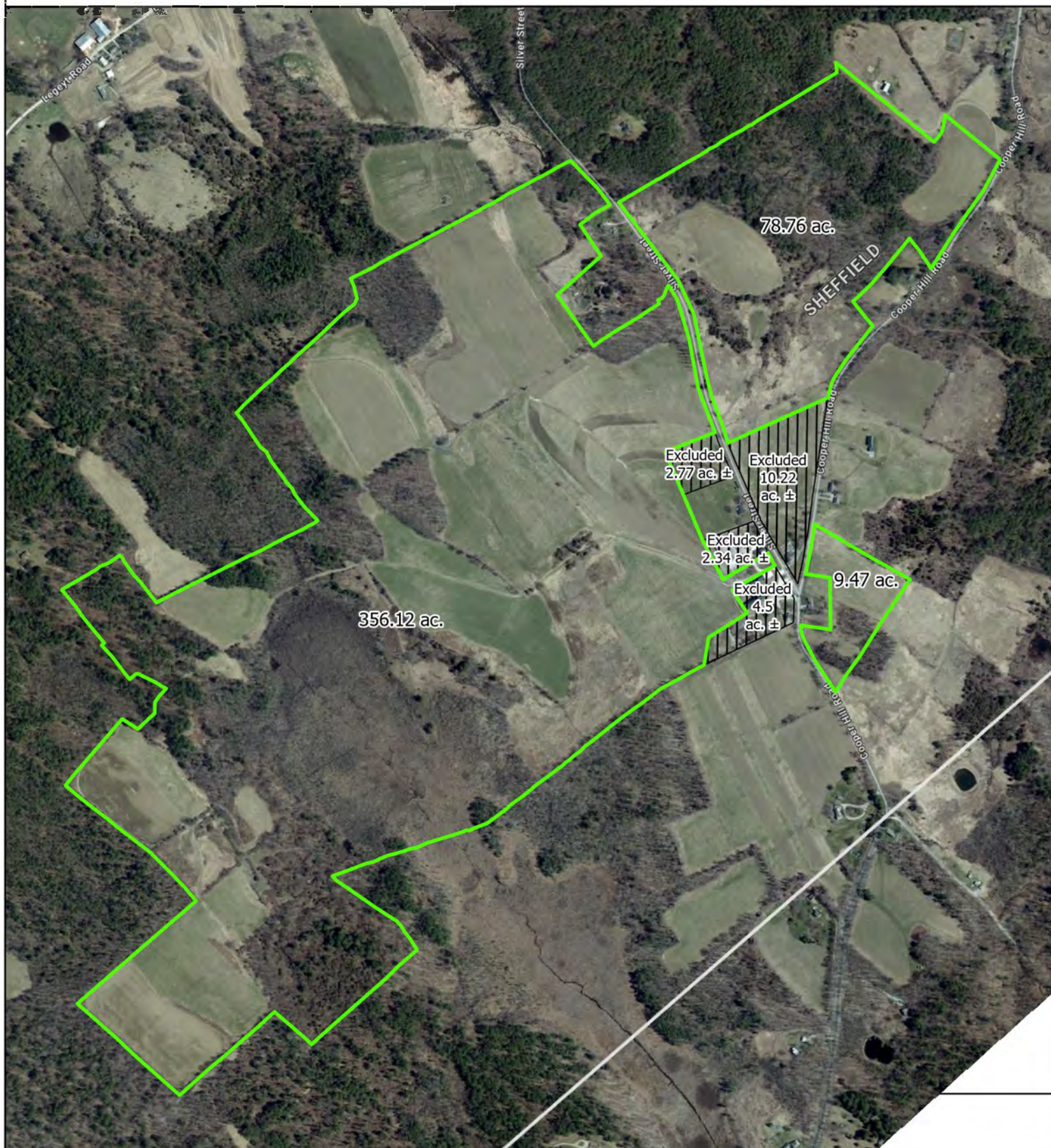


Photo #	Waypoint #	Description	Direction
3		Corn Field East of Silver Street	SE



Photo #	Waypoint #	Description	Direction
4		Hay Field at Far West of Property	E



Project Name: Pine Island Partnership - Land Cover Sheffield, MA



Land Cover	Acreage	% Land Cover
Open Agriculture	230.1	51.8%

444.35 acres total

0 400 800 1,600 Feet
Center: 73.37756°W 42.057152°N

 Same deed reference
but excluded from APR
 APR Applicant



Data Provided by MassGIS, MDAR, and LCLU (2016)

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**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES
AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION RESTRICTION PROGRAM**

Narrative for Final Vote 9/5/2024

Thomas – Sheffield – Berkshire County

The 57.01-acre property located on Bow Wow Road and Giberson Road in Sheffield was acquired by Rebecca Thomas in 1994. Since that time, it has been leased by the Larkin family for hay production. The Larkins own and operate additional APR land in Sheffield. Hay produced primarily supports the dairy industry in and around Sheffield. There is no existing infrastructure on the land, and the Sheffield Land Trust has committed to providing a 50% match toward acquisition. The landowner likely intends to sell the property to the Larkins in the near future.

Appraised values of the parcel established by O'Connor Real Estate Associates are as follows:

Market Value Before Restriction - \$515,000 (\$9,033.5/acre)

Market Value After Restriction (agricultural value) - \$35,000 (\$613.92/acre)

APR value - \$480,000 (\$8,419/acre)

The Sheffield Land Trust indicated that they would support this application and have the necessary funds for a 50% local contribution of \$240,000. The Commonwealth's offer of \$240,000 (\$4,209.78/acre) was accepted by Rebecca Thomas; therefore, the combined paid consideration for the property to be protected by an APR is \$480,000

Staff Recommendation:

This property represents a valuable agricultural resource in southern Berkshire County that contributes to the viability of the regional dairy industry. The Town of Sheffield and the Sheffield Land Trust are highly supportive of the land's protection as a working farm for hay and forage production.

The Final Vote is conditioned on:

- 1.) Available funding
- 2.) The town and/or parties must provide the aforementioned match at or before closing
- 3.) All parcels to be excluded (if any) must conform to the layout as appraised, must be surveyed out and must be approved as required by the municipal zoning body.
- 4.) The Department will complete a recordable survey of the APR property, the cost of which will be shared according to an agreement with the owner and the Sheffield Land Trust, in formats suitable for the purposes of the Department prior to closing.
- 5.) Any lowered value as a result of the final survey will result in the difference being deducted from the state share of the APR, and any higher number may result only in an increase in the local match.
- 6.) The owner(s) must execute the current approved and unamended APR contract in effect at the time of closing with the Department.

**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES
AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION RESTRICTION PROGRAM**

Final Vote Summary Sheet

APPLICANT: Rebecca Thomas

ACRES: 57.01

PROPERTY LOCATION: Bow Wow Road and Giberson Road, Sheffield

COUNTY: Berkshire

ALPC DATE: September 5, 2024

APPRAISED VALUES

MARKET VALUE BEFORE APR: \$ 515,000 (\$9,033.5/acre)

MARKET VALUE AFTER APR: \$ 35,000 (\$613.92/acre)

APR VALUE: \$ 480,000 (\$8,419/acre)

APPRAISER: O'Connor Real Estate Associates

LOCAL CONTRIBUTION \$ 240,000

BARGAIN SALE: \$ 0

COMMONWEALTH'S SHARE: \$ 240,000 (\$ 4,209.78/acre)

COMMENTS: Strong farmland resource that is supported by the local land trust and Town of Sheffield. The farmland has been utilized by an established dairy farming family (Larkin), and the completion of this APR will assist with the farmers likely future acquisition of the land. Proposed APR land abuts several existing APR and CR protected properties contributing to the Sheffield-Egremont Agricultural, Ecological & Scenic Corridor.



Photo #	Waypoint #	Description	Direction
1		Open Ag along Bow Wow Rd. Frontage	S

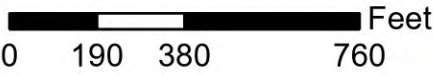


Photo #	Waypoint #	Description	Direction
2		Woodland area with grade change	SW

Project Name: Thomas - Land Cover
Sheffield, MA



Land Cover	Acreage	% Land Cover
Open Agriculture	12.76	22.4%



Center: 73.394782°W 42.121868°N

Data Provided by MassGIS, MDAR, and LCLU (2016)

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- Open Agriculture
- Existing APR
- APR Applicant



56.99 acres total

**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES
AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION RESTRICTION PROGRAM**

Narrative for Final Vote 9/5/2024

Hubbard – Sunderland – Franklin County

Jeff Hubbard, his brother Joe, and their aunt Mary Ellen Ahearn own this 21-acre property on Russell Street in Sunderland. The brothers are currently farming the land and raise hay on 10 acres and winter squash on 11 acres. Eighty percent of the property is comprised of prime soils. The property is located in a large APR block of productive APR land where there is high demand for agricultural property.

At the time of application and ALPC Vote of Interest there was a large collection of old farm equipment located in the center of the property. Language was included in the Purchase and Sale Agreement stating that the items had to be removed no later than 120 days prior to closing. Staff visited the site recently and determined that all of the items have been removed from the land proposed for APR.

Appraised values established by Bob O'Connor are as follows:

Market Value Before Restriction - \$400,000 (\$19,048/acre)

Market Value After Restriction (agricultural value) - \$195,000 (\$9,286/acre)

APR value - \$205,000 (\$9,762/acre)

The owners have accepted a Commonwealth offer of \$194,750 (\$9,274/acre). The Town of Sunderland is very supportive of the APR Program and has already agreed to contribute \$10,250 (5%) towards the project.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends final voting this property for \$194,750 from the Commonwealth with the remaining value (\$10,250) in the form of a local contribution from the Town of Sunderland.

The Final Vote is conditioned on:

- 1.) Available funding
- 2.) The town and/or parties must provide the aforementioned match at or before closing
- 3.) All parcels to be excluded (if any) must conform to the layout as appraised, must be surveyed out and must be approved as required by the municipal zoning body.

- 4.) The Department will complete a recordable survey of the APR property, the cost of which will be shared according to an agreement with the owner, in formats suitable for the purposes of the Department prior to closing
- 5.) Any lowered value as a result of the final survey will result in the difference being deducted from the state share of the APR, and any higher number may result only in an increase in the local match.
- 6.) The owner(s) must execute the current approved and unamended APR contract in effect at the time of closing with the Department.

**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES
AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION RESTRICTION PROGRAM**

Final Vote Summary Sheet

APPLICANT: Jeffrey Hubbard, Joseph Hubbard and Mary Ellen Ahearn

ACRES: 21 based on approved pre-existing owner survey

PROPERTY LOCATION: Russell Road, Sunderland

COUNTY: Franklin

ALPC DATE: September 5, 2024

APPRAISED VALUES

MARKET VALUE BEFORE APR: \$400,000 (\$19,048/acre)

MARKET VALUE AFTER APR: \$195,000 (\$9,296/acre)

APR VALUE: \$205,000 (\$9,762/acre)

APPRAISER: Bob O'Connor

LOCAL CONTRIBUTION \$10,250 from Town of Sunderland – already committed

BARGAIN SALE: none

COMMONWEALTH'S SHARE: \$194,750 (\$9,274/acre)

COMMENTS: Excellent soil resource being used by successful farm operators. Located in a large block of intensively farmed APR land.

Project Name: Hubbard Gothic Top Farm - Land Cover
Sunderland, MA



Land Cover	Acreage	% Land Cover
Open Agriculture	20.21	96.1%

21.02 acres total

0 75 150 300 Feet

Center: 72.573008°W 42.454577°N

Existing APR
APR Applicant



Data Provided by MassGIS, MDAR, and LCLU (2016)

Created by Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources

Created: 7/18/2023 11:40 AM



**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES
AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION RESTRICTION PROGRAM**

Narrative for Vote of Interest 9/5/2024

Crescent Farm Trust – Haverhill – Essex

This 33.14-acre property consists of approximately 19.58 acres of open agricultural land along the property frontage with the remaining acreage consisting of established woodland and wetland areas. No exclusions are proposed as this property has no history of residential use or other development. The property itself is located between two existing APRs owned by the same family as the parcel in question. The preservation of this property through APR is intended to contribute to the existing family holdings. This parcel was brought before the ALPC in 2019 with a slightly different configuration and did not move forward due to family issues. The issues have been resolved and the entire parcel is now under consideration.

The property includes approximately 15.86 acres of state important soils (47.8%) and 8.32 acres of farmland of local importance (25.1%). In total, 19.58 acres of the property (59.1%) are utilized for growing corn and hay. These parcel attributes meet federal eligibility requirements for ACEP-ALE funding. The 8.32 +/- acres of farmland of local importance will have to be verified by NRCS as meeting the soil qualifiers for ACEP-ALE eligibility.

LAND USE	ACREAGE	SOIL CLASSIFICATION	
		CLASS	ACREAGE
Tillable Cropland	19.58 ±	Prime Farmland	
Non-tillable Cropland		State Important Soils	15.86
Nursery/Orchard		Local Soils	8.32
Pasture		Unique Farmland	
Managed Woodland	10.56 ±	TOTAL Prime, SI, LI	24.18 (72.9%)
Unmanaged Woodland			
Ponds/Wetlands	3.0 ±		
Other			
TOTAL ACRES	33.14 ±		
TOTAL ACRES FOR RESTRICTION	33.14 ±		

CONSERVATION PLAN: No

CHAPTER 61A: Yes

APR Parcel Scoresheet Rating: 330 Points

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommendation is to nominate for a vote of interest

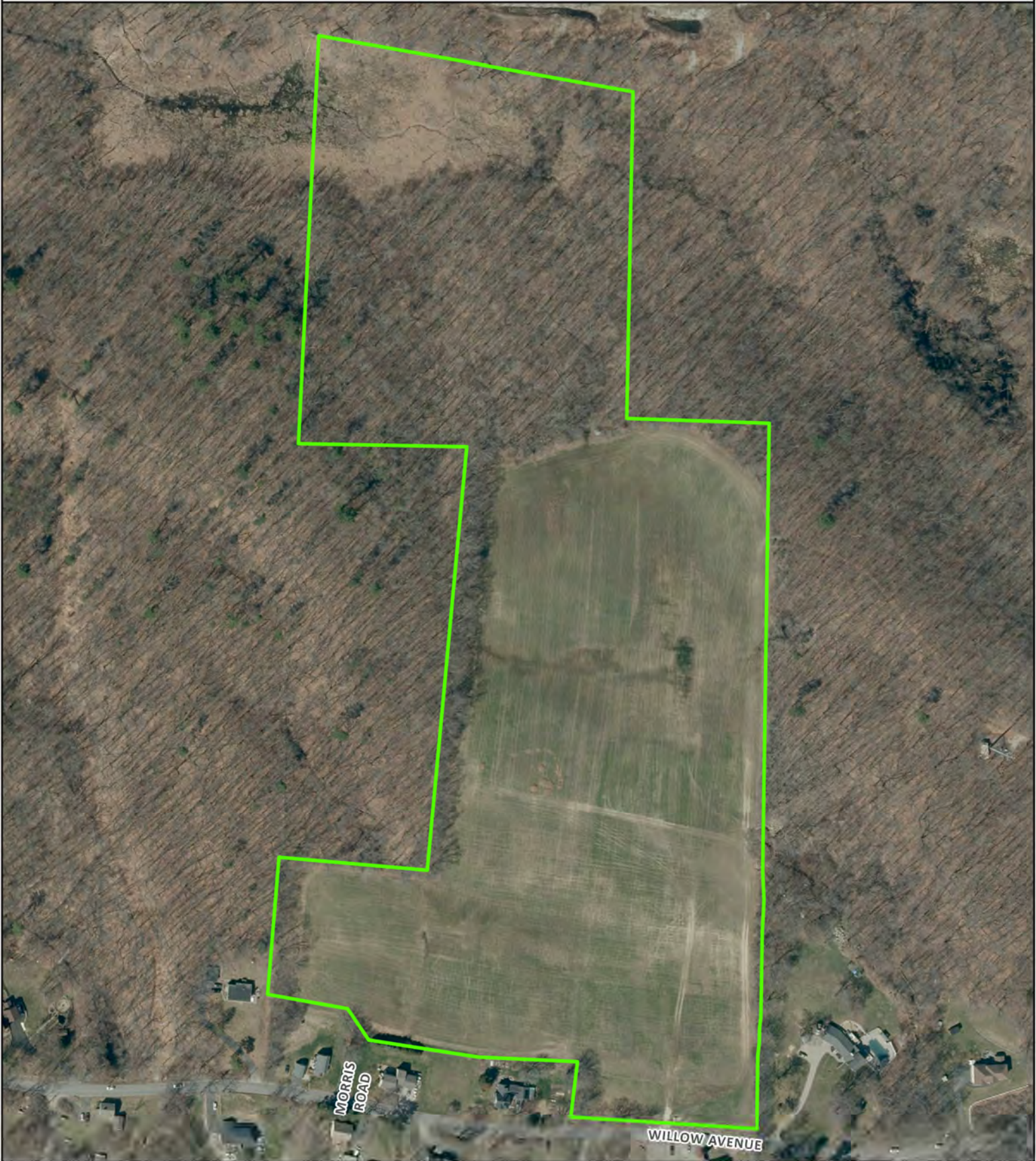
APR Parcel Scoresheet for Applications

Date: 8/7/2024

Prepared by: Chisholm

Landowner's Name: Crescent Farm Trust		Total Acres: 33.14
Property Address: 145 Willow Ave, Haverhill		Eligible Acres: 33.14
Application Eligibility and Land Determination Requirements		
Thresholds - State		Yes
Parcel fulfills at least one EEA Land Conservation Priority		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Products raised on parcel are sold in the normal course of business (i.e. commercial operation)		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parcel in active agricultural production for at least previous two years		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parcel contains at least 5 acres of active agricultural land		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Thresholds - Federal		
Parcel consists of a single contiguous land parcel		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parcel contains ≥ 33% open farmland and ≤ 66% woodland		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parcel contains ≥ 50% of a combination of prime/state important soils		<input type="checkbox"/>
If sod/nursery operation, parcel meets NRCS tolerance for soil loss		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parcel Attributes		
% in open ag use: 59.1%	Points % prime/state/local soils: 72.9	Points
33-50%	25	51-65%
51-75%	50	66-80%
76-100%	75	81-100%
Total	50	Total
Land Use		
Land Use Majority (circle one)		Points
Vegetable/Small Fruit/Tobacco		75
Hay/Forage/RowCrops/Orchard/Vineyard		50
Pasture		25
Christmas Trees/Sugarbush		10
Total		50
Location		
Active commercial APR land within 2.5 mile radius: 323 ac		Points
None		0
1-250 acres		10
251-500 acres		25
over 500 acres		50
Abutting (including across street)		+10
Total		25
Ownership/Succession		
Attribute		Points
Land owner is also farm operator		50
Farm operator makes majority of income farming		25
Farm operator has long term (5+ yr) written lease w/owner		15
Farm owner/operator owns other APR land		10
Written succession plan prepared by professional		10
Total		85
Size		
Acres of land in open ag use: 19.58 acres		Points
5-25		10
26-75		25
76 +		50
Total		10
Intensity/Productivity		
Percent of open land intensively farmed: 50%		Points
0-25%		0
26-75%		25
76-100%		50
Total		25
Agricultural Priorities		
Priority		Points
Right to Farm Bylaw		10
Total		10
Single fam building permits - 5 yr average: __permits		Points
between 1 and 5		5
6-15		15
More than 15		25
Total		25
Additional Information		Points
Parcel contains at least 75% prime soils (20 points)		
Staff Comments (1-40 points):		
Additional Comments/Considerations:		
Total Points		330

Project Name: Crescent Farms Trust - Landcover
Haverhill, MA



Land Cover	Acreage	% Land Cover
Open Agriculture	19.58	59.1%

APR Project = 33.14 acres

Data Provided by MassGIS, MDAR, Maxar 2023 imagery, and LCLU (2016)


Created By Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources

Created: 8/5/2024 3:45 PM



 Proposed APR



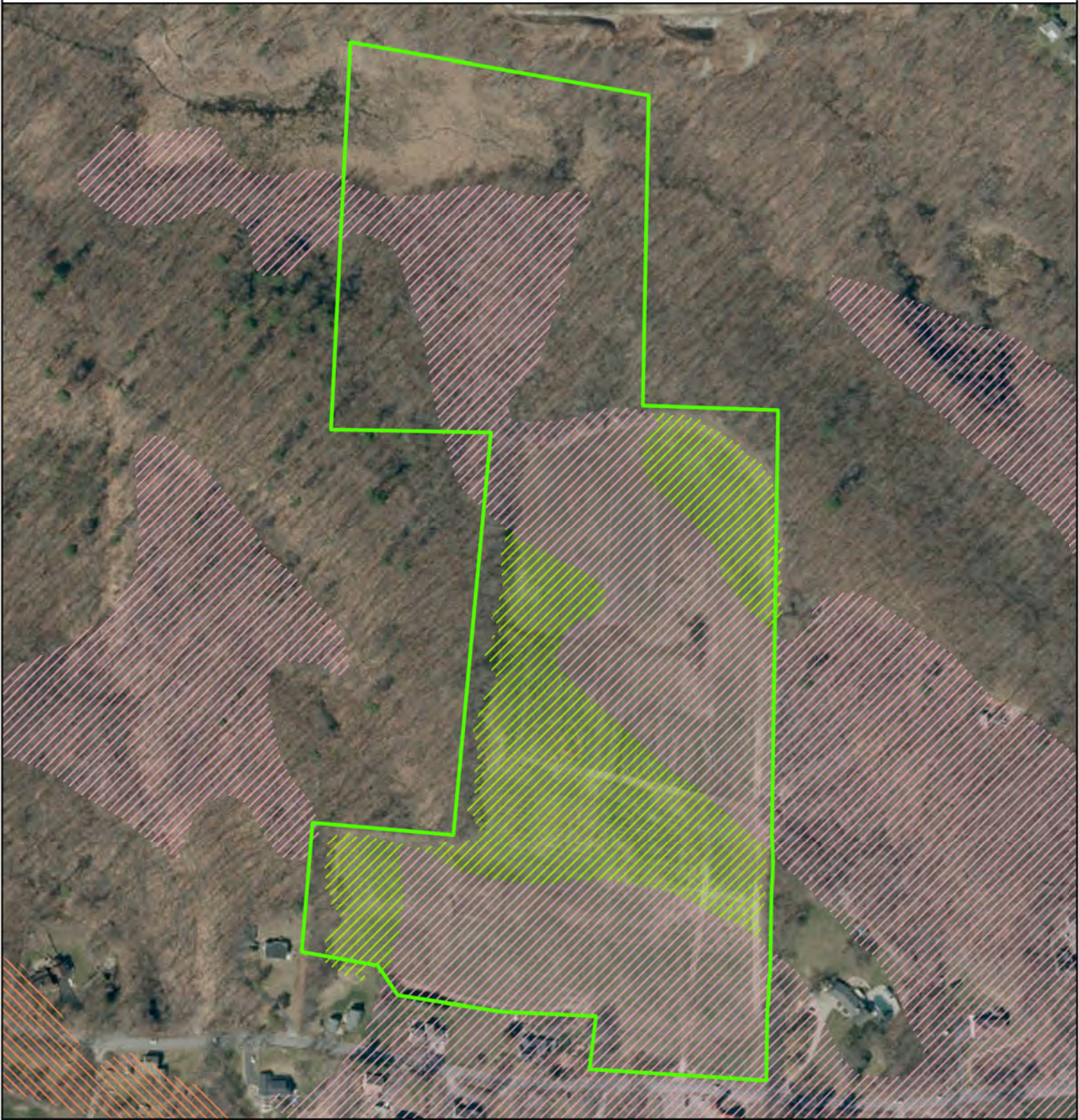
 Feet
0 230 460

Center: 71.093153°W 42.748549°N

Project Name: Crescent Farms Trust - Property Map Haverhill, MA







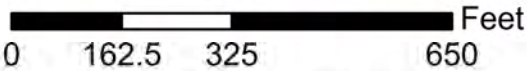
Project Name: Crescent Farms Trust - Soils
Haverhill, MA



FRMLNDCLS	SoilAcres	% Soil Type
Farmland of local importance	8.32	25.1%
Farmland of statewide importance	15.86	47.8%

APR Applicant = 33.14 acres

-  All areas are prime farmland
-  Farmland of local importance
-  Farmland of statewide importance
-  Proposed APR



Center: 71.093153°W 42.748549°N

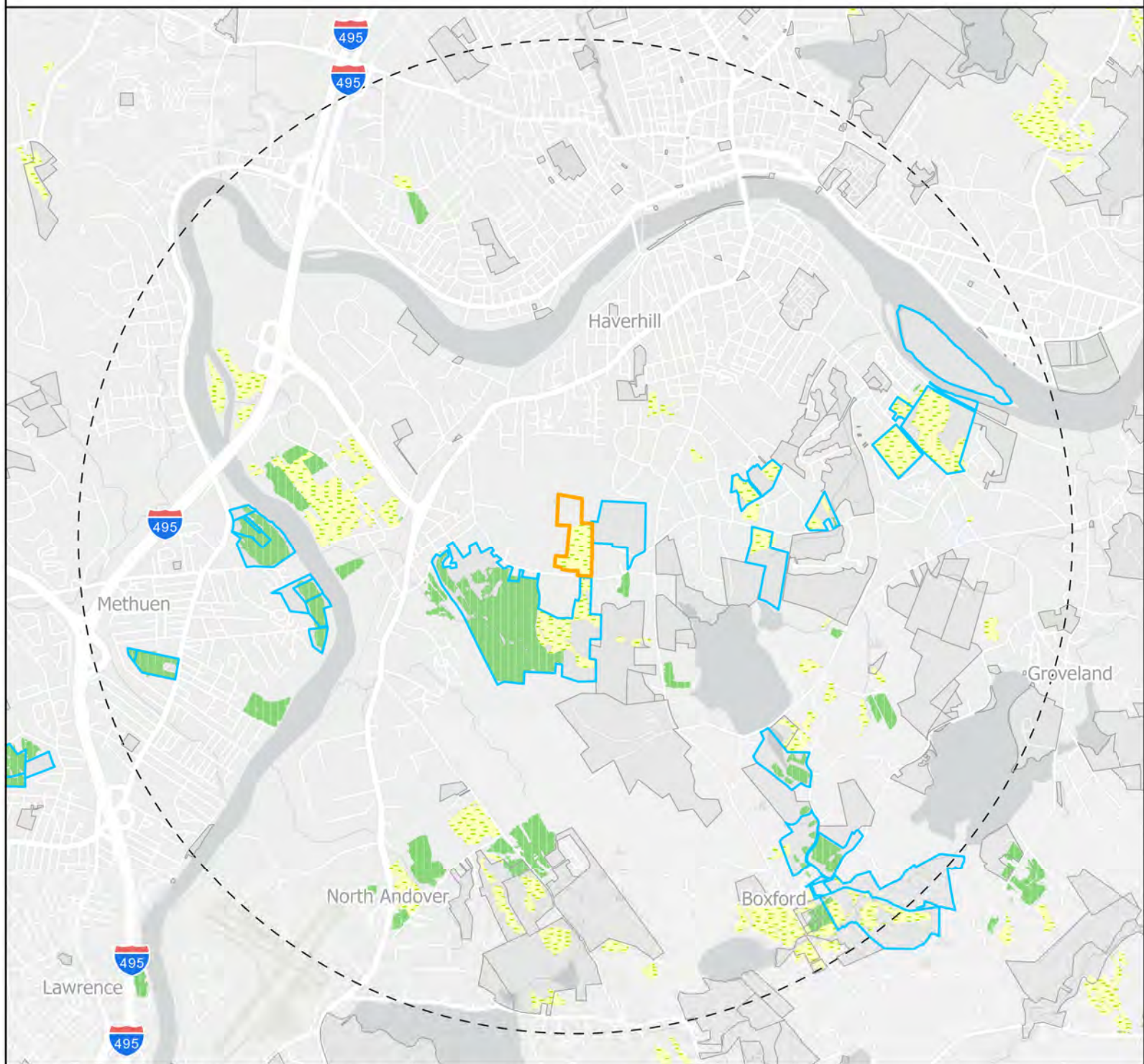


Data Provided by MDAR, NCRS, & MassGIS 2021 Imagery

Created by Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources

Created: 8/5/2024 3:32 PM

Project Name: Crescent Farms Trust - 2.5 mile Block Map



Land Cover Summary Within 2.5 mile Radius

On APR	Acres
Cultivated	191.4
Pasture/Hay	131.6

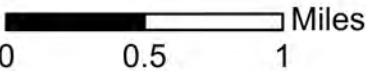
On Protected Openspace	Acres
Cultivated	203.9
Pasture/Hay	182.4

Within Buffer	Acres
Cultivated	333.1
Pasture/Hay	437

This map shows active agricultural areas and APRs within 2.5 miles of the project area. Land cover data is from LCLU (2016).

- APR Applicant
- Existing APR
- Cultivated
- Pasture/Hay
- Protected and Recreational OpenSpace
- 2.5 mile buffer

There are 8 APRs within 2.5 miles of this project.



Center: 71.092975°W 42.748416°N

Data Provided by MassGIS, EEA Openspace, MassGIS, MassDOT & MDAR

Created by Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources

Created: 8/7/2024



**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES
AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION RESTRICTION PROGRAM**

Narrative for Vote of Interest 9/5/2024

Joyce P. Silvia Revocable Trust-2021 – Westport – Bristol

This 205-acre property consists of approximately 43.95 acres of open agricultural land along the property frontage with the remaining acreage consisting of established woodland and wetland areas. Working in partnership with the family and the Westport Land Conservation Trust (WLCT), the proposed APR will include the 43.95 open agricultural acreage as well as approximately 39.5 acres of woodland and a small pond. The remaining 121.5 +/- wooded and wet backland will be purchased in fee by the land trust. The land trust has access to the backland via abutting parcels owned WLCT but are proposing a ROW over the existing farm road for maintenance access by employees of WLCT.

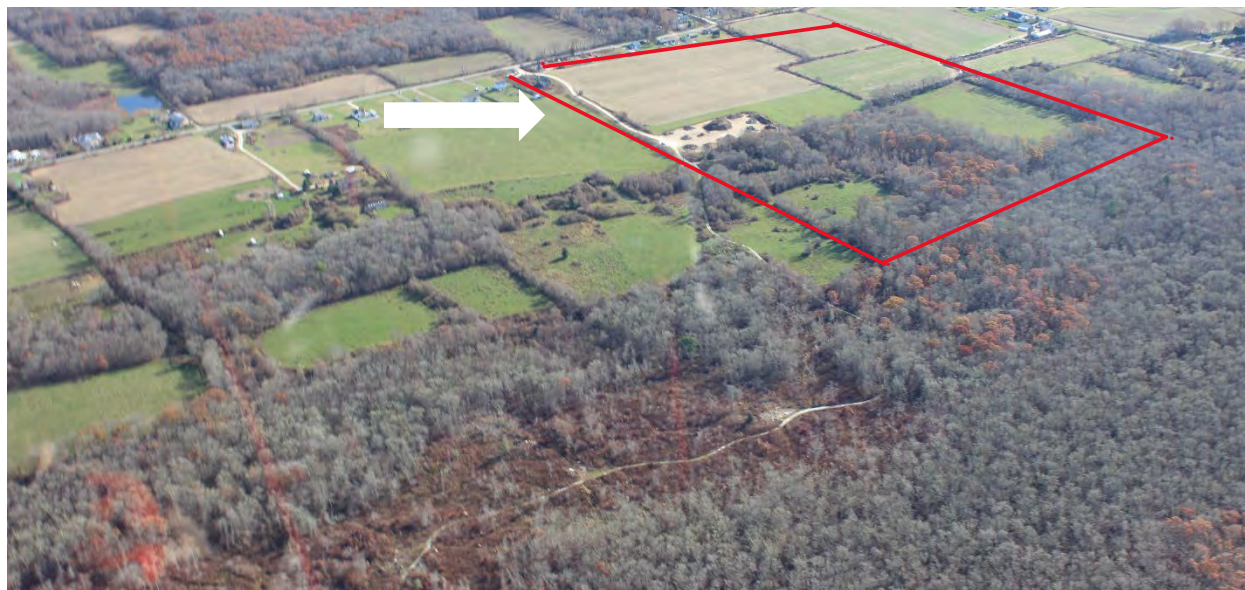
The proposed APR has one current occupant who will vacate the premises and restore the condition of the property subject to agreement to purchase APR by the Commonwealth. Additionally, an abandoned house on the proposed APR will be demolished and removed subject to agreement with APR prior to closing. There are two exclusions proposed one for an existing dwelling and one for an existing landscaper/contractor yard. The property itself is located between two existing APRs one of which was recently closed with the Silvia family. The APR parcel to the south is currently renting the proposed APR parcel. The lessee currently cuts a hay and silage corn crop from the land for his beef herd. Future plans entail grazing cattle while rotating crops and restoring several acres of underutilized pasture. The farm will continue to be owned by the Silvia family but leased to the abutting APR owner for the foreseeable future.

The property includes approximately 29.98 acres of prime farmland (35.9%), 17.53 acres of farmland of statewide importance (21%) and 8.53 acres of farmland of local importance (10%). In total, 43.95 acres of the property (52.6%) are utilized for growing corn and hay. These parcel attributes meet federal eligibility requirements for ACEP-ALE funding.

APR Parcel Scoresheet Rating: 305 Points

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommendation is to nominate for a vote of interest

LAND USE	ACREAGE	SOIL CLASSIFICATION	
		CLASS	ACREAGE
Tillable Cropland	21 ±	Prime Farmland	29.98 ±
Non-tillable Cropland		State Important Soils	17.53 ±
Nursery/Orchard		Local Soils	8.35 ±
Pasture	30 ±	Unique Farmland	
Managed Woodland		TOTAL Prime, SI, LI	15.52 (55.86%) ±
Unmanaged Woodland	21 ±		
Ponds/Wetlands	11.5±		
Other			
TOTAL ACRES	83.5 ±		
TOTAL ACRES FOR RESTRICTION	83.5 ±		



APR Parcel Scoresheet for Applications

Date: 8/7/2024

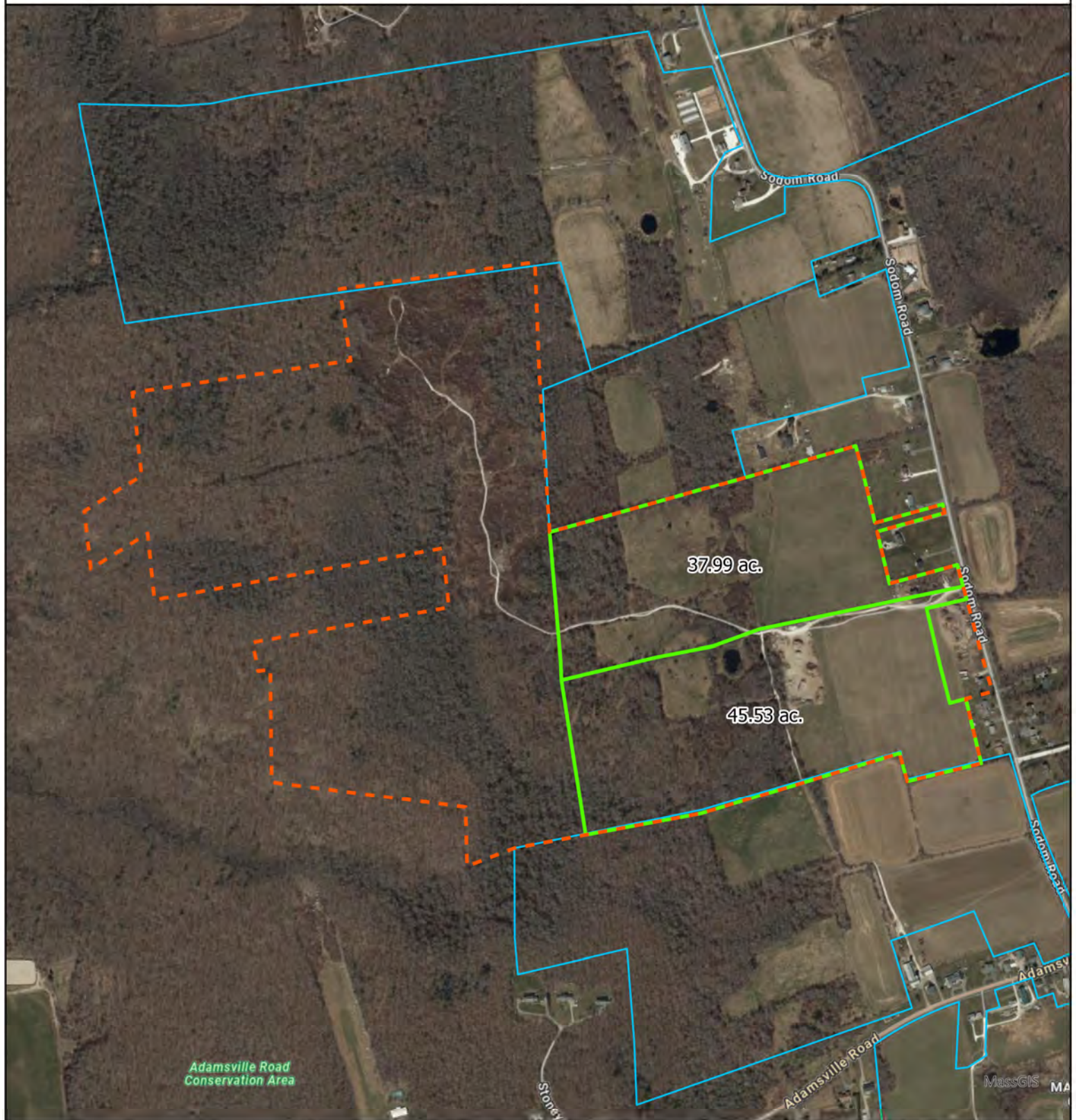
Prepared by: Chisholm

Landowner's Name: Joyce P. Silvia Revocable Trust-2021		Total Acres: 83.5
Property Address: 1047 Sodom Road, Westport		Eligible Acres: 83.5
Application Eligibility and Land Determination Requirements		
Thresholds - State		Yes
Parcel fulfills at least one EEA Land Conservation Priority		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Products raised on parcel are sold in the normal course of business (i.e. commercial operation)		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parcel in active agricultural production for at least previous two years		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parcel contains at least 5 acres of active agricultural land		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Thresholds - Federal		
Parcel consists of a single contiguous land parcel		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parcel contains ≥ 33% open farmland and ≤ 66% woodland		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parcel contains ≥ 50% of a combination of prime/state important soils		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If sod/nursery operation, parcel meets NRCS tolerance for soil loss		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parcel Attributes		
% in open ag use: 52.6%	Points	% prime/state/local soils: 66.9%
33-50%	25	51-65%
51-75%	50	66-80%
76-100%	75	81-100%
Total	50	Total
Land Use		
Land Use Majority (circle one)		Points
Vegetable/Small Fruit/Tobacco		75
Hay/Forage/RowCrops/Orchard/Vineyard		50
Pasture		25
Christmas Trees/Sugarbush		10
Total		50
Location		
Active commercial APR land within 2.5 mile radius: 375 ac		Points
None		0
1-250 acres		10
251-500 acres		25
over 500 acres		50
Abutting (including across street)		+10
Total		25
Size		
Acres of land in open ag use: 43.95acres		Points
5-25		10
26-75		25
76 +		50
Total		25
Intensity/Productivity		
Percent of open land intensively farmed: ____%		Points
0-25%		0
26-75%		25
76-100%		50
Total		25
Ownership/Succession		
Attribute		Points
Land owner is also farm operator		50
Farm operator makes majority of income farming		25
Farm operator has long term (5+ yr) written lease w/owner		15
Farm owner/operator owns other APR land		10
Written succession plan prepared by professional		10
Total		35
Agricultural Priorities		
Priority		Points
Right to Farm Bylaw		10
Total		10
Single fam building permits - 5 yr average: __permits		Points
between 1 and 5		5
6-15		15
More than 15		25
Total		25
Subtotal		295
Additional Information		
Parcel contains at least 75% prime soils (20 points)		10
Staff Comments (1-40 points): Great resource is a critical agricultural block		10
Additional Comments/Considerations:		
Total Points		305

An aerial photograph showing several land parcels outlined in magenta. A large parcel on the left is labeled '85.6 ac±' and has a black hatched pattern. A central parcel is labeled '37.99 ac.' and '1011'. A large parcel on the right is labeled '45.53 ac.' and '1047'. A small parcel on the far right is labeled '1.8 ac±' and '1.2 ac±'. A road on the right is labeled 'SODOM ROAD'. Other parcels are labeled with numbers: 969, 987, 979, 985, 991, 1003, 1005, 1025, 1085, 1075, and 253.



Project Name: Estate of Joyce Silvia Trust - Property Map



-  APR Staff Recommendation
-  Existing APR
-  Land Under Common Ownership

Land in common ownership: 207.0 ac ±

Data Provided by MassGIS, MDAR, and LCLU (2016)

Created By Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources

Created: 8/7/2024 4:53 PM

Project Name: Estate of Joyce Silvia Trust - Soils
Westport, MA



Soil Type	Soil Acres	% Soil Type
All areas are prime farmland	29.98	35.9%
Farmland of local importance	8.35	10%
Farmland of statewide importance	17.53	21%

APR Applicant = 83.52 acres

All areas are prime
farmland

Farmland of statewide
importance

Excluded from
application

Farmland of local
importance

APR Application

0 187.5 375 750 Feet

Center: 71.112106°W 41.575084°N



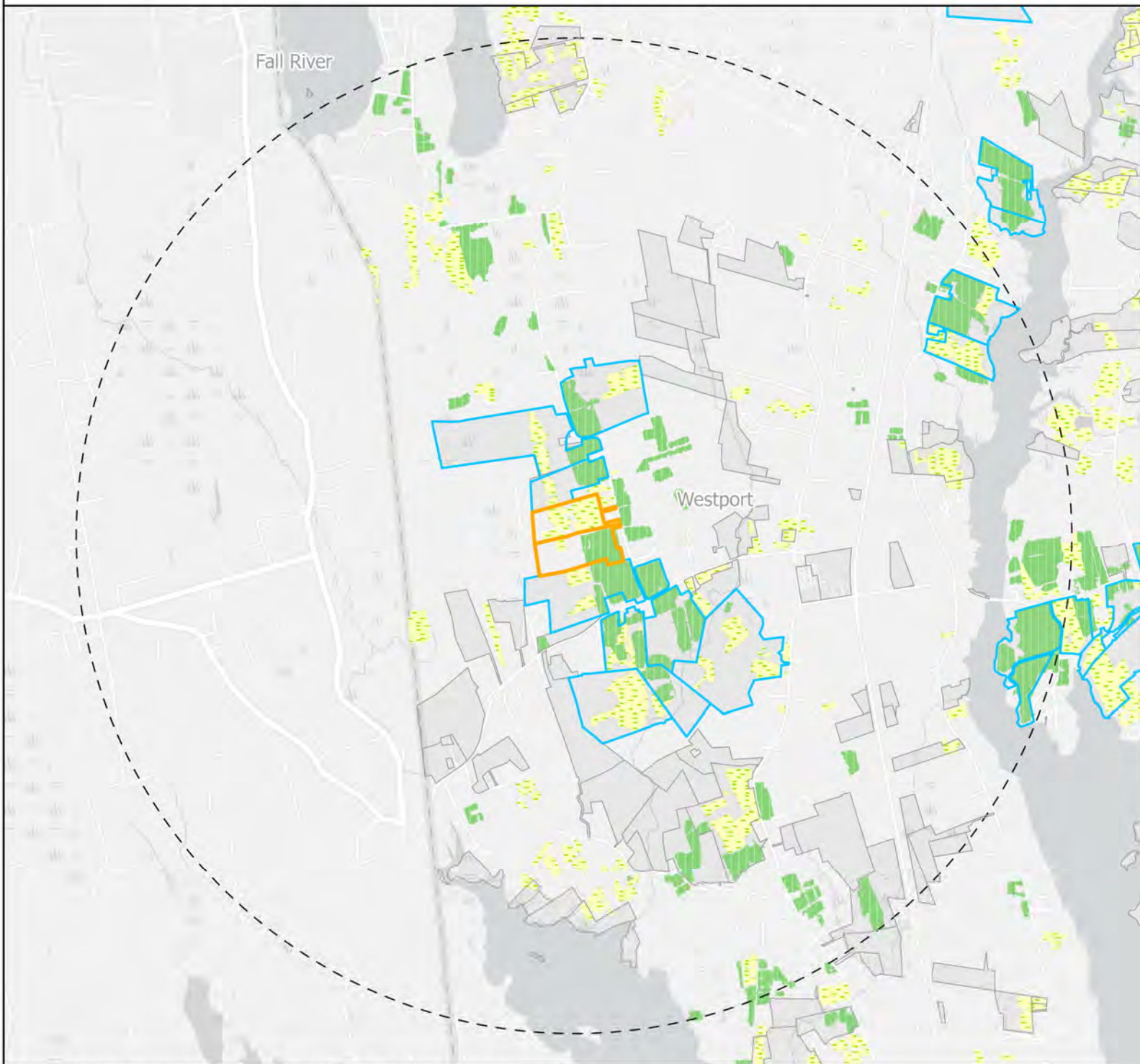
MDAR

Data Provided by MDAR, NCRS, &
MassGIS 2021 Imagery

Created by Massachusetts Department
of Agricultural Resources

Created: 8/7/2024 11:17 AM

Project Name: Estate of Joyce Silvia Trust - 2.5 mile Block Map



Land Cover Summary Within 2.5 mile Radius

On APR	Acres
Cultivated	224.4
Pasture/Hay	145.6

On Protected Openspace	Acres
Cultivated	267.2
Pasture/Hay	247.6

Within Buffer	Acres
Cultivated	499.9
Pasture/Hay	491.6

This map shows active agricultural areas and APRs within 2.5 miles of the project area. Land cover data is from LCLU (2016).

- APR Applicant
- Existing APR
- Cultivated
- Pasture/Hay
- Protected and Recreational OpenSpace
- 2.5 mile buffer

There are 11 APRs within 2.5 miles of this project.



0 0.5 1 Miles

Center: 71.11248°W 41.57499°N

Data Provided by MassGIS, EEA Openspace, MassGIS, MassDOT & MDAR

Created by Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources

Created: 8/7/2024



MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION RESTRICTION PROGRAM

Narrative for Vote of Interest 9/5/2024

Letendre LLC – Ware – Hampshire

This ± 218.3-acre property consists of three parcels situated along Belchertown Road (Route 9) and Babcock Tavern Road in Ware. Proposed exclusions include an existing residential structure with accessory garages (approximately 1.5 acres) and portions of rear woodlands (approximately 138 acres) resulting in a total proposed APR area of approximately 78 acres. Infrastructure to remain within the APR area includes two barns to the north of Route 9 utilized for hay storage, as well as the hen house and a cold storage structure located to the south of Route 9.

The historic Letendre Farm, managed by the Jacques family for three generations, was operated as a dairy farm until the 1970's. Current commercial agricultural use includes hay production that averages about 5,000 square bales annually, 600 laying hens averaging about 30-40 dozen eggs sold daily, and occasional strategic tree cutting. Hay produced is sold to local area customers for both commercial and personal use. Eggs are sold on site and at local farmer's markets.

Approximately 37.8 acres (48.5%) of the land are designated as farmland of statewide importance, and 1.54 acres (2%) are designated as farmland of local importance. In total, about 27.3 acres (35%) of the proposed APR area are utilized for open agriculture (hay production). As a result, the entire project would be eligible for federal ACEP-ALE funding, provided all qualifiers for designation of farmland of local importance soils are satisfied as determined by NRCS.

Letendre LLC has received two prior rounds of MDAR Farm Viability Enhancement Program (FVEP) funding utilized to successfully improve farm infrastructure, specifically related to the hen house and storage infrastructure improvements. The current FVEP covenant is scheduled to expire in May of 2025.

No existing APR properties are located within a 2.5-mile radius of Letendre Farm; however, abutting Belchertown, Hardwick, Warren, and West Brookfield are well established with several productive APR properties each. The town of Ware recently adopted a right to farm bylaw in 2023 and is supportive of this APR application. The East Quabbin Land Trust (EQLT) has also facilitated the submission and consideration of this APR application.

LAND USE	ACREAGE	SOIL CLASSIFICATION	
		CLASS	ACREAGE
Tillable Cropland	42.92 ±	Prime Farmland	
Non-tillable Cropland	7 ±	State Important Soils	37.83
Nursery/Orchard		Local Soils	1.54
Pasture	1.5 ±	Unique Farmland	
Managed Woodland	158.5 ±	TOTAL Prime, SI, LI	39.37 (51%)
Unmanaged Woodland			
Ponds/Wetlands	8.42 ±		
Other			
TOTAL ACRES	218 ±		
TOTAL ACRES FOR RESTRICTION	77.9 ±		

CONSERVATION PLAN: No (Forest Management Plan)

CHAPTER 61A: Yes

APR Parcel Scoresheet Rating: 290 Points

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommendation is to nominate for a **vote of interest**.



Photo #	Waypoint #	Description	Direction
1		East hay field (south side of Rt. 9)	E



Photo #	Waypoint #	Description	Direction
2		Ag. Infrastructure – Storage and Hen House (FVEP funded improvements)	SE



Photo #	Waypoint #	Description	Direction
3		Larger Barn for hay storage (north side of Rt. 9)	NW



Photo #	Waypoint #	Description	Direction
4		Northernmost hay field	N

Landowner's Name: Letendre LLC (Jacques Family)		Total Acres: 218.3	
Property Address: 350 Belchertown Road Ware, MA		Eligible Acres: 77.96	
Application Eligibility and Land Determination Requirements			
Thresholds - State			Yes
Parcel fulfills at least one EEA Land Conservation Priority			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Products raised on parcel are sold in the normal course of business (i.e. commercial operation)			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parcel in active agricultural production for at least previous two years			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parcel contains at least 5 acres of active agricultural land			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Thresholds - Federal			
Parcel consists of a single contiguous land parcel			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parcel contains ≥ 33% open farmland and ≤ 66% woodland			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parcel contains ≥ 50% of a combination of prime/state important soils			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If sod/nursery operation, parcel meets NRCS tolerance for soil loss			<input type="checkbox"/>
Parcel Attributes			
% in open ag use:35% Points		% prime/state soils: 51%	Points
33-50%	<u>25</u>	51-65%	<u>25</u>
51-75%	50	66-80%	50
76-100%	75	81-100%	75
Total	35	Total	25
Land Use			
Land Use Majority (circle one)		Points	
Vegetable/Small Fruit/Tobacco		75	
Hay/Forage/RowCrops/Orchard/Vineyard		<u>50</u>	
Pasture		25	
Christmas Trees/Sugarbush		10	
Total		50	
Location			
Active commercial APR land within 2.5 mile radius: 0 ac		Points	
None		0	
1-250 acres		10	
251-500 acres		25	
over 500 acres		50	
Abutting (including across street)		+10	
Total		0	
Ownership/Succession			
Attribute		Points	
Land owner is also farm operator		<u>50</u>	
Farm operator makes majority of income farming		<u>25</u>	
Farm operator has long term (5+ yr) written lease w/owner		15	
Farm owner/operator owns other APR land		10	
Written succession plan prepared by professional		10	
Total		75	
Intensity/Productivity			
Percent of open land intensively farmed: 75 %		Points	
0-25%		0	
26-75%		<u>25</u>	
76-100%		50	
Total		25	
Agricultural Priorities			
Priority		Points	
Right to Farm Bylaw		<u>10</u>	
Total		10	
Single fam building permits - 5 yr average: 6 permits		Points	
between 1 and 5		5	
6-15		<u>15</u>	
More than 15		25	
Total		15	
Additional Information			
Parcel contains at least 75% prime soils (20 points)			
Staff Comments (1-40 points): Hay production approximately 50 acres producing 5,000 square bales annually - average 2 cuttings per year. Upper fields near house are most productive. Hay sold to regular area customers for both commercial and personal use. Approximately 30-40 dozen eggs sold per day (600 laying hens). FLI is sandy loam with mod. slope			
Additional Comments/Considerations: Family has owned and operated farm (previously dairy farm) for over 50 years. Two-time farm viability grant recipient.			
Farm is primary revenue/employment for landowners and farm infrastructure is well maintained.			
Total Points		290	

Subtotal
260

Project Name: Letendre Farms - Property Map Ware, MA



- ▬ APR Staff Recommendation
- ▬ Existing APR
- - - Land Under Common Ownership

Land in common ownership: 218.3 ac ±

Data Provided by MassGIS, MDAR, and LCLU (2016)

Created By Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources





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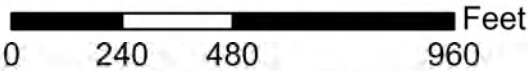
Project Name: Letendre Farms - Soils
Ware, MA



Soil Type	Soil Acres	% Soil Type
Farmland of local importance	1.54	2%
Farmland of statewide importance	37.83	48.5%

APR Applicant = 77.96 acres

-  Farmland of local importance
-  Farmland of statewide importance
-  Excluded from application
-  APR Application



Center: 72.287271°W 42.261608°N



Data Provided by MDAR, NCRS, & MassGIS 2021 Imagery

Created by Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources

Created: 8/7/2024 10:29 AM

Project Name: Letendre Farms - Land Cover Ware, MA



Land Cover	Acreage	% Land Cover
Open Agriculture	27.28	35%

APR Project = 78.0 acres

Data Provided by MassGIS, MDAR, Maxar 2023 imagery, and LCLU (2016)

Created By Massachusetts Department of
Agricultural Resources

Created: 8/7/2024 11:40 AM



APR Application

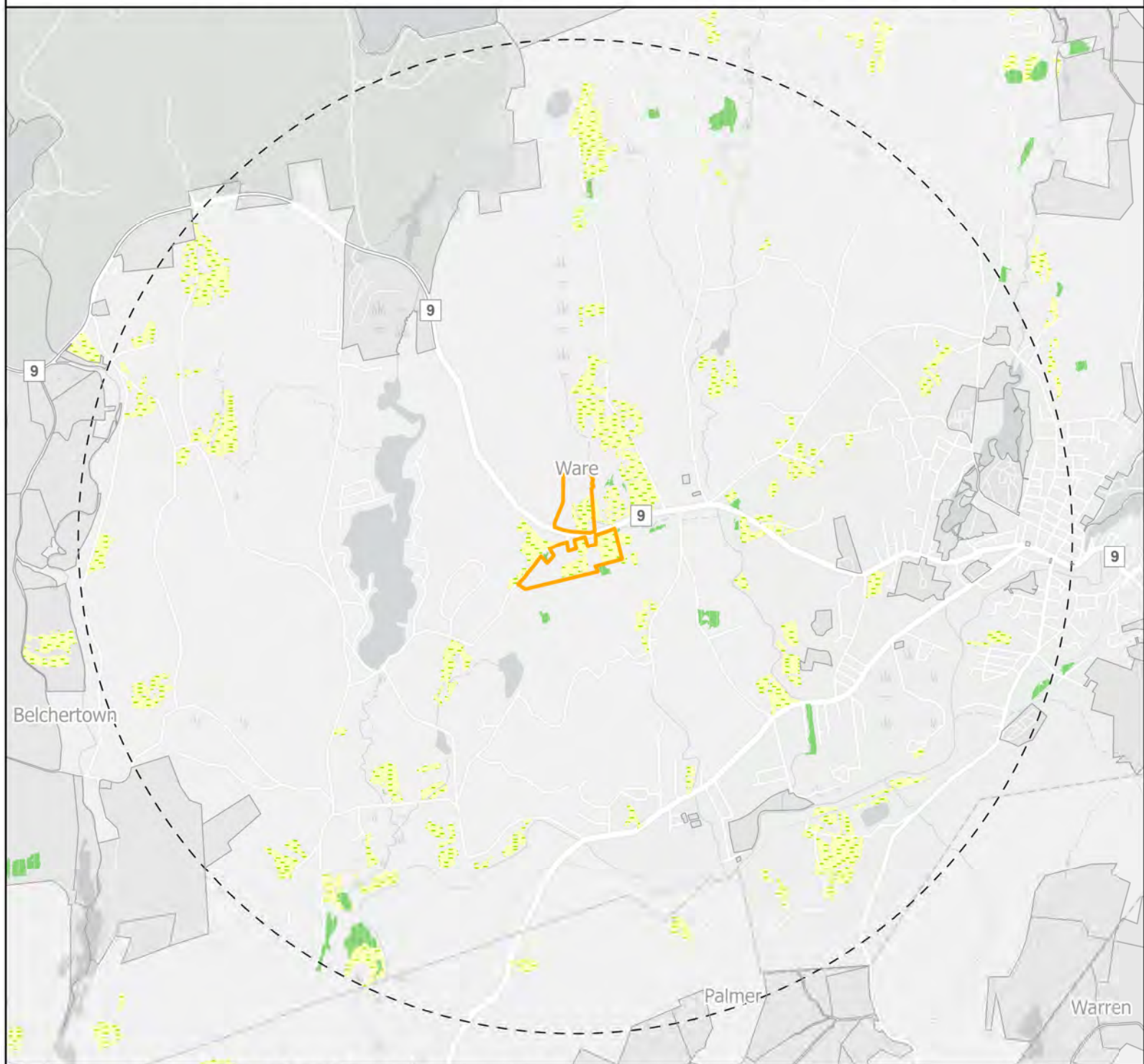
Excluded from application



0 345 690 Feet

Center: 72.287271°W 42.261608°N

Project Name: Letendre Farms - 2.5 mile Block Map



Land Cover Summary Within 2.5 mile Radius

No APRs within 2.5 miles

No protected agricultural land within 2.5 miles

Within Buffer	Acres
Cultivated	49.2
Pasture/Hay	538.6

This map shows active agricultural areas and APRs within 2.5 miles of the project area. Land cover data is from LCLU (2016).

- APR Applicant
- Existing APR
- Cultivated
- Pasture/Hay
- Protected and Recreational OpenSpace
- 2.5 mile buffer

There are 0 APRs within 2.5 miles of this project.



0 0.5 1 Miles

Center: 72.286749°W 42.260951°N

Data Provided by MassGIS, EEA Openspace, MassGIS, MassDOT & MDAR

Created by Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources

Created: 8/7/2024



MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES
AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION RESTRICTION PROGRAM

Narrative for Vote of Interest

ALPC Meeting September 5, 2024

Melnik Family Trust – Deerfield - Franklin County

This 21 +/- acre property in the ownership of the Stephen and Kathy Melnik Family Trust is located on Boynton Road and Sandgully Rod in Deerfield. There are two fields in agricultural production totaling 10 acres that are rotated between corn silage and hay. The remainder is unmanaged woodland. Fourteen acres are classified as prime soils.

This parcel supports the Melnik's large successful dairy operation known as Barway Farms in Deerfield. The family owns over 700 acres in the Deerfield area and rents another 270 acres. Most of their land has been protected by the APR Program over the last 20+ years. The farm supports a herd of 600 cows including 400 milkers. Steve is semi-retired and one of his sons has joined him full time on the farm along with his own son, and another of Steve's sons works on the farm part time.

The Melnik family is hoping the sale of an APR on this parcel will allow them to purchase additional farmland to support the dairy.

This parcel is located in a large block of intensively farmed APR land. Town of Deerfield is very supportive of agriculture and has consistently contributed to APR projects over the years so it is reasonable to assume that a local contribution will be available for this project.

LAND USE	ACREAGE	SOIL CLASSIFICATION	
		CLASS	ACREAGE
Tillable Cropland	10	Prime Farmland	14
Non-tillable Cropland		State Important Soils	
Nursery/Orchard		Local Soils	
Pasture		Unique Farmland	
Managed Woodland		TOTAL Prime, SI, LI	14(65%)
Unmanaged Woodland	11		
Ponds/Wetlands			
Other			
TOTAL ACRES	21		
TOTAL ACRES FOR RESTRICTION	21		

CONSERVATION PLAN: Yes

CHAPTER 61A: Yes

APR Parcel Scoresheet Rating: 280 Points

Staff Recommendation: Vote of Interest

APR Parcel Scoresheet

Date: 9/5/24

Prepared by: MP

Landowner's Name: Stephen and Kathleen Melnik Family Trust		Total Acres: 21
Property Address: Boynton Rd & Sandgully Rd, Deerfield		Eligible Acres: 21
Application Eligibility and Land Determination Requirements		
Thresholds - State		Yes
Parcel fulfills at least one EEA Land Conservation Priority		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Products raised on parcel are sold in the normal course of business (i.e. commercial operation)		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parcel in active agricultural production for at least previous two years		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parcel contains at least 5 acres of active agricultural land		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Thresholds - Federal		
Parcel consists of a single contiguous land parcel		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parcel contains $\geq 33\%$ open farmland and $\leq 66\%$ woodland		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parcel contains $\geq 50\%$ of a combination of prime/state important soils		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If sod/nursery operation, parcel meets NRCS tolerance for soil loss		<input type="checkbox"/>
Parcel Attributes		
% in open ag use: 48%	Points	% prime/state soils: 65%
33-50%	25	51-65%
51-75%	50	66-80%
76-100%	75	81-100%
Total	25	Total
Land Use		
Land Use Majority (circle one)		Points
Vegetable/Small Fruit/Tobacco		75
Hay/Forage/RowCrops/Orchard/Vineyard		50
Pasture		25
Christmas Trees/Sugarbush		10
Total		50
Location		
Active commercial APR land w/in 2.5 mile radius: 774ac		Points
		0
1-250 acres		10
251-500 acres		25
over 500 acres		50
Abutting (including across street)		+10
Total		60
Size		
Acres of land in open ag use: 10 acres		Points
5-25		10
26-75		25
76 +		50
Total		10
Ownership/Succession		
Attribute		Points
Land owner is also farm operator		50
Farm operator makes majority of income farming		25
Farm operator has long term (5+ yr) written lease w/owner		15
Farm owner/operator owns other APR land		10
Written succession plan prepared by professional		10
Total		85
Intensity/Productivity		
Percent of open land intensively farmed: 0__%		Points
0-25%		0
26-75%		25
76-100%		50
Total		0
Agricultural Priorities		
Priority		Points
Right to Farm Bylaw		10
Total		10
Single fam building permits - 5 yr ave: 11 permits		Points
between 1 and 5		5
6-15		15
More than 15		25
Total		15
Subtotal		
		280
Additional Information		
Parcel contains at least 75% prime soils (20 points)		Points
Staff Comments (1-40 points):		
Additional Comments/Considerations:		
Total Points		280





Project Name: Melnik Kathy and Steve - Landcover
Deerfield, MA



Landcover	Acres	Percent of area
Cultivated	4.91	23.2%
Pasture/Hay	5.51	26.1%

APR Project = 21.1 acres

Data Provided by MassGIS, MDAR, Maxar 2023 imagery, and LCLU (2016)

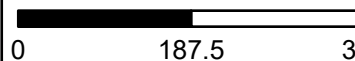
Created By Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources

Created: 7/15/2024 1:43 PM



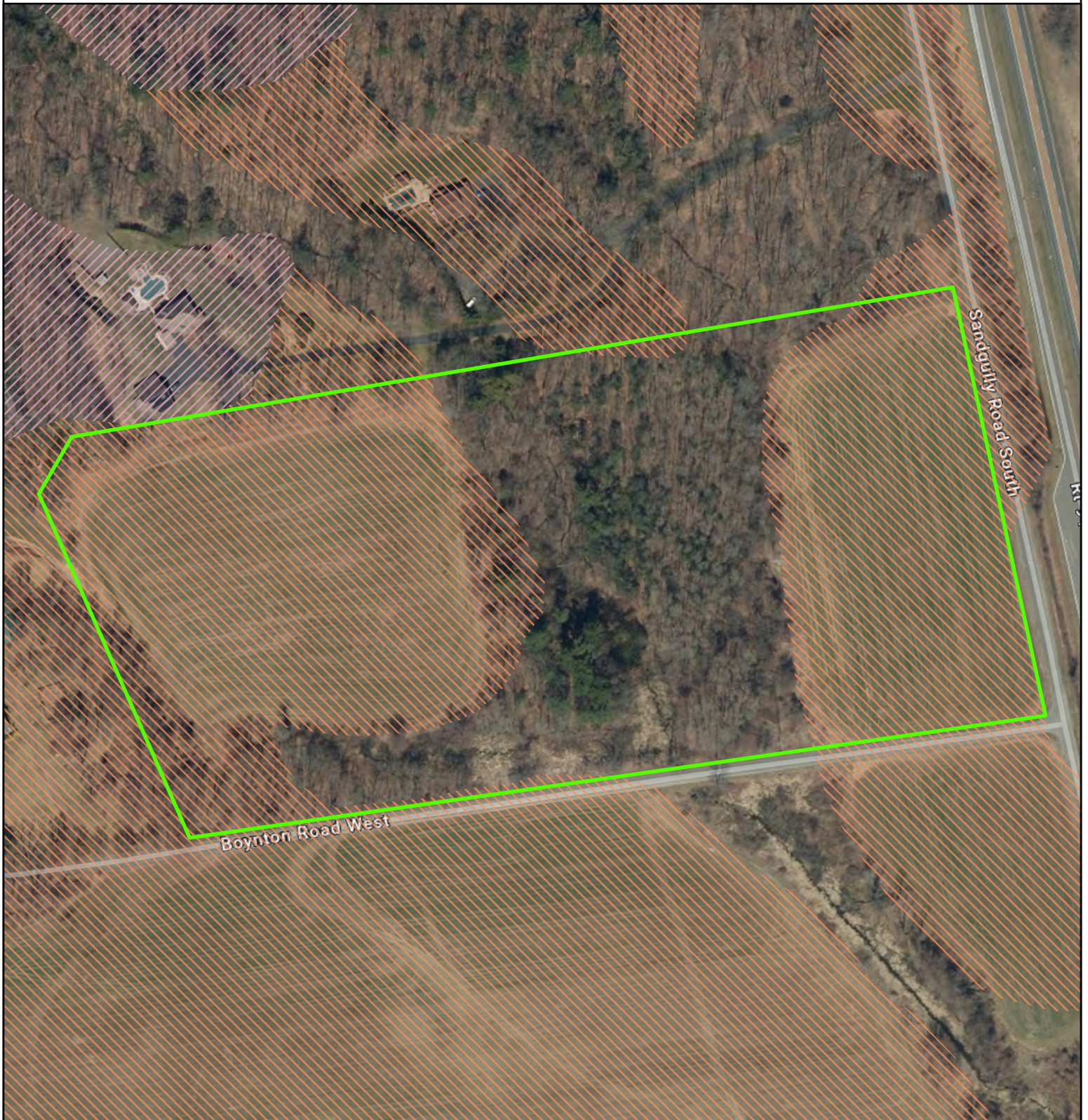
 APR Project



 Feet
0 187.5 375

Center: 72.623834°W 42.505087°N

Project Name: Melnik Kathy and Steve - Soils
Deerfield, MA



FRMLNDCLS	SoilAcres	% Soil Type
All areas are prime farmland	13.62	64.5%
Farmland of statewide importance	0.01	0%

APR Applicant = 21.11 acres

Orange diagonal hatching: All areas are prime farmland

Pink diagonal hatching: Farmland of statewide importance

Green outline: APR Project

0 120 240 480 Feet

Center: 72.623834°W 42.505087°N



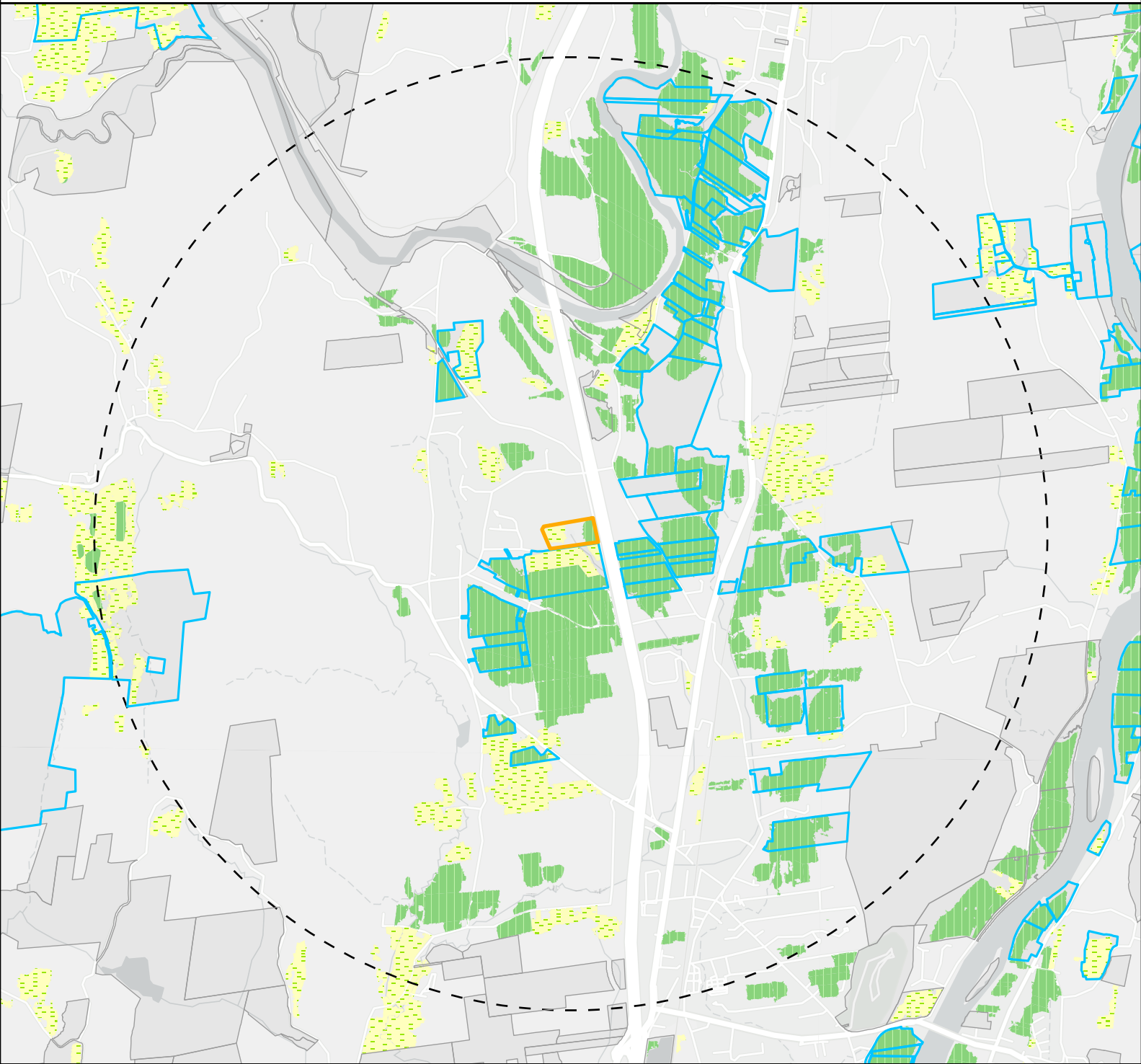
Data Provided by MDAR, NCRS, & MassGIS 2021 Imagery

Created by Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources

Created: 7/15/2024 10:41 AM



Project Name: Melnik Kathy and Steve - 2.5 mile Block Map



Land Cover Summary Within 2.5 mile Radius

On APR	Acres
Cultivated	679.1
Pasture/Hay	95.4

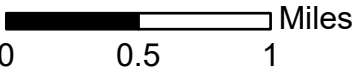
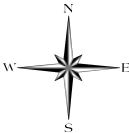
On Protected Openspace	Acres
Cultivated	707
Pasture/Hay	101.8

Within Buffer	Acres
Cultivated	1535.2
Pasture/Hay	579.9

This map shows active agricultural areas and APRs within 2.5 miles of the project area. Active ag. is determined by the LCLU (2016) dataset.

- APR Project
- Existing APR
- Cultivated
- Pasture/Hay
- Protected and Recreational OpenSpace
- 2.5 mile buffer

There are 30 APRs within 2.5 miles of this project.



Center: 72.623752°W 42.505064°N

Data Provided by MassGIS, EEA Openspace, MassGIS, MassDOT & MDAR

Created by Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources

Created: 7/17/2024



**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES
AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION RESTRICTION PROGRAM**

Narrative for Vote of No Interest 9/5/2024

Soderberg - Rutland - Worcester County

This 60-acre property owned by Bob and Karen Soderberg is located on Ridge Road and Wachusett Street in Rutland. The APR application is for 23 acres of land consisting of 8 acres of hay and 15 acres of managed woodland. The hay land is comprised of 3 separate fields – 3.5 acres, 2.5 acres and 2 acres. Approximately 12 acres are designated as prime soils.

Jordan Dairy Farm, which is in close proximity to the Soderberg parcel, has been haying the fields for the last 30 +/- years. There is no interest on the landowner's part in selling the land to a farmer at ag value following the sale of the APR.

Bob and Karen applied to APR on this parcel in 2012 when it was part of a larger cooperative project with DCR. The project received a Vote of Interest and was appraised, but the landowners rejected the Commonwealth's offer.

LAND USE	ACREAGE	SOIL CLASSIFICATION	
		CLASS	ACREAGE
Tillable Cropland	8	Prime Farmland	12
Non-tillable Cropland		State Important Soils	
Nursery/Orchard		Local Soils	
Pasture		Unique Farmland	
Managed Woodland	52	TOTAL Prime, SI, LI	12(52%)
Unmanaged Woodland			
Ponds/Wetlands			
Other			
TOTAL ACRES	60		
TOTAL ACRES FOR RESTRICTION	23		

CONSERVATION PLAN: No (Forest Management Plan)

CHAPTER 61A: Yes

APR Parcel Scoresheet Rating: 215 Points

Staff Recommendation: The amount of agricultural land on this property is very limited and broken up into 3 small fields. The largest and most productive field is only 3.5 acres in size and one of the smallest fields is used as a staging area for logging operations. Stewardship has been consulted and has expressed concern regarding the likelihood of commercial ag uses continuing because of the size and configuration of the fields. The property is currently used by a local farmer because of the location but is not critical to the operation of his business, nor are they priority fields.

Staff recommends a Vote of No Interest.

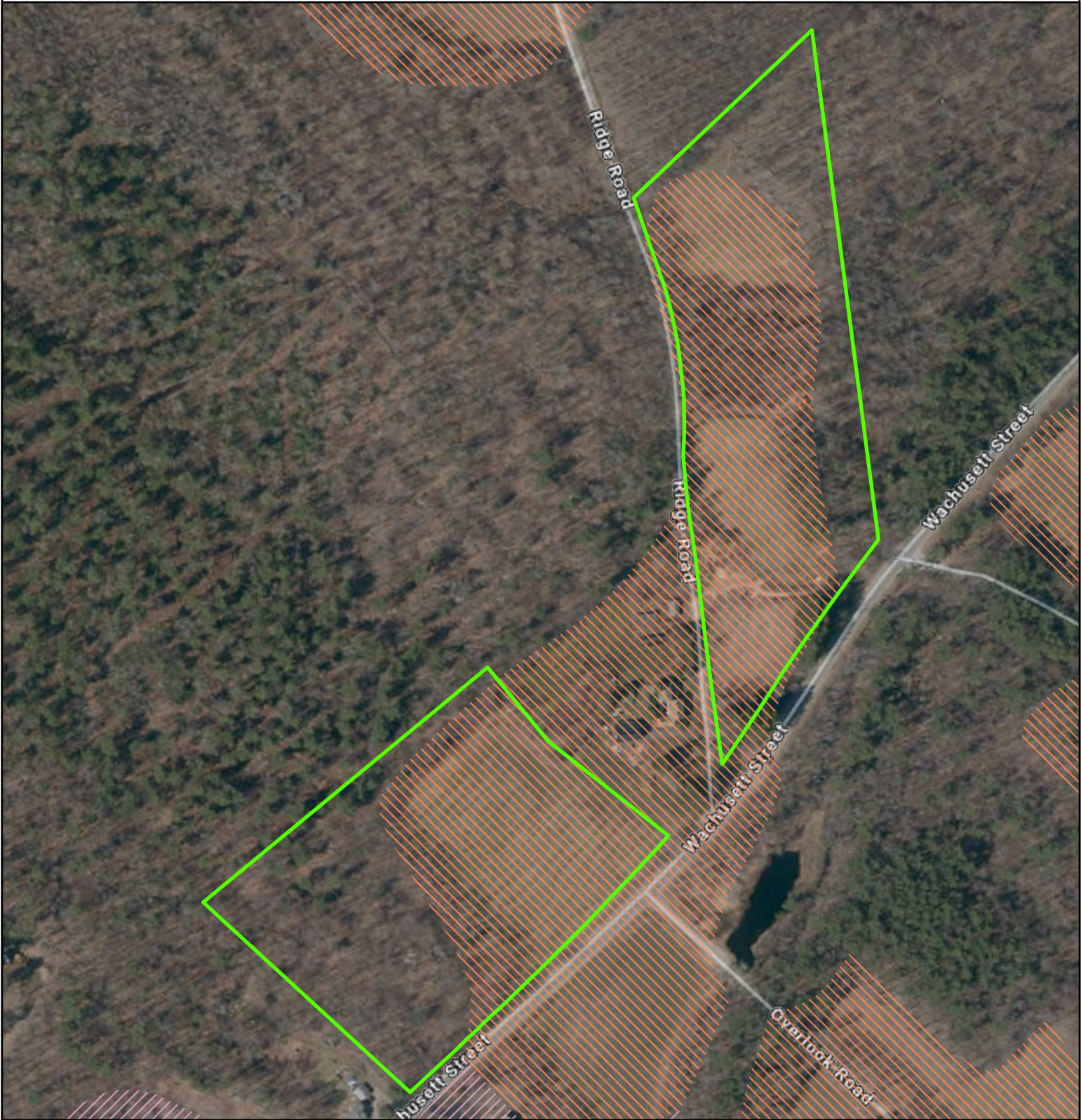
APR Parcel Scoresheet

Date:9/5/24

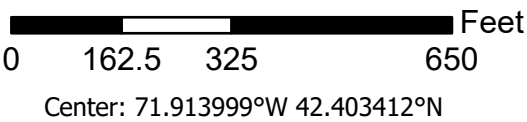
Prepared by:MP Prepared by: MP

Landowner's Name: Robert and Karen Soderberg		Total Acres: 60
Property Address: Ridge Road and Wachusett Street, Rutland		Eligible Acres: 23
Application Eligibility and Land Determination Requirements		
Thresholds - State		Yes
Parcel fulfills at least one EEA Land Conservation Priority		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Products raised on parcel are sold in the normal course of business (i.e. commercial operation)		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parcel in active agricultural production for at least previous two years		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parcel contains at least 5 acres of active agricultural land		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Thresholds - Federal		
Parcel consists of a single contiguous land parcel		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parcel contains ≥ 33% open farmland and ≤ 66% woodland		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parcel contains ≥ 50% of a combination of prime/state important soils		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If sod/nursery operation, parcel meets NRCS tolerance for soil loss		<input type="checkbox"/>
Parcel Attributes		
% in open ag use: 35%	Points	% prime/state soils: 52%
33-50%	25	51-65%
51-75%	50	66-80%
76-100%	75	81-100%
Total	25	Total
Land Use		
Land Use Majority (circle one)		Points
Vegetable/Small Fruit/Tobacco		75
Hay/Forage/RowCrops/Orchard/Vineyard		50
Pasture		25
Christmas Trees/Sugarbush		10
Total		50
Location		
Active commercial APR land w/in 2.5 mile radius: 327ac		Points
		0
1-250 acres		10
251-500 acres		25
over 500 acres		50
Abutting (including across street)		+10
Total		35
Size		
Acres of land in open ag use: 8 acres		Points
5-25		10
26-75		25
76 +		50
Total		10
Intensity/Productivity		
Percent of open land intensively farmed: 0 %		Points
0-25%		0
26-75%		25
76-100%		50
Total		0
Ownership/Succession		
Attribute		Points
Land owner is also farm operator		50
Farm operator makes majority of income farming		25
Farm operator has long term (5+ yr) written lease w/owner		15
Farm owner/operator owns other APR land		10
Written succession plan prepared by professional		10
Total		35
Agricultural Priorities		
Priority		Points
Right to Farm Bylaw		10
Total		10
Single fam building permits - 5 yr ave: 46 permits		Points
between 1 and 5		5
6-15		15
More than 15		25
Total		25
Subtotal		215
Additional Information		
Parcel contains at least 75% prime soils (20 points)		
Staff Comments (1-40 points):		
Additional Comments/Considerations:		
Total Points		215

Project Name: Soderberg - Soils
Rutland, MA



FRMLNDCLS	SoilAcres	% Soil Type
All areas are prime farmland	12.11	61%



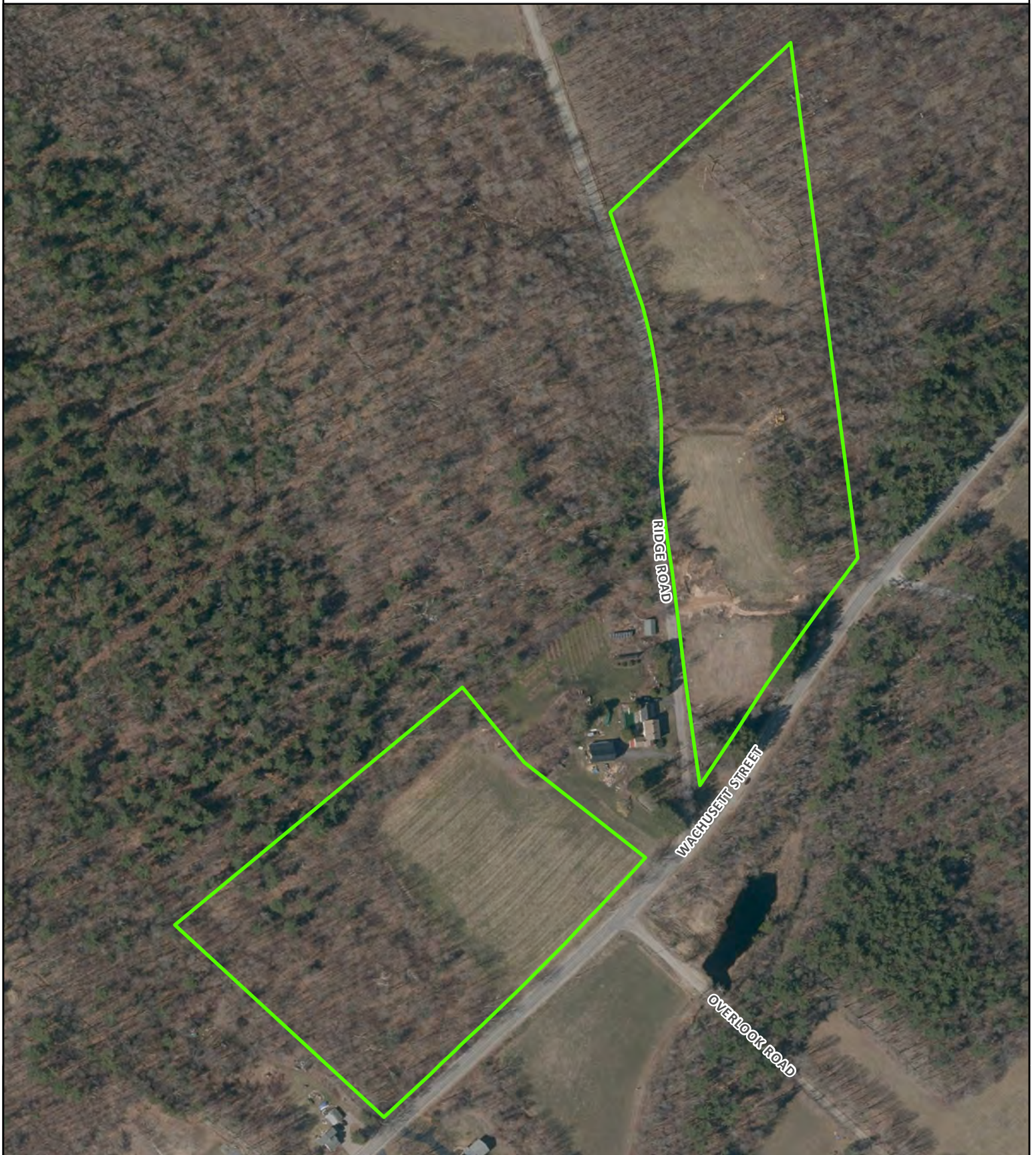
APR Applicant = 19.85 acres

- All areas are prime farmland
- Farmland of statewide importance
- APR Project



Data Provided by MDAR, NCRS, & MassGIS 2021 Imagery
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Created: 7/15/2024 10:41 AM

Project Name: Soderberg - Landcover
Rutland, MA



Landcover	Acres	Percent of area
Grassland	0.21	1.1%
Pasture/Hay	8.11	40.9%

APR Project = 19.9 acres

Data Provided by MassGIS, MDAR, Maxar 2023 imagery, and LCLU (2016)


Created By Massachusetts Department of
Agricultural Resources

Created: 7/15/2024 1:43 PM



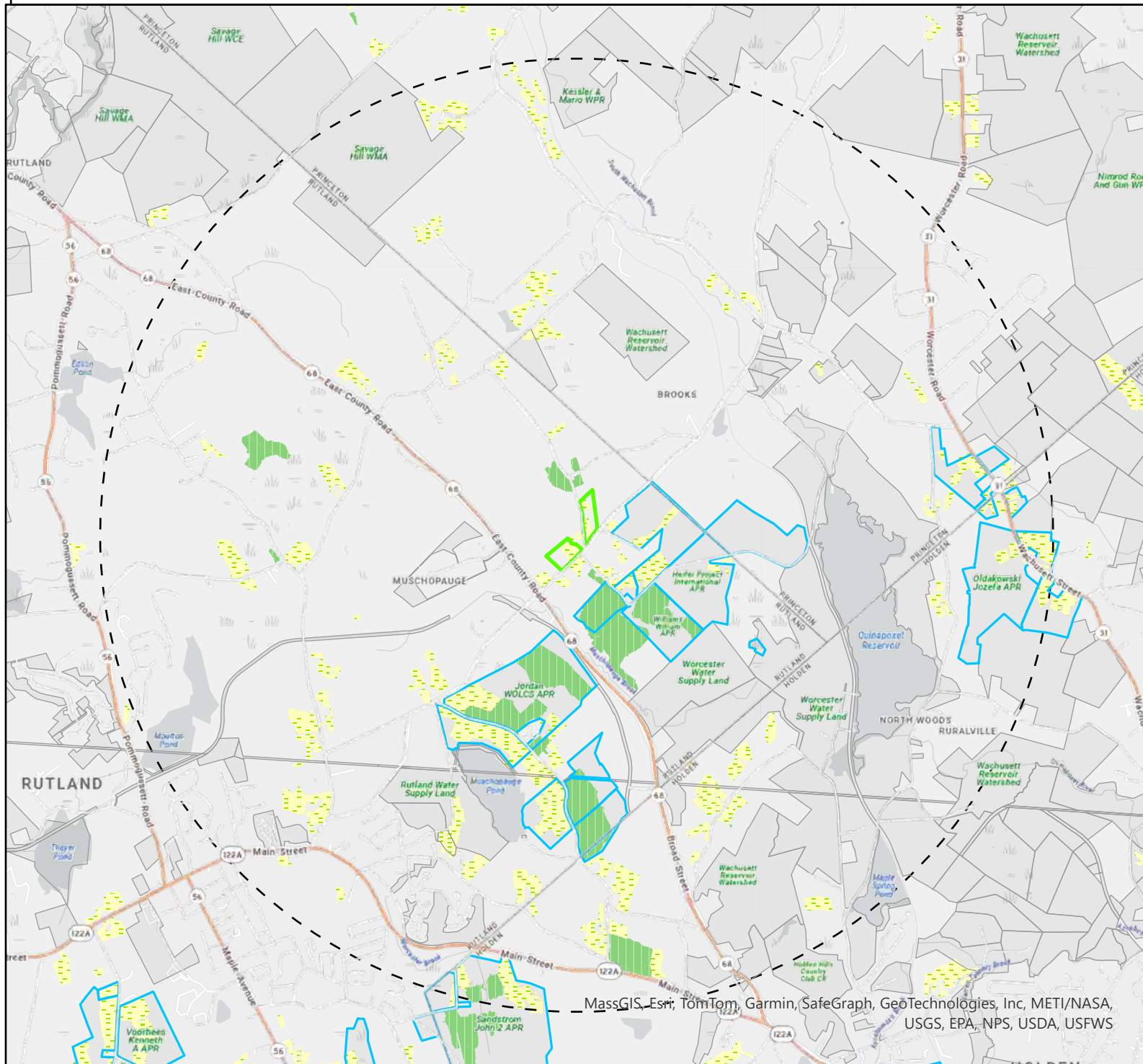
 APR Project



 Feet
0 240 480

Center: 71.913999°W 42.403412°N

Project Name: Soderberg - 2.5 mile Block Map



Land Cover Summary Within 2.5 mile Radius

On APR	Acres
Cultivated	159.2
Pasture/Hay	167.9

On Protected Openspace	Acres
Cultivated	160.2
Pasture/Hay	189.3

Within Buffer	Acres
Cultivated	254.6
Pasture/Hay	564.2

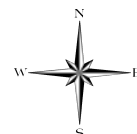
This map shows active agricultural areas and APRs within 2.5 miles of the project area. Active ag. is determined by the LCLU (2016) dataset.

- Existing APR
- Cultivated
- Pasture/Hay

Town Boundary

- Protected and Recreational OpenSpace
- Proposed APR

There are 9 APRs within 2.5 miles of this project.



0 0.5 1 Miles

Center: 71.9135°W 42.403032°N

Data Provided by MassGIS, EEA Openspace, MassGIS, MassDOT & MDAR

Created by Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources

Created: 3/22/2024









