

Hunterdon Freeholders Approve Preserving 75 More Farmland Acres At No Cost To County

Hunterdon County's Freeholder Board, at the July 7th meeting, approved the preservation of two farms in the County in cooperation with the Hunterdon Land Trust, using state and federal preservation funds, that will add 75 more acres to the County's Farmland Preservation inventory.

"Preserving farmland in the County remains a front burner issue for the Freeholder Board. And finding funding partners to take on 100% of the costs is a real bonus for the taxpayers. These preservation projects add to the total of preserved farmland in the County beyond 34,000 acres," Freeholder Board Director Shaun C. Van Doren stated.

The preservation includes the 45 acre Martin DeSapio farm and 24 acres owned by the Kollmer family, both on Ridge Road in Kingwood, to be funded through grants from the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) and the United States Department of Agriculture/Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA/NRCS), resulting in no cost to County and municipal open space funds.

"The Freeholders and Planning Department staff have long worked cooperatively with the non-profit Hunterdon Land Trust in identifying and preserving key properties throughout the county. It has been a very beneficial relationship for preserving the environment and for our residents. We always appreciate their help," Van Doren added.

The Kollmer farm acreage is approved for preservation at a cost of \$121,000, split evenly between SADC and USDA/NRCS, while the DeSapio property preservation cost of \$164,150, is split with SADC picking up \$51,590 and USDA/NRCS \$112,560.

The Hunterdon County Agriculture Development Board's Administrator Bob Hornby said, "The Hunterdon Land Trust's ongoing commitment to helping the towns and County obtain federal grant funding provides opportunities for preservation in tight budgetary times, responsibly ensuring the land base and viability of Hunterdon's agricultural economy."

Hunterdon County has preserved the second most farmland in New Jersey and has preserved the most farms of all the counties in the state. Hunterdon continues to accept applications for preservation, contact cadb@co.hunterdon.nj.us for details.