

# **Section IV**

## **Farmland**

# Overview

## History and Need

The Land for Maine's Future Program protects farmland through the purchase of development rights and other methods. The Program works with the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources and cooperating entities to bring farmland protection proposals to the Land for Maine's Future Board.

In 2007, Maine voters approved an LMF bond, which sets aside \$1.7 million of these funds for farmland protection.

## Appropriate Use of the Fund

The Land for Maine's Future Program assists in the acquisition of conservation easements or in some instances, fee simple rights on farmland with a goal of protecting Maine's productive farm assets from conversion to non-agricultural use(s). The Program seeks to protect prime and statewide important farmland soils as well as unique farmlands that are productive for important crops that do not rely on prime farmland soils.

## How does a farmer apply?

The Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources is the only agency that can sponsor a farmland project to the Land for Maine's Future Program. The Department's screening process allows it to continually respond to landowner's and cooperating entity inquiries and prioritize eligible farmland projects for state and/or federal funding as those funds become available. The typical process is as follows.

- A farmer contacts the Department to schedule several site visits to his/her farm.
- During these visits the Department staff and the farmland owner review the property's soil maps, discuss the landowner's objectives and to begin to determine if the sale of development rights may be a workable option.
- If the Department and farmland owner agree to move forward, they assemble a project planning team to research local fundraising options. This project team must include a conservation partner that will hold and steward the conservation easement. The partner may be a local or statewide land trust, a non-profit conservation organization, a town or other eligible entity that is a "qualified organization" under Title 33 M.R.S.A, Section 476(2)(A) and an "eligible donee" under Internal Revenue Code Section 170(h) (3). In certain circumstances the Department itself may be the easement holder.

- If the team determines that: 1) the landowner is a willing seller; 2) the conservation partner is a willing buyer; and 3) matching funds required by LMFP cannot be raised locally; then the Department will assist the conservation partner in applying for matching funds through the USDA Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP). To be eligible for FRPP funds, the farm must be comprised of at least 50% prime farmland or statewide important farmland soils as determined by the USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service State Conservationist.
- The farmland owner and conservation partner submit a pre-proposal to the Department of Agriculture annually by September 15<sup>th</sup> <sup>1</sup>.
- A 5-member Farmland Advisory Panel appointed by the Department of Agriculture reviews and prioritizes pre-proposals in early October. Only the highest ranked proposals are guaranteed Department sponsorship to the LMFP.

The LMFP, FRPP and local funding cycles are not synchronous. It can therefore take up to three years to plan and successfully complete a farmland protection project. The first year is devoted to planning; the second to securing funds; and the third to complete the funder's and buyer's due diligence and close. It is important to note that the FRPP requires all projects close within 18 months of the allocation of federal funds.

Many Maine farms merit permanent protection, but are not currently eligible for public funding. Some farms are owned by individuals who do not want to enter into a permanent partnership with the "public" through state and federal investments. Thus to achieve success, the farmland owner and the conservation partner are encouraged to work closely with the Department of Agriculture, Maine Farmland Trust and other land conservation groups to fully explore any and all viable opportunities to protect the farm.

Please visit <http://www.maine.gov/agriculture/mpd/farmland/index.html> to learn more about the Department of Agriculture's Farmland Protection Program.

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<sup>1</sup> The Department conducts this process on an ongoing annual process. The Department has already screened potential LMF applicants for funding in 2008. However, persons interested in pursuing new farm protection projects are still encouraged to contact the Department to begin planning for future funding opportunities.

# Purpose

The purpose of the LMFP farmland investment is to protect Maine's prime and statewide importance farmlands from conversion into non-agricultural uses. This does not preclude those unique farmlands that do not rely on prime agricultural soils, but do produce important crops such as blueberries and cranberries.<sup>2</sup>

The LMF seeks to protect properties with these soils that also support farming operations in areas that currently retain a viable agricultural economy.

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<sup>2</sup> If the primary purpose of a proposal is to protect a working farm -- and it has a secondary or minor conservation or recreation component -- then the project may fall under the farmland category. On the other hand, if the primary purpose of the proposal is conservation or recreation -- and it has a secondary or minor component that involves the protection of agricultural values -- then the project should be submitted under the Recreation and Conservation Land category.

# Proposal Process

The Land for Maine's Future Board established a process for the public to propose projects that protect working agricultural lands through the purchase of agricultural conservation easements or outright purchase. The proposal process outlined below is for farmland owners and cooperating entities, who must work with the Department of Agriculture, Food & Rural Resources. Title to easement or fee may be held by a cooperating entity providing the entity has the demonstrated ability to own and manage land. If you have any questions about your proposal or the LMF process, you can call (207) 287-1485 and speak to a member of the Land for Maine's Future Program staff.

## Farm Inquiry Form

This form (Appendix B) can be submitted at any time. It provides the Department of Agriculture with the information they need to consider the possibility of developing an LMF application.

## Proposal Review Process for Farmland Protection Proposals

- 1) Proposal Period:** Proposals must be received by the Land for Maine's Future Program at the closing date of the Proposal Period. Proposal applications must be endorsed by the Department of Agriculture and be complete to be accepted<sup>3</sup>. Incomplete proposals will be returned for additional information. Applicants are advised to contact the Department of Agriculture substantially in advance of the actual deadline. Contact the Program Director for dates of the next Proposal Period.
- 2) Scoring Procedure:** Once your proposal is reviewed by Program staff and determined to be complete, it will be scored using the system found on page 66-70. As an applicant, it is important that you carefully review both the five primary scoring criteria and the "threshold criteria," which will be used by the Land for Maine's Future Board in considering your proposal.

All proposals will be reviewed and scored by program staff and the Board's Scoring Committee. The full list of scored proposals is then given to the Board's Nominations Committee. The Nominations Committee flags any special issues or attributes and presents a list of recommended finalist projects with suggested funding allocations to the full Board. The Board reviews the proposals, selects the finalists, and determines funding. Please note that scores are a guide for the Board; the Board will make the final decision.

Proposals that are not selected will be returned to applicants. All applicants will be contacted and notified of the status of their proposal after final Board decisions.

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<sup>3</sup> The Department conducts its sponsorship reviews on an ongoing annual process. The Department has already screened potential LMF applicants for funding in 2008. However, persons interested in pursuing new farm protection projects are still encouraged to contact the Department to begin planning for future funding opportunities.

# Scoring System for Evaluating Farmland Proposals

Developed in Partnership with the  
Maine Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources

Each farmland protection proposal will be scored using this system. The scoring system assigns points according to the relative value of criteria associated with a farmland protection proposal. The “other criteria” found at the end of the scored criteria are considered by the Board when it compares and considers the top farm proposals.

The five scored criteria and the maximum points that can be awarded for each are:

1. Productive farm assets including soils, tillable land, pasture land, water resources, woodland, buildings, etc. (25 Points);
2. Documented current and emerging threats from conversion that would reduce or eliminate the farm’s productive potential (25 Points);
3. Significance to regional and local markets, both existing and emerging including service providers to farms (25 Points);
4. Open space and public benefits as they contribute to the scenic and landscape values, character of the town/region where it is situated and where public access/protection can be secured for conservation, recreation, wildlife, and education use/values (10 Points); and
5. Community planning and support, both local /regional for farming and farmland protection (15 Points).

## PRIMARY SCORING CATEGORIES

Category	Total Possible Points for Each
• Productive Farm Assets .....	25
• Current and Emerging Threats to Conversion .....	25
• Significant to Regional and Local Markets .....	25
• Open Space, Cultural, and Other Public Benefits.....	10
• Community Planning and Support .....	15
	Total Points <u>100</u>

### The Scoring System

1.      **PRODUCTIVE FARM ASSETS** (Maximum Points = 25)

Explanation: The focus is prime agricultural soils; however, it is also recognized that other factors influence the productivity of a farm. These include, but are not limited to, the following: lands that are productive for crops that do not rely on prime agricultural soils; other types of natural resources available on a farm currently devoted to or having the potential for income-generating and agricultural-based uses, such as a sugar bush, woodlot, farm stand, mix of crop, hay and pasture land, and farm infrastructure (barns, buildings, processing facilities, etc.). Collectively, these serve as indicators of the existing and potential productivity of a farm’s assets. The applicant must have a conservation plan for the farm approved by the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service.

	Points
<p>The land has <b>highly</b> productive assets because of the combination of prime or unique soils, or soils of statewide importance, tillable land, orchards, berry lands, horticultural lands, pasture land, water resources, woodland, total farm acreage, buildings, etc. that could be used to sustain a variety of agricultural enterprises.....</p>	18 - 25

The land has **moderately** productive assets because of the combination of prime or unique soils, or soils of statewide importance, tillable land, orchards, berry lands, horticultural lands, pasture land, water resources, woodland, total farm acreage, buildings, etc. that could be used to sustain a limited number of agricultural enterprises..... 9 - 17

The land has **limited** productive assets because of the combination of prime or unique soils, or soils of statewide importance, tillable land, orchards, berry lands, horticultural lands, pasture land, water resources, woodland, total farm acreage, buildings, etc. that could be used to sustain a relatively few agricultural enterprises..... 0 - 8

SCORE\_\_\_\_\_

2. CURRENT AND EMERGING THREATS TO CONVERSION  
(Maximum Points = 25)

Explanation: The degree of threat to farmland can be reflected in the patterns and trends of development within a town or region. In some parts of Maine, little or no development pressure exists and farming is the basis of a stable or growing economy. In other parts of Maine, sprawl and development pressures are consuming irreplaceable and productive agricultural assets at an ever-increasing pace. Being able to recognize where loss of valuable farmland is imminent is an important step in determining where funds should be applied.

Points

The farm is **highly** threatened by current/emerging conversion to other uses because of documented development pressure in the adjacent or surrounding area..... 18 - 25

The farm is **moderately** threatened by current/emerging conversion to other uses because of documented development pressure in the adjacent or surrounding area. .... 9 - 17

The farm is **not currently** threatened by current/emerging conversion to other uses because of documented development pressure in the adjacent or surrounding area..... 0 - 8

SCORE\_\_\_\_\_

3. SIGNIFICANCE TO AND CONDITION OF REGIONAL AND LOCAL AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY  
(Maximum Points - 25)

Explanation: The contribution to regional or local agricultural processors, local retail and wholesale farm sales and emerging markets, the use of local services, and providing for employment are factors that help in determining the significance of a farm enterprise in maintaining the farming infrastructure within a region or locality. Also considered in this category is the vitality and viability of the agricultural economy of the region in which the project is located and the proximity of the project property to other active farms and farmland.

Points

The farm is highly viable or has the potential of becoming highly viable. The farm sells or has the potential to sell a **significant** quantity of products to meet local consumer demand, or the needs of other farmers, and is highly important to maintaining the local services infrastructure because of its use of these resources. The regional and local agricultural economy is viable and stable..... 18 - 25

The farm is moderately viable or has the potential of becoming moderately viable. The farm sells or has the potential to sell a **moderate** quantity of products to meet local consumer demand, or the needs of other farmers, and is moderately important to maintaining the local services infrastructure because of its use of these resources. The regional and local agricultural economy is threatened and/or declining..... 9 - 17

The farm's viability, and its potential to become viable, is low. The farm can only produce a **small** quantity of products to meet local consumer demand, or the needs of other farmers, and is unimportant to maintaining the local services infrastructure because of its use of these resources. The regional and local agricultural economy had declined to a low level and no longer can maintain a service infrastructure..... 0 - 8

SCORE \_\_\_\_\_

4. OPEN SPACE, CULTURAL AND OTHER PUBLIC BENEFITS  
(Maximum Points = 10)

Explanation: Open space, cultural and other public benefits within a community are often provided through the presence of farmland. Farms can give a region or a town an identity or sense of place, add to the quality of life for people living in an area thus

making it an appealing place to live, or may contribute to the tourism economy by providing a scenic value. The relationship among the natural landforms, cultural elements, agricultural lands, and non-agricultural land uses contributes to the distinctive landscape character and rural beauty of the region or town where the farmland proposed for protection is located. Additionally, farmlands support habitat for wildlife, access for hunting, fishing, or boating, and provide for various forms of outdoor recreation. Some of these benefits accrue to the citizens at large simply by protecting a farm (scenery, open spaces, historic viewscapes), while others require the establishment of public rights of access or management rights. Whenever a landowner is willing to include a component of public access for any of these, this additional public value, along with open space and cultural values, will be awarded points.

Points

The farmland protection proposal will provide **significant** public educational, recreational, including guaranteed public access, and wildlife benefits or the farm makes a **highly** important contribution to the cultural and open space landscape values of the region or town..... 7 - 10

The farmland protection proposal will provide **moderate** public educational, recreational, and wildlife benefits or the farm makes a **moderately** important contribution to the cultural and open space landscape values of the region or town..... 3 - 6

The farmland protection proposal will provide **slight** public educational, recreational, and wildlife benefits or the farm makes a **slightly** important contribution to the cultural and open space landscape values of the region or town..... 0 - 2

SCORE \_\_\_\_\_

5. COMMUNITY PLANNING AND SUPPORT FOR AGRICULTURE  
(Maximum Points = 15)

Explanation: Level of community support is an important measure of local and regional efforts that can significantly further the Land for Maine’s Future Program’s farmland protection goals. Community support comes in a wide range of initiatives such as the existence of a comprehensive plan that recognizes the importance of farms to the quality of life or local identity, adoption of land use ordinances designed to protect prime farmland soils, property tax incentives that encourage/help farmers

stay in farming, or zoning that encourages development to take place in growth areas. Other initiatives may also include support for locally produced produce such as its local distribution to institutional buyers, the establishment of farmers markets, and strong relationships between local farmers and school programs.

Points

The farmland protection has **significant** community support as evidenced by numerous measures, including an adopted comprehensive plan that is consistent with the State's Growth Management Act with one or more protective measures related to protection of rural areas and/or farmland implemented as recommended in the plan, established farmers' markets, and similar measures.....11 - 15

The farmland protection has **moderate** community support as evidenced by some measures, including recognition in an adopted comprehensive plan with one or more protective measures implemented as recommended in the plan, established farmers' markets, and similar measures.....6 -10

The farmland protection has **minimal** of community support. No comprehensive plan exists or a comprehensive plan exists but no protective measures have been implemented .....0 - 5

SCORE \_\_\_\_\_

# Threshold Criteria Relating to Farmland Proposals

The Land for Maine's Future Board follows established policies and guidelines when it makes decisions on which projects to fund. A complete list of other Board policies and guidelines are found in Section I on page 5.

**Threshold Criteria:** Threshold refers to the Board's expectation that all proposals address the following as minimum requirements. In rare cases, a proposal that does not meet these criteria will be considered

**Willing Seller:** The owner(s) has agreed in writing to allow the sponsoring agency or cooperating entity to consider the purchase of his/her property or an easement on the property.

**Appraised Value:** The owner is willing to accept at or below fair market value based on an appraisal that conforms to Land for Maine's Future appraisal standards (see Appendices E and F).

**Match:** A proposal is expected to have a match greater than or equal to 1/3 of the total eligible project costs. This means that for every \$2 of LMF funds, there must be \$1 of match funds. Furthermore, of the total match, the ratios of match type must be the following:

- No more than 30% of the match can be the value of services customarily associated with land or interest in land acquisition (appraisal, survey, title work, legal work, ecological and archeological inventory); and
- 70% must be in the form of land, cash or other tangible assets. When considering land in fee or easement as match, it is the responsibility of the applicant to document the value to be used as match. To qualify as LMF match, the cooperating state agency must appear in the chain of title.

For example, if a proposed property has an estimated total project cost of \$150,000 (including land and all other eligible expenses), it would be eligible for up to \$100,000 in LMF funds, and there would have to be a match of at least \$50,000. Of this \$50,000 match, up to 30% of \$15,000 could be in-kind services needed for the land acquisition, and at least 70% of \$35,000 would have to be in donated land value, cash, or other tangible asset. If a project proposal includes a contribution to a dedicated stewardship/management endowment of the state agency that will hold title (or easement) on the property, this may be considered a tangible asset. Contribution to a qualifying stewardship account is statutorily capped at 20% of land's appraised value.

The value of lands or interest in lands acquired within 2 years of the date of project application maybe used as tangible match when the property interests have a direct relationship to the project.

**Ownership & Organizational Capacity:** An applicant must have sponsorship of the Department of Agriculture and have reached agreement with the agency regarding ownership and management of the property or easement. The Department is typically seeking to acquire or support the acquisition of agricultural conservation easements on viable, working farms. The Department will support the acquisition of fee interest in a working farm by a town or qualifying non-profit organization when there is a commitment to transfer ownership to a new farmer or lease the land to a farmer. If this model is anticipated, the applicant is strongly encouraged to consult with the Department of Agriculture staff. If ownership of the conservation interest acquired is to be held by a party other than the Department (e.g. under a project agreement -see Q #4 on page 8 and Appendix H) the Board will require an applicant to demonstrate the capacity to undertake the project with a reasonable prospect of bringing it to a successful conclusion. The Board may consider all relevant factors including without limitation level of debt, fund raising, past land conservation activity and transactions, organizational history, scope of conservation vision, and evidence of success in building and sustaining land protection campaigns. In addition, the Board will consider whether or not the proposed title or easement holder has the ability, experience, and resources to manage the property appropriately.

**Project Readiness:** Project readiness is a criterion that reflects the degree of due diligence applied and the certainty of a successful LMF project. It is intended to be a guide to project selection decisions. The readiness level is determined by the cumulative progression of items completed.

A graduated scale indicating the level of commitment and likelihood a project will be completed in a predictable timeline.

- Level 1 - 4 items completed
- Level 2 – 3 items completed
- Level 3 – 2 items completed
- Level 4 – 1 item completed
- Level 5 – 0 items completed

Readiness items include:

- Completed appraisal
- Final easement or fee acquisition conditions completed
- Cost Share commitment established
- Signed option or purchase and sales agreement
- Preacquired and held by a third party at the request of the State

**The Board will also consider the fund-raising plan for the proposal and the status of fund-raising efforts for matching funds.**

# Application Format and Instructions

## General Guidelines for Applicants

All applicants are required to provide good maps, aerial photos, and as much supporting information as you feel is necessary for the Board to better understand your project and the values it addresses. Carefully read through this section, to learn what the Board wishes to see in a well-rounded proposal. All applicants are required to use the following application structure and numbering sequence and to provide complete information for categories. If not applicable, indicate so by placing a N/A.

A template for the application is available from the Department of Agriculture (call Stephanie Gilbert at 287-7520). If a category is not applicable please indicate by using the words “not applicable” in the appropriate location.

Eight copies of your proposal should be sent to:

**Land for Maine’s Future Program  
State Planning Office  
38 State House Station  
Augusta, Maine 04333-0038  
Telephone #: (207) 287-1485**

In addition, one copy of the application must be sent to the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources.

1) **Applicant**

Name, address, and phone number of the land trust or other proposed easement holder and the primary contact person.

2) **Agency Sponsor**

In this case it will be the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources. Please be sure that you have contacted the agency and they support your proposal.

3) **Date of Application**

Indicate the date you submitted your application

4) **Project Title/Name of Farm**

This is the name by which your proposal will be catalogued by Program staff.

5) **Location of the Project**

Provide us with the name of the township and county.

6) **Size**

Indicate how many acres your project encompasses.

7) **Owner(s)**

Include address, phone number, fax and e-mail (if available). A letter from the landowner(s) to the applicant indicating their willingness to be considered in the project must be included in the application.

8) **Partners**

Other entities supporting this project. Include address, phone number, fax, e-mail (if available)

9) **Names of individuals knowledgeable about the farm site and proposal.**

List the names of individuals who can speak directly to the various farm values which your proposal will protect and include a telephone where they can be reached.

10) **Total Financial Summary**

Use the form in Appendix G. Note: the Board will not consider an application with an incomplete budget.

11) **Project Description**

Include an introductory narrative description of the entire project.

12) **Location Information**

Provide a selection of easy to read maps including (no larger than 11”X17”)

- a) Maine Atlas Base Map - showing project location and regional perspective
- b) USGS Topographic Base Map - showing entire boundary of proposed project, legal access and adjacency of other public and private conservation lands.

- c) Aerial Photo - showing project location, boundaries, buildings, land use types
- d) Other Maps as Appropriate – showing, for example, significant wildlife habitat, endangered species, significant natural communities, outstanding physical features, proposed public access, trails, etc., the context of the project within a greenbelt plan, comprehensive plan, etc.
- e) NRCS County Soil Survey map or with property located on a Soil Conservation Plan map

13. **Productive Farm Assets**

List and describe every productive farm asset that contributes to the productivity of the farm. These include, but are not limited to, the following: prime or unique soils, or soils of statewide importance; lands that are productive for crops that do not rely on prime agricultural soils; and other types of natural resources available on a farm that are currently devoted to or have the potential for a diversity of income-generating and agricultural-based uses, such as a sugar bush, woodlot, farm stand, mix of crop, hay and pasture land, types of farm structures available, etc. Collectively, the Board seeks indicators of the existing and potential productivity of a farm’s assets. Include the farm’s conservation plan and note when it was last updated by the Soil & Water Conservation District or Natural Resource Conservation Service (USDA). Also note if the farm has a forest management plan and when that was last updated.

14. **Current and Emerging Threats to Conversion**

Indicate the degree of threat to farmland as reflected in the patterns and trends of development within a town or region. The Board is seeking indications that the farm is **highly, moderately, or not at all** threatened by conversion to other uses because of development pressure in the adjacent or surrounding area, and development for nonagricultural uses. Indicate the time frame in which these threats are going to become imminent and include one or more of the following to document the potential for conversion to non-farm uses of the lands proposed for protection: a) full fair market value appraisal, with, if applicable, before easement and after easement values; and/or (b) during the previous two years, the number of subdivision permits issued, the number of new house lots approved, the number of building permits issued in the town or township within which the proposed easement is located. A good source for this information is your town office.

15. **Significance to Regional and Local Markets**

Document the farm’s economic viability or its potential for economic viability, as defined by current or potential markets. Document the farm’s contribution to regional or local agricultural processors, local retail and wholesale farm sales and emerging markets, the use of local services, and provisions for employment. These

are factors which help in determining the significance of a farm enterprise in maintaining the farming infrastructure within a region or locality. Using **Significant**, **Moderate** or **Slight** as terms of measure, indicate whether the farm sells, or has the potential to sell, a quantity of products to meet local or regional consumer demand, or the needs of other farmers, and is important to maintaining the local services infrastructure because of its use of these resources.

#### 16. **Open Space, Cultural and Other Public Benefits**

Open space, cultural and other public benefits within a community are often provided through the presence of farmland. Farms can give a region or a town an identity or sense of place, add to the quality of life for people living in an area thus making it an appealing place to live, or it may contribute to the tourism economy by providing a scenic value. The relationship between the natural landforms, cultural elements, agricultural lands, and non-agricultural land uses contributes to the distinctive landscape character and rural beauty of the region or town where the farmland proposed for protection is located. Additionally, farmlands support habitat for wildlife, access for hunting, fishing, or boating, and provide for recreational use such as: hiking, bird watching, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing or a setting for natural resource education activities. Some of these benefits accrue to the citizens at large simply by protecting a farm (scenery, open spaces, and historic viewsapes) while others require the establishment of public rights of access or management rights. Where ever a landowner is willing to include a component of public access or permanent protection for any of these, these additional public values along with open space and cultural values will add to the project's score.

Please be specific when indicating which of these values are part of your proposal, and how they will benefit or be permanently protected through your proposal. Be sure to provide documentation and good descriptions for any of the values you indicate are present.

#### 17. **Community Support**

The level of community support is an important measure of local and regional efforts that can significantly further the Land for Maine's Future Program's farmland protection goals. Community support comes in a wide range of initiatives such as the existence of a comprehensive plan that recognizes the importance of farms to the quality of life or local identity [the local plan itself should be consistent with the State's Growth Management Act], adoption of land use ordinances designed to protect prime farmland soils and/or farming activity, property tax incentives that encourage/help farmers stay in farming, or zoning that encourages development to take in growth areas or the like. Other initiatives also include support for locally produced produce such as its local distribution to institutional buyers; the

establishment of farmers' markets and relationships between local farmers and school programs.

Indicate the level of community support (significant, moderate, or minimal level of support) and be specific with the examples you associate with your proposal. Provide documentation in the form of letters of support, copies of town zoning ordinances, excerpts from a comprehensive plan, etc.

### **18) Estimate of monitoring and management costs**

An entity submitting a proposal to acquire property or an interest in property with funding from the Land for Maine's Future Fund shall provide:

- A description of the management envisioned for the property for the first 10 years following acquisition. When the application proposes acquiring an interest in property, the application must provide a description of the anticipated management responsibilities retained by the landowner and those to be assumed by the State or a cooperating entity;
- Preliminary estimates of the costs to the State or a cooperating entity of managing the land for the uses proposed in the application; and
- Preliminary estimates of the costs associated with monitoring compliance with an easement when an interest in land is acquired.

### **19) Project Readiness**

Project readiness is a criterion that reflects the degree of due diligence applied and the certainty of a successful LMF project. It is intended to be a guide to project selection decisions. The readiness level is determined by the cumulative progression of items completed.

A graduated scale indicating the level of commitment and likelihood a project will be completed in a predictable timeline.

- Level 1 - 4 items completed
- Level 2 – 3 items completed
- Level 3 – 2 items completed
- Level 4 – 1 item completed
- Level 5 – 0 items completed

Readiness items include:

- Completed appraisal

- Final easement or fee acquisition conditions completed
- Cost Share commitment established
- Signed option or purchase and sales agreement
- Preacquired and held by a third party at the request of the State

**Also include a description of the plan for and status of fund-raising efforts for matching funds.**

- 20) **Organizational capacity:** Describe the applicant's capacity to undertake the project with a reasonable prospect of bringing it to a successful conclusion. The Board will consider all relevant factors including without limitation level of debt, fund raising ability, past land conservation activity and transactions, organizational history, scope of conservation vision, and evidence of success in building and sustaining land protection campaigns. Be sure to describe the proposed title or easement holder's ability, experience, and resources to manage the property appropriately.

# List of Contacts/Cooperating Entities

**NOTE:** When contacting these agencies and organizations, include a base map with the proposed area clearly outlined on a USGS topographic map or on a DeLorme Atlas map, with the map number identified. Also include your name, address and phone number along with specific questions you would like them to respond to. Remember that these agencies may be receiving many such requests and your requests should be legible and concise.

## State & Federal Agencies

State Planning Office  
State House Station # 38  
Augusta, ME 04333  
Tim Glidden, Director  
Land for Maine's Future Program  
tel: (207) 287-1485

Dept. of Agriculture, Food & Rural Resources  
State House Station # 28  
Augusta, Maine 04333  
Stephanie Gilbert  
Farmland Protection Program Manager  
tel: (207) 287-7520

Natural Resource Conservation Service  
967 Illinois Avenue, Suite 3  
Bangor, Maine 04401  
Bill Yarmartino, Assistant State Conservationist for Program Delivery  
USDA Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program  
Tel: (207) 990-9100

## Non-Profit Organizations

MAINE FARMLAND TRUST  
97 Main Street  
Belfast, Maine 04915  
(207)338-6575  
[info@mainefarmlandtrust.org](mailto:info@mainefarmlandtrust.org)

MAINE LAND TRUST NETWORK  
*A program of Maine Coast Heritage Trust*  
Bowdoin Mill, One Main Street  
Topsham, ME 04086  
(207) 729-7366, 729-6863 (fax) 207-729-7366  
[www.mltm.org](http://www.mltm.org)

THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND  
Maine Field Office  
377 Fore Street, 3rd Floor  
Portland, Maine 04101  
(207) 772-7424  
FAX (207) 772-7420  
[wolfe.tone@tpl.org](mailto:wolfe.tone@tpl.org)

**NOTE:** For the name of your nearest land trust, please contact one of the above non-profits or visit [www.mltm.org](http://www.mltm.org).

