



Farmland Protection Talking Points FY 2010-11 New York State Budget

APPROPRIATE \$222 MILLION FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION FUND

The Executive Budget for FY 2010-11 proposes to disproportionately cut the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) by 35% to \$143 million. A \$222 million level of investment is important for protecting the health of New York's environment while still representing a 26% decrease from the level scheduled for 2010 under the 2007 EPF Enhancement Act. The FY 2010-11 Executive Budget Proposal includes:

Program	2009-10 DRP	Proposed 2010-11	AFT Recommended
Environmental Protection Fund	\$212 Million	\$143 Million	\$222 Million
Farmland Protection Program	\$ 22.054 Million	\$ 10.5 Million	\$ 25 Million
Agricultural Nonpoint Program	\$ 11.468 Million	\$ 14 Million	\$ 14 Million
Conservation Partnership Program	\$ 1.575 Million	\$ 1.575 Million	\$ 1.575 Million
Soil & Water Conservation Districts	\$ 3 Million	\$ 3 Million	\$ 3 Million

OPPOSE "OFFLOADS" TO THE EPF THAT DILUTE ENVIRONMENTAL FUNDING

The Governor's budget proposal threatens the EPF's integrity by offloading programs, including the payment of state taxes on public lands and projects at state parks and historic sites. While these programs are important, they are traditionally paid for through the General Fund and/or the State Parks Infrastructure Fund.

SUPPORT AT LEAST \$23 MILLION FOR THE FARMLAND PROTECTION PROGRAM

The proposed FY 2010-11 funding of \$10.5 million for the Farmland Protection Program would result in 94% of pending farmland protection projects being rejected due to inadequate funds (assuming the same level of farmer interest as in 2008). These funds are important economic investments as participating farmers frequently use these funds to:

- Reduce debts
- Construct new buildings
- Purchase more land
- Buy new equipment, supplies or livestock
- Change production or marketing strategies

DEVELOP A MULTI-YEAR EPF REPAYMENT PLAN

"Sweeps" included in previous state budgets have resulted in roughly \$500 million being borrowed from the EPF for non-environmental spending. Without a multi-year EPF repayment plan, it is projected that it could take up to 9 years to complete currently funded Farmland Protection Program projects (assuming cash provided to the Farmland Protection Program remains at the appropriations level proposed in the Executive's FY 2010-11 Budget Proposal). AFT strongly urges the State Legislature to develop a multi-year year repayment plan with an annual increase in the amount of Real Estate Transfer Tax funding dedicated to the EPF.