

**GREENBRIER COUNTY
FARMLAND PROTECTION**

**PROTECTING
FARMLAND
FOR FUTURE
GENERATIONS**



**A Farmland Protection
Easement Program for
Greenbrier County Farmland
Owners**

**Voluntary Farmland
Protection Act**

- In 2000 the West Virginia Legislature unanimously passed into law the Voluntary Farmland Protection Act.
- Through this Act, the legislature declares that agriculture is a unique “life support” industry and that a need exists to assist those areas of the state which are experiencing irreversible loss of agricultural land.
- The WV legislature allows for each county to provide funding for the program through a real estate transfer tax
- On December 12, 2000 the Greenbrier County Commission authorized the creation of the Greenbrier County Farmland Protection Board..
- In 2006 the Greenbrier County Commission voted to fund the program through a transfer tax of \$2.20 per \$1000.00 of real estate transfer.
- The Greenbrier County Board partners with entities such as the USDA’s Natural Resource Conservation Service to purchase development rights on qualifying farms. iGreenbrier County.

**The Greenbrier County Farmland
Protection Board functions by
purchasing conservation
easements.**

- An easement is a legal document that becomes a permanent part of the deed.
- Land owners may donate the easement.
- The easement protects the land from development . The property may never be subdivided.
- Future home sites can be reserved and the owners are not required to place all the property under easement to participate.
- The property is monitored annually by the Greenbrier County Farmland Protection Board and the USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service to ensure the terms of the conservation easement are being followed.

REQUEST AN APPLICATION

Greenbrier Valley Economic
Development Corp.

ATT: Farmland Protection

804 Industrial Drive

Maxwelton, WV 24957

Or email

greenbrierland@frontier.com

304-497-4300 leave message

**The Farmland
Protection Board is
composed of seven
members by state law:**

A Greenbrier County Commissioner.

The Director of the Greenbrier Valley Economic Development Corp.

A Farmer who is a Farm Bureau member.

A Farmer who is a member of the Soil Conservation District.

A Farmer who is a county resident.

Two residents who are not members of the foregoing organizations.



**Reasons for a Conservation
Easement**

According to the 1972 soil survey Greenbrier County had 228,969 acres of farmland. By 1997 that acreage had been reduced to 184,359 acres, a loss of 44,610 acres.

If a landowner sells an easement, income will be generated.

The easement value is the difference between fair market value and the agricultural value of the land.

The value of the land is decreased for real estate taxes, as well as inheritance taxes should inheritance taxes apply.

Land owners retains the right to farm, lease or sell the land.

Principles of Land Protection

- The property must have a clear title or the lender is willing to subordinate the loan.
- The property is of sufficient size that the conservation resources of the property are likely to remain intact.
- The property is not polluted or subject to pollution or adverse influences from surrounding properties.
- Adequate access to the property is available.
- The property contains natural resources that need to be preserved.

