



**For Immediate Release
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OCLT Protects 179-acre Sisters of Saint Dominic Property in Towns of Goshen and Chester

Mountainville, NY (OCLT): The Orange County Land Trust has protected 179 acres of forest, farmland, and streams located in the Town of Goshen and Town of Chester. The landowners, the Sisters of Saint Dominic of Blauvelt, donated a conservation easement on the property to OCLT.

The property contains a 100-acre contiguous tract of mature, mixed deciduous forest, along with 52 acres of agricultural land comprising mostly state-designated “soils of statewide importance.” The acreage also features 2,500 feet of frontage on Black Meadow Creek, a tributary of the Moodna Creek, as well as frontage along the Heritage Trail. In addition, the Sisters of Saint Dominic will eventually allow for future public access to a portion of their property from the Heritage Trail.

“We are grateful to the Sisters of Saint Dominic, whose dedication to protecting natural resources for the benefit of future generations helped spark this project,” said OCLT Executive Director Jim Delaune. “This beloved property has been a source of spirituality, kinship, leisure, and sustenance to them, so we know this conservation easement means a lot to them,” Delaune added.

Sister Ellenrita Purcaro said: “We, the Sisters of St. Dominic of Blauvelt, have dialogued internally since 2008 on how to assure to keep some portion of our land in its natural state or close to its natural state for the public good. We reconnected with Orange County Land Trust in 2018 and worked diligently since then to educate our congregation and involve our sisters in the development of the details of our conservation easement. Using our Land Ethic as a guide throughout the process, we affirmed that the earth is our home and each one of us has the responsibility to preserve the web of life. We restated our belief that the beauty of the earth sustains and refreshes the human spirit. Thank you to all who contributed to bringing this dream to reality.”

Orange County Executive Steven M. Neuhaus said: “I applaud the Sisters of Saint Dominic for generously donating this conservation easement to OCLT. The protection of this property is important to the Moodna Creek watershed and will enhance the many recreational opportunities on the Heritage Trail. The County will continue to work with the OCLT and other partners on projects that preserve open space and create recreational opportunities for residents.”

The project also received funding through the Orange County Soil & Water Conservation District.

Orange County Land Trust is dedicated to conserving Orange County's watersheds, agricultural lands, and natural habitats through conservation agreements with willing landowners. For more information call (845) 534-3690 or visit www.oclt.org