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Silo City to Get Goatscaping Treatment, Makeover as part of Pilot Project for The Riverline

A team of Let's Goat Buffalo goats has deployed to the campus of iconic Silo City, one of Buffalo's most notable landmarks. The pilot project is aimed at eliminating invasive Mugwort and is sponsored by the Western New York Land Conservancy as part of its ongoing effort to develop The Riverline in downtown Buffalo.

Goats offer a unique and organic opportunity to control invasive vegetation. With their specialized digestive systems, they break down seeds and slow the regrowth cycles of invasive plants. As part of the project, the six goats will be penned in a safe enclosure until July 17, where they will graze. Their droppings will provide nutrients to the soil, assisting Silo City's Director of Ecology, Josh Smith, in his efforts to regenerate the historic site with native plants.

Let's Goat Buffalo, Silo City, and the Land Conservancy teamed up as part of their joint commitment to reimagine this Buffalo River landscape as they seek to develop a healthy and vibrant city that will benefit people, plants, and animals.

"This collaboration is tackling a major problem of invasive plants in an exciting and innovative way," said Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul. "The project with the Western New York Land Conservancy offers a unique opportunity to explore creative solutions while adapting infrastructure for modern use as part of the ongoing efforts to develop The Riverline. These goats are an important investment in a revitalized Silo City and will continue to help stimulate growth and success in Buffalo and the entire Western New York region."

Congressman Brian Higgins added: "Pairing environmental protection with revitalization creates a winning formula for resilient communities," he said. "It spurs increased economic activity, which leads to healthier neighborhoods, stronger economies, and increased tourism. This collaboration between Let's Goat Buffalo, Silo City, and the Western New York Land Conservancy supports new and creative solutions for urban revitalization."

Rick Smith, CEO of Rigidized Metals Corp. and the owner of Silo City, is excited to see the goats munching Mugwort on his property. "When you visit this site the first thing you see are the historic grain elevators," he said, "but there's nearly 30 acres of land surrounding those grain elevators, and

developing a healthy ecosystem filled with biodiversity is part of our long-term plan for the site. It will be a natural attraction for future residents of Silo City, for visitors, and for the plants and animals that call Western New York home.”

When it comes to invasive species removal, the Land Conservancy and Let’s Goat Buffalo share a vision, and this is not the first time they’ve teamed up. In 2019 and again this year, they collaborated on the Land Conservancy’s historic Stella Niagara Preserve.

Jennifer Zeitler, founder and Director of Let’s Goat Buffalo, said: “This Silo City project speaks to the heart of what Let’s Goat Buffalo was founded to do, which is re-introduce old ways of managing land to address modern problems. We are honored to work with the Western New York Land Conservancy on such a historically significant site at Silo City. We hope to do the same along The Riverline on the other side of the Buffalo River soon.”

For Nancy Smith, the Land Conservancy’s Executive Director, invasive species removal is an important part of the revitalization of The Riverline, the future greenway that will run for 1.5 miles from the Buffalo River across from Riverbend to the DL & W Terminal at Canalside. “This formerly industrial landscape will become a place where people can reconnect with nature and each other,” she said, “and we’re thrilled to partner with Let’s Goat Buffalo and Silo City on this innovative method to restore wildlife habitat. When The Riverline becomes a reality, this pilot project will put us ahead of the curve.”

Let’s Goat Buffalo offers comprehensive land clearing and growth management services within rural and urban environments. As the first goatscaping organization prepared to operate throughout the greater Western New York area, Let’s Goat Buffalo seeks to become a preferred partner in the effort to manage invasive vegetation for increased biodiversity—specifically in urban environments. To learn more, visit goatbuffalo.com

The **Western New York Land Conservancy** is a regional, not-for-profit land trust that permanently protects land with significant conservation value in Western New York for current and future generations. The Land Conservancy envisions a future in which open spaces, working lands, wildlife habitat, and scenic beauty are cherished and protected as part of the landscape and character of Western New York. The Land Conservancy is accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission and is one of 1000+ land trusts nationwide, including 90 in New York State. Land trusts have protected over 56 million acres of land. To learn more, visit wnylc.org.