

Land Marks

Protecting Land Forever

Protected Land Forever

MORE THAN 1,500 NEW ACRES PROTECTED IN 2019!

Working collaboratively with landowners and land trust partners, MET staff negotiated the completion of eighteen conservation easement projects in 2019. Our work strengthened existing conservation easements and protected 1,535 new acres of significant scenic, ecological, and agricultural land. The new easements were accepted in nine counties across the state. Fourteen of the projects are co-held with land trust partners. A summary by county follows.

In Anne Arundel County, MET accepted two conservation easements. Linda Egolf worked with both MET and the Scenic Rivers Land Trust to protect her 111-acre property for forest, fields, pond and shoreline along the Little Patuxent River. Funding for the conservation easement was provided by the Anne Arundel County Forestry and Forested Land Protection Grant Program, a grant program administered by the Chesapeake Bay Trust with funds from Anne Arundel County's fee-in-lieu funds generated from the Forest Conservation Act and the Critical Area Law. *(Photo 1)*

Land Preserve, LLC also worked with MET and Scenic Rivers Land Trust to protect its 67 acres of forestland. The property is in the Herring Bay watershed and is within the Anne Arundel County Greenways Network. The entirely forested property also contains more than 1,400 linear feet of streams and seven acres of wetland. *(Photo 2)*

The McGill family protected their 84 acres of forest and fields in Baltimore County with a conservation easement. The property contains pasture, intermittent/
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Director's Note

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LandMarks is published on behalf of MET by the Forever Maryland Foundation

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Forever Maryland Foundation

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Kat Pardoe

As the days become warmer, the nights grow shorter, we gratefully welcome spring. The magnificent display of nature's beauty in the springtime is abundant across Maryland – blooming trees along the scenic byways, bright flowers in the flowerbeds on your neighborhood block, local and sprawling fields of sprouting crops promising their delicious produce in just a few weeks' time. Maryland Environmental Trust helps protect and support all such treasures that display the diversity of Maryland's many ecosystems, or highlight the impact a little infusion of life can bring to a community.



We at MET are embracing a renewal of life in our own continuous evolution as an organization. I officially assumed the role of Director of Maryland Environmental Trust on February 12th after serving in the interim since April 2019. I am excited to officially take on this role as we continuously strive towards our collective vision of protecting, enhancing, and sharing Maryland's natural beauty.

We are also happy to announce that MET's collaboration with the recently founded nonprofit, Forever Maryland Foundation, is allowing us to expand the scope of our impact. MET is playing a significant role in supporting the Foundation's start-up phase, and is proud to see the efforts of MET and Forever Maryland staff alike to bring this vision to fruition. Forever Maryland is administering on MET's behalf our Keep Maryland Beautiful Grants program, and with this assistance KMB has become a strengthened partnership between MET, the Maryland Department of Transportation and the Department of Housing and Community Development. Together, we expect to have another record year of grant giving, surpassing our impressive accomplishments of 2019. We'll share a full reporting of this year's grant awards in the fall edition of *LandMarks*.

Not to be outdone, MET's easement program had another successful year in 2019 with over 1,500 newly acquired acres protected in perpetuity across the state. One such project marked a new direction in conservation for MET as we welcomed our first urban agricultural easement on Koiner Farm, located in downtown Silver Spring. You can read more about that new step in this issue of *LandMarks*.

I would like to honor three women who have contributed to these successes, but are unfortunately no longer with the MET community. Megan Benjamin and Erin McNally worked diligently in their roles as Central/Western Region Planner and Easement Stewardship Specialist, respectively. We wish both Megan and Erin good luck as they have moved on to the next steps in their professional journeys. We are also sad to bid farewell to Anne Deford, a longtime supporter of MET and conservation easement donor. Her legacy will live on through her land forever.

It is through combined effort – individual actions taken by individual people – that we accomplish our land conservation goals. Thank you to all who made 2019 a successful year. We see the growth and abundance that this season symbolizes, and plan to develop our own organization in tandem with the new life we've been infused with.

Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,
John Turgeon

In response to the COVID-19 virus, Governor Hogan issued an order to move the Executive Branch of the State of Maryland to an "Elevated Level II" operational status, which requires all units to implement a mandatory telework policy. Accordingly, MET's office will be closed to the public, and our staff will work remotely but be available via phone and e-mail. Meetings will be set up for participation via conference call. Our work will continue, albeit somewhat differently for the foreseeable future. Thank you for your continued support and stay well!



The Forever Maryland Foundation is taking all developments concerning the coronavirus (COVID-19) very seriously. The health and safety of the speakers and attendees is their highest priority. Please check their website for the latest information about the 2020 Land Conservation Conference & Symposium www.forevermaryland.org.

2020 Land Conservation Conference & Symposium

MAY 19-20, 2020 | MT. WASHINGTON CONFERENCE CENTER | BALTIMORE, MD

Mark your calendars for the only state-wide land conservation conference in Maryland (formerly hosted by MET) where the land trust community and its partners come together to connect, learn, share, and celebrate our collective work. This year's gathering is an excellent opportunity for peer-to-peer networking with decision-makers and industry leaders.

This year's theme will address issues and topics related to climate change and the future of land conservation in our region and help further the Forever Maryland Foundation's mission of collaborative ventures to increase the connection between people and the land.

Day 1 will feature a continental breakfast, morning sessions, welcome and renowned Keynote speaker Jim

Levitt, lunch, afternoon concurrent sessions and an evening reception to network and mingle with land conservation leaders.

Day 2 will feature a continental breakfast and two exciting panels with leaders from Maryland's local government sector. The morning panel will be comprised of Chief Sustainability Officers from jurisdictions across the state, followed by lunch and an afternoon panel featuring Hot Topics. Discussions will address county conservation goals, best practices, current and emerging trends, and innovations taking place at the county level. And, like last year, there will be opportunities for attendees to ask specific questions to the panelists.

For more information visit: www.forevermaryland.org



Protected Land Forever

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perennial streams, and emergent wetlands. The property is situated in the Loch Raven Reservoir watershed. *(Photo 3)*

In Charles County, High Pointe Investments, LLC protected 115 acres consisting of approximately 20 acres of agricultural land and pasture, and 99 acres of woodlands. The property contains a portion of the James Run and associated perennial tributaries, which feed the nearby Zekiah Swamp. *(Photo 4)*



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The Nature Conservancy conveyed a conservation easement coheld by MET, the U.S. Navy and the Patuxent Tidewater Land Trust in Calvert County. The property contains frontage along the southerly side of Hellen Creek, a tributary of the Patuxent River. An unnamed tributary of Hellen Creek flows through the property. The property is totally forested land containing steep slopes, as well as headwater streams. The property is notable for containing an isolated stand of eastern hemlock (*Tsuga Candensis*), the southernmost forest of this type on the coastal plain of the eastern United States. *(Photo 5)*



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In Harford County MET partnered with the Harford Land Trust on five conservation projects. Two adjacent properties owned by siblings Veronica Cassilly and Andrew Cassilly, along with their families, were protected by easements. Collectively the two properties total 17 acres. The properties are mostly forested, providing important buffers to Graveyard Run, a tributary of Deer Creek. *(Photo 6)*



Harford County's chapter of the Izaak Walton League of America protected additional acreage through amending two existing conservation easements. These two amendments strengthened the protections in the existing easements and between them protected 20 more acres. *(Photo 7)*

The Harford Land Trust and MET worked with Mary Dulany James to strengthen the protections in the easement on her family farm along the Chesapeake Bay. Funding for this effort was provided by the U.S. Army for Aberdeen Proving Ground's Army Compatible Use Buffer program. *(Photo 8)*

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MET, in partnership with the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy Inc., accepted permanent conservation easements on three Kent County properties. The three farms are within the Aberdeen Proving Ground's priority protection area. Protection of Fry Cooper Farm, the Langford West Farm and the Still Pond Preserve was possible because of funding from the U.S. Army for Aberdeen Proving Ground's Army Compatible Use Buffer program.

Fry Cooper Farm is 191 acres of prime farmland adjacent to more than 1,000 acres of protected farmland (*Photo 9*). Langford West Farm is 224 acres of prime farmland with the West Fork of Langford Creek flowing through the 74 acres of forest on the property. (*Photo 10*). The 152-acre Still Pond Preserve property consists of approximately 41 acres of tilled agricultural land, 60 acres of forest, three ponds and the balance in open meadow. Still Pond Creek flows through the forested portion of the property. (*Photo 11*)

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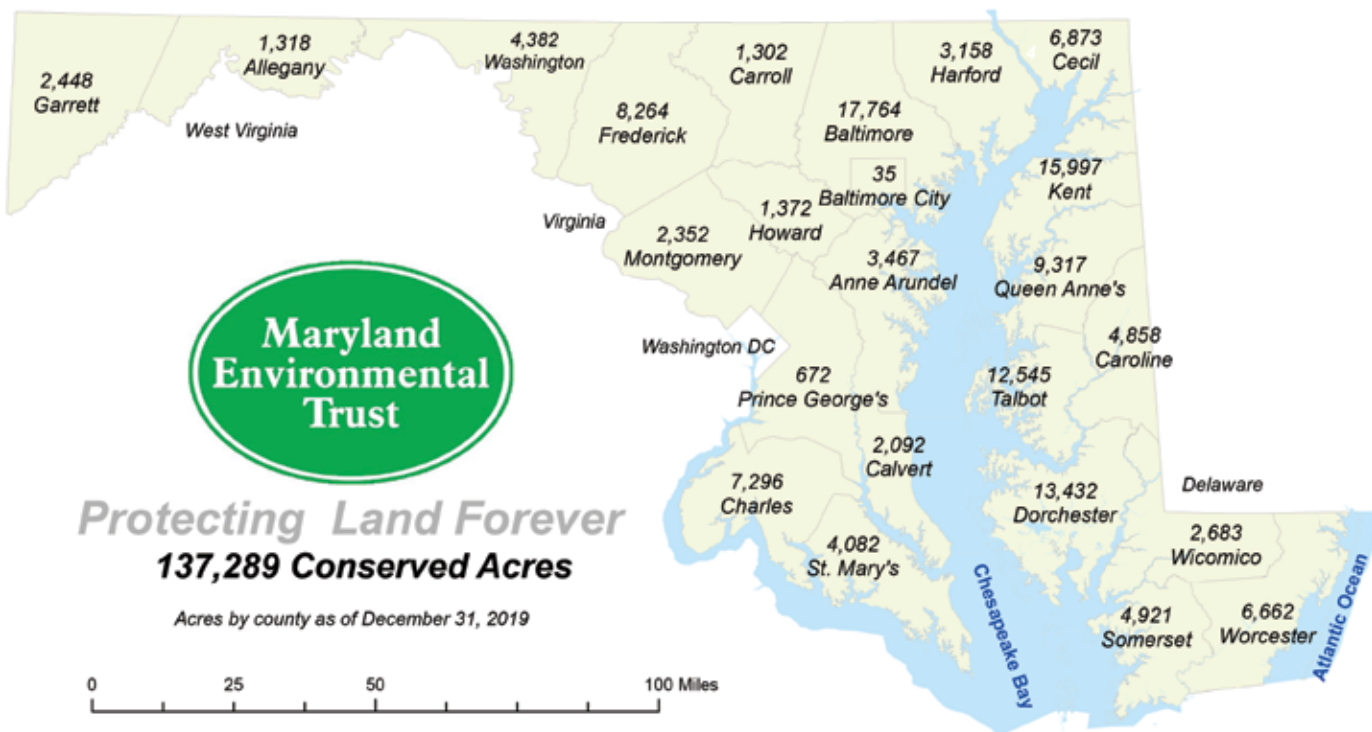
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2019 CONSERVATION MAP



See page 10 for a spotlight on this project.

MET worked for the first time with the Charles Koiner Center for Urban Farming to protect a small farm in downtown Silver Spring. The public will continue to enjoy access to this property as it serves the surrounding community. Please see page 10 for a spotlight on this project.

(Photo 12)

In Washington County, the Hutzell family protected an important forest along Beaver Creek. The property is adjacent to land owned by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources and managed by the Maryland Fisheries Service for public fishing access to Beaver Creek.

(Photo 13)

The Lower Shore Land Trust was a key partner in protecting two farms in Worcester County. The Nichols family added their farm to MET's portfolio of protected farms. MET was pleased to accept the conservation easement working closely with the Lower Shore Land Trust to ensure that 212 acres are protected forever. The Nichols farm consists of 162 acres of agricultural land, approximately 25 acres of forest, and a 10-acre pond.

(Photo 14)

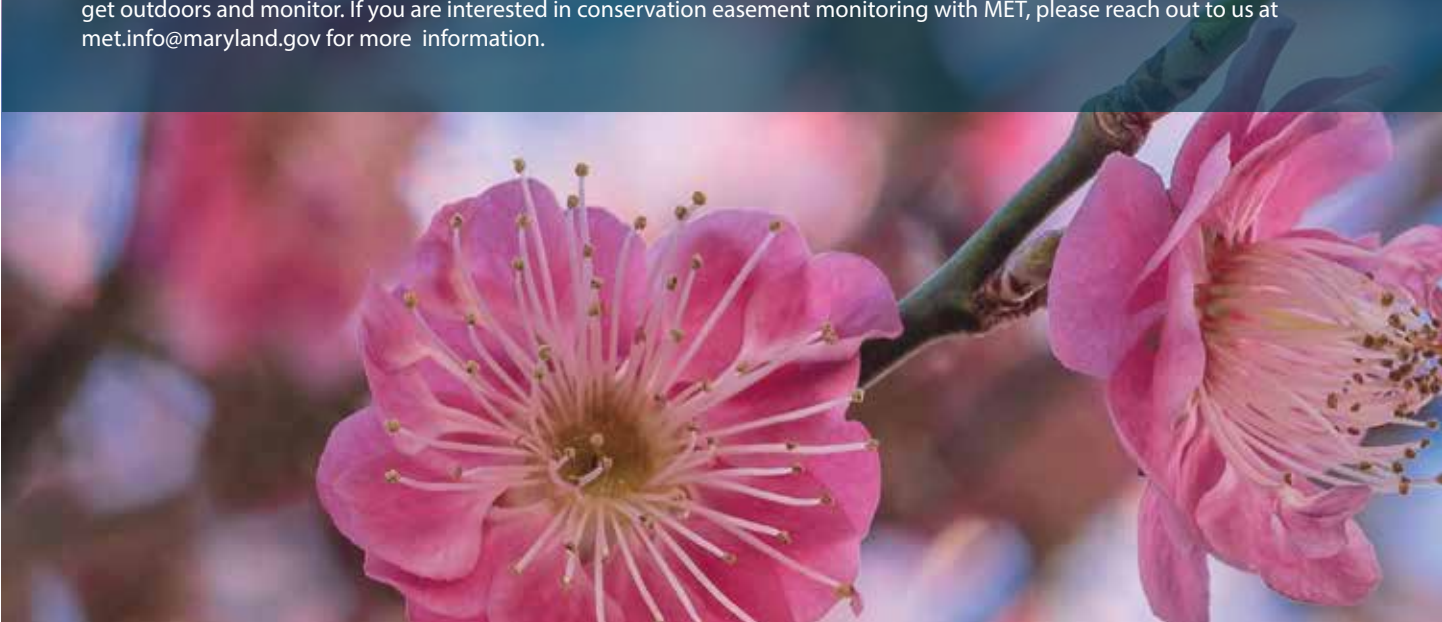
Salt Grass Farm along the St. Martin River in Worcester County was also protected. The landowners partnered with both MET and Lower Shore Land Trust to protect the 60 acres of agricultural land, 65 acres of woodlands, 44 acres of wetlands and five acres of meadow.

(Photo 15)



Conservation Easement Volunteers

Happy Spring! March 8th marked the beginning of Day Light Saving's time and you know what that means? Besides the clock in your car being right again, it is also the unofficial beginning of Spring. That means longer days and more time to get outdoors and monitor. If you are interested in conservation easement monitoring with MET, please reach out to us at met.info@maryland.gov for more information.



Maryland Conservation Core Update

For a third straight year, MET is proud to partner with the Maryland Conservation Corps (MCC). In December, MET's Stewardship team held a half-day training for four MCC crews in our Crownsville office. Crew members were provided a complete overview of our land conservation program and training on our easement monitoring methods. After three hours of classroom training, the group moved outdoors to practice using our monitoring tool and conduct a mock conservation easement monitoring visit.

MET is thrilled to engage with these young men and women again this year. Their energy and enthusiasm for conservation and the outdoors is inspiring and makes us confident that land conservation is in good hands today and in the future.

MCC crew members have completed over 100 monitoring visits in the past two years. We are grateful for the opportunity to provide education, skill training and opportunities. We appreciate their past efforts and their engagement again this year.



Downtown on the Farm

LAND TRUST ENSURES SILVER SPRING'S KOINER FARM WILL REMAIN AN AGRICULTURAL EASEMENT

STORY BY ROSANNE SKIRBLE. Reprinted with permission from *Montgomery Magazine*.



In 2019, the Charlie Koiner Center for Urban Farming (CKC Farming) became a land trust through a cooperative agreement with MET.

Charlie Koiner was well into his late 90s when he was named Montgomery County's first urban farmer. He had been paying a whopping \$20,000 annually in property taxes on his five residential lots at the corner of Easley and Grove streets in downtown Silver Spring.

Since 1983, he had also been harvesting (and selling) crops from his acre-size garden, which made growing fruits and vegetables a very expensive hobby. A solution came in the form of the Urban Agricultural Tax Credit Bill, which the Montgomery County Council passed unanimously in 2017. The measure immediately reduced Koiner's taxes by 80 percent and turned the property into an urban farm. The new law required any applicant to farm between one-half and three acres near a Metro station and to sell or donate \$5,000 worth of produce each year. Koiner qualified on all counts. No others have applied to date.

The tax designation was the start of a new chapter on the Koiner farm, which was then managed by Charlie, and his daughter Lynn, who lived in the family home.

“My initial desire was to preserve the farm. I just want it to continue. Five hundred years from now, I want my farm to still be here.”

- LYNN KOINER, URBAN FARMER

“My initial desire was to preserve the farm,” she says. “I just want it to continue. Five hundred years from now, I want my farm to still be here.”

That dream began to take shape when two volunteers, Hannah Sholder, 32, an urban planner, and Kate Medina, 38, a stay-at-home-mom and former biology teacher, showed up first as customers, then as collaborators, who could help put Lynn's ideas into action. In May of 2018, the duo established the Charlie Koiner Center for Urban Farming (CKC Farming), a nonprofit

“We don’t manage farms to manage farms, we manage them so that they are here for the next generation.”

- HANNAH SHOLDER, URBAN FARMER

education center that preserves urban farms for the purpose of agriculture and education. As an outdoor classroom, CKC Farming hosts school and community events, attends festivals with hands-on science projects and partners with organizations to promote a more just and sustainable food system.

With Charlie’s death in January 2019, Sholder stepped in as interim farm manager which meant, along with a crew of community volunteers and high school and college interns, she directed the planting, weeding, watering, harvesting, and selling more than \$5,000 worth of produce for the tax credit.

“Late this season we planted over 1,000 heads of lettuce and picked persimmons, swiss chard, curly kale, mustard, turnips, and leeks,” she says, relieved that CKC is hiring a farm manager and installing a drip irrigation system under a cost sharing agreement with the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

“We don’t manage farms to manage farms, we manage them so that they are here for the next generation,” Sholder says. In 2019 CKC Farming became a land trust through a cooperative agreement with the Maryland Environmental Trust (MET), a state agency that ensures land preservation.

“Essentially, you take the land off of the speculative market and hold it in trust,” Sholder says. Then this fall, CKC Farming took the next step to establish Montgomery County’s first conservation easement for urban agriculture.



Koiner Farm has had a tremendous impact on the neighborhood. People can walk here, and many come on a daily basis to buy their produce.



Koiner Farm gives city-dwellers the opportunity to connect with nature. Photo courtesy of CKC Farming.

As co-holder of the easement with MET, CKC Farming was named steward, responsible for making sure the easement is used for its intended purpose. Lynn Koiner still owns the property, and according to her wishes as defined in the easement “the rights to develop the property for anything other than agriculture and education have been dissolved,” Sholder says.

It also provided Lynn Koiner with some welcome tax relief as she now doesn’t owe taxes on the easement which covers 80 percent of the property.

As the steward, CKC Farming holds Lynn Koiner or any future property owner accountable for protecting the land and assuring that it is safe for public access. Sholder and Medina say the easement is a visionary move.

“There is so much talk and buzz these days about interim use of vacant parcels for urban agriculture, and we see right now around our county, the county operated community gardens. They don’t necessarily feel permanent,” Sholder says. “This (easement) is unique, because it is not interim use anymore. This ensures forever. This is now the highest and best use of this property,” she adds. Medina says the initiative also furthers CKC’s educational mission.

“I recognize how important it is, for youth in particular, growing up in a city and still having opportunities to connect with nature,” she says.

As a land trust, CKC Farming is exploring other properties to create a network of urban farms that will exist in perpetuity inside the Capital Beltway in Montgomery and Prince George’s counties. “And, it’s because we’ve seen the tremendous impact Koiner Farm has had on this east Silver Spring neighborhood. People can walk here, or come on a daily basis to buy their produce,” Sholder says. “We want people to experience something like this in every neighborhood in our county,” Medina adds.

Volunteer Update



Photos of easements from around Maryland provided by MET volunteer monitors.

Over the past year, MET held six stewardship volunteer trainings and three trainings for Maryland Conservation Corps members. Our trained volunteers assist MET with monitoring our easements across Maryland. They have been a tremendous resource for us and we have enjoyed partnering with them.

We were pleasantly surprised with the level of interest we received for each training, and appreciate meeting everyone who attends. It has been so encouraging to meet so many Marylanders passionate about land conservation and happy to volunteer their time assisting MET with monitoring.

To keep our volunteers engaged and informed so they have a rewarding experience and can be a great resource for our landowners, we will continue to offer opportunities for additional learning on issues relating to land conservation like riparian and forested buffers, invasive species and native species.

2019 was a successful year for MET's Stewardship Program and we are grateful to each of our volunteers for their part in our accomplishment. If you are interested in volunteering please email devyn.croghan@maryland.gov.



Remembering Anne McAdoo Deford

ARTICLE BY LIZ BUXTON, FORMER MET DIRECTOR

Anne Deford was a longtime Maryland Environmental Trust (MET) supporter and easement donor. Until her passing in the fall of 2019 at age 102, Mrs. Deford served as Chairman of the Board of Boordy Vineyards, the largest and oldest Maryland vineyard.

Remembered as the quintessential lady, Mrs. Deford dedicated her life to protecting the Long Green Valley for future generations. Setting an example to others, she donated two conservation easements (vineyard and winery parcels) on 251+ acres of Long Green Farm in Hydes, in 2000 to MET in hopes that it would inspire others to follow suit. Her efforts contributed to the permanent protection of nearly 3000 acres of farmland in the Long Green Valley National Historic District composed of fields and gently rolling hills that extends from Loch Raven Reservoir to the Harford County line.

Her dedication to conservation is not surprising. Conservation runs deep in the family. Mrs. Deford's cousin was the late Brice McAdoo Clagett, MET Chairman, and who served on the Board of Trustees of MET for two decades. Brice Clagett also donated a conservation easement on his home, Holly Hill, in Anne Arundel County.

Mrs. Deford's late husband, Robert Deford Jr., also was a committed land preservationist and believed that prime soils should be viewed as much a valuable resource as water. Boordy's vineyards are planted in the "transition" between the durable limestone of the valley and the more porous schist of the surrounding hills. Boordy is managed by her son, Robert Deford III and wife, Julia and their son, Phineas Deford who, together



Anne Deford was a longtime MET supporter and easement donor who dedicated her life to protecting the Long Green Valley for future generations.

with Rob's sister Sally Deford Buck, and husband Bayly, carry on the preservation ethic.

Long Green Farm was established in about 1720 by James Gittings, the original settler of Long Green Valley. Each successive generation has farmed the land in one way or another. Now a model of local sustainable agriculture, this historic farm will be protected for future generations to enjoy.



FOREVER
MARYLAND

Enhancing and advancing land conservation in Maryland

Advocacy Outreach
Education

FOREVER
MARYLAND

MET is excited to announce its support of the Forever Maryland Foundation. This innovative and bold venture started operating in September 2019 to advance land conservation in Maryland through outreach, education and advocacy.



DEVYN CROGHAN,
MET VOLUNTEER
COORDINATOR

A New Face at MET

Devyn Croghan recently graduated from State University of New York (SUNY) College of Environmental Science and Forestry with a Bachelor’s degree in Environmental Science and a minor in Environmental Writing and Rhetoric. As a volunteer Maryland AmeriCorps member serving at MET as Volunteer Coordinator, Devyn looks forward to enhancing the capacity and effectiveness of the volunteer program. He is excited for the opportunity to make a positive impact within MET, the conservation community, and the ecosystem we serve to protect and maintain.

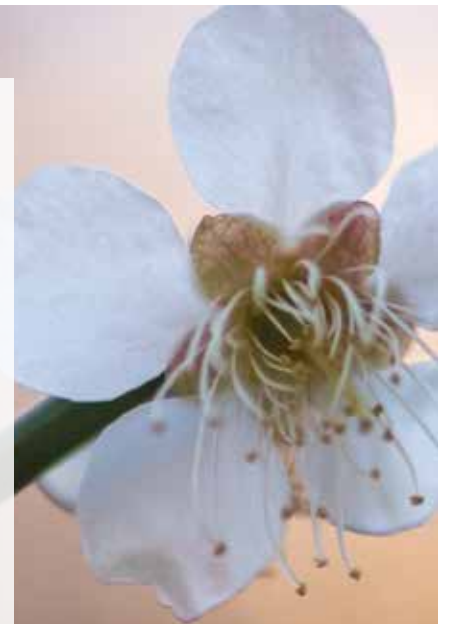
Devyn has prior experience enhancing and solidifying volunteer programs as an AmeriCorps member serving at Anne Arundel County Forestry Board. There he was able to redesign the program and forge partnerships with many local environmental organizations. Devyn also grew up in Anne Arundel County in Pasadena, and in his free time he enjoys cooking, baking, gardening, hiking, biking and camping all over the United States.

HELP BUILD THE MET STEWARDSHIP FUND!

With every conservation easement MET agrees to hold, it accepts the responsibility to monitor the property regularly and ensure that the terms of the easement are upheld forever. In 2006, MET established a dedicated Stewardship Fund to support the ongoing stewardship of over 100,000 acres of conserved lands. Costs associated with regular on-site monitoring, volunteer and land trust training, landowner engagement and support, land restoration, and developing new technologies and approaches to facilitate regular stewardship must be covered through the generous support of our contributors.

BECOME A MEMBER OF THE OPEN SPACE LEGACY SOCIETY!

Like the thousands of landowners who have made the decision to permanently safeguard their land, you can make Maryland Environmental Trust a part of your legacy. By including MET in your estate plans, you are ensuring we will have the funds necessary to meet the long-term challenge of safeguarding easement permanence and ensuring a strong land conservation movement endures in Maryland.



Farewell

GOOD LUCK ON YOUR NEXT ADVENTURES!

MEGAN BENJAMIN

In September 2019, MET bid farewell to Megan Benjamin. “In the 12 years I’ve been at MET, I have come to care deeply for the great work that we do and for the people that do it,” said Megan. “I close this chapter feeling extremely fortunate for the opportunities I have had to explore the beautiful corners of our state and work with inspiring landowners to protect the natural beauty for future generations.”



Megan worked in the central and western regions of the state protecting more than 3,000 acres of farmland and forests. She assisted more than 65 landowners to complete conservation projects. She also traveled the state on MET’s behalf, monitoring easements and meeting with landowners. We are grateful for the many years of outstanding work Megan gave the citizens of Maryland.

ERIN MCNALLY

After serving a year and a half as a contractual Easement Stewardship Specialist with MET, Erin McNally has accepted a new position with Maryland Environmental Service as a Survey Technician. Congratulations to Erin on her new job and permanent position. MET greatly appreciates her service. She was responsible for monitoring a total of 212 easement properties during her short tenure. We wish her all the best!



2020 BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING SCHEDULE

February 3
March 2
May 4
June 1

September 7
October 5
November 2
December 7

The Board of Trustees meets the first Monday of each month with the exception of January, April, July and August.

The board meetings begin at 4:00 pm and are held at 100 Community Place, Third Floor, MHT Board Room 3.218, Crownsville, Maryland, unless notified otherwise. These are public meetings. Please contact MET if you plan to attend.

Easements sometimes require advance notification and/or written approval for certain activities. Please see MET’s website for information and application. If you are unsure whether notification or approval is required, contact MET’s stewardship staff to help make that determination. Activities that might require approval or notification include:

- Constructing any new buildings or structures
- Renovating or enlarging existing structures
- Conveying property (provide contact information on new owner)
- Subdividing property
- Recording any other encumbrances on property (e.g. right-of-ways, ingress/egress, other easements)
- Entering wetlands mitigation or restoration programs
- Changing use of property (e.g. from forested lands to agricultural lands)
- Making a boundary line adjustment
- Harvesting timber

For complex matters, it may take a minimum of 30 days for MET to review and approve the proposed activities. Please contact Jon Chapman, Stewardship Program Manager, at 410-697-9519 to discuss your plans. All requests should be made in writing at least three weeks prior to the scheduled board meeting. Thank you!

Trying Times

CONSERVATION EASEMENTS AND FEDERAL TAX LAWS

Forty-seven attendees from 28 organizations attended MET’s October 2019 Land Trust Roundtable, “Trying Times: Conservation Easements and Federal Tax Law,” at the National Wildlife Visitor Center in Laurel, MD. This Roundtable featured an extended version of the popular Maryland Land Conservation Conference session entitled “Trying Times: Lessons to be Learned From Recent Federal Tax Cases Involving Conservation Easement Donations.” Thanks to our speakers and attendees for an engaging workshop! Presentation materials are available on MET’s Land Trust Roundtable webpage.



Protecting Land Forever

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Thank You to Our Recent Contributors

(July 1, 2019 - December 31, 2019)

Whether you make an unrestricted contribution, donate to our stewardship fund, or support a special project or program, your gift to MET is appreciated and essential to our future. Please consider a tax-deductible contribution to MET this year. With your support, we can continue to protect Maryland's diverse natural, scenic, and historic resources. Thank you for your support!

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The estate of Alverta and
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