

# Watershed Observer



NEWSLETTER OF THE AMERICAN CHESTNUT LAND TRUST - VOLUME 38 No. 1 WINTER 2024

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## COMING UP ON THE CALENDAR

### JANUARY

Jan thru Dec – 12 Hikes in '24  
Double Hiking Challenge -  
Hike once a month, every  
month plus take the extra  
challenge of hiking all 25+  
miles of trails

27 Sat – Volksmarch/Opening  
Celebration of New Oriole  
Trail (Time TBD) at South  
Side Trailhead

See full calendar on page 10 and  
on our web site:

[www.acltweb.org/Calendar24](http://www.acltweb.org/Calendar24)

## ACLT Land Acknowledgement and Pledge

By Greg Bowen, Executive Director

During the fall, the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Subcommittee of the Outreach & Membership Committee wrote and edited the ACLT's new Land Acknowledgement and it was approved by the Board of Directors at its November meeting. It will be placed throughout the ACLT media sites and read at formal gatherings.

The ACLT Land Acknowledgement is an important way to recognize our current understanding of the contributions of those who inhabited, cared for, and worked this land before us. To do so, it mentions indigenous peoples, and more specifically, the Piscataway Confederacy. Importantly, the Land Acknowledgment also underlines that people of African descent have played a crucial role in caring for the land that surrounds us. We feel it is imperative to publicly recognize that enslaved peoples suffered on this land, but also that free black men and women worked and owned the land as well. Maryland history teaches us about the injustices that these populations have experienced throughout time and the Land Acknowledgement is an attempt to align this understanding with our actions as they relate to our mission and the public good.

Because land conservation through acquisition is part of what we do, it is even more important to make a clear statement about our understanding of the injustices that have happened on this land. We know that historical forces played a role in displacing the original and subsequent stewards of the land that make up the ACLT and that the displacement of those peoples has been in one way or another influential in our ability to acquire those lands. These forces included the displacement of indigenous societies by settler colonists, the enslavement of people of African descent by plantation owners, and, after emancipation, the societal [discriminatory practices](#) that made Black farmers six times more likely to be foreclosed on when compared to white farmers ([bit.ly/blacklandlosshistory](http://bit.ly/blacklandlosshistory)). Because of the relationship between these realities and our desire to continue to conserve land, it is imperative that we constantly remind ourselves and our supporters we must also make this land equitably accessible, particularly to those populations that have suffered this type of displacement.

We hope to continue to do this through ongoing research and public education, as well as outreach that is inclusive and underlines a sense of belonging for a diverse population.

*ACLT acknowledges that the land it stewards, including Parkers Creek and Governors Run watersheds, is the ancestral home of the Peoples of the Piscataway Confederacy and other Indigenous People. Further, we recognize the people of African descent, enslaved and free, who once worked on or owned the farms, the land of which is now stewarded by ACLT. We recognize the contributions made by these displaced and enslaved peoples in the face of injustice and inequity and acknowledge our obligation to maintain the land and educate the public in such a way that their spirit and heritage are not forgotten.*

*Accordingly, ACLT pledges to continue its fundamental mission of connecting all people to the land by providing equitable and inclusive access to the lands we steward, through ongoing research and education about the land's inhabitants and their history, and through outreach to all, particularly those most affected by societal inequities. As a leader in land conservation and preservation we strive by example to foster a feeling of belonging to this region and at ACLT for all its diverse communities with the hope of a more equitable and sustainable future in Nature for all.*



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Published quarterly by the American Chestnut Land Trust. The ACLT is dedicated to the preservation of Calvert County, Maryland's Natural and Historical Resources. Since it was established in 1986, ACLT has preserved over 3,800 acres. We own 1627 acres, manage 1,810 acres owned by the State of Maryland, and hold conservation easements on 374 privately-owned acres. — Editors: Ellen and David Farr

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## From the President's Desk ...

### ACLT's Approach to Regional Conservation

I want to discuss our mission and approach to conservation briefly. Most land trusts primarily hold easements on land. Of course, that can be very effective at conserving properties, but ACLT has gone further. By owning lands, we have:

- **Engaged beyond easements:** Going beyond simply restricting usage, we actively connect people and communities to the land through direct ownership, allowing for deeper interactions and appreciation for its intrinsic value.
- **Provided science-driven stewardship:** The integrated science aspect, like water quality monitoring and invasive species removal, showcases a proactive approach to environmental protection, going beyond mere preservation.
- **Unveiled historical narratives:** By embracing both the positive and negative aspects of our lands' history, we foster a more nuanced understanding of the region's cultural context and the importance of learning from the past.
- **Promoted empathy and understanding:** Through interpretive programs and online resources, we bridge the gap between diverse groups, cultivating a sense of shared connection and respect for different perspectives.

This multi-pronged approach fosters a deeper understanding of the land and its role in shaping the region's identity. It protects the environment and enriches the lives of individuals and communities, fostering a sense of shared responsibility and collective stewardship.

Sharing our approach with other land trusts is valuable for promoting its advantages and sparking conversations about innovative conservation strategies.

David Farr, President

# Around ACLT

## ACLT's Annual Meeting Set for March 2, 2024

by Miriam Gboll, Community Relations Manager

All ACLT supporters are encouraged to attend this year's Annual Meeting, to be held on Saturday, March 2, 2024 at the St. John Vianney Family Life Center, 225 Holy Family Lane, Prince Frederick, Md. Doors open at 9:30 am for registration and refreshments. The meeting begins at 10:00 am and is followed by an opportunity to catch up with old friends and make new ones at an optional luncheon catered by Dream Weaver Café and Catering.

2023 was another productive year for ACLT thanks to the dedication and hard work of our community of supporters. At the meeting, staff and committee members will highlight last year's accomplishments, followed by a presentation of the proposed 2024-2028 5-Year Strategic Plan. In drafting the new Plan, we took into consideration the results of a survey conducted after last year's Annual Meeting as well as insights and suggestions from all ACLT Committees.

We hope you will join us for the Annual Meeting. Registration opens in February.

## Volunteer Appreciation Dinner

By Miriam Gboll, Community Relations Manager

On December 7<sup>th</sup>, ACLT staff played host to approximately 65 volunteers at the annual Appreciation Dinner. The event was held at the Scientists Cliffs Community House and was catered by Salsarita's Mexican Grill in Prince Frederick with desserts provided by staff. The annual event offers an opportunity for volunteers to relax and share a meal and for staff to express their appreciation to all who show up week after week throughout the year to help ACLT fulfill its mission. From farm workers to trail crews, from event helpers to water quality monitors, from committee members to envelope stuffers, we could not achieve as much as we do without the dedication of our volunteers. As a small token of appreciation, each volunteer went home with a custom-made coffee mug filled with sweets.

**Thank you, volunteers!**



Greg Bowen addresses volunteers at the appreciation dinner party.

Announcing

# ***ACLT'S Annual Meeting & Luncheon\****

**Saturday, March 2, 2024  
9:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.  
St. John Vianney Family Life Center  
Prince Frederick, Md.**

***\*Luncheon optional.  
Catered by Dreamweaver Cafe' & Catering  
More details to follow.  
Registration opens in February.***

**act's 12 Hikes in '24  
Double Challenge**



**Hike once a month  
every month in 2024 PLUS  
Hike every trail for an added  
Challenge!**

**Hurry! Registration Closes  
January 31, 2024  
[www.acltweb.org/12Hikes24](http://www.acltweb.org/12Hikes24)**



# ACLT's Newest Addition— The Oriole Trail

By Clara Brill-Carlat, Assistant Land Manager

Please welcome the Oriole Trail, the newest addition to ACLT's trail system! Named in honor of our beloved Baltimore baseball team and the actual Oriole birds that inhabit ACLT's forests, the trail is set to open in late January. It is designed for both hikers and bikers and runs through two properties that previously did not have any ACLT trail access. From its connection point with the East Loop Trail, the Oriole Trail crosses over Governors Run via a long bridge. It heads south through the mature forests of the Yowell property, which ACLT purchased in 2021, and then curves to the southeast to follow alongside the powerlines. After crossing Governors Run Road, the trail makes a full loop through the woods on the Kenwood property, bridging streams three more times in the process. Kenwood is ACLT's southernmost property and sits just north of the Western Shores neighborhood in Port Republic. The trail is shaped like a lollipop with a 1.25-mile loop and a 0.5-mile "stick." Hikers and bikers can return to East Loop by following the "stick" portion of the trail back across Governors Run Road and through the Yowell property, completing the 2.25-mile route.

Building a new trail requires careful planning and hard work. Though not *quite* as long and arduous as its baseball namesake's rebuilding phase, the development of the Oriole Trail was a multi-stage, time-intensive process. Beginning back in the fall of 2022, the first step was designing the route. A topographic map can provide a sense of which obstacles—such as steep terrain, streams, and marshy floodplains—might impede a trail's construction. However, the only way to select the best path is to walk potential routes and examine the terrain close-up. Very minor changes in slope can make a big impact on how water and erosion affect the trail, so thorough on-the-ground assessments need to be made. Over the course of several months, Land Manager Autumn Phillips-Lewis and volunteer Dale Hutchins marked out the trail, piece by piece, with flagging tape tied to trees. The goal was to create a sustainable trail that will withstand wear and tear from hikers and bikers and also minimize erosion and flooding from storms. Two key mantras in sustainable trail building are "think like the water" and "keep it curvy." A straight, downhill section of trail will be prone to erosion during a rainstorm, whereas switchbacks cut into a hillside will allow water to drain off the trail in shorter sections, before it gains the velocity to cause erosion. For this reason, the Oriole Trail climbs and descends the hills on the southern side of Governors Run Road in a series of switchbacks. As you hike the trail this winter, imagine where the rainwater will flow during a heavy storm, and notice where the path bends and slopes accordingly.

After each section was marked out, ACLT's Wednesday morning volunteers got to work clearing and cutting the trail. This included everyone's favorite activity: side-ledging. Wherever a trail runs along the side of a hill, the uphill side needs to be dug out (side-ledged) enough that hikers can walk on the trail comfortably, but not so much that water is unable to drain downhill across the trail. Since the Oriole Trail will be open to bikers, stairs were not an option. The trail therefore provided plenty of opportunities for side-ledging, especially on a very steep, una-

voidable hill on the Kenwood property. Armed with shovels, mattocks, and loppers, ACLT staff and volunteers did some serious digging in the root-ridden hillside to create a flatter, wider path. Volunteer Kevin Donahue also designed a platform to widen the trail and allow for a gentler turn at a particularly narrow, tight curve on the hill. All along the trail, extra care was taken to remove potential hazards like small roots and overhanging branches that could interfere with bike pedals and handlebars. The trail extends ACLT's bikeable trail mileage by connecting to East Loop, which was previously the only trail where biking was allowed. ACLT restricts bike access due to the trail damage that can be caused by tires in our easily erodible soils. However, allowing bikers on East Loop and the Oriole Trail, which are designed and side-ledged with bikes in mind, lets ACLT's visitors enjoy another form of outdoor recreation while still minimizing erosion on the rest of the trail network.



Above: Side-ledging a section of the Oriole Trail  
Below: Close-up view of a side-ledged trail section.



The next step in constructing the Oriole Trail was building bridges at the four stream crossings. This required scouting and measuring the best spots for crossing each stream, determining the materials needed for each bridge, and ordering some impressively long lumber. The shortest bridge is 16 feet long, two are 24 feet, and the fourth – meticulously designed by volunteer Ken Romney – spans a whopping 32 feet. To help pay for this trail infrastructure, Autumn applied for a grant from the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority in the fall of 2022 and received \$3,500 for lumber and hardware. Grace Mayer, one of ACLT's 2022-2023 Chesapeake Conservation Corps (CCC) members, also obtained a \$1,500 Chesapeake Bay Trust grant, part of which was used to fund the 16-foot bridge. Grace's grant also enabled ACLT to host a group of CCC members for a day, during which they worked on the bridge and other land management projects.

After the bridge lumber was delivered to ACLT, staff and volunteers cut it to the proper lengths for joists, spacers, posts, handrails, and deck boards and sorted out which pieces belonged to each bridge. The cut lumber was driven closer to the bridge sites using a pickup truck and trailer on the roads, then into the woods using a narrow cart hitched onto the back of a gator. While attempting to navigate the twists and turns of the new trail with the gator, cart, and 24-foot boards, it became clear that we had successfully "kept it curvy." Nevertheless, with careful driving and many helping hands to lift the lumber-laden cart around tight turns, all the wood reached its final destination. Staff and volunteers then set to work building the bridges, taking steps to make them as long-lasting as possible. These included covering the tops of the joists with Tyvek tape to prevent rot, securing the baseboards to the streambanks with rebar rods, and using galvanized bolts, which have a special coating that minimizes corrosion from the chemicals in pressure-treated lumber. Each bridge was constructed in stages, starting with the frames and then adding ramps, deck boards, and handrails. The process required teamwork and a touch of brute strength, particularly for assembling the hefty frames and setting them in place. Have you ever wondered how many people it takes to haul a 32-foot joist across a stream? Our lucky Wednesday morning crew learned that the answer is 6.

The last stage of building a new trail is opening it to the public. Final preparations include painting blazes and installing signage and directional arrows so that the path is easy to follow, even before it gets worn in. Once the Oriole Trail is well marked, ACLT will hold a volksmarch for the grand opening on January 27<sup>th</sup>, similar to the Holly Hill Trail volksmarch in 2021. A volksmarch is an organized but noncompetitive walk, and participants will be able to hike at their own pace by following the Oriole orange blazes. The event will be a celebration of ACLT's expanding trail system, the beauty of the surrounding preserved land, and all the hard work and volunteer contributions that made the new trail possible. Stay tuned for more details!



Above: Constructing the frame for the 16-foot bridge.

Below: Installing handrails and deck boards on the 32-foot bridge.



**We're planning another Volksmarch  
to Celebrate the Opening of the New Oriole Trail!**

**January 27, 2024 - Time TBD**  
Rain/Snow Date: January 28th



# Fishing Creek, the Time is Now!

By Greg Bowen, Executive Director

Calvert County has always been and still is home to numerous hunters, fishermen, wildlife observers, and others who care about the health of our natural lands and waters. In the fall 2023 *Watershed Observer* article, “Zoning Matters”, I suggested that Fishing Creek be designated a Rural Legacy Area.

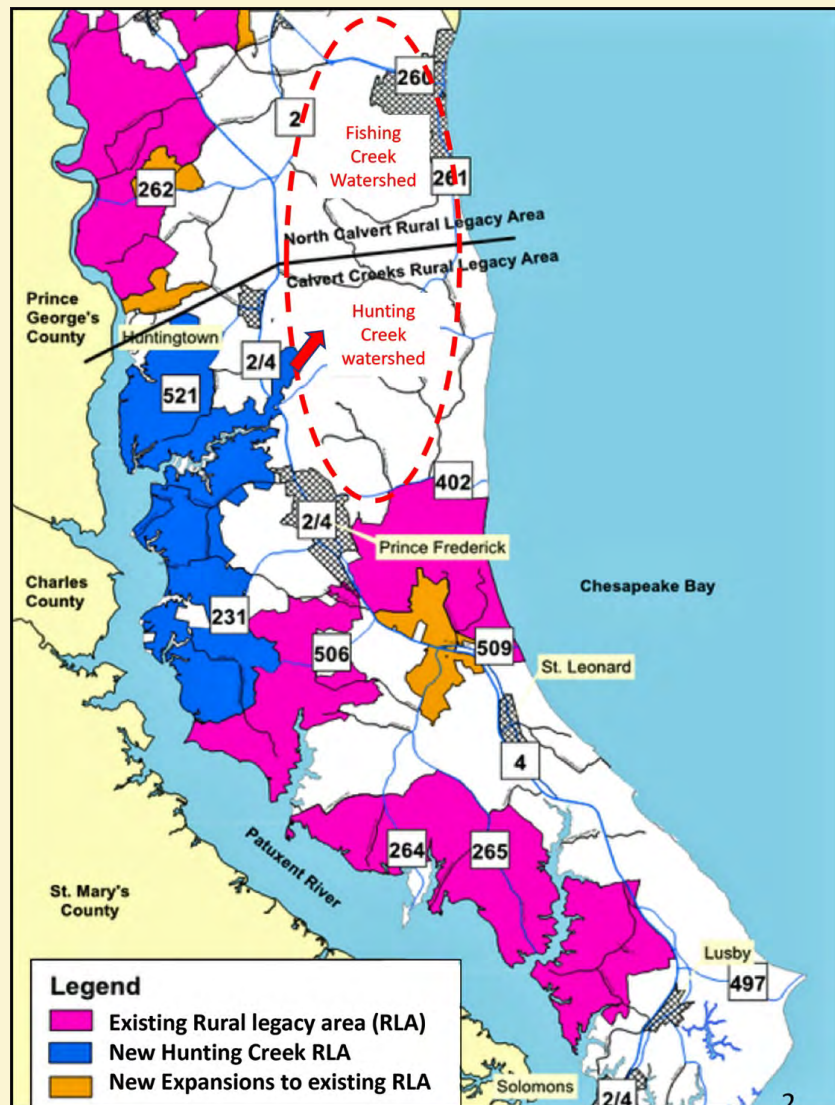
Many people are familiar with Fishing Creek. They may have driven over it when visiting Chesapeake Beach. They may have motored or sailed into the mouth of the Creek on their own vessel or on one of the many charter fishing boats, or they may have hiked along the Railway Trail which follows Fishing Creek upstream. What they may not know is that it is the third largest watershed in Calvert County with the most wetlands of any watershed in the county. The land uses are very diverse with 30% of the watershed in farmland and a whopping 66% forested. Despite the fact that the mouth of the creek is located in the heart of a densely populated town, there is a lot of land to be conserved.

This year the newly formed Friends of Fishing Creek Group, made up of volunteers from Chesapeake Beach, participated in ACLT's water quality monitoring blitz. They tested three streams in the upper reaches of the Creek and found that nitrogen and phosphorus levels were very low, a good sign for water quality.

However, of all of the major watersheds in Calvert County, Fishing Creek is the only one that does not have a Maryland Rural Legacy Area designation. In the last decade, the Maryland Rural Legacy Program has been the most successful county tool for protecting habitat for wildlife and fisheries, while also conserving farm and forest land. And this is one program that does not require county funds.

One reason that it has not happened yet is because a condition of Rural Legacy Area (RLA) expansion is that all of the properties have to be connected in RLAs. Fishing Creek is in the northern part of the county and because of the roads and the development patterns, it is difficult to connect Fishing Creek to the North Calvert Rural Legacy Area, which runs along the Patuxent River.

However, in 2022 the County Commissioners officially included the Hunting Creek watershed properties into the Calvert Creeks Rural Legacy



area. The new Rural Legacy map crossed Route 4 to the eastern side of Calvert County. From a wildlife standpoint this makes sense because Hunting Creek extends almost to the Bay. The two MD 4 bridges allow wildlife to travel under MD 4, along the creek, creating a safe wildlife corridor. With that wildlife corridor connection, we are now able to connect Fishing Creek to the Calvert Creeks Rural Legacy Area as the Hunting Creek watershed extended to the Fishing Creek watershed.

On the topic of establishing a Rural Legacy Area in Fishing Creek. I have spoken with the county sponsor, Southern MD RC&D. I have also spoken with the staff of the MD Rural Legacy Program, with Chesapeake Beach Town Hall, and with other lands trusts in Calvert County and they all agree that this is something we should pursue.

At the same time, we can ask for more of the lands in the Hunting Creek Watershed to be designated, such as those that drain from ACLT owned land. This is something that ACLT and its partners will be pursuing in the first half of 2024. We will be asking our membership for letters of support!

## ACLT 2024 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Please check website for up-to-date information.

### JANUARY

Jan thru Dec – 12 Hikes in ‘24 Double Hiking Challenge - Hike once a month, every month plus take the extra challenge of hiking all 25+ miles of trails

27 Sat – Volksmarch/Opening Celebration of New Oriole Trail (Time TBD) at South Side Trailhead

### FEBRUARY

10 thru 17 – Valentines “Show Some Love” Unguided Hikes – (All Day) on all trails

### MARCH

2 Sat – ACLT’S Annual Meeting & Luncheon (10am-1pm) at St. John Vianney Family Life Center

16 Sat – St. Patrick’s Day “Leprechaun Hunt” (10am-3pm) at North Side Trailhead

### APRIL

13 thru 27 All Week – Earth Day-Themed “Story Walk” (all day) at Griffin Meadow Trail/North Side Trailhead

20 & 21 Sat/Sun – Earth Day Highway Clean-up (ACLT volunteers) (Time TBD) along Dares Beach Road and Main Street in Prince Frederick

### MAY

25 Sat – Mountain Laurel Guided Hike (Time TBD) at Laurel Trail/South Side Trailhead

30 Thur – Dining in the Field (Time TBD) at North Side Trailhead

### JUNE

Only off-site events

### JULY

Date TBD – Guided Early Morning Hike (Time TBD) at South Side Trailhead

### AUGUST

24 Sat – Guided Evening Hike/Farewell to Summer (Time TBD) at Turkey Trail, North Side Trailhead

### SEPTEMBER

7 Sun – Sip & Save (1-5pm) at North Side Trailhead

28 thru Oct 13 Sat-Sun – Art for All Seasons Artists’ Exhibition (all day) at AnnMarie Sculpture Garden

### OCTOBER

6 Sun – Annual Dinner & Auction (4-8pm) at Jefferson Patterson Pavilion

12 Sat – Parkers Creek Challenge (10am-1pm) at South Side Trailhead

### NOVEMBER

2 Sat – Guided Hike – Fall Foliage (Time TBD) at Turkey Trail, North Side Trailhead

30 & Dec 1 Sat/Sun – Wreath-making Weekend (volunteers and their guests) at ACLT Office/ North Side Trailhead

### DECEMBER

7 Sat – Annual Wreath and Greens Sale (11am-1pm) at South Side Trailhead

## A Fresh New Look for ACLT's Office!

Stop by and see the new siding that was recently installed on ACLT's office! A huge thank you to Kevin Donahue, Ed Hudson, Mark Lee, Scott Hite, Ralph Noletti, Prasad Gerard, Rob and Dylan Cimini, and Clara Brill-Carlat, Assistant Land Manager, for all of the time and effort they put in to spruce up the place. We think it looks much better!





# A Coordinated Effort to Save A Critical Property

And an Antidote to Bay Fatigue by Greg Bowen



Photo from Jug Bay Sanctuary website: <https://jugbay.org>.

The Southern Maryland Conservation Alliance (SMCA) has good news at a time when we need some about the Bay. Stories about the failure of the Chesapeake Bay region's effort to clean up the Chesapeake Bay by 2025 may have left many people seemingly ready to throw up their hands and accept a degraded environment for our next generations to deal with. Not mentioned so much in the major media outlets are the successes of the Chesapeake Bay Program in achieving 17 of the 31 outcomes<sup>1</sup> set by the Program, despite a 60% increase in population in the watershed since the first Bay Agreement. In many ways, there has been major progress like reduced air pollutants and improved sewer treatment plants (both of which reduced nutrients into the Bay), more forested stream buffers, and a rise in oyster population and harvests.

On the other hand, the region continues to lose forestland while gaining impervious surfaces. In an article in the December 4, 2023 *Bay Journal*, Karl Blankenship & Timothy B. Wheeler note that "Despite warnings dating to the 1987 Agreement that rampant sprawl was gobbling up the landscape, drying up wetlands and destroying stream habitats, the Bay Program has never been able to grapple with the problem."<sup>2</sup> Where and how we grow may ultimately determine our level of success and here is where SMCA is making a difference.

Thirty-eight years ago, ACLT's willingness to buy and conserve lands for sale, not just rely on owners to conserve their own lands, was a key to preventing residential sprawl in the Parkers Creek and Governors Run watersheds. Now these two watersheds are recognized as two of the most significant biodiversity areas in the state.<sup>3</sup>

ACLT's philosophy has carried on in the creation of SMCA. It is great when current owners conserve their own land, but if they don't and a critical property is for sale, SMCA's Core Team, made up of 12 nature conservancies from the 5 Southern Maryland Counties, looks for ways to conserve them. After mapping the region's critical lands for protection, the SMCA Core Team has focused on conserving critical properties as they come up for sale. The Team has already had successes, but the most notable to date comes from Prince George's County.

Soon after SMCA's critical lands program started, Black Swamp Land Trust in Prince Georges County raised the alarm about a big apartment project, East Marlton, being developed next to Charles Branch which flows into Jug Bay on the Patuxent. The land is also adjacent to a conserved property in the county's Rural Legacy area. The Trust explained the impacts the development would have on Charles Branch and on a narrow band of land along the Patuxent that the county designated as a *Rural and Agricultural Area* in its Comprehensive



Aerial Photo showing location of property (East Marlton project).



Plan. Furthermore, this 550-acre tract consists of rugged lands, some of which contains old growth forest. Finally, the installation of a new entrance for this community would require filling of wetlands in a watershed that has already lost significant wetlands.

The Core Team asked Alyssa Matanin and Mary Hoover (former and current SMCA Coordinators, respectively) to research the history of the project. It was worse than we had feared. The apartment project had already been approved by the county. A developer had donated the land to a national nonprofit which is known for its youth programs. However, after receiving this large donation of land, the nonprofit decided to market it for apartment construction rather than using it to provide outdoor recreation for youth in an area of Prince Georges County that lacks adequate outdoor facilities.

Our Core Team got to work. First one of our members contacted Prince Georges County Parks and Recreation about buying this property to serve as an outdoor park. The county expressed a willingness to buy it at market value and our team began to try to make introductions for this to happen. However, the nonprofit felt that development of this rugged land was more lucrative and initially refused the county's efforts to meet and discuss acquisition. Next, our Core Team and affiliates wrote letters to the nonprofit asking for them to consider a proposal by the county. Again, no response. Next, our Core Team reached out to the Sierra Club for Prince George's County and they created an AddUp campaign, which resulted in over one thousand letters to the nonprofit. Our team also reached out to leadership in the nonprofit and elected officials of Prince George's County. Finally, the nonprofit agreed to discuss a deal. In October, the project was approved for Program Open Space funding by the Maryland Board of Public Works, enabling the county to purchase the property.

Obviously SMCA hopes that not all projects will be this difficult. However, it points out the commitment of SMCA to turn things around so that land conservation groups can have hope that the lands intended to be for farming, forestry, and open space can be successfully conserved. We have also had successes in Charles and St. Mary's Counties, and in our Spring Watershed Observer I'll have news about a project in Calvert!

## A gift and a gift again!

By Greg Bowen, Executive Director

The year was 2004 and development was still growing strong in Calvert County. ACLT had the opportunity to buy the Trikas property—a beautiful 28-acre parcel directly on Parkers Creek. But at that time, the Board lacked all the necessary funds to buy the property. Fortunately, three Board members stepped up to buy five Transferable Development Rights (TDRs) each to pay for the property. It was a gift to ACLT and to nature.



Trikas Property

Barbara and Stan Benning were among those who stepped up to buy 5 TDRs. Barbara served as a member of the Board of Directors from 2002 to 2007 and was the Recording Secretary for the Board at the time of the purchase.

As owners of the developments rights, Barbara and Stan could have sold them to another party at any time. However, they recently decided to gift them to ACLT, which will allow us to resell them and add the proceeds to our Land Acquisition Fund.

In 2004 Barbara and Stan's gift initially enabled the purchase of the Trikas property; in 2023 their donation provided a very generous cash gift to the ACLT and proved to be an astute investment for the Benning's as the TDRs had more than doubled in value and provided a healthy tax credit. If this were a bet on a horse race, the Benning's would have won the trifecta, and for ACLT it is a gift again from our dear friends!

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1 <https://bit.ly/BayJournalDec2023>

2 <https://bit.ly/BayJournalPostSept2023>

3 <https://bit.ly/BionetMapping-DNR>

## Thank you for your support

### New Members

ACLT welcomes the following new members since the Fall 2023 Newsletter:  
Sherry Cohen  
Iris Dominguez  
Dan & Donna Goucher  
Chris & Liz Hunsaker  
Jill McNeil  
Jonathan & Jennifer Moreland & Family  
Martha Nortrup  
Alberto & Ivanna Omechevarria & Family  
Anna Pokora  
Nancy Roeper  
John & Judy Runyon  
Nathaniel Salzman  
Nicole Stewart  
Vicky and Tom Travis  
Gerard Walles  
Jason & Pamela Ward



**Registration Now Open!**  
**Sign up today for ACLT's**  
**2024 Maryland**  
**Master Naturalist Class**

Share your love of nature! A "Master Naturalist" is a citizen scientist who is dedicated to the care and conservation of Maryland's natural environment. ACLT is now accepting applications for the 2024 Master Naturalist Class. Classes will take place on Monday evenings from 6-9pm from March 4, 2024 through June 17, 2024. Classes are normally held at the ACLT office in Prince Frederick, except for mandatory fields trips.

**Registration closes in Feb.**  
**or when the class is full.**

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE INFO:**  
**[www.acltweb.org/2024MNClass](http://www.acltweb.org/2024MNClass)**

### Memorial Donations

Thank you to the following who made a memorial contribution since our last newsletter:

In memory of **Paul, Doris & Don Berry:**  
Marsha Berry

In memory of **Dan Head:**  
Greg & Linda Locraft

### In Honor of Donations

Thank you to the following who made an "in honor of" contribution since our last newsletter:

In honor of **Laura Berg:**  
Carol & Ronald Berg

In honor of **Greg Bowen:**  
Nathan Bowen

### Gift Memberships

Thank you to the following who donated a gift membership since our last newsletter:  
Dan Boesz  
R.T. West

### General Contributions and Designated Gifts

#### Chili Cook-off Donations

Bob Field  
Carl Fleischhauer & Paula Johnson  
Daniel Murphy  
Peter & Randi Vogt

#### Chili Cook-off Paddle Raise

Karl Adler & Danielle Chappell  
Laura Allison  
Joy Bartholomew & Mark Edmondson  
David & Paula Bohaska  
James Borell & Jo Anne Longhill  
Greg & Tamea Bowen  
Denise Breitburg & Mark Smith  
Peter Daly  
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David & Ellen Farr  
Bob Field  
Kenneth Good  
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Richard Gray & Kimberley Von Paris  
Patrick & Abbey Griffin

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## Martin Luther King, Jr. Day January 15, 2024

"LIFE'S MOST PERSISTENT AND  
URGENT QUESTION IS:

*What are you  
doing for others?"*

– Martin Luther King, Jr.



Photo Credit: Book Cover  
"The Essential Martin Luther King, Jr."

ACLT embraces the spirit of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s teachings everyday by providing a safe place for people of all backgrounds to enjoy the peace and beauty of nature along our trails and by donating thousands of pounds of produce to the local food pantry every year.

*We could not do it  
without our Volunteers.*

Join ACLT in building a better community for all by volunteering to:

- Help with trail maintenance
- Help raise produce at Double Oak Farm for the food insecure in our community
- Join one of our watershed friends groups to help monitor and improve the health of our watersheds for the enjoyment of future generations
- Help with our many events and fundraisers ... and many more

Visit our website for more info about these and many other volunteer opportunities:

[www.acltweb.org/volunteer](http://www.acltweb.org/volunteer)



American Chestnut Land Trust, Inc.  
Post Office Box 2363  
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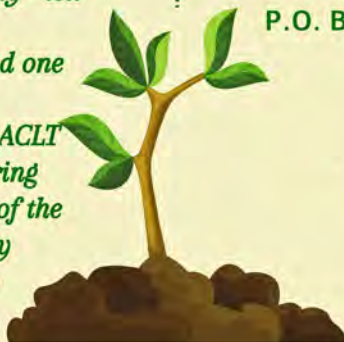
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In order to use your donations as efficiently as possible, we use USPS Bulk Mail and this statement is now required in the address. Thank you for understanding!

## Help Us Grow!

Thanks to your support, ACLT has grown into a vibrant land conservancy with a bright future. As demonstrated in this newsletter, we are making progress on several fronts – preserving more land – fighting climate change – staying engaged with the community – plus lots of exciting projects underway! We want to share our good news with everyone – current and new members and donors alike! We're asking for your help by ...

- *talking us up to your friends and family - tell them why you support ACLT*
- *inviting them to hike with you or attend one of our many events*
- *inviting them to volunteer with you at ACLT*
- *following us on Social Media and sharing our posts or sharing your own photos of the beauty of ACLT with friends and family*
- *Giving the gift of an ACLT membership (go to [www.acltweb.org/membership](http://www.acltweb.org/membership))*



Help us continue our mission! Please donate by scanning the QR Code above or mail a check made payable to ACLT to:

P.O. Box 2363, Prince Frederick, MD 20678

Or donate online at  
[www.acltweb.org/donate](http://www.acltweb.org/donate)

The American Chestnut Land Trust is a 501 (c) (3) charitable organization. A copy of the current ACLT financial statement is available on request. Requests should be directed to the American Chestnut Land Trust, Inc, P.O. Box 2363, Prince Frederick, MD 20678 or call (410) 414-3400. For the cost of copies and postage, documents and information submitted under the Business Regulation Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland are available from the Secretary of State.