



Harford Land Trust News

VOLUME 21, ISSUE 2

WINTER 2018

HLT Partners with APG and County to Preserve Perryman Forest



Perryman Forest preservation partners hold a commemorative sign which will soon be installed on the property. Left-to-right: Todd Beser (Aberdeen Proving Ground [APG], Army Compatible Use Buffer Program Manager), Harry Webster (Forest Greens-Perryman Community Association President), Billy Boniface (Harford County Director of Administration), Barry Glassman (Harford County Executive), Major General Randy S. Taylor (Senior Commander, APG), Ben Lloyd (President, HLT), Kristin Kirkwood (Executive Director, HLT), Peg Niland (Former Executive Director, HLT). (Photo by Ruben Pereida Photography)

The Harford Land Trust (HLT) is pleased to announce that it has completed the purchase of a 32-acre property known as Perryman Forest at a cost of \$935,000. The local land preservation nonprofit had pursued the Perryman-area property for twelve years due to its significant environmental value, proximity to the Bush River, and connectivity with other open space.

Perryman Forest is adjacent to the first property that HLT acquired for preservation in the early 1990s, the 100-acre Forest Greens Lake Preserve. That land has since been conveyed to Harford County government, which uses it as a park. The land trust will manage the Perryman Forest as an extension of the Lake Preserve and hopes to work with the county to join the two properties at some point in the future.

Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG) provided \$850,000 for the purchase through their Army Compatible Use Buffer Program (ACUB), which serves to protect high-value habitat and reduce incompatible development around the installation. APG also reimbursed the Harford Land Trust approximately \$100,000 for due diligence, staff,

and transaction costs as well as a portion of long-term monitoring and management costs, without which the organization could not have protected the property.

"We are pleased to hear that years of dedication and effort have come to a 'closing,'" said Colonel Robert Phillips, III, APG Garrison Commander. "Closing the deal on the Perryman Forest parcel is the prime example of how the community, the County, our ACUB partners and the Army can come together to achieve many goals. Preserving open space in a tight knit community, protecting valuable Chesapeake Bay natural resources and providing direct support to research and development military missions have all been accomplished through this endeavor. Furthermore, establishing this buffer will enhance the resiliency of the Bush River shoreline, which in turn helps maintain the continuity of operations at APG and the surrounding community. We are proud to be part of a program that provides a lasting legacy of open space, protects the Chesapeake Bay, and supports our Warfighters."

Continued on page 3.



To work with landowners, private and public, to conserve land and protect its natural resources, scenic beauty, rural character, and promote a healthy quality of life in Harford County.

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From the President's Desk

As I like to tell new audiences who may not be familiar with the HLT's work, we don't stand in front of bulldozers or tie ourselves to trees to prevent their destruction; we just buy the land that the trees are on. We don't grab a bullhorn when environmentally or culturally significant land is threatened; we grab the phone and negotiate an easement with the landowner. That is certainly a simplification of how we operate, but my point is that we are a land preservation organization rather than an advocacy organization.



In my 11 years serving on the HLT's Board of Directors, I cannot recall a single instance where we waded into discussions regarding controversial issues by sharing our views publicly. So it was a bit unprecedented that in 2018 we submitted testimony regarding two different regulatory and legislative actions.

The first involved the Transource proposal to route new high-capacity power lines to a substation in Norrisville, which requires the condemnation of some easements on preserved farmland. Our testimony in Annapolis centered around the fact that this could establish a precedent for violating perpetual easements, and also that the existing evaluation process for such projects seems to unintentionally encourage routes through preserved farmland.

The second instance involved the proposal by one outgoing county councilman to sequester revenue from the real estate transfer tax and prevent it from being spent on farmland preservation, despite the fact that Harford taxpayers overwhelmingly approved the program and its funding source in a referendum. We testified in support of the Ag Preservation program, and we were happy that all of the other County Council members voted to keep the record-level funding in the budget as proposed by the County Executive.

Even though the county's Ag Preservation program is separate and distinct from the work of the Harford Land Trust, Inc., we do work closely with one another. Each of the numerous preservation programs and organizations that work in this county fills an important niche, and each one is vital to the protection of the diverse range of farms, forests, waterways, and natural features we all love. We are fortunate to live in an area that has so many unique landscapes and natural resources worth protecting.

Despite what some would have you believe, land preservation benefits all county residents in many ways, including:

- Saving taxpayer-funded resources by not extending costly infrastructure further out into the countryside;
- Averting future strain on our roads, schools, and public safety services;
- Providing stability in our agricultural economy;
- Preventing environmental degradation by mitigating flooding, erosion, and pollution;
- Protecting threatened wildlife habitats; and,
- Saving irreplaceable natural features like Kilgore Falls and the Forest Greens Lake for future generations.

Some say that the county should preserve land through the zoning process instead. But zoning is a temporary designation rather than a permanent condition on the land, and taking development rights away from ag land without compensation would punish families who have kept on farming instead of selling their land for development. The only way to preserve land in perpetuity is through an easement.

We as supporters of preservation need to stand together whenever there are threats to the sanctity of perpetual easements, and to set the record straight whenever folks spread misinformation or cast land preservation as an unnecessary exercise.



Ben Lloyd

While we appreciate the sharing of news regarding our work, please contact the HLT office prior to reprinting of newsletter content in full or in part.

Perryman Forest *Continued from front page.*

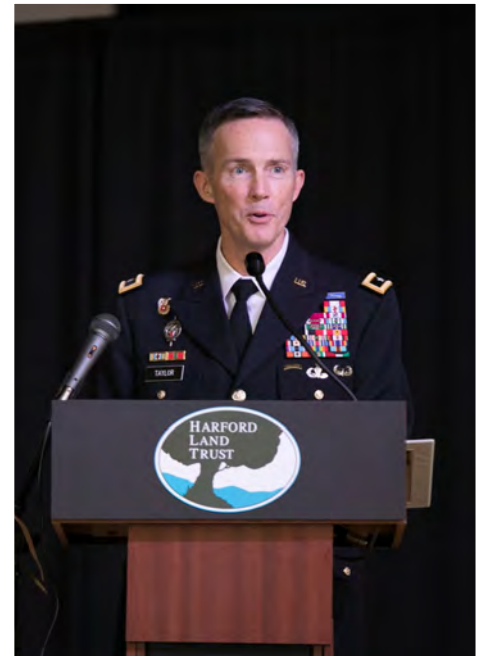
Harford County government also contributed \$74,204 for the purchase. “I am proud of our partnership with the Harford Land Trust and APG to preserve the Perryman Forest property for the benefit of the community,” said County Executive Barry Glassman. “Harford County’s share of the funding for this purchase came solely from stormwater mitigation fees, paid by developers in other areas of the county, which will help us improve the health of local streams and the Chesapeake Bay. Prior to my administration, this land was planned for the development of 21 residential lots. Now it will serve our citizens as a passive park and remain in a natural state forever.”

HLT began a campaign to raise the remainder of funds needed in November 2017. The Forest Greens-Perryman Community Association joined the land trust’s efforts by mailing over 300 flyers to area residents requesting financial support for the purchase. The combined efforts from the community and the land trust resulted in \$19,185 from generous donors. “The strong community support for this project only made us more determined to preserve the Perryman Forest,” said HLT Executive Director Kristin Kirkwood. “We are so thankful for our loyal HLT members and the many new supporters that contributed to the effort.”

Preservation of Perryman’s open space is vital to maintaining intact coastal plain habitat in the County. The 32-acre Perryman Forest is characterized by upland forest and wetlands, also known as “tree swamps,” and vernal pools, also known as “flatwoods.” The woods are important habitat for bird, reptile, and amphibian species. The tidal and non-tidal wetlands on the site are connected through surface and subsurface flow to the Chesapeake Bay, benefiting water quality by retaining nutrients and sediment.



Perryman Forest wetland in early spring. (Photo by Andy Adams)



Clockwise from top left: Mary Archer Stewart; Harvest Moon attendees; Major General Randy S. Taylor, APG Senior Commander; Kirk and Henry Mantay; Andy and Robin Ishak; Harvest Moon Committee members Diane Jones, Marilyn Thompson, Peg Niland, Jo Tyson, Kristin Kirkwood, and Cyndi Fitzhugh. (Photos by Ruben Pereida Photography)

HLT's Harvest Moon Event Raises \$50,000 for Land Preservation

HLT raised a record \$50,000 at our seventh annual Harvest Moon Dinner & Auction on Saturday, October 20. An enthusiastic crowd of 200 people attended the event at the Bel Air Armory in support of our mission of preserving land in Harford County.

Keynote speaker, Major General Randy S. Taylor, APG Senior Commander, spoke of the important partnership with HLT through the Army Compatible Use Buffer Program. General Taylor described APG's need to preserve high-value habitat and limit incompatible development near the installation.

Mary Archer Stewart, of Fawn View Farm in Pylesville,

also spoke at the event. Stewart stressed the importance of land preservation to the county's agriculture industry and natural resource and agriculture education programs.

The event was made possible by the donated goods and services of over 100 local businesses and residents.

Aimee O'Neill, of O'Neill Enterprises, donated her auctioneering services and Jeff Conti donated his professional decorating services. "The outpouring of support for our event shows that our community recognizes the importance of our work and understands the many benefits of land preservation," HLT Board President Ben Lloyd said.

Thank you to our Harvest Moon supporters!

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\$5,000

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Executive Barry Glassman

\$2,500

Anonymous
Ann and Art Helton, Millbrook Farm

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Jesse Colvin for Congress
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Massanutten Resort

Mayo Family Band

Mayor William T. Martin

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Law

The Mill

Mike Zeller

Continued on page 6.

Thank you to our Harvest Moon supporters! *Continued from page 5.*

National Aquarium	Peg Niland	Aberdeen	Vagabond Sandwich Company
The Nest	Peter Jay, Windmill Hill Farm	Sean Bolan's Irish Pub	Vineyard Wine Bar
Newberry Bakery & Café	Pilgrim's Oak Golf Course	Shaw Orchards	Visage Salon and Day Spa
Office of Governor Larry Hogan	Pleasant Valley Golf Club	Sue Rice	Wallis & Co. Acoustic Trio
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Peg Dougherty	Savona	Town Hair Salon	WXCY Radio
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We strive to ensure that our records are accurate and to properly acknowledge all donors. Please contact us if you see that we have made an error or omission.

HLT Completes Land Conservation Prioritization Map for Harford

HLT's 2017—2022 Strategic Plan called for us to strategically pursue land preservation projects that meet our land preservation criteria. Of course, we cannot, and should not, protect "everything." It is paramount that our land preservation efforts are sharply focused on the most critical and vulnerable resources to ensure our efforts have the greatest positive impact.

Thanks to a grant from the Chesapeake Bay Land and Water Initiative, a project of the Chesapeake Bay Funders Network and the Land Trust Alliance, we were able to try something new further this goal. In late 2017, HLT engaged the Chesapeake Conservancy's Conservation Innovation Center to develop a Harford County strategic land preservation prioritization map based on HLT's land preservation criteria.

Over many months, HLT staff worked with the Conservancy to identify data sets and assign weights that best reflected HLT's criteria and evaluation process for prospective land preservation projects.

Each parcel larger than five acres in Harford County was assessed against over 20 datasets. The highest priority was assigned to three overarching criteria:

- Wildlife and biodiversity (e.g., ecologically sensitive areas, habitat)
- Productive farmland (e.g., soil quality)
- Water quality (e.g., Chesapeake Bay Critical Area, marshland and streams, steep slopes, floodplains, green infrastructure)

HLT also factored in property size and impervious surface cover. Lastly, we assessed proximity to other preserved land and scenic and historic landmarks (e.g., Maryland Scenic Byways, historic landmarks and individual sites, scenic trails).

Each parcel was assigned a score, resulting in the colors shown on the map. Blue parcels are those that are currently being taxed based on an agricultural or residential use. Orange parcels are those that are currently being taxed based on a commercial, industrial, or other use.

Through clickable web viewers, HLT staff can query parcels and view land characteristics and tax information from a desktop or mobile device.

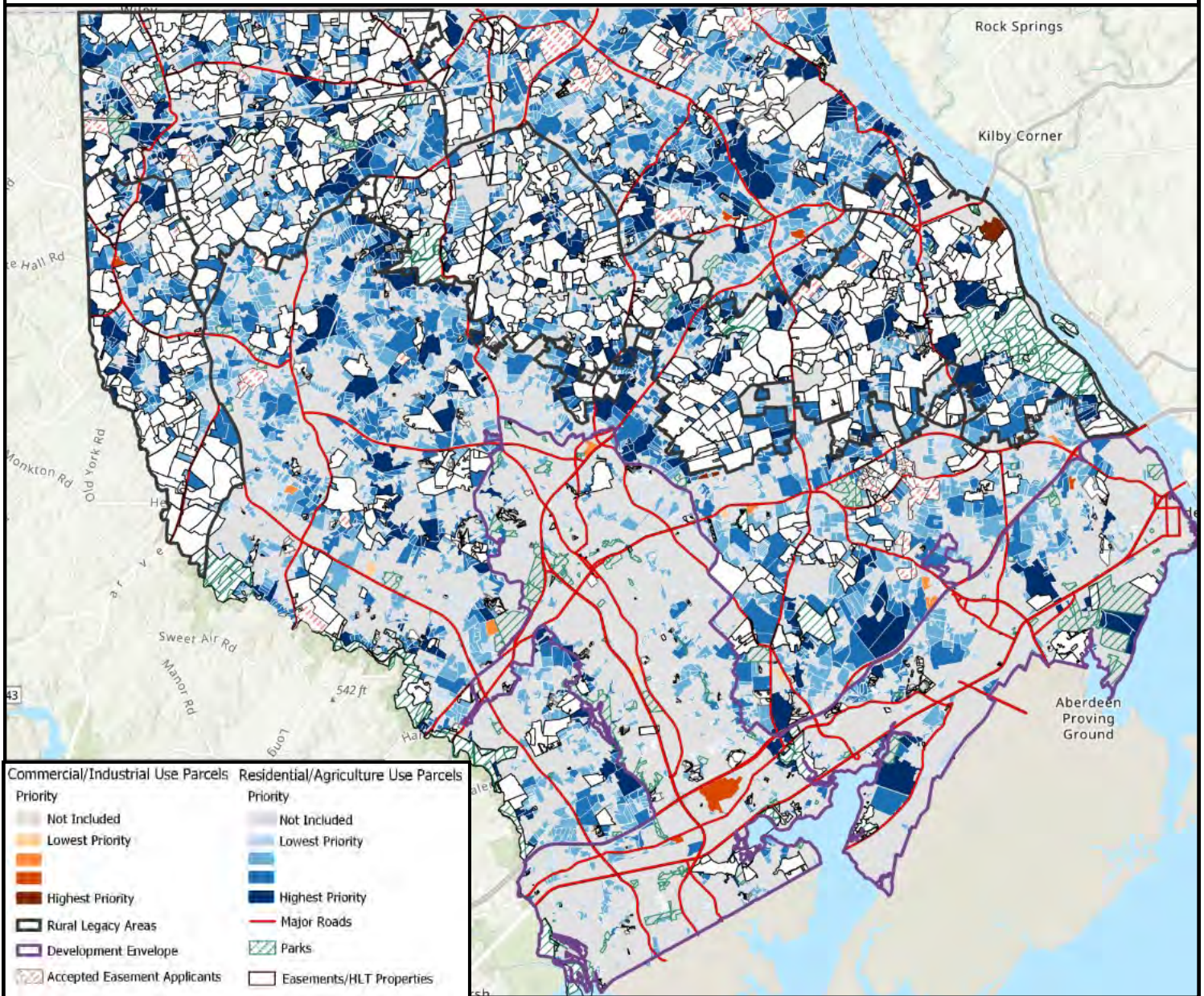
The map to the right is the result of many hours of research, discussion, meetings, analysis, and thought. It is a living document and should not be viewed as a static plan.

The map is a high-level overview designed to help guide our land protection activities. It is impossible to truly assess the values of an individual piece of land in this manner; but, it is a useful starting point nonetheless. HLT will continue to evaluate opportunities with on-the-ground site visits and landowner consultations.

Thank you to the HLT Lands Committee (Dan Krug, Sam Martin, Charles Day, Glenn Dudderrar, and H. Turney McKnight) for their thoughtful participation. A special thanks to Bill Amoss, of Harford County Planning & Zoning his time and expertise.

HLT Strategic Land Conservation Map

Version 1.0 (September 2018)



This map is intended as a high-level guide and should not be used as an indication of where HLT will or will not deploy resources now or at any point in the future. Contact the HLT Office at info@harfordlandtrust.org or (410) 836-2013 for more information.



HLT is looking for energetic, passionate members to join our Board of Directors. Our expectations are simple:

- Be an active HLT member and contributor
- Commit to a three-year Director term
- Attend 10 meetings per year and participate in HLT events
- Join a committee—Finance, Development, Fundraising, Land, Outreach, and Governance

Interested? Contact us at info@harfordlandtrust.org or (410) 836-2103 for a Director Application.

Stancills and HLT Partner to Expand IWLA's Bosley Conservancy

HLT members Terry and Regina Stancill contacted HLT about a small property on the north side of Otter Point Creek in late 2016. The Stancills, of Darlington, owned an undeveloped commercially zoned 3.77 acre parcel on Route 40 in Edgewood and were interested in donating it to HLT.

Although Edgewood is predominantly urban, it contains an extensive wetland system, including the Stancill parcel. HLT quickly noted that the property, known as Ha Ha Cove, had previously been identified by the Chesapeake Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve at Otter Point Creek for its important role connecting the freshwaters of Ha Ha Branch to Otter Point Creek and the larger Bush River.

Ha Ha Cove is adjacent to the 250-acre Melvin G. Bosely Wildlife Conservancy, owned and managed by the Izaak Walton League of America (IWLA) Harford County Chapter. It is also very near to the Anita C. Leight Estuary Center, which HLT helped to expand in 2001.

HLT's long-term stewardship responsibilities are a significant consideration for the organization when we consider accepting a donated property. The real work begins only after a property has been preserved.

In the case of Ha Ha Cove, it made the most sense for the property to be managed by IWLA given their ongoing stewardship of the Bosley Conservancy and Otter Point Creek. The Stancills agreed and moved ahead with donating the property to IWLA in mid-2018.

HLT and the Maryland Environmental Trust (MET) are now working with IWLA to amend their existing conservation easement to include Ha Ha Cove as well as another 20-acre parcel already owned by IWLA. These inclusions will expand the permanently preserved property owned by IWLA Harford County Chapter to approximately 275 acres of contiguous land in Otter Point Creek.

Thank you to Terry and Regina Stancill for their commitment to land preservation and their generous donation of Ha Ha Cove. We are also grateful for our partnerships with IWLA and MET, without which this project would not have been possible.



Top: Ha Ha Cove looking south towards the Bush River in winter.
Bottom: IWLA Harford County Chapter sign in Otter Point creek marsh. (Photos by Kristin Kirkwood)

Show your support for Harford County land preservation with an HLT hat! Only \$20.



Monk's Creek Headwaters Permanently Preserved with Easement



Late spring at HLT's Monk's Creek Preserve on Willoughby Beach Road in Edgewood. (Photo by Kristin Kirkwood)

In June, HLT completed the permanent preservation of 61 additional acres on Willoughby Beach Road in Edgewood with a conservation easement donation to the Maryland Environmental Trust (MET).

The property, known as Monk's Creek Preserve, is across the road from HLT's 104-acre Otter Creek Preserve, which we also protected with a conservation easement donation to MET in late 2017. The initial Monk's Creek property was sold to HLT by the family of Bob Ward, a Harford real estate developer, in 2013 at a discounted sales price. HLT later purchased three smaller "infill" parcels from Upper Chesapeake Hospice House, Gail and Eugene Stewart, and Anna and Robert Koscielski, with funding from Aberdeen Proving Ground's (APG) Army Compatible Use Buffer Program.

The property hosts one of the two headwaters of

Monk's Creek that flows through APG to the Bush River. This tract of deciduous woodlands contains many vernal pools, some the size of small ponds, that provide breeding and feeding habitat for a large number of amphibians, reptiles, invertebrates, and waterfowl. The property is also habitat for many bird species requiring large woodlands to survive, and is known to support species such as Ovenbird, Red-eyed Vireo, Scarlet Tanager, Acadian Flycatcher, Hairy Woodpecker, and Kentucky Warbler.

"Acquiring these parcels took the cooperation of four landowners, funding by the U.S. Army, and generous donations of our members," Harford Land Trust Executive Director Kristin Kirkwood said. "We value our strong partnership with the Maryland Environmental Trust and look forward to continued collaboration."

SAVE • THE • DATE

8th Annual Harford Land Trust

Harvest Moon Dinner & Auction

Saturday, October 19, 2019 • Bel Air Armory



Kayak Poker Run draws 100



Over 100 people participated in the Harford Land Trust's Ben Boniface Kayak Poker Run from Flying Point Park on Saturday, July 7. Paddlers enjoyed a 3-mile circuit in Otter Point Creek, collecting playing cards at five stops on publically and privately preserved land. Stops included the Bosely Conservancy, owned by the Izaak Walton League of America – Harford County chapter, the Anita C. Leight Estuary Center, and other properties preserved by the Harford Land Trust.



Now in its seventh year, the land trust hosts the event in partnership with the Ben Boniface Memorial Fund. The event encourages enjoyment of Harford County's many waterways through kayaking, canoeing, and standup paddling. Proceeds support the Harford Land Trust's mission of conserving open space and natural resources in Harford County. In prior years, the land trust has hosted the event on Broad Creek near Whiteford and on the Chesapeake from Tydings Memorial Park in Havre de Grace.



The event was followed by a lunch and awards ceremony at Harford County's Flying Point Park in Edgewood. Top prize winners included Russell Jacobson, Alan Walsh, and Jennifer Bieschke.

The event was made possible through generous sponsorship and support from the Ben Boniface Memorial Fund, Jones Junction, the Office of Harford County Executive Barry Glassman, Klein's ShopRite, Lassen, Marine & Webster, Harry and Eileen Webster, Autumn Sky Outfitters, H. Turney McKnight, Mid-Atlantic Farm Credit, Harford County Parks & Recreation, and the Anita C. Leight Estuary Center.

From top: Ben Lloyd, Bethany Boniface, Barb Boniface, Billy Boniface, and Kristin Kirkwood; Paddlers finish at Flying Point Park; Bob and Susan Hood; Paddlers cross the Bush River. (Photos by Jean Kirkwood)

OUR MEMBERS ARE THE HEART OF EVERYTHING WE DO.

Thank you to the many members and donors who **contributed between April and October 2018.**

We strive to ensure that our records are accurate and to properly acknowledge all donors. Please contact us if you see that we have made an error or omission.

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Harford Land Trust, Inc.
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Bel Air, MD 21014

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Harford Land Trust is a 501 (c) (3) charitable organization. A copy of our current financial statement is available upon request by contacting HLT. Documents and information submitted to the State of Maryland under the Maryland Solicitation Act are available from the Office of the Secretary of State for the cost of copying and postage.

FOREST & FARMLAND PRESERVATION PROGRAMS

Eligibility & Benefit Information for Landowners

Saturday
November 17, 2018
8:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Harford Community College
Chesapeake Center
401 Thomas Run Road, Bel Air

Light refreshments provided



FARM CREDIT
MIDATLANTIC



If you own 25 or more acres of land in Harford County, or land contiguous with other preserved property ...

LEARN HOW YOU CAN:

- Receive potential tax-free payments and/or tax credits without selling your land
- Protect your forests and farmland from residential or commercial development in perpetuity
- Retain property ownership for future generations

Topics will include eligibility criteria, financial benefits, standard easement terms, programs, processes & timelines.