



Centre County Farmland Trust, 420 Holmes Street, Bellefonte, PA 16823

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Centre County Farm Trust Applauds Renewal of Conservation Tax Incentive

Congress has renewed the tax incentive for private landowners—especially working family farmers and ranchers—who protect their land with conservation agreement. The incentive, which had expired at the end of 2009, helped Centre County Farmland Trust (CCFT) work with willing landowners in our community to conserve 699 acres of productive agricultural lands and natural areas between 2006 and 2009.

Conservation-minded landowners now have until December 31, 2011 to take advantage of a significant tax deduction for donating a conservation agreement to permanently protect important natural or historic resources on their land. When landowners donate a conservation easement to the Farmland Trust, they maintain ownership and management of their land. The easement does not interrupt or interfere in the control of the land for agricultural purposes. The enhanced incentive applies to a landowner's federal income tax. It:

- Allows farmers earning more than 50% of their income from the farm to deduct up to 100% of their taxable income for up to 16 years and up to the full value of their donated conservation easement
- Allows landowners earning less than 50% of their income from the farm to deduct up to 50% of their taxable income for up to 16 years and up to the full value of their donated conservation easement.

“Our whole community wins when thoughtful landowners conserve their land this way, protecting wildlife habitat, clean drinking water, scenic landscapes, recreational spaces, and productive agricultural lands,” said Robert Anderson, President of CCFT. “Conservation agreements have become an important tool nationally for protecting our watersheds, farms and forests, increasing the pace of private land conservation by a third – to over a million acres a year. CCFT joins America’s 1,700 land trusts and their two million supporters in thanking Congress for making this important conservation tool available,” he said.

In the Centre County region, the incentive is having a real impact. Just last fall CCFT assisted Peter and Carol Schempf in a new easement of their property located in Harris Township on Cedar Run Road. See the article in this issue celebrating this wonderful accomplishment on behalf of the Schempfs and all concerned residents of Centre County.

According to the Land Trust Alliance, the national organization that provides a voice for land trusts in Washington, DC, bills to make this incentive permanent have 274 House and 41 Senate co-sponsors from all 50 states, including majorities of Democrats and Republicans in the House. This legislation is supported by more than 60 national agricultural, sportsmen's, and conservation organizations.

Special points of interest:

- Conservation tax incentives extend until Dec. 31, 2011. Learn why you should act now!
- Schempf Farm Picturesque Property Preserved for the Ages
- Thanks & Congrats to Rep. Glenn Thompson!
- Guest Columnist, Nancy Silvas
- Dine at Mt. Nittany Inn to Benefit the Trust

FIND OUT IF A CONSERVATION EASEMENT IS RIGHT FOR YOUR PROPERTY

Attend the Public
Education Forum on
February 28. (details within)



Schempf Farm Preserves Picturesque Property for the Ages

Generous landowners who donate voluntary conservation easements to the Centre County Farmland Trust are inspired by many things: they love the Centre County region, they feel connected to their land, and they wish to leave a legacy for future generations. This inspiration is central to our work to permanently protect our valuable agricultural resources. The Farmland Trust is pleased and proud to announce the newest easement, secured in 2010, the 42 acre farm of Peter and Carol Schempf.

Pete and Carol generously donated their historical farm which is located in Harris Township 2.5 miles east of Boalsburg at the intersection of PA Route 45 and Cedar Run Road. This farm has been a part of the Schempf family since 1946 when Peter Schempf's father purchased the house and land. The original farmhouse is documented in Historic Homes of Centre County with an origin date of 1816. Plumbing wasn't added to the home until after the Schempf's purchased it. Current interior and exterior renovations to the homestead occurred in 2003-04.

Both Pete and Carol were raised

with an understanding and commitment to preserving green space for agriculture purposes. As the years have moved along they have watched as enormous amounts of nearby farmland have been sold off for residential development. Peter Schempf states, "Carol and I knew that we wanted to enable the property to remain in agricultural use while protecting its natural, scenic, historic and water resource values forever." After researching conservation options, the Schempf's chose to work with the Centre County Farmland Trust. "The Trust offered up front monetary, technical, administrative and moral support throughout the entire process. We were amazed by how Norman Lathbury, Executive Director of the Trust made everything so easy to understand and really walked with us through the six month proceeding."

This farm is rich in agricultural and natural resources and we are thrilled by the Schempf's commitment to maintain it now and for generations to come. Currently the farm produces corn and soybeans in prime agricultural soil on the western portion of the property. The farm also includes a sloped pasture and beautiful forest of oak, black walnut, lo-

cust and pines. Native shrubs of maple leaved viburnum, witch hazel and honeysuckle flourish in the borders.

This property is the headwaters for Cedar Run, a tributary to Spring Creek. Cedar Run is classified by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection as a High Quality Cold Water Fishery. In his published fishing guide book *Great Rivers Great Hatches*, author Charles Meck has noted that the Cedar Run tributary is a pastoral limestone stream that enters Spring Creek at Oak Hall and is the perfect spawning area for streambred native brown trout. In addition to the stream, the Schempf farmlands are the source of four natural springs that feed Cedar Run along with springs on the neighboring property.

Other wildlife commonly seen on the property include white-tailed deer, bear, red fox, ground hogs, minks, muskrats, geese, ducks, herons, kingfishers, rabbits, hawks, crows, gray and red squirrels, cardinals, blue jays, wood thrush, wood peckers and a variety of song birds. The woodlands and field areas provide cover for species adapted to more sunlight such as: blue birds, nut hatches, chickadees, and ruffed grouse and woodcock.

We know that the entire Farmland Trust membership joins us in saying thank you to Pete and Carol Schempf for their commitment to the quality of life

(cont'd Pg. 3)

**"Carol & I
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use...forever."
- Peter
Schempf**



Schempf Farm, cont'd.

provided by this land, and commitment to the continuing process of preservation of precious Pennsylvania farmland.

Donating a conservation easement is a major decision for all of our donors, however it is also an incredible opportunity to leave the legacy of preserving our precious farmlands for future generations. If you or someone you know are in-

terested in creating a legacy or might benefit from, as prolific author and farmer Wendell Barry once said, "The Gift of Good Land", please contact Norman Lathbury, Executive Director, Centre County Farmland Trust at 814-355-6791 or by e-mail at nklathbury@co.centre.pa.us. Equally important, if you value our farmlands and want to continue the work of preserving valu-

able farmland in Central Pennsylvania, please consider a donation to Centre County Farmland Trust or giving the gift of membership to others. For more information regarding a donation or CCFT membership please visit www.centrecountyfarmlandtrust.org.

Consider Volunteering!
See our website for details:
Centrecountyfarmlandtrust.org

Thank You & Congratulations Congressman Thompson!

Centre County Farmland Trust (CCFT) extends our thanks to Congressman Glenn Thompson for his support as a co-sponsor of H.R. 1831. Congress recently extended a tax incentive that allows the Trust to work with farmers, ranchers and other modest-income landowners to conserve their land and protect valuable natural and historic resources in *Centre County*. Our organization protects what makes this community so unique and we need to have this important incentive in our conservation toolkit. This extension will help thousands of family farmers, ranchers and foresters to afford the choice of conservation, protecting our clean water, special places, locally grown food, and rural livelihoods.

Donating a conservation easement is a lengthy and expensive process that many landowners simply won't begin if they don't know what the tax consequences will be. For this reason we are glad that with Representative Thompson's help bills to make the incentive permanent now have 274 House and 41 Senate co-sponsors from all 50 states, including majorities of Democrats and Republicans in the House.

We are also pleased to announce that in addition to retaining his seat on the House Agriculture and the House Education & Labor Committees, Congressman Thompson has also been named Chairman for the Subcommittee on Conservation, Energy & Forestry. In a recent release Congressman Thompson said, "I am honored that Chairman Lucas and my colleagues on the House Agriculture Committee have recognized my commitment to our nation's farmers and agricultural sector. This appointment will be great for the people of the 5th District and Pennsylvania, as I will have more input toward the issues affecting our lives on a daily basis – from the Commonwealth's family farms to Marcellus Shale, to the Allegheny National Forest and Chesapeake Bay Watershed."

The jurisdiction of the Conservation, Energy & Forestry Subcommittee will include soil, water, and resource conservation; the small watershed program; energy and bio-based energy production; rural electrification; and forestry in general. It is a wonderful privilege for our state of Pennsylvania to have a leader who is seen as both knowledgeable and concerned about the important issues being faced in these areas by our coun-

try today.

On issues of Agriculture, Committee Chairman-Elect Frank Lucas of Oklahoma stated: "Our Subcommittee Chairmen have demonstrated a commitment to ensuring the success of American agriculture and rural economies. They are ready to join me in addressing the challenges that farmers, ranchers, and small businesses face across rural America. The next year will be an exercise in educating our freshmen members on both sides of the aisle, providing oversight of the administration, and building a strong working relationship as we prepare to reauthorize the farm bill in 2012."

THINK ABOUT IT...

During the five year period 2002-07, Centre County lost 67 farms totaling 16,670 acres. This is more than 9 acres of farmland a day lost to development!

Source: 2007 Census of Agriculture

PRESERVE YOUR LAND FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

Learn how it just got easier.

- WHAT:** A public education forum on conservation tax incentives sponsored by Centre County Farmland Trust
- WHEN:** Monday, February 28 at 7:00 PM
- WHERE:** The Grange Administration Building (adjacent to Grange Fair Gate 2 at the corner of Kurtz Street and Hoffer Avenue in Centre Hall)
- WHY:** Congress recently passed legislation extending the increased tax incentives for private land conservation, making it easier and more economical for average Americans to conserve their land and natural resources for future generations. Unless Congress acts, this incentive will expire December 31, 2011, so landowners must act fast. This forum will explain the incentive structure and inform you of options to preserve your land.
- WHO:** A variety of speakers will present information and benefits to this opportunity for conservation of valuable Centre County farmland.
- COST:** FREE – but space is limited!
- RSVP:** Contact Norm Lathbury at Centre County Farmland Trust at 814-355-6791 or by e-mail at nklathbury@co.centre.pa.us to reserve your space at the Forum.

NEW BOARD MEMBERS ANNOUNCED

Centre County Farmland Trust is led by a Board of Directors who are volunteers who care deeply about farm conservation and preserving the natural beauty of the land we call “Home”. We are proud to announce the members of the 2011 Board of Directors. Join us in gratitude for their service!

Bob Anderson
Bill Beck
Brian Burger
Herb Cole
Bob Eberhart

Larry Harpster
Larry Hutchinson
Emily Landis
Norm Lathbury
Roland Leach

George Moellenbrock
Anna “Mickey” Peters
Lynda Powell
Peter Schempf
Caitlin Smith

Get involved with the Trust and meet new friends who share your passion for preserving Centre County’s landscape and cultural heritage. There is something for everyone and we welcome your input! Contact George Moellenbrock at gxm3@psu.edu or at 814.364.9528.

PATTERNS ON THE LAND

Guest Columnist Nancy Silvas, Co-Owner, Mt. Nittany Inn

Patterns.....I first learned about patterns from my mother. She made most of my clothes during my childhood in South Florida. I was intrigued how the tissue paper pinned on the fabric gave her guidelines to cut, sew and create something useful. When growing up in Florida I would go to the beach when I needed inspiration. Now, in Happy Valley, I go to a table by the window at the Inn. Patterns of color create geometric shapes of squares and rectangles. Designs change with each season, as shades of brown, green, orange and red provide a palette of interest to the eye. The view of Penn's Valley from our tables at the Inn is a rare one. I've never seen anything like it. What makes it so special? The patterns... patterns formed by land when crops are planted evenly in rows to produce foods useful to man.

Corn, beans, soybeans, cows, horses and sunflowers, all take their special place in the patterns. Black cows [often labeled as "bears" by Inn patrons] often graze under power lines

below the Inn, entertaining restive kids and visitors from out of town as they await their meals.

Feeling sometimes frustrated with challenges the Mt. Nittany Inn faces, a look from my window at the Inn reminds me of those with different challenges, many far more difficult than mine, yet some similar. Sunshine, rain, pests and the economy....while they affect farming of crops, most affect our restaurant business as well. As I ponder at the view, I am reminded why the Mt. Nittany Inn exists there. Almost a century ago, Mr. M.E. (Pete) Coldron built a platform in 1919 from which he sold crackers and Cokes to motorists traveling over the mountain. Often, their radiators overheated and they pulled over for a rest and to take in the amazing view! As they say, the rest is history!

The Mt. Nittany Inn wouldn't be what it is today without the value we receive from what farming families have created and maintained for many

years. It is the valuable, picturesque landscape we enjoy atop Mt. Nittany that provided perseverance after fires to rebuild twice and reopen in tough economic times. It is our hope that the beautiful "patterns" in the landscape from our vantage point will continue to be available for generations to enjoy long after we're gone. Oh.....and if you need any fresh "inspiration", come on up and take in our view!

Nancy Silvis is a co-owner of the Mount Nittany Inn and has been a resident of Centre County since 1982. In addition to being a pharmacist, Nancy currently volunteers her time on the State Theatre Board, WPSU Board, and co-chairs the WPSU Wine Celebration, volunteers in the CVIM pharmacy, and is the former Celebrations Chair for the Fourth Fest. Nancy has generously offered the fundraising opportunity below and we sincerely hope you will support the Trust by dining at the Inn in the coming weeks



Indulge in Great Food, Drink & the View to benefit the Centre County Farmland Trust

Centre County Farmland Trust and the Mt. Nittany Inn have joined for a wonderful fundraising opportunity. And appropriately so, no where else can you get a more picturesque view of the agricultural quilt of Centre County than atop Centre Hall Mountain at the Inn. Present this flyer when you dine at the Mt. Nittany Inn anytime between Wednesday, January 26 - Wednesday, February 9. When you do, 15% of the food and beverage check before taxes and gratuity will be donated to the Trust. Best of all, there is no limit to the number of times you can dine to benefit the Trust. So spread the word, pass out copies of this flyer and come enjoy the view and food at the historic Mt. Nittany Inn!

Mt. Nittany Inn is located at the summit of the Centre Hall Mountain with a breathtaking view of Penn's Valley. The Inn is open for lunch, dinner and Sunday Brunch the first Sunday of the month. The Inn is closed on Mondays during the winter. Reservations are recommended but not required. Come Dine "Above It All!"

Mt. Nittany Inn

559 N. Pennsylvania Avenue, Centre Hall, PA 16828 ~ 814-364-9363
View menus on line at mtnittanyinn.com.



**Centre County
Farmland Trust**

**420 Holmes Street,
Bellefonte, PA 16823**

Phone: 814-355-6791
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Visit us at:
www.centrecountyfarmlandtrust.org

**Saving farms, preserving our
common ground. Supporting
our heritage. Enriching our
agricultural community.**



Farmland Preservation is at a critical juncture. Express your concern about preserving our agrarian heritage and landscape for generations to come by joining Centre County Farmland Trust. Consider the gift of membership for relatives and friends or memorialize those you love with a tax deductible donation. Visit our website for membership levels and donation information: www.centrecountyfarmlandtrust.org.

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