



Landscapes

2022

Land Trust Helps Protect Key Shepherdstown Battlefield Property From Development

With the help of the Land Trust of the Eastern Panhandle, a key 121 acres of the Civil War Shepherdstown Battlefield is being protected forever from becoming the housing development that was once planned for.

The land, which was then known as the Osborne Farm and more recently has been known as Far Away Farm, lies at the center of the advance by Confederate forces as they successfully repelled the Union troops that had followed them across the Potomac River after the Battle of Antietam in September 1862.

The American Battlefield Trust acquired the 121 acres November 30, using funds from the National Park Service’s American Battlefield Protection Program, the West Virginia Outdoor Heritage Conservation Fund, the Shepherdstown Battlefield Preservation Association and its own donors. The property will be transferred to the Jefferson County Historic Landmarks Commission, with the Land Trust of the Eastern Panhandle to hold a conservation easement protecting the land from ever being developed – a requirement for the American Battlefield Protection Program funding.

Preservation efforts over the past 16 years had already protected almost 400 acres of the battlefield: 43 acres owned by the Jefferson County Historic Landmarks Commission (including the land where Confederate and Union forces landed on the south bank of the Potomac) and 350 acres covered by conservation easements held by the Land Trust of the Eastern Panhandle and the Jefferson County Farmland Protection Board.

But the 120 acre Far Away Farm was always the largest and most central parcel of undeveloped land in the battlefield. Formed in 2005, the Shepherdstown Battlefield Preservation Association repeatedly went to court to oppose plans to develop the property with 152 houses.

As those court cases dragged on, the Land Trust together with the Farmland Protection Board negotiated conservation easements on two key, privately owned parcels totaling 59 acres north of Far Away Farm, protecting them from any further development. And, in 2013 the Jefferson County Historic Landmarks Commission, with the help of the American

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Scenic 20 Acres Protected

River Road has always provided some of the best scenery in Jefferson County, and some of that just got preserved forever with closure of a conservation easement on an open 20 acres about midway between the Potomac River and Moler’s Crossroads.

Neal and Alice Barkus placed the parcel under easement with the Land Trust of the Eastern Panhandle on December 14, protecting the views it provides looking off River Road to the east. Neal said “It is a beautiful piece of property. We just didn’t want this place to be degraded and now the Land Trust will see to its protection into the future.”

A future house on the property will be restricted to one corner, with no structures allowed in the balance of the acreage. The land is currently planted with grass for hay, but it could be used for other agricultural purposes

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Legacy Fund Update

It is with overwhelming gratitude that we share a 2022 update on the Land Trust's Legacy Fund. Whether you are a founder, past board member, long-term or new donor, we celebrate your commitment! Your donations to date have assisted us in making great strides towards the overarching goal of fiscal responsibility through building long-term, sustainable revenue. Our Legacy Fund can be used as a tool for offsetting costs to land owners in establishing conservation easements. It also helps lay the groundwork for inclusive outreach to a wide array of landowners and in doing so, builds a legacy – your legacy - to Conserve Land, Water and Open Space – Forever.

This summer the Eastern West Virginia Community Foundation (EWVCF) selected

the Land Trust to participate in a matching fund campaign. As a result, many of you made early and extra donations to the Land Trust's Legacy Fund. Our goal was \$25,000.00 and through your generous and early donations we exceeded that goal!

Many of those donations were in memory and honor of special individuals or groups who have made a difference in the conservation of land, water and open space in the Eastern Panhandle of WV. We want to say a special thank you to those early donors and also share their notes regarding the individuals or groups they chose to dedicate in their Legacy Fund donations in honor or in memory (see below).

The Land Trust's Legacy Fund, an Agency Endowed Fund with the Eastern West Virginia

Community Foundation (EWVCF) was established in 2020 to help us save for the future needs of the Land Trust. The Land Trust's Legacy Funds are invested both for long-term growth and income, helping to grow the funds you have so generously donated. We hope all our friends and partners will continue to help grow this fund so it can benefit future landowners and protect and grow conservation easements through a growing source of sustainable revenue.

We will keep working with the EWVCF to wisely invest your donations in the Legacy Fund of the Land Trust – it is **Your Legacy, Your land, Your water and Your open space – Forever!**

Will you join this early group of donors and help us keep the Legacy growing?

2022 Matching Land Trust Legacy Fund Challenge Donors

Please note the special honorary and memorial donations that support our mission.

Mrs. Margaret Biggs

Charles (early Board member) and Margaret Biggs established the second Easement in 1998. Their support continues to this day.

Wayne Braunstein and Dannie Wall

Long-time friends and dedicated donors.

Linda Benedict Colvin

In Honor and Loving Memory of Dr. Mark Benedict. A past Board member, whose work on land conservation and preserving ecosystems, is important today in light of global climate change.

Richard Conard

A long-time friend and dedicated donor for over two decades.

Ron and Cindy Gunderson

Ron is a past board member, and they provided the first donation to the Legacy Fund Challenge.

Don and Kathryn Henry

Long-time friends and dedicated donors.

Georgia Jeppesen and Skylar Benedict

In Honor of the Land Trust Founders.

Robert H. Poole

A long-time friend and dedicated donor for over a decade.

Bonnie and Bill Stubblefield

In Honor and Memory of the Founders of the Land Trust and the first three Conservation Easement Holders.

- In 1997 Nancy McMurry established an Easement on 70 acres of the Harlan Spring Farm (Land that had been in the Harlan Family for three centuries).
- In 1998 Margaret and Charles Biggs, established an Easement on 30 acres in Morgan County, having continued to add additional land. The Easement borders the Sleepy Creek Wildlife Management Area.
- In 2000 Judy and William Belton, (early Board member) established an Easement on 120 acres in Morgan County, protecting a flyway for migratory birds.

Michael and Susan Whalton

In Honor of the "Land, the Life It Supports, and All the People Who Are Trying to Save It". Long-time friends, dedicated donors and easement holders in Berkeley County. Susan is a past board member.

Martha S. White

In Honor and Memory of Pep White and Derek White, who valued the landscape and the importance of trees.

Note: For more information on the Land Trust's Legacy Fund, or Estate Planning to leave a gift to the Fund, contact Michael Whalton, Executive Director of the Eastern West Virginia Community Foundation. He will be glad to talk with you about the variety of options available for donors. www.EWVCF.org (304) 264-0353.

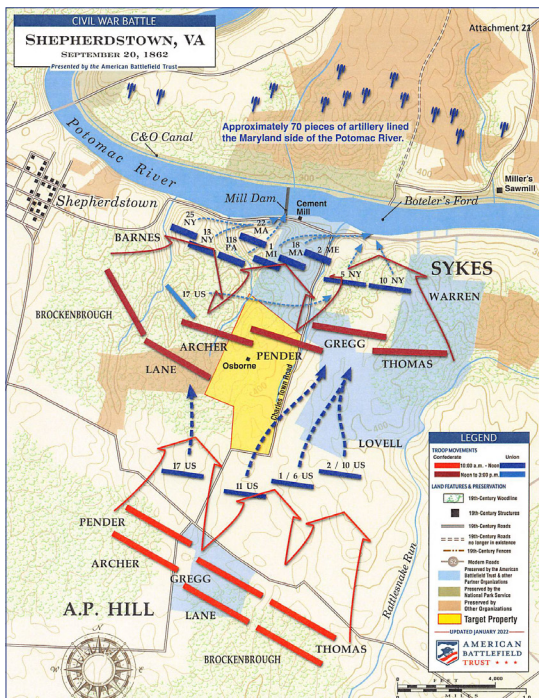
BATTLEFIELD,
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Battlefield Protection Program, the American Battlefield Trust and the Shepherdstown Battlefield Preservation Association acquired the first parcel along the river itself, protecting the southern side of Packhorse Ford, where General Lee's forces landed after crossing the Potomac on the night of September 19, 1862, and Union forces arrived in pursuit. The Land Trust holds the conservation easement on that land, which with additions in subsequent years, grew to 19 acres.

More recently, the Jefferson County Farmland Protection Board obtained a conservation easement on 278 acres on the east side of Trough Road, and the Jefferson County Historic Landmarks Commission acquired 24 acres next to that property. The Land Trust holds easements on another 52 acres in the study area of the battlefield, just outside its core.

While the 625 casualties in the Battle of Shepherdstown pale in comparison with those in the Battle of Antietam, the fighting was sharp, with one inexperienced regiment from Pennsylvania suffering 269 losses. Historians consider the battle as persuading Confederate General Lee not to try a second invasion of Maryland that year and Union General McClellan not to try further pursuit of Lee in what was then Virginia. And, of course, McClellan was fired by President Lincoln not long afterwards.

The Jefferson County Historic Landmarks Commission hopes that ultimately both the Far Away Farm property and the battlefield parcels already owned by the HLC will become part of Antietam National Battlefield Park – an action that requires congressional approval. Adjoining privately owned land, even if already under a conservation easement, can only be added with the consent of the property owners.



PROTECTED ACRES, *from page 1*

under the terms of the easement.

With this donation, the Land Trust holds 51 easements, protecting 4,857 acres in Jefferson, Berkeley and Morgan counties. Under such easements, the landowner or landowners continue to hold title to the property but cannot develop it beyond what is allowed in the easement. The restriction on how it can be developed transfers with the property, so future owners are limited in what they can do with the property.

The Barkus' acquired the parcel in 2000, attracted by its location close to their home and by its scenic beauty. The soil of the parcel is of high quality according to the US Department of Agriculture rating system, making it valuable for continued use as farmland.

A nearby property was protected under a conservation easement of the Jefferson County Farmland Protection Board in 2019, opening the possibility of a concentration of preserved, scenic farmland along a popular bicycling route.

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News from the Land Trust of the Eastern Panhandle

YOUR PARTNER IN RURAL CONSERVATION

Our mission is to encourage people to preserve open space and rural landscapes in West Virginia's Eastern Panhandle. We use private, voluntary initiative and education to:

- Preserve the scenic beauty and historic character that have long made our region attractive to people;
- Promote a healthy, balanced local economy by preserving productive farmland and encouraging appropriate development;
- Encourage wise stewardship of the region's natural resources.

We are a private, non-profit, tax-exempt charitable organization incorporated in West Virginia in 1995. Our board is composed of individuals from a variety of backgrounds from Morgan, Berkeley, and Jefferson counties.

We meet monthly on Zoom.

Our vision is "Conserving Land, Water, and Open Space - Forever."

Board Members

- Grant Smith
- Larry Dean
- Barbara Humes
- Georgia Jeppesen
- Lucien Lewin
- Kevin T. McLaughlin
- David Plummer
- Bonnie Stubblefield

Land Trust of the Eastern Panhandle

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