



September 2011

A publication of GreenSpace Alliance

GreenSpace Connect is a digest of natural, recreational, and agricultural open space protection success stories from Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia Counties. These projects are made possible through the wise investment of state, county, local, and private funds. GreenSpace Alliance and our partner organizations are committed to the protection of green spaces as both a sound and strategic investment in our region's economic prosperity.

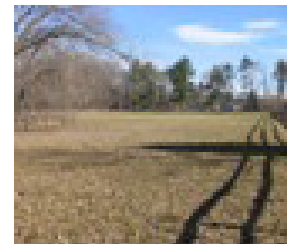
New Property on Pickering Creek Preserved

If the ideal summer getaway for a young child (who can't use electronic devices) could be devised, the White property in Chester County would be it. Pickering Creek, stocked with brown and rainbow trout, runs through woodlands and meadows waiting to be explored. If fish aren't your cup of tea, the whinny of a mare in the paddock might speak to you. At 15 acres, this property has been eyed for its development potential to become yet another subdivision. Fortunately Charles and Alyssa White have chosen to preserve the land. West Pikeland Township and Chester County have funded the easements, and Natural Lands Trust (NLT) holds the conservation easement that will restrict future development and preserve the land.



Charles and Alyssa White initially bought the property as an investment. Having never lived in a historic house or on such a large acreage, they decided to give the 18th century house a try. Charlie, a hunter, appreciates the outdoors and nature. When the time came to create their dream home, they decided to stay with their historic home. When builders approached them about subdividing the property, they realized something. "We didn't want the property chopped up and people living behind us," said Alyssa White. Neighbors were to play an important role in their move forward. Living across the street from the Binky Lee Preserve, they had been impressed with the Natural Lands Trust and the work they did there. Their neighbor, Curt Grogan, is President of the West Pikeland

Land Trust, which made it easy to work with that organization. Alyssa reported that the NLT and Township were great to work with, and credits the conservation easement with helping to keep the property intact and allowing them to be able to preserve the historic house and the land.



A lot of work went into making the conservation easements possible. The stage was set in 2007, when West Pikeland Township passed an Open Space Preservation Tax referendum, which raised funds dedicated to pay for land and easement purchases. West Pikeland Land Trust was appointed as the Open Space Advisors, and they designated the White property to be preserved with Open Space funds. Chester County provided matching funds of \$115,998 through their Preservation Partnership Program. Charles and Alyssa White cared enough about preserving the natural beauty of the site to agree to the limitations that selling their right to develop entails. Natural Lands Trust worked with the Whites to write up the conservation easement, which NLT now holds. Natural Lands Trust takes the ongoing responsibility to monitor the site to make sure the easement restrictions are being complied with.

This insures that the site, which contains 9 acres of woodlands and 5 acres of soils suitable for agriculture, will continue to be preserved. Also, the public will now have an easement that allows public access to Pickering Creek. The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission considers Pickering Creek a high quality trout stocking stream, and stocks it with trout for fishing. In addition a trail easement for hiking and horseback riding has been placed on the property. Its 30-foot width allows for the trail to

Continued on back page...



New Property on Pickering Creek Preserved (continued)

meander around trees. The site currently provides habitat for horses, as well as wild creatures.

"The White property along the Pickering Creek is within a large and growing corridor of protected lands," states Judy Thomas, Preservation Programs Coordinator of the Chester County Department of Open Space. "The property is adjacent to the Township's Pickering Grove Park, and also links on its eastern corner to Natural Lands Trust's Binky Lee Preserve. It is also adjacent to other privately owned properties with land trust easements. Most of the surrounding preserved land was also preserved with the help of County funds."

Though the trail easements on the White property are not a direct link to other trails, they may help provide the building blocks for future trails. Jack Stefferud, Regional Director of Land Protection for Natural Lands Trust, points out they are hoping to get a trail along Pickering Creek. Though they try to connect trails, he notes that he can only work with willing landowners. To develop the trails from lines on paper to constructed trails on the ground, they try to use Boy Scouts who are looking for projects. Along the same lines, Curt Grogan, President of West Pikeland Land Trust, said he would be working with township and regional groups working on parks, recreation, and trails to get the trails built.

The conservation of the White property is another victory in a long line of projects that have involved numerous groups working together, and a willingness on the part of property owners to preserve the beauty we enjoy today for future generations.

Find out more:

Natural Lands Trust

West Pikeland Land Trust

Chester County Open Space Program

Photo Credit: Natural Lands Trust

SUBSCRIBE TO THE GREENSPACE CONNECT

GreenSpace Connect is a digest from the GreenSpace Alliance, whose purpose is to highlight successful preservation initiatives and projects throughout Southeastern Pennsylvania. Please email dpitz@greenspacealliance.org or call (215) 545-4570 x 111 if you would like to receive an electronic copy or would like to suggest a preservation effort to highlight in an upcoming issue.



Mission: The GreenSpace Alliance promotes and advocates for the preservation and enhancement of recreational, natural and agricultural open spaces to preserve the quality of life in southeastern Pennsylvania.

GreenSpace Alliance | 1315 Walnut Street | Suite 532 | Philadelphia, PA 19107

Donna Pitz | dpitz@greenspacealliance.org | (215) 545-4570 x 111

**GREEN
SPACE**

This is a condensed print version of GreenSpace Connect. Read the full stories at:

www.greenspacealliance.org/digest

