

**MARJORIE L. AND ARTHUR P. MILLER FUND
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
FUND FOR OPEN SPACE AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

Across Chester County, local citizen groups are emerging as stewards of their local land resources while other organizations with an environmental focus are forming as issue groups, non-profit agencies, and municipal land trusts. Other non-profits serve as stewards for important parcels of land being used in creative ways for education and demonstration purposes. Each community has valuable resources that are worthy of being preserved—streams, wetlands, green space, areas important to wildlife, scenic vistas, and areas of historic or community significance.

The Chester County Community Foundation is now accepting applications for the Marjorie L. and Arthur P. Miller Fund. **One challenge grant of up to \$2,500** is available each year to support a non-profit organization which provides creative solutions to open space preservation and the wise use of environmental resources. The challenge portion of this grant can be met through such diverse means as new forms of in-kind donations and volunteer support and/or new grant dollars. The Miller grant can be used for the following:

- **The creation of a park, trail, or recreation area**
- **A public or school-based environmental education effort**
- **Research and publication about an important environmental issue**
- **Environmental enhancement and preservation of a significant site**
- **Volunteer and leadership development**
- **A demonstration project with wide-use application**

Successful projects will be those that:

- **Involve collaboration with environmental agencies & organizations**
- **Demonstrate high impact relative to the dollars expended**
- **Are of a lasting nature.**

Programs with a significant educational component are encouraged.

Proposals will be accepted until September 30. Upon review of the initial proposals, a site visit may be conducted of the finalists. The grant will be awarded in November.

Please use the attached Grant Proposal Format to apply for the grant. Please explain how you will meet the challenge component in your grant proposal narrative. Grant applications should be submitted no later than 5:00 P.M., **September 30** to: grants@chescofc.org. **Subject: Marjorie L. and Arthur P. Miller Fund Grant Application**

For more information, please contact Beth Harper Briglia, Vice President of Philanthropy Services at the Chester County Community Foundation at 610-696-8045 or at beth@chescofc.org. Thank you!



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

SUMMARY SHEET

Organization Name: French & Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust
Contact Bill Gladden, Executive Director; email: bgladden@frenchandpickering.org
Address: 511 Kimberton Rd; Phoenixville, PA 19460 Phone: 610-933-7577
Fax: 610-933-7751 Web Address: www.frenchandpickeirng.org Year Incorporated: 1967

Have you previously received the Miller Grant Award: Yes

(1) Year: Repurposed and closed in 2019 Amt Rec'd: \$ 2,500

Organizational Information:

Geographic Area Served (*If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County municipalities served*): North Coventry, South Coventry, East Coventry, East Vincent, Spring City, East Pikeland, Phoenixville, Schuylkill, Charlestown, West Pikeland, West Vincent, East Nantmeal, Warwick, Elverson, West Nantmeal, Upper Uwchlan

Annual # of Clients & Description of Population Served: 110,567 population in immediate service geography. Over 1.3 million engagements on Facebook. Expanded programming through online zoom programs on mission related topics reached roughly 1,000. We are expanding the number of people served at preserves through additional parking and trails. We are also working to introduce underserved populations to nature via scheduled guided visits.

Mission Statement: Preserve, steward and connect people to the land in northern Chester County.

Organization Description: French & Pickering Creeks Conservation is a community-based nonprofit conservation organization. Founded by Sam and Eleanor Morris in 1967, the organization has: ensured the permanent protection of more than 13,000 acres of farms, forests, fields, parks and preserves; created greenways and trails along French & Pickering Creeks (and is beginning to establish a trail network on land it owns and manages); and, continues to monitor and defend all protected lands.

Annual Budget \$875,582 budgeted (\$800,134 audited [deducted program expenses]). 6.75 FTE

86.77 % of budget for program expenses

17 # of Board Volunteers

10.58 % of budget for administrative expenses

75 # of Active Non-Board Volunteers

2.67 % of budget for fundraising expenses

hundreds # of Volunteer Hours (auction committee, iron tour, board, office [pre-Covid 19], preserve field workdays, etc.)

Top 3 funders: William Penn Foundation, Archie W. and Grace Berry Foundation, Blue Sky Foundation.

Proposal Information:

Grant Amount Requested: \$2,500

Description of Grant Purpose:

The grant funds would be used to fund a volunteer trail maintenance program and would be matched by French & Pickering funds, donated labor from volunteers, French & Pickering staff time, and donated value for machinery (post hole diggers, rock movers, etc.). The real impact greatly exceeds this as it lays the foundation for future interns, community engagement, and is described in greater detail in the proposal narrative.

**MARJORIE L. AND ARTHUR P. MILLER FUND
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE**

Please provide the following information clearly and concisely.

1. Organization's history, goals, key achievements and distinctiveness.

Founded by Sam & Eleanor Morris in 1967, French & Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust has effectively caused over 13,000 acres in northern Chester County to be permanently preserved through direct easements, acquisition, or purchase and transfer to public agencies (Chester County Parks, State Game Lands, French Creek State Park). French & Pickering is the only nonprofit land conservation organization working exclusively in the northern Chester county region.

2. Funding request:

A. Specific Chester County needs and issues addressed: *Increased trail access, increased opportunities to volunteer, foundation for future leadership development.*

B. Project impact: *The grant funds would provide the resources needed to kick off a volunteer trail maintenance program and would be matched by French & Pickering funds, donated labor from volunteers, French & Pickering staff time, and donated value for specialized machinery (post hole diggers, rock movers, etc.). A detailed list of projected expenses is attached, but the real impact exceeds the dollars and cents. It was just over 1 year ago that French & Pickering opened the Thomas P. Bentley Nature Preserve to the public. Since then, we have been working very hard to maintain the condition of the preserve, establish some new trails, and also open a second location up to the public roughly 1 mile away that we currently call the Great Marsh Uplands. We incurred unexpected costs of roughly \$15,000 to open that preserve but felt that the need for this additional nature access was/is critical during these challenging times of overcrowded parking lots and the need for mental health. We have had our share of struggles as the normal cadre of volunteers (company workdays, scout troops, and residents) were not available during the peak season (June, July, August) due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We did try to set up time slots for people to help us with some limited projects, but that proved to be too time consuming and we did not have the tools needed to match the management needs to equip the volunteers. Also, the crowding of outdoor spaces that occurred spurred us to open an alternate location. In short, we will need to reboot our volunteer program vision by supplying clean, safe tools onsite and – one of many blessings of trail work – have them spaced out yet organized. Our Resource Committee is in the process of establishing a trails subcommittee to serve as a cohort of trained volunteer overseers for the expanded and expanding trail network. These grant funds would allow us to purchase the tools needed to launch this initiative. I think it is important to share how this small, detailed grant request fits into the big picture as they truly will be the catalyst for public involvement, education, trail work, and volunteer/leadership development. The vision for 2020-2021 is to get this up and running, establishing the organizational capacity and “muscle memory” to provide even*

more public engagement opportunities. During the coming winter, we are going to develop the outline and work plan for a summer intern at the preserve. We estimate that will carry a cost of \$5,000-\$6,000 and we currently have a source for half of those funds. The concept is that, building on the foundation of trails and public access/benefit, the intern will learn wildlife ecology, biology, plant identification, help directly with maintenance and indirectly via organizing volunteer workdays. But it all starts with having the anchor of a quality trail system, volunteer engagement, and community connections that will be facilitated through this project.

C. Overall strategies to implement the organization's mission (or project). *We have always relied on volunteers, but the pandemic accelerated our recognition that we need to do even better with our volunteer base if we are to meaningfully advance our mission given the other issues that require our FTE time and attention. In true French & Pickering fashion, we did not let the challenges of the pandemic and associated fundraising challenges stop us from opening a second preserve to the public – so – now we REALLY need to find ways to engage volunteers!*

D. Why it is important to fund this now? *It is critical that we keep these preserves open to the public, meet maintenance standards, broaden our engagement in terms of volunteers and nature visitors, and lay the foundation for future interns/leadership development. Funding from the Marjorie L. and Arthur P. Miller Foundation would provide positive reinforcement to the board, staff, community and other funders.*

E. How do you intend to meet the challenge component of this grant? *We will meet the challenge component through donated labor, equipment, and cash from a private benefactor.*

3. Timetable, with anticipated outcomes and their relevance to the nonprofit's mission

The proposed timeline is 10 months. There will be opportunities to use several of the items this grant would fund in 2020. I expect we would begin to execute on the grant project immediately with completion by or before summer of 2021.

4. How impact and results will be demonstrated.

Seeing this generate the positive momentum needed to attract funding and interest in a June-August intern is the ultimate goal. Interim measures of success are timely acquisition and deployment of the tools purchased and their use through volunteer workdays. The ongoing condition of the trails being maintained as needed to create a wonderful experience throughout an entire calendar year with a rhythm of volunteer engagement will be another. Visitation and increased operating donations as well as donations for things like interpretive signs and benches are also potential measures of success. Hopefully we hit all our targets, gather in person, and have a wonderful celebratory visit and walk along the trails!

