

**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](mailto: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](mailto:beth@chescofc.org). Thank you!

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

**SUMMARY SHEET (One page only) Note: If Philanthropy Network Common Grant Application is used, this Summary Sheet MUST accompany application. Please visit our website at [www.chescocf.org](http://www.chescocf.org) to obtain an electronic version of this application.**

**Date:** 9/30/2020

**Contact Information:**

Organization Name: Green Valleys Watershed Association  
 Address: 1368 Prizer Road, Pottstown, PA 19465  
  
 Phone: (610) 469-4900  
 Web Address: [www.greenvalleys.org](http://www.greenvalleys.org)

Contact Name: Victoria Laubach  
 Contact Title: Executive Director  
 Contact E-mail: [victoria@greenvalleys.org](mailto:victoria@greenvalleys.org)  
 Fax: N/A  
 Year Incorporated: 1964

**Have you previously received the Miller Grant Award:** Yes  No

If "Yes", please indicate date and amount of each grant, if any, received from the Foundation:

(1) Year: 2006 Amt Rec'd: \$ 2500 (2) Year: 2007 Amt. Rec'd \$ 1000  
 (3) Year: 2013 Amt Rec'd: \$ 1000 (4) Year: 2018 Amt. Rec'd \$ 2500

**Organizational Information:**

*Geographic Area Served (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County municipalities served):*

Green Valleys primarily serves northern Chester County in the townships of North, East, & South Coventry, East and West Vincent, East and West Pikeland, Schuylkill, Tredyffrin, East Whiteland, Charlestown, Upper Uwchlan, East and West Nantmeal, and Warwick; and the boroughs of Elverson, Spring City, and Phoenixville.

*Annual # of Clients & Description of Population Served:*

We have approximately 1,000 members and serve the roughly 143,000-person population of northern Chester County; 5,000 individuals are engaged in our education programs annually. We work with students & teachers in the Owen J. Roberts, Phoenixville, and Pottstown School Districts; local government officials; and community volunteers.

*Mission Statement:*

To protect, preserve, and restore the natural watersheds of northern Chester County. We inspire, educate, and involve our community to make a difference for our generation and for generations to come.

Organization Description:

Annual Budget \$ <u>\$709,450</u>	<u>4</u>	# of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
<u>79</u> % of budget for program expenses	<u>10</u>	# of Board Volunteers
<u>20</u> % of budget for administrative expenses	<u>65</u>	# of Active Non-Board Volunteers
<u>1</u> % of budget for fundraising expenses	<u>avg 750 hrs/yr</u>	# of Volunteer Hours
<u>100</u> % total		

Top 3-5 funding sources:

**Proposal Information:**

Grant Amount Requested: \$ 2,500

Description of Grant Purpose: We are seeking funding to complete trail enhancements at our Welkinweir headquarters.

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

**Please provide the following information clearly and concisely.**

**Proposals of 1 or 2 pages are strongly encouraged.**

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

Green Valleys Watershed Association (GVWA) was founded in 1964 to protect the five major tributaries to the Schuylkill River in northern Chester County: French, Pickering, Pigeon, Valley Creeks, and Stony Run. GVWA has a 55-year history of working with residents, government, and community groups to protect the local environment through education, action, and restoration. Our focus has adapted over the years to address changing threats to our streams: from the closure of point source polluters like Knickerbocker Sanitary Landfill, to addressing non-point source pollution by working with municipalities to improve ordinances, and with institutions to improve stormwater capture with nature-based infrastructure.

We provide education to our community – individuals, school and scout groups, and municipal officials – about the importance of protecting and preserving our streams and natural resources to enable them to be better stewards of our local environment and empower them to act to protect those resources. We collaborate with other nonprofit organizations – from local, to regional, state and national, to strengthen our effectiveness, most notably through the Delaware River Watershed Initiative, which brings organizations across the basin together to reduce pollution, protect headwaters, and promote water-smart practices and policies.

**2. Funding request:**

In 1997 the organization took title to Welkinweir, the former home of GVWA founding members Everett and Grace Rodebaugh, to protect the property in perpetuity and to expand the organizations environmental education programming. It is the latter that we've been especially successful with – our environmental education programs have grown exponentially in the 22-years we've owned Welkinweir – summer nature camps for children ages 4 to 14, on-site interactive community nature programs for families and adults, in-school programming and on-site field trips for students in 1<sup>st</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades, Pennsylvania Master Naturalist and Schuylkill Water Stewards volunteer training programs for adults – with the property being integral to many of those programs.

We are committed to stewarding Welkinweir in a manner that supports and embodies our mission, provides an example to residents, and offers a tranquil retreat for visitors. We have taken numerous opportunities to add to the preserved land at Welkinweir to bring the original 162-acres up to the current 224-acres, to protect the property, the adjacent contiguous forests, and the Exceptional Value, wild trout stream that flow through and link the properties.

In November 2019, working with the experts from Penn Trails, we completed a Trail Plan that will link these property acquisition to the core Welkinweir preserve through a publically accessible trail system. Working closely with the Horse-Shoe trail Conservancy, we have prioritized the repair, re-routing, and improvements to the Horse-Shoe Trail (Trail) as it crosses the Welkinweir property. The improvements to the Horse-Shoe Trail at Welkinweir will comprise the following (see attached map):

1. Reroute the Trail onto the new Inner Loop Connector 1 trail (gold color). This switch-back section will break up the steep climb of the Trail at its most severe point and provide multiple water diversion features rather than allowing stormwater to continue flowing straight down the Trail, creating erosion, and entering into a tributary of Beaver Run within the Exceptional Value (EV) watershed of French Creek.
2. Repair the Trail where it merges with the west end of the new Outer Loop Trail (red color). This work will repair a badly eroded section of the Trail, disperse water flowing down the Trail, reducing run-off going into an EV stream, and improve the stream crossing.

Reroute the Trail onto the existing Blue Trail and then to the east leg of the new Southwest Loop Trail (orange color). The trail work will move the current Trail completely onto the Welkinweir property in this section, therefore

permanently protecting the Trail. The reroute would also move the Trail away from a long stretch of trail that is severely eroded and hazardous.

#### **A. Specific Chester County needs and issues addressed**

Chester County continues to be one of the fastest-growing counties in Pennsylvania, with associated development pressure as land is converted from open space to roads, buildings, and other impervious surfaces. Northern Chester County retains Exceptional Value and High Quality designated streams, unique in Southeastern PA, because of the amount of conserved forested land in the region. As a contributing property to that conserved land, Welkinweir, which is open to public, offers the kind of outdoor recreation that makes Chester County such a desirable place to live and is so important especially in 2020.

#### **B. Project impact (for project proposals)**

We have seen a tremendous increase in visitors this year as more people seek outdoor recreation spaces. There are many documented health benefits associated with being outside. Spending time in green spaces clearly benefits psychological, emotional and overall well-being of people, reducing stress, improving cognitive functioning and is associated with improved overall health, especially during stressful periods like pandemic shutdowns. Welkinweir, with its 55-acre arboretum and trails through the preserve, is well suited to maintaining social distancing rules.

#### **C. Overall strategies to implement the organization's project**

The requested funding would be used to bring a team of youth from the Appalachian Conservation Corp to Welkinweir to work with the volunteers from the Horse-Shoe trail Conservancy and PA Master Naturalists. They would work on repairing, re-routing, and improving the prioritized sections of trail identified in the Trail Plan prepared by Penn Trails.

#### **D. Why it is important to fund this now**

The increase in visitors we have seen this year is exacerbating the existing erosion issues on the trails. This project would address those issues. Currently one section of the Trail crosses a very steep section of private property where the owner keeps a number of large dogs outside – by moving this section of the trail onto Welkinweir, we will move the trail onto land that is permanently protected, on less steep land, therefore less prone to erosion issues, and make the trail more comfortable for visitors. The improvements will give visitors access to more trails with a variety of terrains.

#### **E. How do you intend to meet the challenge component of this grant?**

This project is enabling new partnerships and strengthening existing partnerships. The Appalachian Conservation Corp (ACC) is one of our new partners. The nonprofit ACC works to connect youth and young adults to conservation work, including trail construction and repair for improved public access, in the mid-Atlantic region, while building job skills and developing leadership experience in their teams. The volunteers at the Horse-Shoe Trail Conservancy have met with GVWA staff as we developed our conceptual trail plans and have secured funding from the Schuylkill Highlands mini-grant program toward this project. Our own volunteers, including a boy scout working on his Eagle project and our PA Master naturalist volunteers who assist in trail maintenance are eager to help implement this project.

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

October - December 2020 – funding efforts for the project continue.

November 2020 – all parties will meet at Welkinweir to review the work to be done.

April – June 2021 – repairs, re-routing, and improvements to the trail are being worked on.

July 2021 – all planned work is complete and visitors are enjoying improved trails through Welkinweir. The Horse-Shoe Trail Conservancy has permanently protected another portion of the 140 mile long Horse-Shoe Trail for the public to use and enjoy.

### **4. How impact and results will be demonstrated**

With so many residents responding positively to access to open spaces and trails during the pandemic and believing this access is important to their health and well-being, we expect to see a continued use of outdoor spaces well into the future. Implementing Trail improvements at Welkinweir with multiple partners is a positive impact for visitors now and well into the future.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

*Please attach the following support information:*

1. Copy of 501 (c) (3) federal tax-exempt letter
2. List of Board of Directors, with their affiliations
3. Most recent annual report and financial statement, audited if available
4. Itemized organizational operating budget with actual results for prior fiscal year and current fiscal year to date
5. Itemized project budget (if applying for project-specific grant)

Note: The Philanthropy Network Common Grant Application may be submitted with CCCF Summary Sheet.

Please visit our website at [www.chescocf.org](http://www.chescocf.org) to obtain an electronic version of this application.

E-mail applications are strongly encouraged.

***Please send completed applications to:  
Beth Harper Briglia, Vice President of Philanthropy Services  
Chester County Community Foundation  
28 West Market Street  
West Chester, PA 19382  
[grants@chescocf.org](mailto:grants@chescocf.org)  
(610) 696-8045  
THANK YOU!***