

**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 15. 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 15** to: [grants@chescocf.org](mailto:grants@chescocf.org). **Subject: Marjorie L. and Arthur P. Miller Fund Grant Application**

For more information, please contact Stephenie Stevens, Grants and Outreach Manager at the Chester County Community Foundation at 610-696-0501 or [steph@chescocf.org](mailto:steph@chescocf.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:**

### **Contact Information:**

Organization Name:

**French & Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust**

Address: **511 Kimberton Road, Phoenixville, PA 19460**

Contact E-mail: **bgladden@frenchandpickering.org**

Phone: **610-933-7577, ext. 116**

Web Address: **www.frenchandpickering.org**

Contact Name: **Bill Gladden**

Contact Title: **Executive Director**

Fax:

Year Incorporated: **1967**

***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: 2014    Amt Rec'd: \$2,500

(2) Year: 2015    Amt. Rec'd \$2,500

### ***Organizational Information:***

**Geographic Area Served:** The geographic impact of French & Picking Creeks Conservation Trust is vast. By protecting high-value watersheds including the Great Marsh, French Creek, Pickering Creek and the Schuylkill River, the direct impact of our work reaches from the Schuylkill Highlands to as far south as Wilmington, Delaware.

**Annual # of Clients & Description of Population Served:** Over 15 million people, almost 5% of America's population will benefit from our work. While all people residing in northern Chester County are the organization's direct target population, many more enjoy the benefits of land preservation, stewardship and programming. Chester County is a recreational, historic and cultural destination for people residing in neighboring counties and the natural resources transcend political boundaries. French & Pickering continues to remain locally focused while reaching out to a broader base within a neighbor based local approach.

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

**Organization Description:** French & Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust 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 13,150 acres of farms, forests, fields, parks and preserves; created greenways and trails along the French & Pickering Creeks and is beginning a trail network on land it owns and manages; and continues to monitor and defend all protected land.

Annual Budget \$844,858	<u>6</u>	# of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
<u>87</u> % of budget for program expenses	<u>18</u>	# of Board Volunteers
<u>10</u> % of budget for administrative expenses	<u>42</u>	# of Active Non-Board Volunteers
<u>3</u> % of budget for fundraising expenses	<u>400</u>	# of Volunteer Hours
<i>100 % total</i>		

**Top 3-5 funding sources:** William Penn Foundation, Berry Foundation, Blue Sky Family Foundation

***Proposal Information:***

**Grant Amount Requested:** \$2,500

**Description of Grant Purpose:** The Miller Grant funds would be used to launch "Preserve Pioneers", a volunteer trail building and maintenance program that would be matched by French & Pickering through donated volunteer hours, French & Pickering staff time, and donated value for machinery purchased entirely by applicant/French & Pickering. It was just over a year and a half ago that French & Pickering opened the Thomas P. Bentley Nature Preserve to the public. Since then, the organization has been working diligently to maintain the condition of the Preserve and establish new trails. French & Pickering also opened a second location to the public, roughly one mile away named the Great Marsh Preserve. Unexpected costs of roughly \$15,000 were incurred to open Great Marsh Preserve however the organization felt that the need for additional access to nature was and remains critical during these challenging times of overcrowded outdoor spaces and the need for improved mental health. French & Pickering is hopeful that with a grant from the Miller Fund, a well-run volunteer program through supplying clean, safe tools onsite for the needed trail work to serve both the preserves and, in the future, expand out into the community (with landowner permission and support) will be established. This program will lead to an increase in community engagement throughout northern Chester County and beyond. The Miller Fund Grant would be a catalyst for community access and involvement in the environment, environmental education, sustainable trail work and volunteer/leadership development.

**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**
- 2. Funding request:**
  - A. Specific Chester County needs and issues addressed**
  - B. Organizational impact (for general operating proposals) or project impact (for project proposals)**
  - C. Overall strategies to implement the organization's mission (or project)**
  - D. Why it is important to fund this now**
  - E. How do you intend to meet the challenge component of this grant?**
- 3. Timetable, with anticipated outcomes and their relevance to the nonprofit's mission**
- 4. How impact and results will be demonstrated**

**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:*

**[grants@chescocf.org](mailto:grants@chescocf.org)**

**(610) 696-8045**

**THANK YOU!**

## **History**

French & Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust was founded in 1967 by Sam and Eleanor Morris. The organization is recognized as a land conservation leader and has protected over 13,150 acres of farms, fields, forests and park lands. French & Pickering works collaboratively with individual landowners, local, county and state governments, and partner conservation organizations to ensure land preservation in northern Chester County watersheds, which contain some of the most scenic and environmentally sensitive lands in Pennsylvania.

## **Goals**

Land Preservation and Stewardship, Community Engagement, Public Access, Sustainability, Physical and Mental Health through Nature, Water Quality Improvements, Air Quality Improvements, Wildlife Habitat.

## **Key Achievements**

Founded in 1967, French & Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust has:

- \* Ensured the permanent protection of more than 13,150 acres of agricultural, natural, and park lands through donated and purchased conservation easements and public/private partnerships including additions to the State Game Lands, Warwick County Park, Brightside Farm Park (Charlestown Township) and French Creek State Park.
- \* Created greenways and secured more than 10 miles of trail right of ways along the French and Pickering Creeks.
- \* Continued to monitor and advocate for sound stewardship practices on all lands protected by French & Pickering conservation easements.
- \* Been accredited through the Land Trust Alliance, a designation awarded only to land trusts meeting the highest national standards for excellence and conservation permanence.

To help meet the increased demand for public access during the Covid-19 pandemic, French & Pickering expanded and enhanced public access to land that it owns. This increased public access was made possible in part with funding administered by the Community Foundation and the Chester County Commissioners. French & Pickering now seeks to further expand the network of trails and increase the number of programs to meet what appears to be a sustained increase of interest in nature:

- \* In September of 2019, French & Pickering opened its first publicly accessible preserve, the Thomas P. Bentley Nature Preserve. In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, French & Pickering opened a second 550 acre preserve, the Great Marsh Preserve in 2020 and tripled the parking capacity in 2021.
- \* In 2020 French & Pickering transitioned its Third Thursday Talks program to an online platform. These programs highlight locally- relevant environmental topics such as Owls, bird migrations, and invasive pests. Attendance regularly exceeds 100 with the most popular (so far) at 332.
- \* To date in 2021, French & Pickering has opened two new trails and has begun to establish additional trail opportunities at the preserves we own and manage.

## **Distinctiveness**

French & Pickering is the only community-based land trust working *exclusively* in northern Chester County and serves the community by preserving and restoring land, providing public access, creating awareness and appreciation of nature, and fostering a greater sense of community through lectures and programs. The organization has adapted to changing community needs through the COVID-19 pandemic and looks forward to meeting the present and future needs of our community.

## **2. Funding request**

### **Specific Needs and Issues to be Addressed**

French & Pickering desires to establish a Preserve Volunteer Corp but lacks the tools necessary for the program. If awarded, the grant funds would be used to purchase the tools to launch the inaugural year of the Preserve Pioneer Program. These tools are necessary to host volunteers who would assist in the construction and maintenance of quality trail systems within the two preserves, which total over 715 acres in our community and would create a safer and more welcoming environment to Preserve users. Additionally, the Preserve Pioneers Program would provide hands on opportunities for land management techniques which the volunteers could implement on their own properties.

### **Organizational Impact**

The outcome of expanded public access will allow for greater educational opportunities relative to wildlife identification/ecology, biology, plant identification, and water quality. Additional impacts of the Preserve Pioneers Program includes the maintenance of safe trail lengths throughout the Preserves and the expansion the trail network in coordination with the trails committee whereby allowing for increased visitation opportunities.

### **Overall Strategies to implement the Organization's Project**

Through the 54 years that French & Pickering has been working in northern Chester County many relationships have been formed. This opportunity would allow the organization to follow up on multiple partner opportunities with various local nonprofit organizations, civic service clubs, boy scout and girl scout troops, middle school and older clubs, as well as outreach through our social media accounts. Additionally, French & Pickering utilizes an online platform to manage volunteer sign ups and communicate the organization's volunteer opportunities to the population at large. French & Pickering's Preserve Manager will oversee the Preserve Pioneer Program with administrative assistance from the office staff.

### **Why it is Important to Fund this Now**

The need for additional access to nature for physical and mental wellbeing remains critical during these challenging times of overcrowded outdoor spaces. Fortunately, French & Pickering has a foundation of preservation from 54 years' worth of conservation work to rely upon in our time of need, which includes over 715 acres in our community owned by the organization. Many visitors already frequent the Preserves however French & Pickering does not currently have the resources necessary to improve their experience through proper trail maintenance and signage.

### **How French & Pickering will Meet the Challenge Component**

The grant funds would be matched by French & Pickering through donated volunteer hours, French & Pickering staff time, and donated value for materials purchased entirely by applicant/French & Pickering. The grant funding will be specifically used to purchase tools and \$1,500 will be used as donated match value for items including gasoline, oil, materials and staff time; approximately \$200 will be used to purchase trail markers and signs; and, \$800 will be used as a donated match value for volunteer hours.

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

French & Pickering's mission is to preserve, steward and connect people to the land in northern Chester County. As described above, the Preserve Pioneer Program speaks directly to all three legs of the organization's mission.

The anticipated timing of the Program Implementation is as follows:

1<sup>st</sup> Quarter: Draft Preserve Pioneer job description; create 2022 Preserve Pioneer work calendar; purchase tools; advertise program and have 1<sup>st</sup> work day.

2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter: Host work days and continue to promote

3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter: Host work days and continue to promote

4<sup>th</sup> Quarter: Host work days; continue to promote; analyze success of 2022 Program through participant surveys and organizational input; inventory condition of tools; and, plan for the 2023 Preserve Pioneers Program.

### **4. How Impact and Results will be Demonstrated**

A measure of success for the Preserve Pioneers Program launch is the total number of volunteers that sign up during the Grant Period. The Preserve Pioneer Program's goal is a minimum of 100 volunteer hours in group sizes that can be efficiently managed and that safely take full advantage of the equipment available. These outcomes will be measured through the total length of trails installed and/or maintained, the purchase and frequency of use of the tools and the installation of signage.