

PROTECTING THE FORESTS, FARMS, RURAL HERITAGE AND WATER QUALITY OF THE CACAPON AND LOST RIVERS WATERSHED

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INTERESTED IN PROTECTING YOUR LAND?

Conservation easements are flexible tools that meet the needs of landowners and protect land forever. Working in partnership with landowners, the Cacapon and Lost Rivers Land Trust listens carefully and ensures the goals of landowners are supported and the conservation values of the land are protected. Conservation easements offer peace of mind and through donated easements, tax deduction benefits. For more information contact Jennifer at jennifer@cacapon.org.

I want to thank the landowners and supporters who work side-by-side with us to protect land in this magnificent watershed. Our partnership means that our mission statement is just not words on paper. We are continuing to protect forests, farms, rural heritage and water quality in the Cacapon and Lost Rivers watershed. I like to say that protecting land is like one big bear hug with all the generations who made it possible and for all those who will benefit in the future.

This year I've been fortunate to work with several landowners to conserve their property. You can read more about their stories on pages 2 and 3. These landowners are using the flexibility of a conservation easement to protect their land in the way they want it protected. They want the peace of mind that comes with knowing their property won't be lost to building developments and asphalt. Dottie Eddis and her husband Lowell Hott who have long held an easement on their property to protect the original vision of their family's land share their story on page 2.

If you are interested in learning more about conservation easements, I'd enjoy talking with you about your land and your goals. Give a call at 304-856-1188 or send me an email at jennifer@cacapon.org.

At a recent meeting, the Cacapon and Lost Rivers Land Trust Board discussed how we can help more landowners protect their land. Of course, we all agreed that there's no more land to be made and there's no more urgent task than to ensure the land in this watershed remains protected, healthy and productive.

As the holiday season approaches, I hope you will consider a tax-deductible contribution to the Cacapon and Lost Rivers Land Trust to help protect what we all love about this watershed. Our work depends on the generous support of people like you.

Thank you and Happy Holidays!



Jennifer



HIGHLIGHTS FROM HOLLYHOCK FARM



Dottie Eddis, a Cacapon and Lost River Land Trust Board Member, and husband Lowell Hott, own Hollyhock Farm in Augusta. Dottie shares with our readers about the Farm.

Lowell's parents, Earl and Charlotte Hott, purchased the farm in the early 1940s. All they brought with them to their new home was a milk cow and a chifforobe. They were full time farmers and were hard workers. The first farm truck they bought was in 1964. We still have that truck. Although we stopped raising cattle and making hay, we value the importance of farming and undeveloped farmland and forest. We want to make sure that the original vision for this farm can remain in place and for the grasslands and forests to provide habitat for wildlife, especially songbirds. That's why we have a conservation easement – to protect this original vision.

One songbird species we care about is the cerulean warbler, a beautiful bird that has seen a steep decline because of habitat destruction – it's a species of national conservation concern. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has the **Cerulean Warbler Appalachian Forestland Enhancement Project** that provides technical and financial assistance to private, non-industrial forestland owners to help improve habitat for the warbler. We decided to do some forest management specifically directed at helping this species because what's good for the warbler is good for forest health in general. It's a win-win.

The NRCS developed a plan for us to open up some areas of the forest so that light could help jumpstart plant growth on the forest floor and understory which is really helpful to the cerulean warbler. We will also be doing a combination of fencing and cut-brush fencing to help keep the deer from

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Michael & Carrie Kline

LANDOWNER STORIES

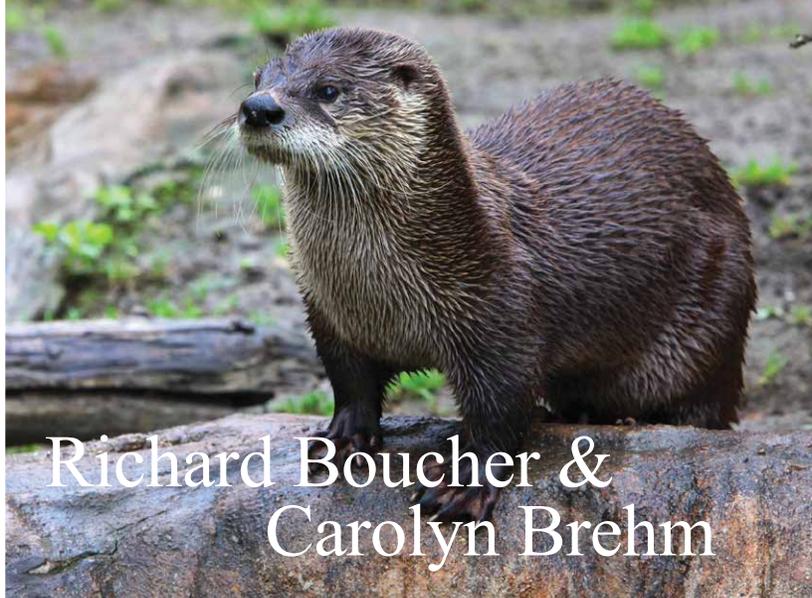
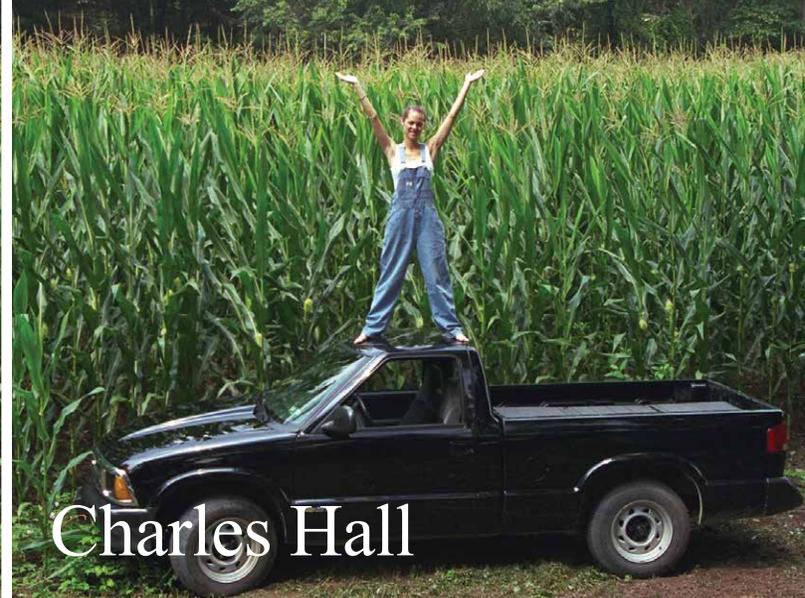
As regional folklorists, Michael and Carrie Kline are well-known for their efforts to preserve old music and folk tales that resonate with West Virginia's history (For more on their contributions go to www.folktalk.org).



They have permanently archived some of West Virginia's oldest and most compelling songs and oral histories. And now, with a conservation easement, they are doing the same for a 125-acre, fragile tract of forest land in Hampshire County. Their easement will protect the waters of Dillons Run, a native brook trout stream, along with other springs and a white oak-black gum swamp forest, considered rare and of high conservation significance by the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources. Many West Virginia species of greatest conservation concern including the cerulean warbler, wood turtle, and calopogon orchid (grass pink) will also be protected through this easement. "It was important to us to ensure a home for this abundant wildlife," Michael said. "We don't want to see this land chopped up into tiny parcels. It deserves to be protected forever." This property with a conservation easement is for sale: Contact kline@folktalk.org; 304-636-5444 for more information.

“It was important to us to ensure a home for this abundant wildlife. We don't want to see this land chopped up into tiny parcels. It deserves to be protected forever.” — Michael Kline





If you ask Charles Hall to tell you something about his land on Gibbons Run Road in Augusta, he's bound to tell you that his fields grow "the best corn in Hampshire County." He's proud of the productivity of his land and hopes that future owners will continue to participate in agricultural enterprises. With two-thirds of his property bordering the North River, Charles will also tell you that, "Landowners need to think about downstream. This is a river that ends up in the Chesapeake Bay, one of the most productive estuaries. As landowners, we need to remember that." Charles has owned his 115-acre property for more than forty years and is now putting a conservation easement on the property to protect wildlife, water quality and productive farmland. Adding to the numerous contributions Charles has made in Hampshire County to protect and retain the county's history, he's also permanently protecting another piece of history with this conservation easement. A former owner of the property, Dr. James Craik, was the friend and personal physician to President George Washington. The property is soon to go on the market waiting for someone who will appreciate a beautiful agricultural resource and a nature lovers' gem.



Black bear, coyote, bobcat, beaver, fisher, otter, mink, fox, turkey and deer. Richard and Carolyn's 114-acre property on the Cacapon River is teeming with wildlife. Adding to these delights are Kates Mountain Clover, an extremely rare plant, and the two-flower melic grass, another rare plant. Patches of columbine and other wildflowers grace the walking paths. "We keep finding more treasures," said Richard. Protecting the conservation values of this property in perpetuity was a family decision. "Our son and daughter also know how special this place is and they want to participate in ensuring we continue to be good stewards," said Richard. "We'll keep this land intact and healthy, not just for us, but for generations that will follow in our footsteps," added Carolyn. One of Richard's dreams is to someday restore the American chestnut. The conservation easement with the Cacapon and Lost Rivers Land Trust supports the forest management practices that will be needed. "I know it's a long shot but I'm willing to give it a try," said Richard.

“Landowners need to think about downstream. This is a river that ends up in the Chesapeake Bay, one of the most productive estuaries. As landowners, we need to remember that.” — Charles Hall

“We'll keep this land intact and healthy not just for us, but for the generations who will follow in our footsteps.” — Carolyn Brehm

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**HELP PROTECT
WHAT WE LOVE**

Please consider a tax-deductible contribution to help protect what we all love about the Cacapon and Lost Rivers watershed. Go to www.cacapon.org/donate or mail your generous contribution to Cacapon and Lost Rivers Land Trust, PO Box 58, Wardensville, WV 26851. Thank you!



Board members and guests at the November 2019 CLRLT Board meeting.

WHAT'S AHEAD...

Our 30th Anniversary Celebration! We certainly have a lot to celebrate in 2020 as we reflect on 30 years of protecting forests, farms, wildlife and water quality, and our rural heritage. Thanks to the vision and hard work of many people, especially Nancy Ailes the first Executive Director of the Land Trust, 14,000 acres of land are now permanently protected in the watershed. Throughout 2020, we will be celebrating all that makes this 680-mile watershed so unique. The Cacapon and Lost Rivers watershed is nationally recognized as one of the most ecologically beneficial tributaries to the Chesapeake Bay. Our work together goes a long way! We look forward to celebrating with you.

HOLLYHOCK FARM *continued from page 2.*

nibbling on young vegetation. Some of the expenses for the culling of trees and fencing are being shared by NRCS and we're grateful for that financial support.

Lowell and I consider ourselves lucky to live in a place where our individual decisions can have a huge impact. We feel fortunate to have partnered with the Cacapon and Lost Rivers Land Trust to help us protect our small treasure. We hope that our conservation easement will encourage others. Every parcel of undeveloped land in the community has the potential to remain a farm, forest, or wildlife habitat. We all need to protect what we love most about living here.



**SPECIES OF
CONCERN IN OUR
WATERSHED**

There are scores of species that need our land stewardship to survive. Here's just a few:



Woodcock



**Spotted
Turtle**



**Wild
Lupine**



**American
Kestrel**

**WOW
PHOTO CONTEST**

Help us celebrate the Wonders of Our Watershed (WOW) by entering your photo in the Cacapon and Lost Rivers Land Trust's 30th anniversary photo contest. Please go to www.cacapon.org for more information.