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For Immediate Release

**\$330,000 in Grant Funding to go toward County-Wide
Green Futures Program**

December 8, 2005 Lederach, PA – The **William Penn Foundation** recently awarded a 24-month grant of \$330,000 to **Montgomery County Lands Trust**, a non-profit land conservancy. Funds will go toward the pilot phase of the Montgomery County Green Futures Program, a conservation education and training initiative. The initiative will promote strategic land protection and smart growth techniques for communities across the county in the implementation of the county's open space program.

The targeted education and outreach program will be developed by Montgomery County Lands Trust and selected partners to educate local and county officials and other decision makers on how to maximize land conservation, utilize innovative preservation techniques, and enhance watershed protection during the execution of the county's newly invigorated open space program – Green Fields/Green Towns. The approach will be three-pronged, calling for education and training in the areas of 1) planning, 2) implementation and 3) advocacy and recognition.

A Green Futures advisory council, convened by Montgomery County Lands Trust throughout the year, will provide guidance for the initiative, oversee development of

the program, and lead advocacy efforts. Resource materials developed by Montgomery County Lands Trust will provide three levels of training that will include 1) a “basics” workshop on conservation fundamentals, 2) a municipal advisors program and 3) an advanced training program for officials and advocates with more experience in open space planning.

The newly invigorated Montgomery County Open Space program – *Green Fields/Green Towns* created the impetus for this educational effort with a goal of aiding Montgomery County communities in their open space planning and acquisition. In November 2003, Montgomery County voters approved \$150 million in funding for open space protection and green communities. A large percentage of this funding is directed toward municipalities as they apply for create open space projects tailored to the individual needs of their communities.

The William Penn Foundation, founded in 1945 by Otto and Phoebe Haas, is dedicated to improving the quality of life in the Greater Philadelphia region through efforts that foster rich cultural expression, strengthen children’s futures, and deepen connections to nature and community. In partnership with others, the Foundation works to advance a vital, just, and caring community. Learn more about the Foundation online at www.willampennfoundation.org.

Montgomery County Lands Trust works collaboratively with citizens, municipal leaders, community organizations, and other conservation organizations to permanently preserve land and to foster the wise stewardship of open space in our county. Learn more about the Trust online at www.mclt.org.

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--- Montgomery County Lands Trust