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For Immediate Release

Montgomery County Land Trust Elects 2011 Officers to its Board of Directors

January 4, 2011 – Harleysville

The **Honorable Catherine M. Harper, Esq.** known as **Kate Harper** was re-elected as **Board Chair** of the Montgomery County Lands Trust Board of Directors. Ms. Harper practices law full time with Timoney Knox LLP in Fort Washington and serves as State Representative of Pennsylvania's 61st District. Prior to her role as state legislator, she was a community leader, planning commission member, and township supervisor in Lower Gwynedd Township. She received the Governor's Individual Award for Excellence in Local Government for her distinguished record of public service in Montgomery County. She is a former Vice-Chair of the Montgomery County Planning Commission and former Chair of the Montgomery County Open Space Planning Board where she helped create Montgomery County's Open Space Plan. With Timoney Knox LLP, Ms. Harper represents individuals, families, entrepreneurs and municipal agencies. She is one of only a handful of Montgomery County lawyers to have argued a case before the U.S. Supreme Court. Ms. Harper earned her undergraduate degree from LaSalle University and her law degree from Villanova University. She has served on the Montgomery County Lands Trust board since 1993 in the roles of Vice Chair and Chair.

Newly elected as **Montgomery County Lands Trust Vice Chair** is **Deb Takes**. Ms. Takes is the chair and CEO of First Priority Bank a \$250 million commercial bank based in Malvern. Prior to First Priority, she was the President and CEO of Harleysville National Bank (HNB) where she built her banking career beginning in 1972. Active across the region, Ms. Takes serves as Vice Chairman of the Board of Trustees at Cabrini College and as a board member of Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School, the North Penn United Way, the North Penn Boys & Girls Club, The Philadelphia Boys Choir, Rosemont College Business Advisory Council, and the Pennsylvania Association of Community Bankers. She holds a BA from Vassar College and a Masters in the Science of Management from Rosemont College. Ms. Takes is on the Montgomery County Lands Trust Advancement Committee and has been a member of the board of directors since 2006.

Newly elected to the position of **Board Treasurer** is **Jeffrey M. Schweitzer**, current Chief Financial Officer and Executive Vice President of Univest Corporation based in Souderton. Mr. Schweitzer has been with Univest since 2007 where he has oversight of finance and accounting, treasury management, risk management, property management, e-commerce, back office operations, and investor relations. A certified public accountant, Mr. Schweitzer worked for many years as a senior manager for Ernst & Young L.L.P., handling clients such as Sovereign Bancorp, Inc.; TBI Mortgage Company (of Toll Brothers); Sovereign Securities Corp.; Dollar Financial Corp.; Sterling Financial Corp.; and CoreStates Financial Corp. Mr. Schweitzer is a graduate of the University of Notre Dame. He joined the Montgomery County Lands Trust board in 2008.

Re-elected as **Board Secretary** is **J. Ross Pilling II**. Mr. Pilling is Principal with The Conservation Development Partnership, a regional, conservation-based real estate firm located in Chestnut Hill. As a land specialist, Mr. Pilling currently devotes more than half of his time to The Conservation Fund acquiring interests in land on behalf of the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the US Forest Service, and the National Park Service. In his private practice, Mr. Pilling advises Upper Salford Township, Whitemarsh Township, and Worcester Townships on strategies for positioning land acquisition for county and state funding. He served for three years on the Montgomery County Planning Commission board. Mr. Pilling holds a BA from the University of Denver and a Master of Regional Planning degree from the University of Pennsylvania. Mr. Pilling is on the MCLT Stewardship and Advancement Committees and has served as MCLT Board Secretary since its founding in 1993.

John R. Harris of Worcester Township was voted in as a new board member. Mr. Harris served as a Worcester Township Supervisor from 2003 to 2009 and prior to that as Open Space coordinator for Worcester Township. He is the President and Owner of Blue Bell Leasing Company and the former owner and director of Blue Bell Senior Camp. Mr. Harris earned a B.S. in accounting and later an M.S. in management/computer science -- both from Penn State University. Mr. Harris has proven to be a generous partner in multiple Worcester Township/MCLT open space projects and will bring additional conservation experience and expertise to the Montgomery County Lands Trust Board.

As a non-profit conservancy, Montgomery County Lands Trust works to preserve and connect the natural areas, farmland, and neighborhood green spaces which contribute to our quality of life, to a clean and abundant water supply, and to the health of our region's economy. To learn more about our organization, please visit our website at www.mclt.org

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