

Maryland Environmental Trust (MET) Receives Conservation Easements From Audubon Society

**-Maryland Department of Natural Resources
Press Release
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ANNAPOLIS—The Maryland Environmental Trust (MET) recorded two donations of conservation easements in Frederick County from the Audubon Society of Central Maryland, Inc. The Society placed the easements on its two preserves, which are in the vicinity of Mt. Airy and New Market. The easements are co-held by the Catoclin Land Trust, a local land trust.

The Audubon Society of Central Maryland is an all-volunteer, non-profit organization whose members share an active interest in wildlife and birding, along with an overriding concern for the well-being of our shared environment. It is an active chapter of the National Audubon Society. The Audrey Carroll Audubon Sanctuary is located west of Mount Airy on Old Annapolis Road. It consists of 129 acres of diverse habitat, including upland meadows, wetlands, woodlands, two streams and a pond. This diversity supports more than 160 species of birds and other wildlife as they make their home in the sanctuary or stop off during migration. Its other preserve, the Fred Archibald Audubon Sanctuary, is located near New Market in Frederick County, off Boyers Mill Road. It consists of 140 acres of old fields, forest stands and several streams.

“These easements will provide permanent protection for the preserves so that the birds and wildlife will always have these acres to call home,” said Bill Becraft, the Sanctuary Manager for Audubon. “Also, the Audubon will receive an MET property tax credit that will reduce our property taxes to nothing for the next 15 years.”

“We appreciate Audubon’s commitment to permanent preservation and hope that other Audubon chapters or other non-profit preserve owners will follow their lead,” said MET Director Nick Williams.

Frederick County landowners have now protected over 7,000 acres of land through the donation of 70 conservation easements. Donated conservation easements allow landowners to protect their properties in perpetuity without giving up ownership of the land. Gifts of conservation easements are charitable donations and their appraised value is tax deductible. In addition, a new Maryland state income tax credit is available to landowners who donate conservation easements to MET. The credit is a maximum of \$5,000 a year per individual for up to 16 years.