



Pledge Form

To: Steven Carter, President, North American Land Trust

I (we) pledge the sum of \$_____ to enable North American Land Trust (NALT) to purchase the 3.75-acre wooded tract bordering Laurel Lake, in Camden County, NJ, identified by the Borough of Laurel Springs as Block 61/Lot 1 & Block 62/Lot 5; to protect the wooded lakefront habitat and historically significant property from residential development in perpetuity; and to manage the site as a nature sanctuary, an outdoor classroom and a living tribute to poet Walt Whitman, who summered nearby, walked the lakeshore daily and drew inspiration from the natural world he encountered (*see page 2 for the Whitman Woods Project Backstory*).

The family trust that holds the land is now depleted and faces dissolution. Funding “Whitman Woods” this year is crucial to saving the land from development. In order to plan this preservation effort and enlist other donors, it is essential to document your anticipated contribution by receiving your completed pledge agreement. NALT accepts gifts of cash, securities, life insurance and bequests, real estate and appreciable personal property. *Donations, when executed, are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.*

I (we) understand that all parties, including NALT, are relying upon my (our) pledge to complete this transaction. Once NALT reaches its financial goal and is certain the acquisition is ready for completion, NALT will notify me (us) and I (we) will send payment in satisfaction of my (our) pledge within 10 business days following such notification. If for any reason, the acquisition is not completed, NALT will return my (our) funds.

By signing below, I (we) acknowledge that we have reviewed the information on this page in full.

Print Name: _____ OR Corporation/Foundation: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Is Signatory a foundation or corporate officer? ☐ No ☐ Yes Title: _____

Mailing Address (Street or POB): _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

How would you like to be listed in our printed materials? _____ ☐ Anonymous

Mail to: North American Land Trust, PO Box 467, Chadds Ford, PA 19317 | **E-mail to:** pledges@NALT.org

Whitman Woods Project



Backstory

Walt Whitman took great joy in walking the banks of Laurel Lake in what is now Laurel Springs, New Jersey. The influences of the Natural World he encountered here resonate through the centuries in his most legendary works, including *Specimen Days* and portions of *Leaves of Grass*.

This last significant parcel of undeveloped woodland along the lakeshore where Whitman found enduring inspiration is a rare remnant of the now near-relic native Inner Coastal Plain Forest as it existed in Whitman's day, and the centerpiece of Whitman Woods Project. The towering canopy that distinguishes the 3.75-acre parcel provides the desired ambiance for a passive park. Conservation will provide a physical platform to carry out the project **Mission**: "Distill Nature, History, Art & Science as a living legacy that honors poet Walt Whitman and forever preserves vital open space."

Owned since 1925 by the same family, this private tract of wooded lakefront land in the built-out Borough of Laurel Springs has been considered a park in all but name for nearly 50 years. Urban dwellers seek sanctuary here. Recently returned Bald Eagles hunt here. Children experience wildlife here, recite poetry here, draw and paint here. Canoes are launched here. Naturalists bird here. Photographers capture Nature here. *Peace is found here.*

In 2006, Camden County Open Space (CCOS) approached then-owner Elizabeth Hanson Kuehner to explore the purchase of this site, but she was too ill at the time to consider it. After her 2009 death, her heirs reopened conversations with CCOS, and in 2010 the Borough Council confirmed its support of "Elizabeth Hanson Kuehner Trust's Plans for Passive Recreational Space" in a formal resolution. By 2011, however, CCOS was no longer permitted by the county freeholders to acquire pocket parks unless contiguous to existing parks.

After an epic search for the ideal steward, **North American Land Trust (NALT)** was enlisted in 2015 to facilitate the conservation of this wooded tract in densely populated Camden County. NALT is a national organization committed to conserving and restoring natural and cultural lands for present and future generations. NALT ownership will be a seamless and profoundly organic conservation solution. To succeed, NALT must raise \$1 million to endow, own, steward and manage the passive park in perpetuity. It has an impressive national record of conservation. To date, the Chadds Ford, PA-based nonprofit 501c3 has creatively conserved land in 23 states.

The family trust that holds the land is now depleted and faces dissolution. Funding "Whitman Woods" this year is crucial. Saving this rare, wooded tract from development in the locale where Whitman famously sought renewal in the embrace of Nature defines the Whitman Woods Project vision.

Thank you for making a **PLEDGE** toward the creation of "Whitman Woods," the last remnant of undeveloped woodland where Whitman once walked, where 21st-century human visitors are restored and where urban wildlife find sanctuary and sustenance.