Malvern Hill is one of the most important properties to go on the market in the Richmond region. The Capital Region Land Conservancy (CRLC) is honored to have this 900± acre farm under contract for $6.56 million.

Bounded by Route 5 (a Virginia Scenic Road), Route 156 (Willis Church Road), and Route 606 (Carter’s Mill Road) with about 20 acres south of Route 5 along Turkey Island Creek, Malvern Hill has been owned by the same family since it was last sold in 1939 to William Heighler Ferguson Sr. (1885–1984). Its historic ownership includes Thomas Cocke (1638–1696), who established the first Anglo-American residence of which the architecturally significant ruins remain intact today, as well as James Powell Cocke (1690–1747), Robert Nelson (1752–1818), George Benskin Pindexter (1797–1860), and Benjamin Franklin Dew (1820–1877).

The Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places first listed Malvern Hill in 1969 recognizing its role in Virginia and United States history dating to the 17th Century. The Marquis de Lafayette (1757–1834) encamped on the property in the summer of 1781 and the Virginia Militia also made camp there during the War of 1812.

The name “Malvern Hill” is more strongly associated with a climactic moment in the American Civil War when the entire property lay behind the front infantry line of the Union army during the Battle of Malvern Hill on July 1, 1862. This deadly clash of armies ended with 5,650 Confederate and 2,100 Union casualties, bringing the Seven Days Battle and the Peninsula Campaign to a close and prompting President Abraham Lincoln to draft the Emancipation Proclamation.

According to the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), Malvern Hill Farm ranks as “very high” in its vulnerability model. The Civil War Sites Advisory Commission in 1993 listed Malvern Hill in the Top 10 of Virginia’s battlefields that are highly threatened. Despite its proximity to downtown Richmond and development pressures in the Varina district of Henrico County, the property has remained mostly unaltered in appearance since 1862.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s soil maps show Malvern Hill Farm contains nearly 400 acres of prime farmland and more than 150 acres of “farmland of statewide significance.” Coupled with the “very high” ranking on Virginia’s Forest Economics Model as well as DCR’s evaluation of Ecological Cores and habitats of endangered species, the property is a priority for land conservation.

The National Park Service (NPS) has long sought portions of Malvern Hill Farm for inclusion in the Richmond National Battlefield Park. The United States Congress has approved roughly 443 acres in its legislatively authorized boundary for the park. “Acquisition and preservation of this farm would be a critical step forward in
ensuring the long term integrity of such an historic place” noted David Ruth, Superintendent of the Richmond National Battlefield Park. DCR specifically names Malvern Hill in its Virginia Outdoors Plan for provision of public access with walking and biking trails and a Turkey Island Creek canoe/kayak launch to reach the James River, the Captain John Smith National Historic Trail and the Presquile National Wildlife Refuge. Likewise, nearly 2 miles of the Virginia Capital Trail along scenic Route 5 passes by and/or traverses Malvern Hill Farm.

The Capital Region Land Conservancy is the only land trust dedicated solely to serving the City of Richmond and Charles City, Chesterfield, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, New Kent, and Powhatan counties. Our mission is to conserve and protect the natural and historic land and water resources of Virginia’s Capital Region for the benefit of current and future generations. As a private non-profit, CRLC has protected over 7,000 acres of land, including over 35 miles of stream and river frontage. Our diverse programs work to preserve open space, provide capital to working farms and forests, and protect our region’s air and water quality.

The Capital Region Land Conservancy has secured more than $2.2 million in funding towards this important acquisition. This includes $687,500 from the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation (VLCF), $400,000 from the Virginia Battlefields Preservation Fund (VBPF), $100,000 from the Open Space Land Preservation Trust Fund, $500,000 each as a two-to-one challenge grant from The Mary Morton Parsons Foundation and the Cabell Foundation. Every donation is thus leveraging additional dollars.

CRLC is working with a consortium of partners to complete this important acquisition. They include the Chesapeake Conservancy, Civil War Trust, James River Association, National Park Service Richmond National Battlefield Park, Virginia Capital Trail Foundation, Virginia Department of Historic Resources, and the Virginia Outdoors Foundation. The Conservation Fund is considering financing for the project as CRLC continues to apply for additional grants.

Tax-deductible donations to support the acquisition of Malvern Hill Farm and contribute toward the challenge grants should be made payable to the Capital Region Land Conservancy and mailed to P.O. Box 17306, Richmond VA 23226. For more information or to donate stock and discuss employer matching gift programs, please contact Parker Agelasto at 202-302-0153 or parker@capitalregionland.org.

Please help protect Malvern Hill in perpetuity by making a tax-deductible gift of $100, $250, $500, $1,000 today.

MALVERN HILL DONATION / PLEDGE FORM

Name ____________________________ Organization/Business Name ____________________________

Address/City/State/Zip _____________________________________________________________

Email ___________________________________________ Phone _____________________________

Name as it should appear in CRLC publications: _______________________________________

o Enclosed is my check to Capital Region Land Conservancy for: __________

o Please send me a pledge reminder for $ ____________ on _________________ date.

o Please charge my credit card listed below as follows:

One time amount of $ ____________ to be charged on _________________ date.

I prefer to make a ☐ monthly / ☐ quarterly gift of $ ____________ via my credit card.

Credit Card Number ___________________________ Exp (00/00) Security Code _____________

Billing Zip Code _____________________________ Name as it Appears on Card

Signature

Please help protect Malvern Hill in perpetuity by making a tax-deductible gift of $100, $250, $500, $1,000 today.