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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Commissioners Certify 2018 County Farmland Preservation Program Funds

Carlisle, Pa. – The Cumberland County Commissioners recently certified the 2018 funds for the County’s Farmland Preservation Program. Completed annually, the certification allocates certain funds to the Program, which allows the County to apply for match funding from the state.

The Commissioners certified a total of \$607,145 for the program, which has the potential to leverage \$1,654,055 in state funding. In addition to the \$500,000 of County general fund monies approved in November 2017, the Commissioners also approved \$107,145 from a variety of other non-general fund sources, including clean and green rollback penalties and private donations to the program.

“By certifying these additional funds for the Farmland Preservation Program, we will secure additional state funding, which allows us to preserve more of the farms on our waiting list,” said Stephanie Williams, manager of the County’s Greenway & Open Space/Farmland Preservation programs.

The County currently has about 30 farms on the waiting list for preservation. With the nearly \$1.7 million in state funding, plus the more than \$600,000 certified by the County, Williams estimates 850-900 of the over 3,000 total acres on the list could be preserved. To date, Cumberland County has preserved almost 19,000 acres of prime farmland.

The Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchase Program was developed to strengthen Pennsylvania’s agricultural economy and to protect prime farmland. The program uses county, state, federal and local funds to pay willing farmers to place certain restrictions upon their land, in order to maintain and permanently preserve high quality, functional farmland. The land continues to be the farmer’s private property and the farmer retains all privileges of land ownership, except the ability to sell the land for non-agricultural development or to develop the land for non-agricultural purposes. An agricultural conservation easement is permanent; if a landowner wishes to sell the land, the easement is transferred and the new landowner must continue to use the property exclusively for agriculture.

For more information on Cumberland County’s Farmland Preservation Program, visit www.ccpa.net/farmland.

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