



OUTREACH & INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
VIRGINIA TECH.

5075 Catawba Creek Road
Catawba, Virginia 24070
P: (540) 588-0283
adamht@vt.edu

CATAWBA SUSTAINABILITY CENTER

Rockefeller Foundation
420 Fifth Avenue
New York City, New York

To whom it may concern:

The Virginia Tech Catawba Sustainability Center (CSC) is a 377-acre farm that serves as a living laboratory for the research and demonstration of sustainable agriculture, forestry, and land management practices. The CSC serves the Appalachian/southwest Virginia region by providing technical trainings geared toward small scale producers practicing or exploring agroecological methods on their own mountain farms or rented land. A partnership with the Agrin Trust in the region would align with the CSC's vision of fostering environmental, economic, and social sustainability on farmland to promote not only a viable local food economy, but a long-term ecological vision for agriculture in our biodiverse region. Visioning an ecological agriculture for the region is also timely, as our economy transitions toward sustainable solutions.

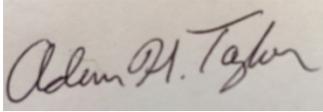
The CSC supports the Agrarian Trust's efforts in southwest Virginia, and commits to being a technical and networking resource in furtherance of a Southwest Virginia Agrarian Commons. Most of our region's farms are small and diverse and well-suited to enhance living buffers and agroecological practices that sustain and enhance the region's biodiversity. At the same time, there is a veritable renaissance of beginning farmers attracted to the region for its small farm ethic that serves communities rather than commodity markets. However, these farmers often lack long-term land access which a Commons could ameliorate, while ensuring land is kept out of development or extractive industry.

Knowledge and programming the CSC commits to provide includes:

- planting local heritage and landrace seed varieties in living soils, including non-timber forest products;
- responsibly/humanely maintaining livestock in a silvopasture system;
- incubating beginning farmers, supporting farm business planning and organic production among diverse crops such as mushrooms, goldenseal, ginseng, maple and black walnut syrup, hemp, sorghum, grass-fed beef, vegetables, contour planting and alley cropping fruit and nut trees, and beekeeping; and
- reducing erosion and sedimentation into streams and rivers through wetland rehabilitation, planting living buffers that are multi-functional riparian zones including native and medicinal plants.

The CSC highly recommends the Rockefeller Foundation to earnestly consider AT as a recipient of funding. Please accept my sincere support and do not hesitate to contact me if the CSC can do anything to help.

Sincerely,

A rectangular image showing a handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background. The signature is written in a cursive style and reads "Adam H. Taylor".

Adam H. Taylor
Manager, Virginia Tech Catawba Sustainability Center
adamht@vt.edu
(540) 588-0283