WHAT: American chestnut ceremonial planting
WHEN: Saturday, September 21 at 4 PM
WHERE: Grey Towers National Historic Site, Milford, Pennsylvania

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The American Chestnut Makes Triumphant Return to Grey Towers National Historic Site for 50th Anniversary Commemoration

Milford, PA

On Saturday, September 21, at 4 PM the Pinchot Institute will plant a potentially blight-resistant American chestnut as a part of their ceremonies to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the donation of Grey Towers to the American public. Grey Towers, located in Milford, PA is the ancestral home of Gifford Pinchot, first Chief of the US Forest Service and twice Governor of Pennsylvania. The chestnut seedling is part of a unique breeding program led by The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF) to restore the American chestnut to the eastern forests of America. The event is free and open to the public.

The ceremonial planting will take place in the Grey Towers Amphitheater at 4 PM, directly after the rededication of the Pinchot Institute and Grey Towers National Historic Site. The tree will be planted permanently on Sunday, September 22 at 2 PM, in the location of the original Grey Towers chestnut tree. For additional details about the 50th Anniversary events, visit http://www.pinchot.org.

Once the mighty giants of the eastern forests, American chestnuts stood up to 100 feet tall, and numbered in the billions. They were a vital part of the forest ecology, a key food source for wildlife and an essential component of the human economy. In the beginning of the 20th century an Asian fungus, known as the chestnut blight, spread rapidly through the American chestnut population, and by 1950 it had killed an estimated four billion
mature trees from Maine to Georgia. Several attempts to breed blight-resistant trees in the mid-1900s were unsuccessful.

In 1983, a dedicated group of scientists formed TACF with a mission to develop blight-resistant American chestnut trees. Now assisted by nearly 6,000 members, volunteers, and partners, the organization is undertaking the planting of potentially blight-resistant trees in select locations throughout the eastern US.

The mission of the Pinchot Institute for Conservation is to strengthen forest conservation thought, policy, and action by developing innovative, practical, and broadly-supported solutions to conservation challenges and opportunities. For more information about the Pinchot Institute for Conservation, visit http://www.pinchot.org.

TACF is a 501 (c) 3 conservation organization headquartered in Asheville, NC, that has nearly 6,000 members and volunteers in 16 state chapters. For more information on TACF and their work to restore the American chestnut tree, contact TACF Director of Communications Mila Kirkland at (828) 281-0047, email: mila@acf.org. Or visit www.acf.org.