



North Branch
Land Trust

2018 | ANNUAL REPORT



Letter from the Executive Director

Richard Louv, author of the groundbreaking book *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children From Nature-Deficit Disorder*, and an NBLT event speaker this past year, tells the story of interviewing a child who told him that he liked playing indoors more than outdoors “‘cause that’s where all the electrical outlets are.”

There have been many studies conducted over the years that clearly show the benefits and importance of getting kids outdoors and connecting them with

nature. Specifically studies show time and again that allowing kids to play in nature promotes creativity and imagination, teaches responsibility, improves health and wellness, reduces stress and fatigue, and improves critical thinking.

So while screen time is the easier, more popular choice, it’s important to set aside time for unstructured outdoor play. This unstructured style of play allows kids to interact meaningfully with their surroundings. They can think more freely, design their own activities, and approach the world in inventive ways.

NBLT is committed to promoting and holding activities in nature for children. We feel connecting kids, as well as adults, to nature is extremely important as it improves their wellbeing and builds awareness of nature in their lives. Conserving land ensures that our children will always have the opportunity to enjoy and reap the benefits of nature’s bounty. Our children are our future!

Thank you for supporting NBLT and land conservation in Northeastern Pennsylvania.



Paul Lumia, Executive Director



Young hiker observing a stream



Toasting marshmallows at Taste the Local Harvest



Elizabeth Hughes (Earth Conservancy), Mike Dziak (Earth Conservancy), Paul Lumia, and Wyoming Seminary Lower School Environmental Club students discussing their artwork donated for the Annual Dinner.

Mission Statement:

The North Branch Land Trust works in partnership with landowners and their communities to conserve the natural, working, and scenic landscapes in Northeastern Pennsylvania that sustain us.

YEAR IN REVIEW

NATURE IS THE BEST PLAYGROUND FOR ALL AGES!

North Branch Land Trust offered many programs and events during 2018. The highlight was welcoming renowned *New York Times* bestselling author, Richard Louv to Wyoming Valley on October 17. Through the partnering of Geisinger, NBLT, Riverfront Parks Committee, and Wilkes University, Mr. Louv addressed an audience in the Dorothy Dixon Darte Center at Wilkes on *The Nature Principle: Nature-Deficit Disorder, Vitamin N and the New Nature Movement*. Following his talk, Mr. Louv answered a number of questions from the audience and ended the evening with a book signing.

During Mr. Louv's talk he spoke of the many benefits of modern technology and spoke of studies showing positive health benefits for children who have a strong "nature connection." From his book *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder* he explains nature-deficit disorder (a phrase he coined) as describing "the human costs of alienation from nature, among them: diminished use of the senses, attention difficulties, and higher rates of physical and emotional illness. This disorder can be detected in individuals, families, and communities."

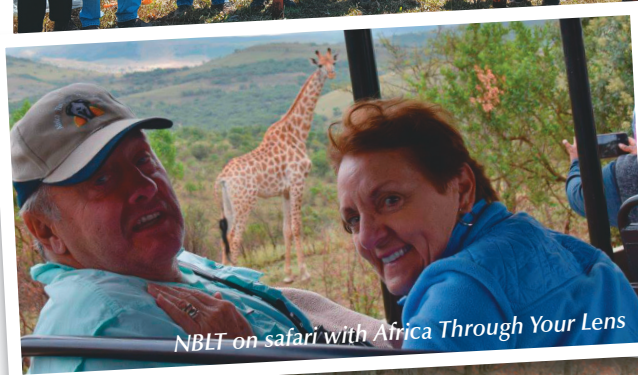
As studies have shown, our natural world is vital for our good physical and emotional health. NBLT will continue to offer opportunities for all ages to discover the wonders of our land and nature.

“Time in nature is not leisure time; it's an essential investment in our children's health (and also, by the way, in our own).”

~ Richard Louv



Chesapeake Bay Foundation tree planting by NBLT volunteers



NBLT on safari with Africa Through Your Lens



Winter hike



Winter Picnic



Taste the Local Harvest



Richard Louv (center) with NBLT staff



Rylan Coker (NBLT), Senator Yudichak, and Elissa Garofalo (D&L)



Senator Yudichak and Elissa Garofalo (D&L)



Senator Yudichak and Cindy Dunn, PA Secretary of Conservation and Natural Resources

Get Your Tail on the D&L Trail

Have you heard? Pocono Forests and Waters Conservation Landscape and the City of Wilkes-Barre have joined forces with St. Luke's University Health Network and Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor (D&L) to launch the Northeastern Pennsylvania chapter of "Get Your Tail on the Trail." The free program aims to help people of all ages and abilities meet their personal fitness goals and experience the value of local trails through day-to-day challenges, public events, and incentives. The announcement was made Friday, July 13, 2018, as state Senator John Yudichak (D-Luzerne/Carbon counties) finished the last leg of his *Senator Takes a Hike Initiative* on the D&L Trail into Wilkes-Barre.

To help with this initiative North Branch Land Trust is working hard to complete the final six miles of the D&L trail from Oliver Mills to Northampton Street. NBLT just completed the engineering plans and is now applying for construction permits, hoping to break ground in early summer 2019.

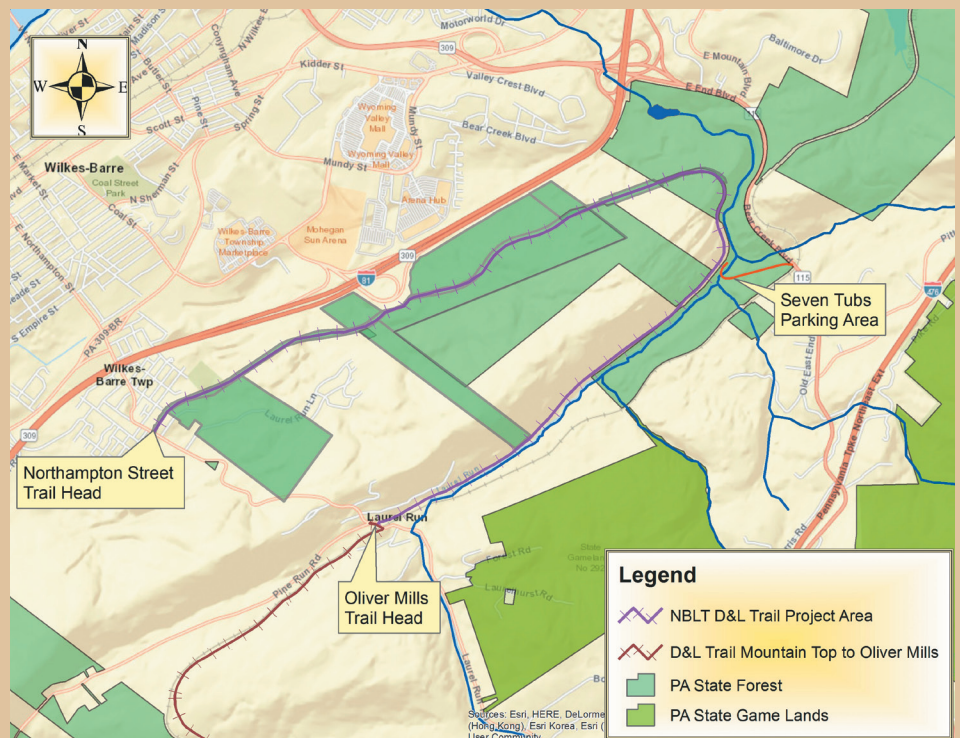
So what is this "*Senator Takes a Hike Initiative*?" Senator Yudichak, a long-time D&L trail advocate, fulfilled a promise and brought awareness to the trail project by hiking the entire 165 miles from Bristol to Wilkes-Barre. Senator Yudichak stated at a trail planning meeting in early 2018 that if the Philadelphia Eagles won the Super Bowl he would hike the trail from start to finish. And he did. Thank you Senator Yudichak!!!

For more information about the D&L Trail from Bristol to Wilkes-Barre visit:

THE D&L MAP WEBSITE
<https://delawareandlehigh.org/map/>

GET YOUR TAIL ON THE TRAIL WEBSITE
<https://tailonthetrail.org/chapters/northeast-pennsylvania/>

THE NBLT WEBSITE
<https://www.nblt.org/>



Leaving a Lasting Legacy – The Bierly Estate Conservation Easement

On July 6, 2015, George W. Bierly passed away at the age of 93. He and his wife Betty were always full of adventure and found their “heaven on earth” on their 106-acre farm in Sweet Valley, PA. George’s sense of humor brightened many lives.

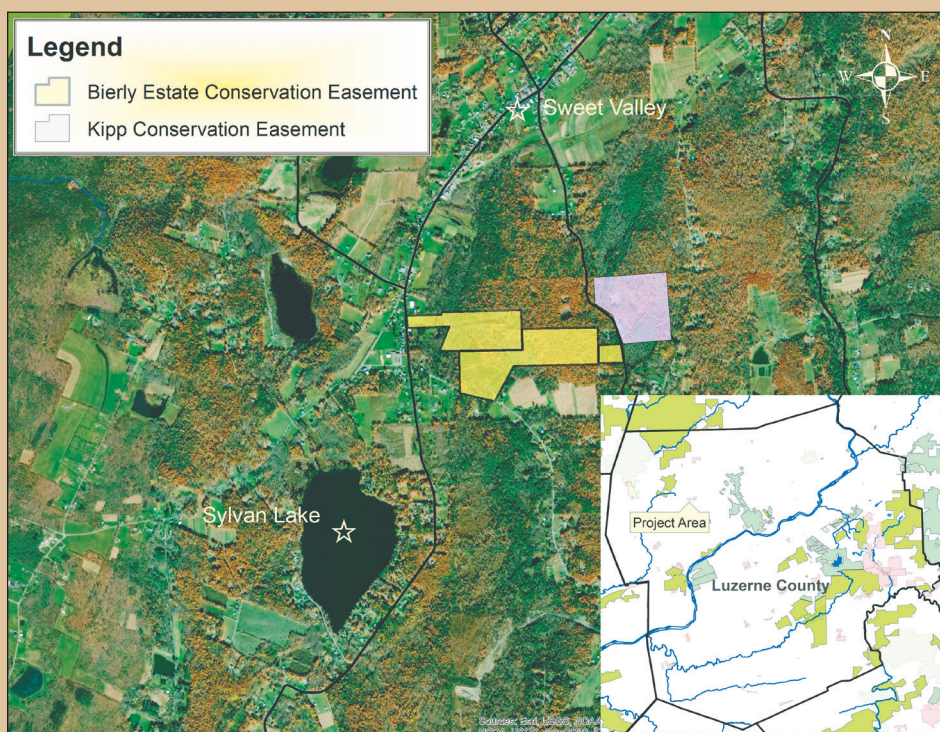
George was a successful businessman and leader in his community. He graduated from Bucknell Junior College, Wilkes-Barre, in 1940 and went on to earn a graduate degree in engineering from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in 1943. From 1943 to 1945 he was honored to serve his country in Italy during World War II.

George wanted to ensure that his beloved Sweet Valley farm would be protected in perpetuity from any development. He consulted his attorney and directed in his will that the farm be donated to an organization capable of ensuring the preservation of its natural character. After George’s death, the executor of his estate was referred to North Branch Land Trust. The Estate and NBLT together concluded that donating the property, with

permission to sell it subject to a conservation easement, would be the best approach to protect the farm forever.

On August 21, 2018, NBLT permanently protected 100 acres of the Bierly Farm with the recording of a conservation easement at the Luzerne County Courthouse. Establishing a conservation easement fulfilled Mr. Bierly’s wishes while supporting the conservation mission of the Land Trust. His estate was entitled to a tax deduction for the donation and NBLT was able to protect another beautiful farm including its old growth timber and stunning stone walls.

There are many ways you can ensure that the property you love is protected forever. The Internal Revenue Service has determined that the permanent protection of woods, forests, and fields is worthy of a tax deduction for individuals or estates. To learn more about all the available land conservation options and tax savings, please contact NBLT at 570-310-1781 or email info@nblt.org. Thank you for considering conserving your land.



Three Land Projects Completed on the Penobscot Mountain Highlands

The Penobscot Mountain Highlands, which frames the southern border of the Wyoming Valley along with highlands in Mountain Top and Bear Creek, are listed in the *Luzerne County Open Space and Recreation Master Plan* and the *Luzerne County Natural Areas Inventory* as high priority areas for conservation due to their scenic beauty and unique habitat for a host of plant and animal species. North Branch continues to work in these areas and is happy to report that in

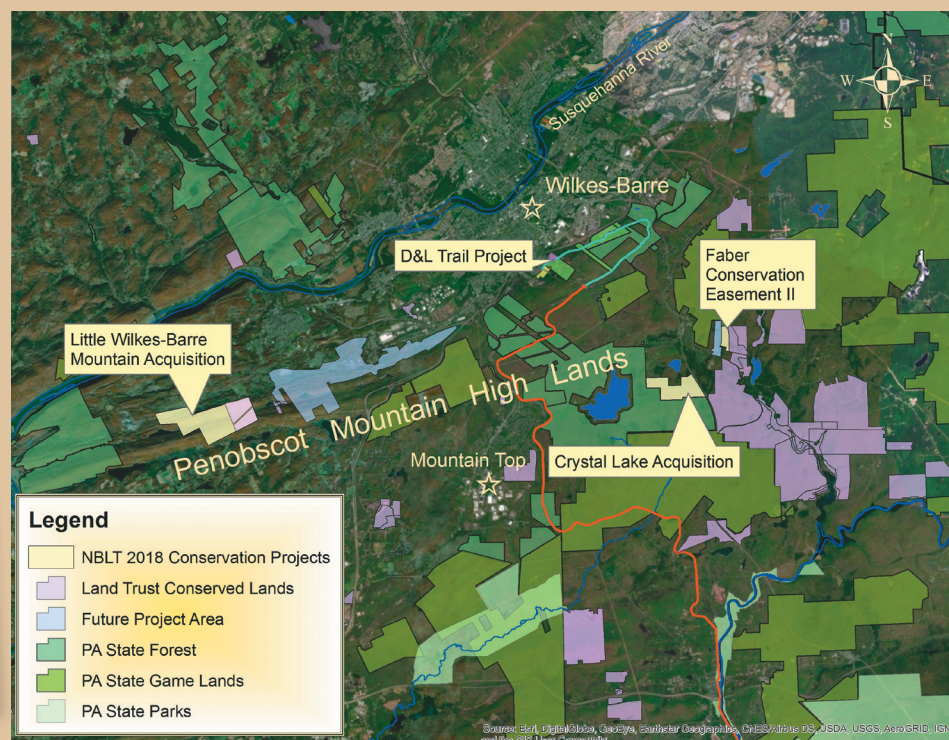
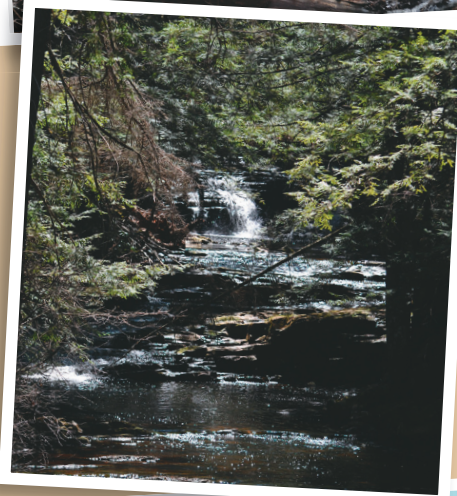
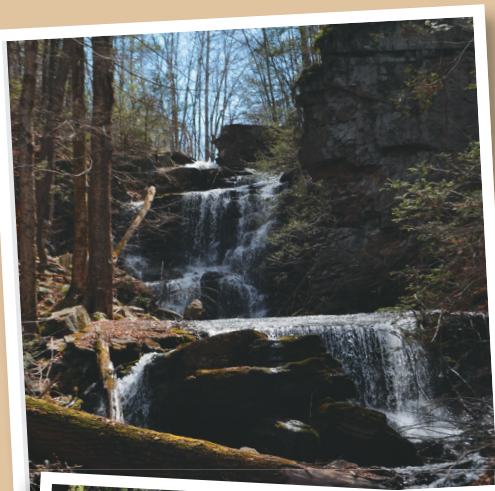
2018 three additional conservation projects were completed.

Little Wilkes-Barre Mountain Acquisition, Newport Twp. - In keeping with NBLT's strategic conservation plan to protect the Penobscot Mountain Highlands, the Land Trust worked with one of its great conservation partners, Earth Conservancy, and acquired from them 1,131-acres of prime forests, fields, and streams on Little Wilkes-Barre Mountain. Some of this land had been mined for coal and was in rough shape, but Earth Conservancy stepped in and reclaimed much of the scarred area. The property has a native brook trout stream, wonderful stands of pines and hemlocks, and fields of native grasses. Thanks to a grant from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and funding from the Bureau of Forestry, NBLT was able to acquire the property and transfer it into the State Forest system. It is now available for the public to enjoy.

The Bear Creek Properties Acquisition, Crystal Lake - This 389-acre tract of land at the southern edge of the Pocono Plateau is quite amazing because it literally straddles both the Delaware and Susquehanna River watersheds. It is also contiguous to many thousands of acres of State Forest and State Game lands. In 2016 NBLT approached the out-of-

town landowner about conserving the property and the landowner was interested in selling it outright. With its unique wetlands, bogs, and scrub lands along with its proximity to Crystal Lake, the property was one NBLT wanted to acquire. In 2017 the Land Trust was fortunate to be awarded a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Bureau of Recreation and Conservation Community Conservation Partnership Program with funding from the Keystone Recreation, Park, and Conservation Fund, and the Open Space Institute's Delaware River Watershed Protection Fund which is made possible with funding from the William Penn Foundation for its Delaware River Watershed Initiative to protect water quality in the Delaware River Basin. NBLT closed on the property in August 2018 and transferred it to the PA Pinchot State Forest.

The Faber Conservation Easement II, Bear Creek - Eberhard and Mary Louise Faber conserved their lovely 231-acre property in 2007. In 2017 an adjoining property, part of Bear Creek Village founder Albert Lewis's original estate, came up for sale. This 79-acre parcel has frontage on Ten Mile Run and Red Run, headwater streams for the Bear Creek, and the Lehigh and Delaware Rivers. The Faber's purchased the property and in the summer of 2018 NBLT rolled it into their existing conservation easement.



VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR — Michael Tonkin



Mike Tonkin (left), Paul Lumia (right)

Michael Tonkin of Duryea, Pennsylvania was named NBLT's 2018 Volunteer of the Year and was recognized in November at the annual Volunteer Appreciation Get-Together held at Sabatini's Bottleshop and Bar in Exeter. Mike was chosen to receive this award for his commitment, reliability, and sense of adventure as a volunteer land monitor. Volunteer land monitors visit NBLT's 60 conserved land easements yearly to be certain that the properties are in compliance with the terms of the conservation agreement. Rylan Coker, NBLT's Land Protection and Stewardship Coordinator stated, "It is volunteers like Mike who help NBLT in its mission of land conservation." Three cheers for Mike!

TO ALL OF NBLT'S VOLUNTEERS

An extra special THANK YOU to all of NBLT's dedicated volunteers! Volunteers are the life blood of the Land Trust and whether you are attending meetings, stuffing thousands of envelopes for mailings, monitoring conserved properties, restoring an old house and barn, building trails, clearing brush, leading hikes, planting trees, or hauling trash, you are most appreciated! The Land Trust is honored that you are willing to donate your time, energy, and talents to NBLT's land conservation mission.

WELCOME TO NEW BOARD MEMBERS

The NBLT welcomed four new board members: Peter Butera, Mollie Maseychik, Guy Rothery, and Fred Valentine. Peter, Mollie, Guy, and Fred bring their talents and professional skills

in the areas of finance and business to help the NBLT with its land conservation mission throughout Northeastern Pennsylvania.



Peter Butera



Mollie Maseychik



Guy Rothery



Fred Valentine

Donors

January 1, 2018-December 31, 2018

We extend sincere thanks to the conservation-minded friends whose commitment and support make possible North Branch Land Trust's efforts to conserve land and connect people to nature in Northeastern Pennsylvania. The donors listed on the following pages provided meaningful support throughout the year.



Turkey eggs in nest at base of a tree



Neoscona domiciliorum a.k.a. Spotted orbweaver

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Artist Earl Lehman giving an art lesson to Tunkhannock area students at Howland Preserve

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 Theresa Palischak Stewart
 Alison Zurawski

SUPPORTER

Under \$35

Debbie Alunni & Jeff Baran
 Barbara Barnes
 Bartolai Winery
 John & Mavourneen Boner
 Fran Browne
 Candice Cilvik
 Rylan Coker & Rebecca Lane
 Barbara Craig, RSM
 Loretta Daubert
 Barbara Davis
 Sharon Davis
 Dietrich Theater
 Judith Dinofrio
 Liliana Dinu
 Olga Dukinas
 Dymonds by Kate
 Allysan Edwards
 Endless Mountains Nature Center
 Carole Ertley
 Jamie Evans
 Kim Gardner
 Harold J. Golomb Farm
 Mike Hewitt

Fred & Vall Hill
 Jack & Karen Hoover
 Robert C. & Nancy Houck
 MaryAnn Hovan
 Ronald R. & Cheryl D. Jeckell
 Jeanne Kapral
 KB's Coffee House
 Barb Kilgallon
 Charles Kinsman
 David & Patricia Kowalek
 Catherine Kriel
 Brad Kurlancheek
 Lisa Kuter
 Krystle Lampan
 Rachel Leskosky
 Little Lenny's Cheesecake Factory
 Mary Ann Luton
 Lisa Makara
 Philip & Kathy Marino
 Fred Melvin
 Gabriela Moustardas
 Diane L. Nagle & Joseph G. Schneiderite
 Donna Ondish
 Richard & Barbara Parry
 Margaret Pizzi
 Jim & Linda Pravlik
 Karen Puscavage
 Kevin & Adele Reilly
 Lawrence & Wilma Richards
 Mark Rutkowski
 Ronald Schrieber
 Robert Simkonis
 Jennifer Smith
 John & Sharon Stevens
 Marypat Tang
 Joanne Taras
 The Cafe
 The Frederick Stegmaier Mansion
 Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Thompson
 Marcie Walsh
 Regina Williams
 Martin & Kathy Wise
 Jim & Rebecca Wolfe
 Lauren Zluchowski

GIFTS IN MEMORIAL

Donations were made in memory of the following:
 Donna Illuzzi
 Sera Jane
 John N. Shoemaker

GIFTS IN HONORARIUM

Donations were made in honor of the following:
 Paul & Colleen Lumia
 Dr. Carl Urbanski

MATCHING GIFTS

The following organizations matched donations from members:
 Benevity Community Impact Fund
 Bank of America Charitable Foundation

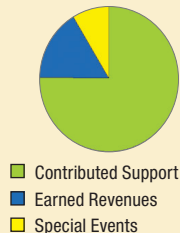
NBLT makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of these listings. If you find an omission or a misspelling, please excuse our error and contact us at smith@nblt.org or call (570) 310-1781 to update our records for future donor listings.

Financial Information

North Branch Land Trust financial statements are prepared on the accrual basis of accounting in accordance with standards established by the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) for external financial reporting by non-profit organizations. The charts below provide a breakdown of where our operating funds come from and how they are spent. As a community based non-profit, the Trust relies heavily on contributions from individuals, businesses, and foundations within its service area. The Trust staff spends the majority of its time and resources on land conservation projects and education and outreach activities. All funds raised stay local!

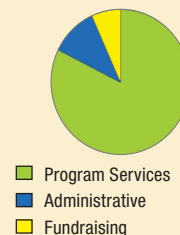
REVENUE BY SOURCE

Contributed Support	75.17%
Earned Revenues	16.34%
Special Events	8.49%
TOTAL	100.00%



EXPENSES BY TYPE

Program Services	82.45%
Administrative	10.92%
Fundraising	6.63%
TOTAL	100.00%



At year end 2018, North Branch Land Trust assets stood at about \$6.2 million dollars, 82% of which are non-liquid land assets and assets set aside to monitor and defend conserved lands.

Currently the Trust has a modest endowment to help fund the organization's operations. However, this endowment is not large enough to support the entire budget and additional funds must be raised on an annual basis. It is the goal of the North Branch Land Trust staff and Board of Directors to grow this endowment to a level that will support a robust conservation budget and the advancement of the Trust's land conservation mission in Northeastern Pennsylvania. Thank you for your continued support!



Partridge berries

2018 Board of Directors and Staff

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John L. Zembruski, Esq.	Secretary

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Ryan Flood	Guthrie Mitchell	Fred Valentine
Ramah Hackett	John J. Pekarovsky III	Scott W. Watkins, DMD

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Rylan Coker	Land Protection & Stewardship Coordinator
Paula Fall	Land Steward & Activities Coordinator
Barbara Romanansky	Director of Development
Rebecca F. Smith	Communications Director
Maureen Whipple	Office Administrator
Lena Williams	Social Media & Communication Associate Intern

COMMITTEES

Annual Dinner

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Anthony T.P. Brooks	
Lissa Bryan-Smith	
Ruth Corcoran	
Kathleen Dunsmuir	
James R. Gorman	
Elizabeth Hughes	
Holly Kelleher	
Karen Labbate	
Paul Lumia	
Cathy McHugh	
Marilyn Millington	
Terri Morgan	
Rachel Pugh-Blanchard	
Barbara Romanansky	
Rebecca F. Smith	
Jill Snowden	
Maureen Whipple	
Lena Williams	
Alison Zurawski	

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James T. Shoemaker, Esq.,	<i>Chair</i>
Ruth Corcoran	
Barry H. Dyller, Esq.	
Paul Lumia	
Barbara Romanansky	

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Deb Dick	
Paula Fall	
Tina Fiorani	
Brian Gettig	
Ellie Harding	
Jim Ridolfi	

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Phil A. Muntzel	
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Michael D. Weaver	
John L. Zembruski, Esq.	
Fred Valentine	

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Stacey Fay	
Joshua D. Katyl	
Guthrie Mitchell	
Gary J. Swartz, Jr.	
Christina Dilks Taylor	
John L. Zembruski, Esq.	

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Barry H. Dyller, Esq.	
Elizabeth Eckman Lloyd	
Ellen Parmenteri	
John J. Pekarovsky III	
Brian Stahl, Esq.	
Michael M. Stair	
D. Kay Strickland	
Fred Valentine	

Mailing Volunteers

Sarah P. Carr	
Suzanne Druffner	
Carol Lizell	
Jan Lohmann	
Constance Orchard	
Elaine Palischak	
Tony Palischak	
Paul Pryor	
Rachelle Pryor	
Mary Annette Rawls	
Bruce Troy	
Roberta Troy	
Charlene Wildes	
Gary Williams	

Picton Wildlife

Sanctuary Management

Tina Fiorani,	<i>Chair</i>
Rylan Coker	
Paula Fall	
Brian Gettig	
Mike Gondell	
Ellie Harding	
Jim Ridolfi	
Bob Romanansky	
Rebecca F. Smith	
Charlene Wildes	

Renewal of Accreditation

Paul Lumia,	<i>Chair</i>
Rylan Coker	
Barbara Romanansky	
Rebecca F. Smith	
Maureen Whipple	

Risk Management

Stacey Fay,	<i>Chair</i>
Rylan Coker	
Guthrie Mitchell	
Scott W. Watkins, DMD	

Strategic Planning

James T. Shoemaker, Esq.,	<i>Chair</i>
Stacey Fay	
Paul Lumia	
Christina Dilks Taylor	
John L. Zembruski, Esq.	

Taste the Local Harvest

Barbara Romanansky,	<i>Chair</i>
Stacey Fay	
Paul Lumia	
Mollie Maseychik	
Cathy McHugh	
Terri Morgan	
Scott Simko	
Rebecca F. Smith	
Maureen Whipple	

Volunteer

Property Monitors

John Bensinger	
Sandy Bensinger	
Cindy Beaumariage	
Tina Fiorani	
Brian Gettig	
Mike Gondell	
Bob Romanansky	
D. Kay Strickland	
Mike Tonkin	
Fred Valentine	
Charlene Wildes	
Edward Zygmunt	



The Charter Members of the Guardian Society were recognized at a gathering on November 14, 2018, and are listed in the Donors section of this report. We encourage others to become members and take advantage of the Guardian Society's benefits which include exclusive invitation-only events, complementary tickets to Taste the Local Harvest and The Annual Dinner & Auctions, personal guided tours of privately owned conserved land, acknowledgement of your exceptional generosity in NBLT newsletters and Annual Report, and the recognition of being a Guardian Society member.

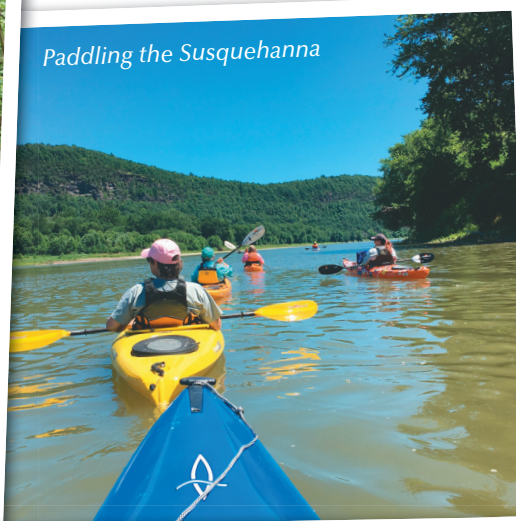
Your membership at the \$1,000 level or above will help increase the pace of land conservation in Northeastern Pennsylvania and ensure a legacy for all generations to come: the opportunity for children to experience nature and have it always be part of their lives. For more information or to inquire about ways to give, please call or email Barb Romanansky, Director of Development at (570) 310-1781 or Romanansky@nblt.org

In 2018, North Branch Land Trust launched its new giving club, the Guardian Society, comprised of individuals, businesses, and foundations who *donate \$1,000 or more annually* to NBLT. With its own branding and logo, the Guardian Society is a way to acknowledge those donors and includes three levels of giving:

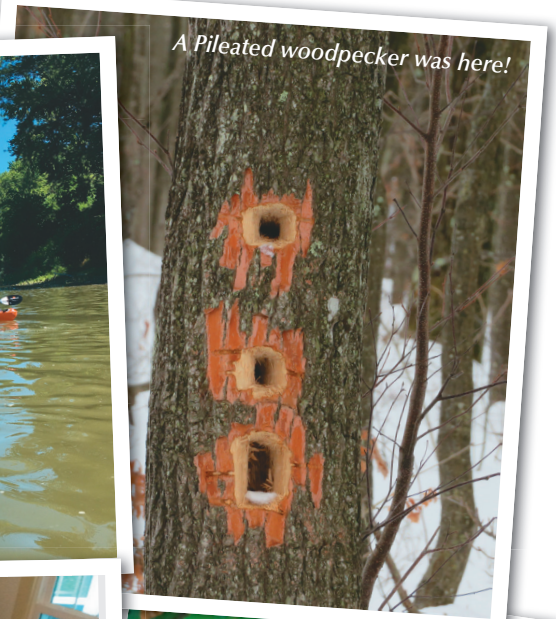
- ☐ River Guardian \$1,000
- ☐ Woodlands Guardian \$2,500
- ☐ Highlands Guardian..... \$5,000+



Rylan and a friendly snapping turtle at Hanover pond.



Paddling the Susquehanna



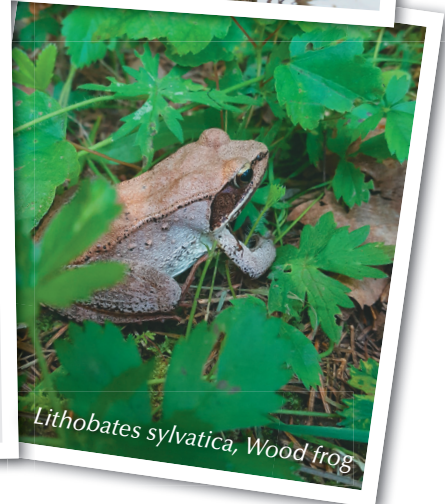
A Pileated woodpecker was here!



Grass pink orchid, Valmont Bog



Helping hands



Lithobates sylvatica, Wood frog

Working together, we can conserve the places in nature that we cherish and leave a legacy for all generations to come: the opportunity for children to experience nature and have it always be part of their lives.

Membership in North Branch Land Trust
Helps Conserve What Matters Most!

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP, BECOME
A NEW MEMBER, OR GIVE A GIFT
MEMBERSHIP TODAY!

THE GUARDIAN SOCIETY

- ☐ Highlands Guardian\$5,000+
- ☐ Woodlands Guardian\$2,500
- ☐ River Guardian\$1,000
- ☐ Protector\$ 500
- ☐ Conservator\$ 250
- ☐ Sustainer.....\$ 100
- ☐ Steward.....\$ 50

Membership at any level runs July 1 to June 30

MATCHING GIFT PROGRAM

Does your company have a matching gift program? Please enclose your matching gift form with your membershipi donation.

YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City _____

State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

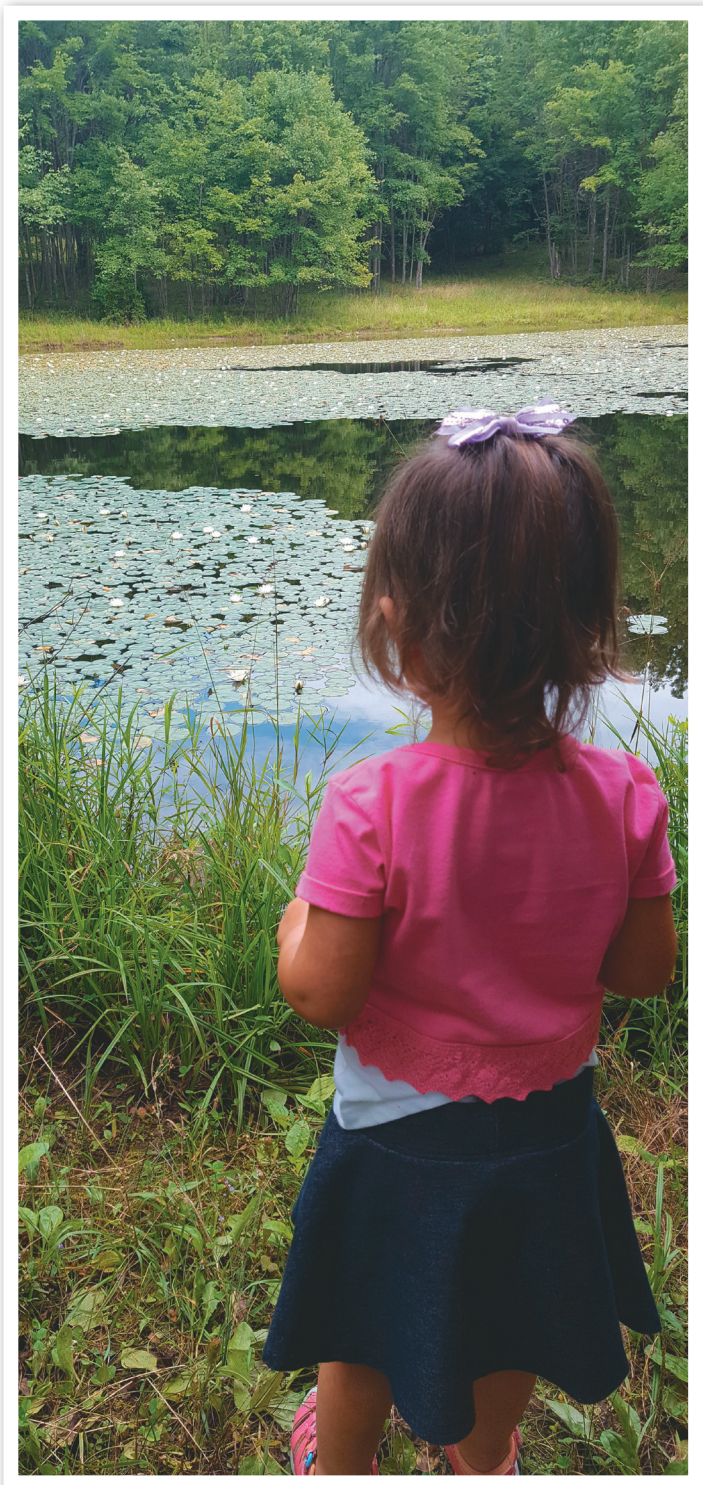
PLEASE MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO:

NORTH BRANCH LAND TRUST
251 Huntsville-Idetown Road
Dallas, PA 18612
Or to make a donation online, visit www.nblt.org

FOR MORE INFORMATION SEND AN EMAIL TO
INFO@NBLT.ORG OR CALL THE OFFICE AT (570) 310-1781

☐ Please remove my name for your mailing list.

North Branch Land Trust is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. Your contribution is tax deductible to the fullest extent permitted by law. A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the PA Department of State. Call 800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement



What’s under those lily pads?



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Birthday tree planting tradition begins.

“ The times I spent with my
children in nature are among
my most meaningful memories
– and I hope theirs. ”

~ Richard Louv

PHOTO CREDITS:

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PAULA FALL – Page 2: Young hiker; Page 3: C. B. F. tree planting;
Page 8: Turkey eggs in nest; Spotted orbweaver; Page 9: Conservation
easement in Bear Creek; Page 11: Orange coral mushroom; Page 12:
American toad; Page 14: Rylan and snapping turtle; Grass pink orchid;
Wood frog; Page 15: What's under those lily pads?
TINA FIORANI – Page 3: Winter hike; Page 14: A Pileated woodpecker was here
PATTY HORN – Page 11: Lillian's Pond, Picton Wildlife Sanctuary
RICH NAUSE – Page 3: NBLT on safari with Africa Through Your Lens
NBLT STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS – Front cover photos;
Page 5: photos of Bierly Estate C. E.
Page 6: photos of Three Land Projects; Page 9: Earl Lehman and students
BARB ROMANANSKY – Page 14: Paddling the Susquehanna
REBECCA F. SMITH – Page 2: Toasting marshmallows; E. Hughes,
M. Dziak, P. Lumia, and W. S. Lower School Environmental Club students;
Page 3: Winter Picnic; F. E. Walter Dam; Taste the Local Harvest;
Page 7: M. Tonkin and P. Lumia; Page 14: Helping hands
CHRISTOPHER WHIPPLE – Back page: Birthday tree planting tradition begins
BOB WHIPPLE – Page 3: Richard Louv (center) with NBLT staff