

2020 Annual Report





STAFF

PAUL LUMIA Executive Director

RYLAN COKER Land Protection and Stewardship Coordinator

PAULA FALL Land Steward and Activities Coordinator

BARBARA ROMANANSKY Director of Development

LAUREN GORNEY Development and Outreach

Maureen Whipple Office Administrator

COVER PHOTO: Frances Slocum by Matt Giambra

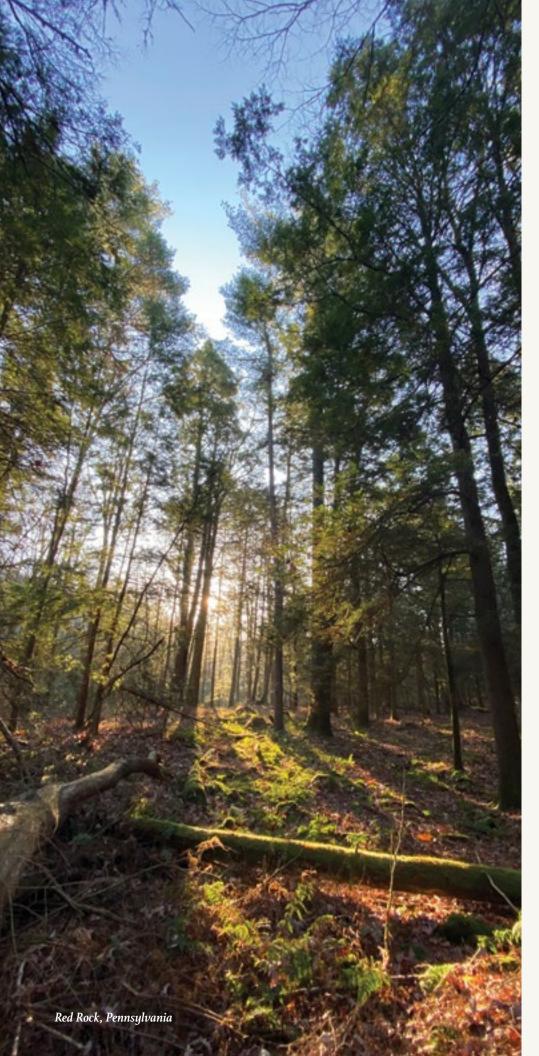
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MISSION STATEMENT: North Branch Land Trust conserves the natural, working and scenic landscapes in Northeastern Pennsylvania that enrich our lives.

Picton Wildlife Sanctuary, White Haven



THE LAND WE LOVE

2020 was a challenging year! Many of us found ourselves somewhat isolated, separated from loved ones, our usual pursuits, and lifestyles we may have taken for granted. We had to modify and adjust both physically and mentally and most importantly keep a positive attitude in the face of adversity. It has been difficult at times but one comforting and constant companion has been the land we love. We took to the trails, the streams and rivers, the mountains, beaches, and open spaces to rejuvenate and recharge. We turned to the lands we love to help us fill avoid and keep us on a solid physical and mental footing.

All of us at NBLT thank all of you for supporting our land conservation efforts throughout 2020. We continue to press forward conserving and protecting the natural wonders in our region that sustain us in good times and in bad. Progress is being made and with your help the land we love today will be here tomorrow and for generations to come. However, we do have an impact on the land and must be good stewards now and in the future as our lives literally depend on it. Nature gives us so much and asks for so little in return.

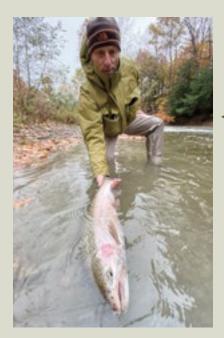
Thank you for your financial support. Your tax deductible dollars go directly toward our land conservation and trail building projects and most importantly help protect in perpetuity the land we love.

With respect,

Paul Lumia Executive Director

Thoughts from the Staff





Maureen Whipple

Office Administrator

We should never take unencumbered natural lands for "Pass Nature Forward. Boomers could be the last generation to remember a time when it was considered normal and expected for children to play in the woods and fields. When we leave this earth, will the memory of such experiences leave with us? Reconnecting the young to the natural world could be our greatest, most redemptive cause."

~ Richard Louv - Vitamin N (2016)

Ryan Coker

Land Protection and Stewardship Coordinator

"Why conservation? For some it might be a connection to the past and a preservation of a memory for future generations to be able to enjoy; for others, a way to balance environmental integrity and developmental pressure. Whether it is conserving a forest, waterway or farm, permanent preservation may be the only way to ensure future viability for those to come."



Paul Lumia

Executive Director

We should never take unencumbered natural lands for granted! The natural lands we love give us so much while asking nothing of us. They provide resources for our survival, habitat for plants and animals, and environments to energize our minds and bodies. The lands we live on and the natural lands available to us are a finite resource! We should always have an eye on striking a balance between development and conservation of the natural resources that sustain us.

Lauren Gorney

Director of Development

It seems as if this was the year the world re-discovered nature. The silver lining of an otherwise challenging, and sometimes scary year, was the opportunity to slow down and reconnect with our roots. The cultural and ancestral heritage of the NEPA region was born of the landscape, and what a year it was to plant our feet firmly on this ground. My neighborhood trail on the Penobscot Ridge was bustling with more people than the land has seen since it was last used for mining. The once coal-scarred lands were covered in green vegetation and hikers in bright color clothing, only outshined by the sun, illuminating the hills in a warm, welcoming glow. 2020 was many things, and my favorite of them? Answering the call to return to "home."







Paula Fall

Land Steward and Activities Coordinator

Two words come to mind when I think of 2020; change and adaptation. At home, I found myself taking on the stress of a kindergartner doing virtual school for a while, picture a 5-year-old hiding under the table for math class! One thing, however, remained constant and that was getting outdoors to balance the stress and uneasiness caused by major changes. As non-essential business and social activities stopped, the forest remained open. Places where I hike suddenly became packed with people! Trails became a hot commodity and an essential need for health and happiness. I cannot think of a better way to affirm the need for open space.

BARB ROMANANSKY Director of Development, Retires

Barb has a deep and contagious passion for protecting the beauty of nature and all that it offers. Barb started her journey with NBLT in 2008 working in an administrative role helping run the day-to-day office operations. Her enthusiasm and willingness to take on new challenges soon lead her toward a development role and the task of engaging donors and friends of land conservation far and wide. Barb retires as the Land Trusts first Director of Development and has the distinction of substantially growing our donor base and building long-term relationships with many members of our community.

IN BARB'S WORDS: It has been an honor to be part of a small but mighty team that has conserved over 22,000 acres of our beautiful NEPA land. I am so fortunate that, in the second half of my life, I was able to be in a position where I could pursue my passion of connecting people to the land and protecting nature. I will miss the interaction with NBLT donors and supporters but I'm thrilled to



continue the many friendships forged over the common bond of land conservation. My retirement is a bittersweet moment as I love NBLT and its conservation mission but I'm looking forward to spending more time in my kayak, traveling, spreading my volunteer wings and becoming more involved with the Adaptive World.

Please continue to support North Branch Land Trust as there are thousands of more acres to conserve in order to protect habitat, watersheds, farms, and our beautiful scenic views. As Jane Goodall states "You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make."

VOLUNTEERS



Volunteer of the Year Mike Gondell

Mike Gondell is very passionate about the environment. He is also very knowledgeable about plants, which is why he took over the pollinator garden at the Picton Wildlife Sanctuary. Through hours of planning and maintenance, he has brought the garden to life. The garden serves as a food source and habitat for butterflies, moths, bees, and other pollinators.

Mike is also involved with many organizations whose goal is to save and enjoy the environment. He volunteers with Trout Unlimited, Broadhead Watershed Association and Greater Hazleton Rails to Trails, to name a few. Because of Mike's commitment to NBLT and the greater good of NEPA, the Land Trust is honored to name him Volunteer of the Year.

To All NBLT Volunteers

Thank you for your continued support, adaptation and hard work! Your efforts make it possible for the Land Trust to sustain its land conservation mission. The Land Trust is especially grateful for all of your efforts and perseverance through a challenging year.

To the Community: please consider volunteering your time and talents. The staff at North Branch Land Trust is always grateful for volunteer support to help with land stewardship, planning and executing activities, serving on committees, and providing expertise in many other areas regarding the land and protecting it for future generations.

If you have interest in supporting our mission PLEASE CONTACT US!

Programs & Activities

Although many Land Trust events and activities had to be postponed this past year – we pushed forward. We all needed nature more than ever and getting outdoors was essential to our health and wellbeing. As spring approaches we look forward to having you join us in nature for programs and activities.

PASSING NATURE ON TO THE NEXT GENERATION

The first program in NBLT's "Discovery and Connection" series for children was "Winter Animal Survival." The program, which is one in a series of four, was held on March 1st, 2020 at Bear Creek Camp in Bear Creek. The program, taught by Environmental Educator Charlene Wildes, focused on how animals survive the harsh winters. The children learned which animals migrate, hibernate or adapt to survive the winter months.

The group hiked to a lake looking for animal signs. Among the finds were an empty Monarch chrysalis, the cocoon of a Prometheus moth, tracks from a squirrel, a birds nest and fox scat.

After returning, the kids had a "frozen critter" snack of whipped cream and chocolate ice cream with a surprise animal inside. Activity sheets and a groundhog craft finished the program.

All four programs are provided through a grant from the Luzerne Foundation and an anonymous donor. The three remaining programs will be rescheduled. They include Animals in your Backyard, Who Lives in And Around the Water and Discovery Forest Walk. Thank you to NBLT volunteer Tina Fiorani and Bear Creek Camp staff Denise Abrams for helping with this event.

Let the children be free; encourage them; let them run outside when it is raining: let them remove their shoes when they find a puddle of water; and when the grass of the meadows is wet with dew, let them run on it and trample it with their bare feet; let them rest peacefully when a tree invites them to sleep beneath its shade; let them shout and laugh when the sun wakes them in the morning.

~ Maria Montessori

DRIVE THROUGH ANNUAL DINNER 2020

Recognizing Geisinger with our Community Stewardship Award for their unwavering commitment to promoting a healthy lifestyle by encouraging people to connect with the land through recreational opportunities and educational initiatives. Thank you Geisinger and thank you to all our sponsors, donors, and supporters of our Annual Dinner and our mission to protect the natural places we love and cherish!



Left to right: Christina Taylor, NBLT Board Chair; Paul Lumia, NBLT Executive Director; Deno Pantelakos, Photographer; Lissa Bryan-Smith, Chief Administrative Officer Geisinger Bloomsburg Hospital; Ron Beers, Chief Administrative Officer Geisinger Northeast Region; and Cheryl Connelly, Senior Director of Advancement Geisinger Northeast Region.



Thank you to Dinner Chair Alison Zurawski, Auction Chair Lissa Bryan-Smith, Staff Coordinator, Barb Romanansky, the Westmoreland Club and all the wonderful Committee members for conquering challenges and putting together one of the most successful and memorable annual dinners to date! We appreciate you!



Our **Hike From Home** Photo Contest got us out to document some of our favorite places in nature. Thank you to all the participants and the wonderful photos and congratulations to the winner Matt Giambra and his photo taken at dark at Francis Slocum State Park. Matt's photo is our cover photo this year. We look forward to future submissions as our *Hike From Home* series continues. Enjoy nature!



Land Protection Projects 2020

The permanent protection of the regions natural land resources continues to be our main focus! As a community nonprofit we utilize the funds you donate to help complete land protection projects that will be relevant for generations to come.

Even given the challenges of 2020 we were able to advance our conservation mission. Existing projects were completed, new projects started and ongoing projects advanced. Our success is a testament to your trust and support in us ... Thank You!



Hanover Reservoir Acquisition Project – Phase II

700 Acres | Hanover Township, Luzerne County

WATERSHED:

Hanover Reservoir, Espy Run, Nanticoke Creek, Susquehanna River, Chesapeake Bay

KEY PARTNERS:

Earth Conservancy; Hanover Township; Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), Bureau of Recreation and Conservation – Community Conservation Partnership Program; DCNR Bureau of Forestry



In November, 2019 North Branch Land Trust (NBLT) was awarded a grant in the amount of \$850,000 from the Community Conservation Partnership Program administered by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) to acquire 700 acres on Penobscot Mountain including the historic Hanover Reservoir. On October 8th, 2020 NBLT was awarded a second

grant in the amount of \$850,000 from DCNR to acquire an additional 700 acres surrounding the Hanover Reservoir bringing the total lands to be acquitted to 1,400 acres. Funds for this project come from the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund (Key 93), the Environmental Stewardship Fund (Growing Greener) and federal funds.

Penobscot Mountain Highlands, Part of the Hanover Reservoir Project Area

After survey and a thorough environmental review, NBLT will acquire the property and transfer it to the Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry and the Pinchot State Forest System. This beautiful tract will add to the over 4,000 acres on Penobscot Mountain previously transferred to the Pinchot State Forest System by NBLT. Public access and recreation opportunities will be plentiful.

ALEXANDERIAN ACQUISITION PROJECT

184 Acres | Bear Creek Township

WATERSHED:

Red Run, Ten Mile Run, Bear Creek, Lehigh River, Delaware River, Delaware Bay

Land transferred to the Pennsylvania Game Commission on October 13, 2020

KEY PARTNERS:

Open Space Institute's Delaware River Watershed Protection Fund, made possible with funding from the William Penn Foundation for its Delaware River Watershed Initiative, which seeks to protect water quality in the Delaware River Basin; Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation – Community Conservation Partnership Program; Pennsylvania Game Commission.

Completed this past year the Alexandrian Acquisition Project in Bear Creek is quite special. Located on the northwestern edge of the Pocono Plateau this parcel includes a unique northern boreal forest habitat. Two high-quality streams, Ten Mile Run and Red Run flow unobstructed and Bobcat, Brook Trout, Snowshoe Hare and other dense forest-loving creatures find a home here.

The property has been transferred to the Pennsylvania Game Commission and will now be part of Game Lands 91. The property is forever wild and helps link many thousands of acres of protected lands in the area. A big thank you goes out to the Alexanderian family for helping to protect this very special piece of forest habitat in Luzerne County.





Ten Mile Run at the Project Site, Bear Creek Township

D & L TRAIL CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

6.2 miles | Wilkes-Barre Township, Laurel Run Borough, Plains Township

WATERSHED:

Laurel Run, Susquehanna River, Chesapeake Bay

KEY PARTNERS:

Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor; Laurel Run Borough; Luzerne Foundation; Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development – Greenways, Trails and Recreation Grant Program; Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), Bureau of Forestry; PA DCNR Bureau of Recreation and Conservation – Community Conservation Partnership Program; Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation – Grant Program; Pennsylvania Department of Transportation; Plains Township; Sordoni Family Foundation; Wilkes-Barre Township.

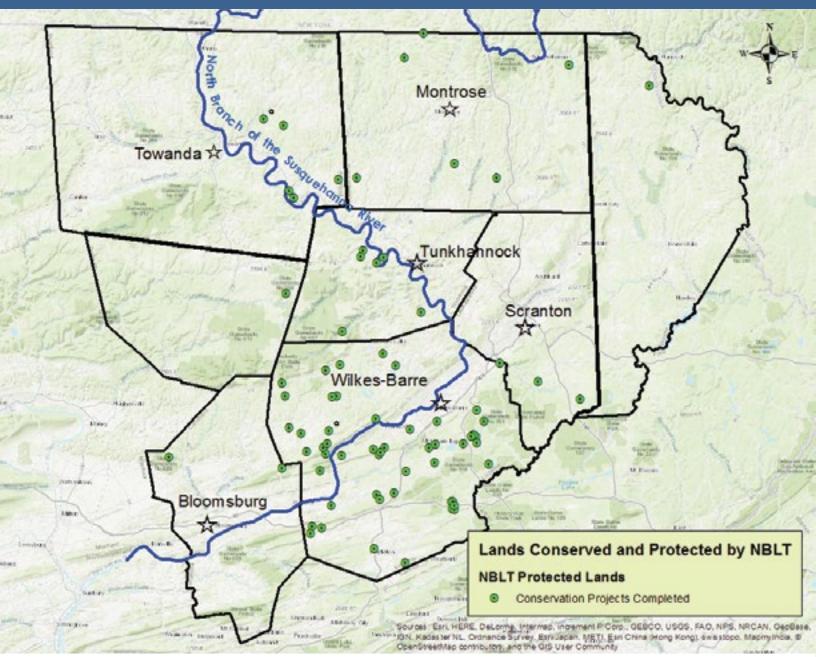
Trail construction in Laurel Run Borough near the Seven Tubs Nature Area

The 165 Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor (D & L) trail from Bristol in Bucks County, PA to Wilkes-Barre is well on its way to being completed. Check out the D & L website for information on the entire trail at www.delawareandlehigh.org.

The Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor organization located in Easton, PA has many dedicated partners working hard to complete all 165 miles of trail. North Branch Land Trust has committed to completing the last 6.2 miles into Wilkes-Barre and we are under construction. This section runs from Oliver Mills in Laurel Run Borough through Plains Township and back into Laurel Run and Wilkes-Barre Township. This section of trail runs on the old Lehigh and Susquehanna Railroad line which was a subsidiary of the Leigh Coal and Navigation Company.

Public trail systems that are accessible to those of us living in and around urban areas are vitally important. They give us easy access to affordable recreation opportunities, help improve our health and wellbeing, and also vastly improve the economic outlook of the regions where they are located.

NBLT Completed Projects Map as of Year End 2020 84 PROJECTS COMPLETED IN EIGHT COUNTIES WITH OVER 22,500 ACRES PROTECTED





GIVING THROUGH YOUR ESTATE

North Branch Land Trust would like to thank those who have included NBLT in their estate planning. If you are interested in conserving your land, donating land or financial assets through your estate we would be happy to discuss options and benefits. The natural land we live on is a finite resource and planning now to protect it for our children, grandchildren and future generations is critical

DONORS

January 1 to December 31, 2020

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.

HIGHLANDS GUARDIAN \$5,000 and Above

DiscoverNEPAGeisingerHackett Philanthropies FoundationBill & Wilma JamesKenneth & Caroline Taylor Family FoundationPaul D. Wasserott FoundationSordoni Family FoundationWilliam Penn Foundation Special Gifts ProgramYellow Zinnia Fund





WOODLANDS GUARDIAN \$2,500-\$4,999

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Lissa Bryan-Smith & Richard M. Smith
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Edith Reynolds Trust
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PA American Water
PNC Bank
Riggs Asset Management Company





RIVER GUARDIAN \$1,000-\$2,499

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Kelly Bray Snyder

Peter & Lesa Butera

The Constellation Fund of The Luzerne Foundation

Mwark & Traci Cross

Barry H. Dyller, Esq. & Honorable Lesa S. Gelb

Earth Conservancy

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PROTECTOR \$500-\$999

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John S. Thalenfeld
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David L. Wagner & Elizabeth Cecil
The Westmoreland Club Charitable Foundation Fund of The Luzerne Foundation

Wilkes-Barre Family YMCA



CONSERVATOR \$250-\$499

Senator Lisa Baker Margaret Bakker & Rob Lewis BB&T Commercial Community Bank Geoff & Emily Bell The Bevevino Family Fund of The Luzerne Foundation Chris & Eileen Blazic Paul & Donna Bookstein Anthony T.P. Brooks & Matthew Malani buka Mike Burnside Robert L. Carson Dr. Carl & Susan Charnetski **Bob & Jeannie Clements** Rob Coburn **Cheryl Connolly** Cook's Pharmacy



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Christine Davis

Thomas Dorko

Dundee Gardens

Fidelity Bank

First National Bank

of Pennsylvania

Dr. Seth & Carolyn Fisher

Judd B. & Dianne Fitze

Fox Hill Country Club

Clarence Givens, Jr.

Gretta A. Gross

The Fund of Luzerne County of

The Luzerne Foundation

Phil & Judy Decker

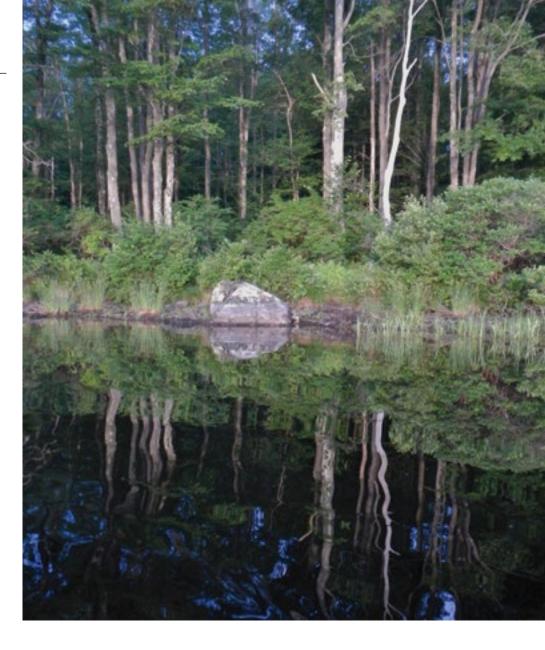
Joseph & Nan DeMarco

Paula Fall & Brian Gettig

Winter came down to our house one night Quietly pirouetting in on silvery-toed slippers of snow. And we, we were children once again. ~ Bill Morgan, Jr. Harold C. Snowdon Home for Funerals, Inc. George Hart Molly Hinkin **Elizabeth Hughes** Jerry & Marnie Idec Jacobi Capital Management Dave & Kate Jenkins Johnson & Johnson Benjamin R. Jones, IV John Keker Marcella Kelly Stephen B. & Estella Killian King's College David & Mary Kolessar Dr. William Krah III Karen Labbate Life Stories Remembered, LLC Carol Lizell Loren J. Grossman, DMD Luzerne County **Community College** Marc & Susan Magnotta **Richard Maslow** Gert McGowan Medico Industries Rob & Kim Mericle MPA LLC - Marilyn & Scott Millington Susanne Mullin Tony & Elaine Palischak The Parsons Family

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SUSTAINER \$100-\$249 (continued)

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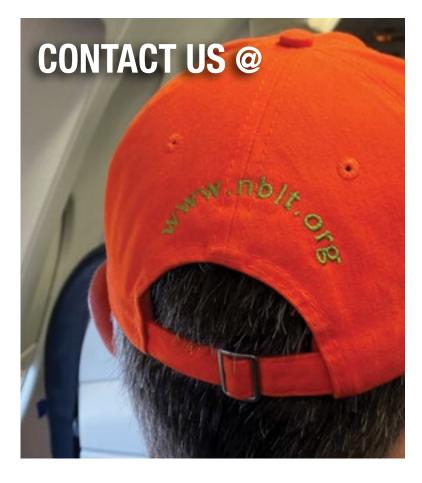
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SUSTAINER \$100-\$249 (continued)

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GIFTS IN MEMORIAL

Donations were made in memory of the following:

Dr. Douglas Ayers

Betsy Condron

Frankie Gubbiotti

GIFT IN HONORARIUM

Donations were made in honor of the following:

Barbara Romanansky

Charles & Sharon Stanski Theresa Stewart Greg & Vera Supey Erin Tanner Steven & Joan Taylor The Cafe The Upstairs Gallery **Jon Thomas** Jim & Jane Turner **Bob & Catherine Veleker** Robert & Irene Wendoloski Theodore S. Wiaterowski Lillian Wittmer William R. Woronko Sharon Wunner Robert & Elaine Zavada Matthew & Lauren Zluchowski Ed & Amber Zygmunt

GIFT IN MEMBERSHIP

Donations were made in memory of the following:

Bear Creek Organics

MATCHING GIFTS

The following organizations matched donations from members:

Bank of America Charitable Foundation

Benevity Community Impact Fund Johnson & Johnson Matching Gifts

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 the office at gorney@nblt.org or call 570-310-1781 to update our records for future donor listings.

SUPPORTER \$49 and Under

Lynn K. Aldrich **Russ Andrews Barb** Andricks Nancy Baker John & Sandra Bensinger John & Darlene Bero **Richard Bishop Tiffany Buchman** Gary R. & Kim Carpenter Maureen Collins **Common Grounds Caffe** Barbara Craig, RSM Suzanne Druffner Louise Edwards & Gary Johnston **Carole Ertley** Glenn & Laura Frank Jeanette Godlewski Dr. Jon & Beverly Hart Joyce Lang Jenny B Designs

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Picton Wildlife Sanctuary, White Haven

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\$	135,560
Earned Revenue\$	76,200
Special Events\$	99,500

EXPENSES BY TYPE

Program Service	. \$2	268,552
Administrative	. \$-	108,900
Fundraising	. \$	52,250

The Total Revenue above reflects the revenue needed to operate North Branch Land Trust. It does not reflect the funds raised for the protection of land or other capital projects, a number which can vary widely from year to year.

THANK YOU!

Renew your membership, become a new member, or give a gift membership today by retuning the enclosed envelope or donate at nblt.org/donate

GUARDIAN SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

Highlands Guardian	\$5,000+
Woodlands Guardian	\$2,500
River Guardian	\$1.000

MEMBERSHIP

Protector	\$500
Conservator	\$250
Sustainer	\$100
Steward	\$ 50



North Branch Land Trust

2020 Annual Report

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The official registration and financial information of North Branch Land Trust may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. registration does not imply edorsement.



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SUPPORTING THE PROTECTION OF OUR NATURAL HERITAGE!

Committed individuals, businesses and like-minded organizations fuel the land conservation work of North Branch Land Trust. Please consider a gift this year by returning the enclosed envelope or donate at www.nblt.org/donate



Deno Panjelakos NEPA Nature Photographer