



North Branch

Land Trust

2021 Annual Report



North Branch

L a n d T r u s t

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



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Design: Karley Stasko
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NBLT Environmental Educator, Charlene Wildes teaches young stewards about local watersheds

Letter from the Executive Director

Ellen Ferretti started as Executive Director of North Branch Land Trust on November 15, 2021

I was at an event recently that hosted a few people from out of the area. Someone commented, "This place is beautiful!" Her comment was not intended toward the venue, but rather the lands and landscapes that she traveled through to get to our area. Her comment was meant for Northeastern Pennsylvania.

A little over 29 years ago, a group of concerned residents got together to form a land trust in Northeastern Pennsylvania. The foundation for their mission, as it has been for succeeding Board Members and supporters, was and is a mixture of love and respect: of the lands and waters, of home, of the character of the region that is so clearly defined by the aspects of nature that enshrine us, and an understanding of how intertwined our lives and livelihood are with nature. They, as now, were inspired to act, to conserve, to protect and steward the natural resources of Northeastern Pennsylvania - for enjoyment and benefit now and for future generations. They, as now, saw the need to protect the forests, fields, farms, waters, hillsides, trails and valleys - not just for aesthetics, although fundamentally important, but for the belief that protecting key conservation resources and values protects and supports us all. They knew, as we know now, that a good place to live is a good place to work, and this drives companies to locate here.

We define ourselves by the landscape, lands, and waters of our region. We are from the Wyoming Valley, Bear Creek, Endless Mountains, Back Mountain, Lackawanna Valley, Susquehanna Valley, Delaware Valley, and so on.

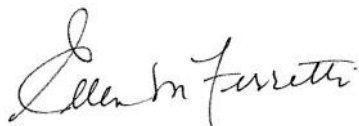
Conservation and stewardship are commitments to these landscapes, lands and waters; to our community; to our children and our children's children; to the forests that clean the air we breathe and filter our water; the waters we drink; the soils that grow our food; the landscapes and vistas that feed our souls; the preserves and trails we visit for outdoor recreation; and the children and next generations to inherit it all. They are acts of love, of inspiration, of learning; they are a statement to protect a beloved family homestead, critical wildlife habitats, vibrant forests, mountainsides, stream buffers, lakes, watersheds, and so much more.

During the pandemic, we sought refuge in nature, in places to wander, to absorb beauty. The lands and trails we walked, the waters we sought, the long views into green forests that we drove through were there because, at some point in time, they were conserved and became precious, even vital, to us at a time of great need. That connection is forever.

The North Branch Land Trust, your land trust, is still here after all this time. More than 22,000 acres conserved, and still passionately protecting Northeastern Pennsylvania side-by-side with landowners and so many others who support this mission. We receive calls every month from landowners who want us to help them ease their precious places to protect them - in perpetuity. We are always looking for ways to create meaningful outdoor experiences for those who seek the outdoors.

Our Mission is to conserve the natural, working, and scenic landscapes in Northeastern Pennsylvania that enrich our lives. North Branch Land Trust, your land trust, that started so long ago is still as vibrant and active as ever serving the people, lands, waters, and natural resources of Northeastern Pennsylvania.

With your support, we will continue this mission - with a deep respect for our history and a broad vision toward the future.





Paula Fall
Stewardship Associate



Liz Martin
Office Administrator



Karley Stasko
Marketing & Development
Coordinator



Ellen Ferretti
Executive Director



Rylan Coker
Land Protection &
Stewardship Coordinator

Who Lives Around and In the Water Program

August 2021

Despite the everchanging nature of the pandemic, NBLT Volunteer Environmental Educator Charlene Wildes taught young stewards about the Pennsylvania watershed. Children investigated a stream, pond and lake at the beautiful Bear Creek Camp to collect frogs, tadpoles, newts, and aquatic insects.

Thanks to a grant from The Luzerne Foundation, this program was made available free of charge.



Wilson-Ayers Road Conservation Easement

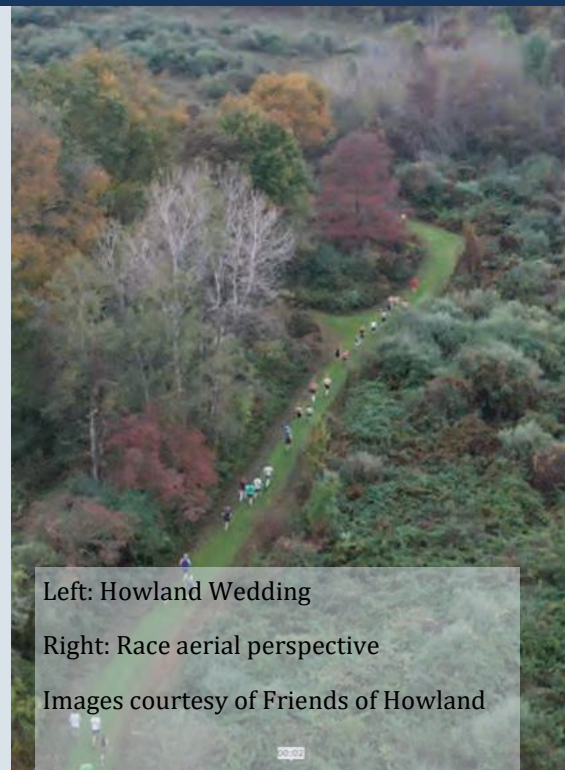
In 2021, two landowners made a commitment to conserving more than 14 acres in Noxen, Wyoming County with NBLT—conserving the precious resources of the land as well as protecting the vital Bowman Creek, Susquehanna River and Chesapeake Bay watersheds.

This conservation easement is particularly special to NBLT as it honors the vision of the late Dr. Douglas Ayers, one of the founding members of NBLT and early Chairs of the Board of Directors.



Friends of Howland

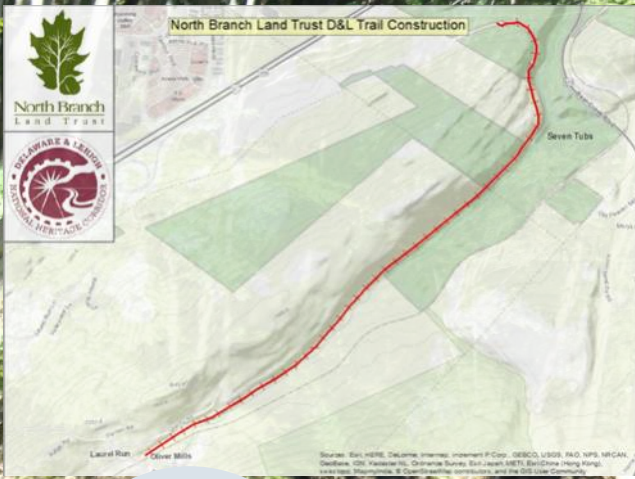
The Friends of Howland Preserve made great strides in enhancing the experience at this 669-acre property in Tunkhannock owned by the North Branch Land Trust. In this past year, Friends of Howland not only reconstructed, restored and repainted various indoor and outdoor structures, but they also hosted a variety of events, from weddings to class reunions to a five-mile race!



Left: Howland Wedding

Right: Race aerial perspective

Images courtesy of Friends of Howland



D&L Trail Progress

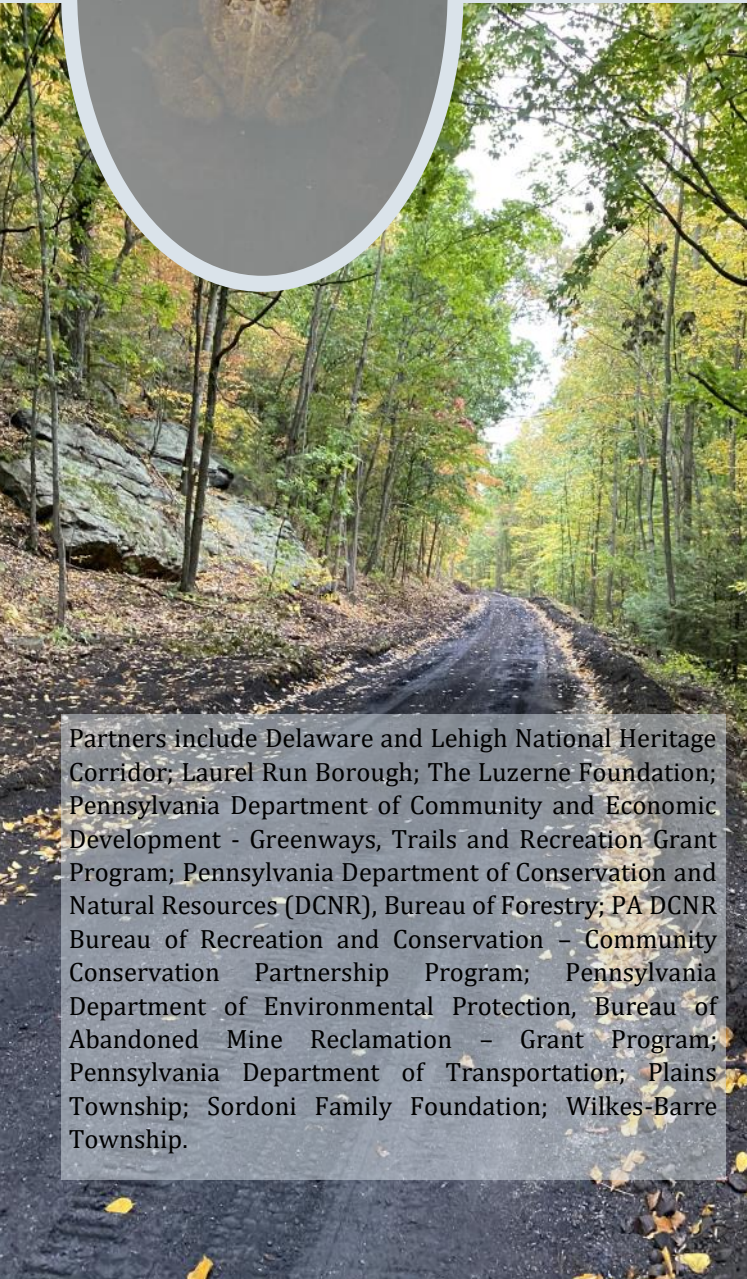


The Delaware & Lehigh (D&L) National Heritage Corridor preserves, interprets and leverages the nationally significant history of the 165-mile transportation route

between Wilkes-Barre and Bristol, Pennsylvania by building and maintaining public and private partnerships along the route of the trail. In 2014-2015, NBLT received ownership of that section of the D&L trail in Luzerne County from Oliver Mills, around little Wilkes-Barre Mountain, passing through the PA DCNR Bureau of Forestry Seven Tubs Recreation Area, and terminating at Northampton Street . While design and construction related activities have been funded by a combination of sources, i.e., PA DCNR, Earth Conservancy, various foundations, staff time has been considerable and unfunded. Over the years, this has taken a toll on NBLT.

Partners include Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor; Laurel Run Borough; The 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.

In 2021, North Branch Land Trust completed 2.8 miles of the rail trail extending from Oliver Mills through the Seven Tubs Natural Recreation Area in Plains Township. Once construction of the section of the trail from the Seven Tubs to Laurel Run at the base of Giants Despair is complete, North Branch Land Trust plans to transfer ownership of the trail to the PA DCNR Bureau of Forestry. The trail will be managed by the Bureau in the future for public access.



Year in Review

15

New Young
Stewards

24

Future
Conservation Site
Visits

250

Trees Planted
Across Two
Counties

325

Individual Donors

5,932

Reached via Social
Media

11,436

Total Conservation
Easement Acreage

2021 in Numbers

66

Stewardship Visits

193

Average
Conservation
Easement Acreage

359

Reached by Each
Email Campaign

1,602

Total Owned
Acreage

66,043

Metric Tonnes
Carbon
Sequestered*

190,000

Gallons Stormwater
Retained Annually
by 2031**

* US Forest Service (2019) estimates that privately owned forestland stores 77.1 metric tonnes of carbon per acre. Total sequestration is based on approximately 856 acres of NBLT-owned *forested* property.

**A mature tree will retain up to 760 gallons of water annually (The Green Infrastructure Center Inc. 2019). Trees planted in 2021 will mature in approximately 10 years.

Letter from Board Chair

2021 was a year of exciting changes at NBLT. We celebrated long-time Executive Director Paul Lumia and wished him well on his much-deserved retirement. We welcomed Ellen Ferretti as our new leader. Ellen has hit the ground running, launching us into the next stage of NBLT's evolution.

I would like to first thank the members of the Executive Director Search Committee. Together we developed and executed a comprehensive search process which ultimately led us to Ellen. I am grateful to these individuals for their dedication, candor and engagement throughout this important journey.

Despite all the turmoil in recent years, I remain appreciative of the long-term impact that NBLT's work has on the health and vitality of Northeastern Pennsylvania. Your support, whether through volunteer hours, membership or simple encouragement for our mission, allows our team to permanently protect precious land throughout this region forever. Our work in turn supports local communities by providing recreational opportunities, cleaner water and air, gorgeous mountain vistas, and habitats for our native wildlife.

I thank you for your continued generosity. I urge you to recognize all those who support our conservation work (and who are acknowledged in this report) as we all enjoy the benefits of these preserved spaces.

I wish you a healthy, plentiful, joyful year ahead filled with lots of time outside.



Christina Dilks Taylor



Next year, North Branch Land Trust is going green and going digital!

Check out the 2021 Annual Report at nblt.org/annualreport21/

The 2022 Annual Report will be hosted on our website and sent directly to your inbox. Physical copies will only be mailed upon request. If you would like to request a physical print of the 2022 Annual Report in advance, email info@nblt.org

Donors

January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021

GIFTS IN MEMORIAL

*Donations were made in
memory of the following:*

Joseph S. Bogdon

Molly Coker

Jerry Conlin

Helen & Chippy L

Jason Lepa

Bob Smith

GIFTS IN HONORARIUM

*Donations were made in
honor of the following:*

Barry Dyller

Paul Lumia

Rick Mooney

Highlands Guardian

AllOne Charities

Bear Creek Camp

Deborah Demuro

Earth Conservancy

Hackett Philanthropies

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Kenneth & Caroline Taylor
Family Foundation

The Luzerne Foundation

Paul D. Wasserott Foundation

Donna Schuler

Sordoni Family Foundation



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Thomas E. & Karen Sox

Fred Valentine

River Guardian

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Community Bank

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Matthew Sordoni

Brian & Lauren Stahl

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 Karl & Cindy Swankoski
 Stephen Taren
 Michael Tomalis & Theresa Gatusky
 Bruce & Roberta Troy

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 stasko@nblt.org or call 570-310-1781 to update our records for future donor listings.

Sustainer



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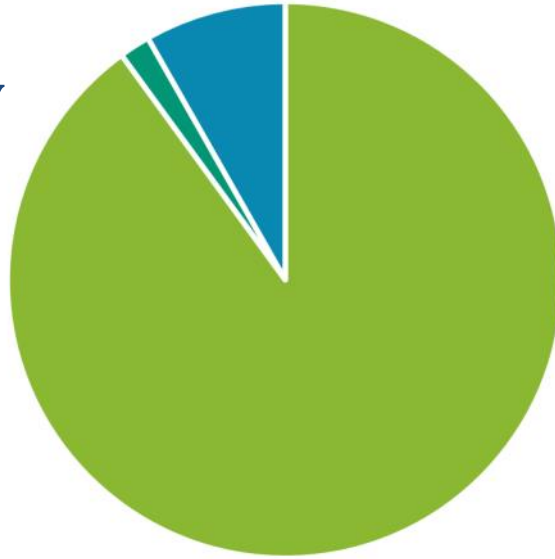
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John & Sandra Bensinger	Janice Lohmann	Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Thompson
Richard & Faye Bishop	Diane Olson	Doreen Vetro

Renew your membership today!

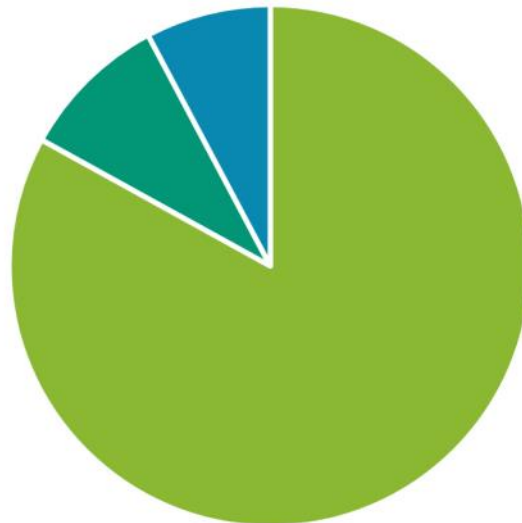
Income by source:

- Contributed Support
- Earned Revenue
- Special Events



Expenses by type:

- Program Services
- Administrative
- Fundraising



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.

Please consider a gift this year by returning the enclosed envelope or donate at www.nblt.org/donate

Membership Levels

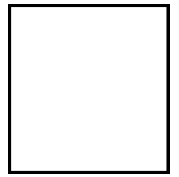
- Supporter - any
- Steward - \$50
- Sustainer - \$100
- Conservator - \$250
- Protector - \$500



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



251 Huntsville-Idetown
Rd. Dallas, PA 18612



Help Protect 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



Perrins Marsh by Rylan Coker